

# Screens light up the night near Yosemite

The world is a theater and nature is its stage. With a shuttered \$1 theater in Manteca and a long gone drive in theater in Ceres, that statement seems more appealing than ever. What are you going to do when you've seen all the new movies and you don't feel like going to a modern indoor, air-conditioned theater?

Like those vultures in Disney's "The Jungle Book," we ask, "What you wanna do?" "I don't know, what do you want to do?" someone replies, and it goes on and on, even with the myriad outdoor activities available in the Mother Lode. After all, summer may be the best time for

outdoor activities, but it's also the hottest time for them, which makes evenings perhaps the best time for relaxing in the summer air. Luckily, there are ways to combine modern technology with outdoor stages, and at an inexpensive price, too.

Why not see a movie under the stars, by the lake or at the park? Pinecrest Theater offers recent movies at the Pinecrest Lake amphitheater at 8:30 p.m. on select summer nights for \$6.50 (learn more at pinecresttheater.com or 402-4870). Perhaps a lesser-known outdoor movie screen takes center stage in Groveland on Saturday nights through Labor Day (excluding Aug. 25). Movies in the Park

began in 2005, based on community feedback that indicated a need for more family activities in the greater Groveland area.

The weekly events take place at Mary Laveroni Park in Groveland; the films start around sundown, generally between 8:30 and 9 p.m. For current show times visit groveland-moviesinthepark.blogspot.com.

Pam Oler, director of the Yosemite Chamber of Commerce, which presents the movies, said bleacher seating is available, but she recommends people bring their own blankets or chairs to sit in on the grass during the movies.

"It's a unique experience watching a movie under the stars," Oler said.

"I think it reminds many of us of the drive-ins from our childhoods. The prices are low! This venue is a family event and, even with inflation, we've been able to keep the admission costs the same as they were seven years ago: \$4 for 13 and older; \$3 for 6- to 12-year-olds and 5 and under are free. The volunteer staff is friendly. It's a great place to hang with friends. It's just a really good time!"

Oler said campers often come from Yosemite Pines, Yosemite Lakes, the Pine Mountain Lake Campground and other nearby areas to watch the films.

"Many people vacationing in our area, whether camping, staying in a rental home or one of the hotels, motels or B&Bs, find this is a great way to spend Saturday night," Oler said. "And most of us who live in the foothills love the outdoors. This is just another great thing to do and still be outdoors!"

The portable movie screen is about 14 feet wide. Oler says organizers have picked out films that are family-friendly, based on ratings from sites like Common Sense Media and with the goal of sticking to G- and PG-rated films, with an occasional PG-13 film, like this year's upcoming "X-Men: First Class." Other films planned for this summer include "Diary of a Wimpy Kid 2: Rodrick Rules" (on Saturday), "Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked," "Home Alone,"

## Tuolumne Talk

Harmony Wheeler



## Movies in the Park

**WHEN:** 7:30 Saturdays, show time at 8:30 p.m. through Sept. 1

**WHERE:** Mary Laveroni Park, 18950 Highway 108, Groveland

**TICKETS:** \$4 for adults, \$3 for ages 6 to 13 and free for 5 and under

**MORE INFO:** groveland-moviesinthepark.blogspot.com or 962-0429

"Robots," Gulliver's Travels" and "We Bought a Zoo."

"We intend to continue this great community project," Oler said. "It's an important part of our summer in Groveland. It gives locals and visitor's a unique family-friendly event under the stars!"

Send your Tuolumne County events to Harmony Wheeler at [hwheeler@sierralodestar.com](mailto:hwheeler@sierralodestar.com) and [mtaylor@sierralodestar.com](mailto:mtaylor@sierralodestar.com).



Courtesy photos

Mitch Lennen and Katelyn Gordon head to Groveland's Mary Laveroni Park for a Saturday night movie.



Katelyn Gordon and Mitch Lennen are ready for the show to start. Blankets can be helpful after the sun sets in Groveland.

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Laurel and Hardy shorts often welcome the audience to the Saturday Movies in the Park.