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Yamhill Market

Tests of time: films on transitions

by Eleanor Malin

STAND BY ME

Starring: Wil Wheaton
River Phoenix
Corey Feldman
Jerry O'Connor

Directed by: Rob Reiner

From a novella by: Steven King

Now playing at: Music Box

(Second top draw at the box office nationwide last week)

How refreshing. A film from a work by Stephen King with a little substance, about which we need not have to make up a bunch of trendy, sardonic slurs.

We went to see this film because it was made in Oregon, expecting a pleasant, though innocuous hour and a half. But the small story, artfully entwined with the landscape, and the four boys working their way fitfully towards manhood, works.

The boys set out to "discover" the body of another young boy, who has been missing for days. Rumors are flying in their small rural community. By a quirk of fate, one of the set of four boys overheard an older brother discussing the body with a friend. He and his friend can't announce their find, as it would, they think, implicate them in a crime. So the boy tells his three young friends, and they set out to find the body — out of curiosity, for a lark, and to get some publicity.

On the trip, really an allegory of passage into manhood, the boys tell stories, sing songs, play tag with the train, and let off a lot of steam. They talk boy stuff, which is they spend a lot of time insulting each other, comparing old wives tales, and making disparag-

ing remarks about each others' mothers. In truth, each of these boys has had real problems with their fathers, who have battered, reviled, and/or rejected them. Only 12 or 13, they are already steadfastly fixed on their paths in life, as surely and geometrically as the train tracks are fixed. Wil Wheaton, the narrator, is just beginning to realize how badly they have been messed up, and how slim their chances for happiness a la American dream really are. They have been treated badly by their fathers, apparently ignored by their mothers, and regularly beaten down by older, meaner siblings. The adventures they encounter, their methods of coping, and a heroic showdown in the climax of the film make a good story.

Good acting by all the boys, including Kiefer Sutherland in a smaller role as an older hood. But it is the director, Rob Reiner, who brings out the fragile story in a most memorable way. The landscape makes a fifth voice. When the movie is over, you feel as though you really have been somewhere and really have found something.

THE TURTLE DIARY

Screenplay by: Harold Pinter

Starring: Ben Kingsley
Glenda Jackson
Eleanor Bron

Playing at: Not currently showing, but it's played steadily for most of the year, and will show up again. Watch for it.

(Newly released in video stores last week)

Another allegory — this time a tale of entrapment and attempts to escape. A man and woman hang around so often at the sea turtle exhibit they finally strike up an acquaintance. The turtles have been swimming around in a tiny little tank for 30 years. They've grown huge and glide passively around the tank, healthy enough, but pathetic, nonetheless. From thinking what a shame it is, the man and woman begin to plot to free the turtles. At

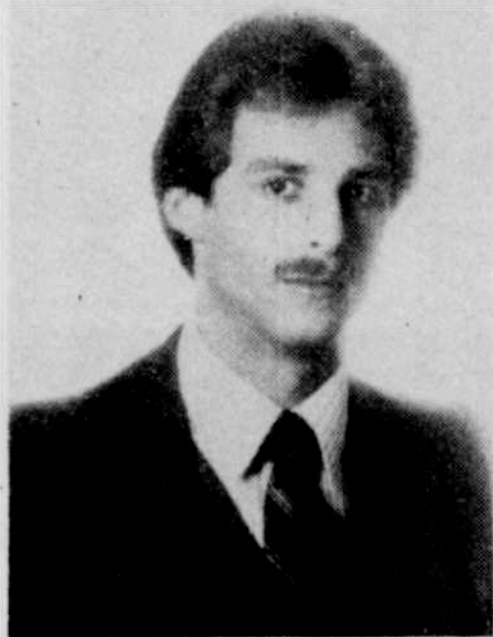
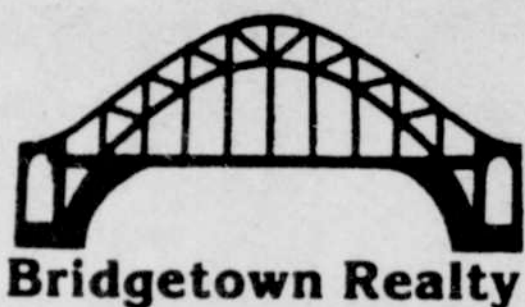
first Kingsley doesn't want to go along with it. It's Jackson's character, although even more unassuming than Kingsley's, who pushes for the plan. She asks him what they would need. It's not so much really — three crates, a van, and the cooperation of the keeper. He says he thinks he's got the cooperation of the keeper. That understatement is part of his persona as a spectator in life. Actually, the keeper has already outlined exactly how to do the job, and all but offered a signed contract pledging support. Reluctant at first, he finally consents to the plan, makes the crates, rents the van — they go get the turtles — you can guess the rest.

This is another simple story about simple folk trapped in little lives, performing a simple enough chore, but one which symbolically encourages them to make small but meaningful changes in their own lives. By setting free the turtles, they are allowing themselves thoughts and actions that lead to furthering their own self-fulfillment.

The Turtle Diary is a funny and heart-warming film. The test for Kingsley is to get himself to do something that is different from his regular little routine. The test for Jackson is to get herself to reach out for attention and affection.

Eleanor Bron has a small, but pivotal part as an overly-sensitive spinster neighbor of Kingsley's. A tragic figure, she loses her fragile grasp on life, and is the one who finally makes Kingsley stop and take assessment of his life. Although they don't really appear together, Glenda Jackson and Eleanor Bron both also appeared in *Wives and Lovers* many years ago. The roles they play her couldn't be more different from the ones they played in *Wives and Lovers*.

The Turtle Diary has enjoyed a long run in neighborhood theaters since its first release last year. The straightforward but entertaining dialogue and the skillful characterizations make this an easy watching film.



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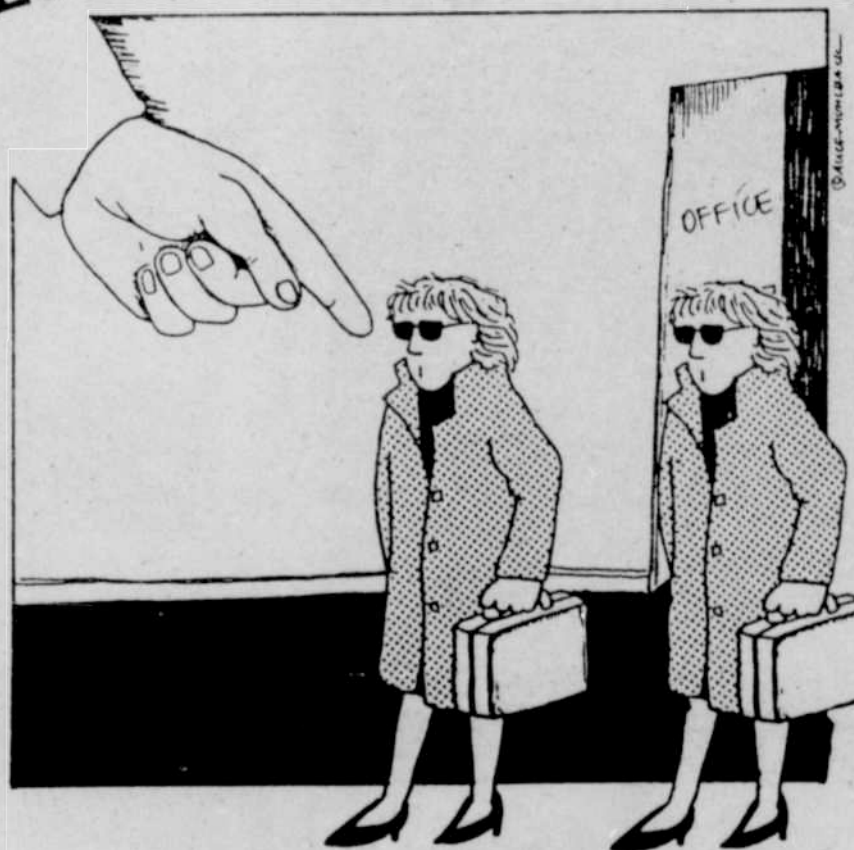
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Brush up on your Lesbian Etiquette

With author Gail Sausser
5-7 pm
October 10, 1986
at A Woman's Place



The strictest code we live by is not to expose anyone else's sexual identity to the straight world.

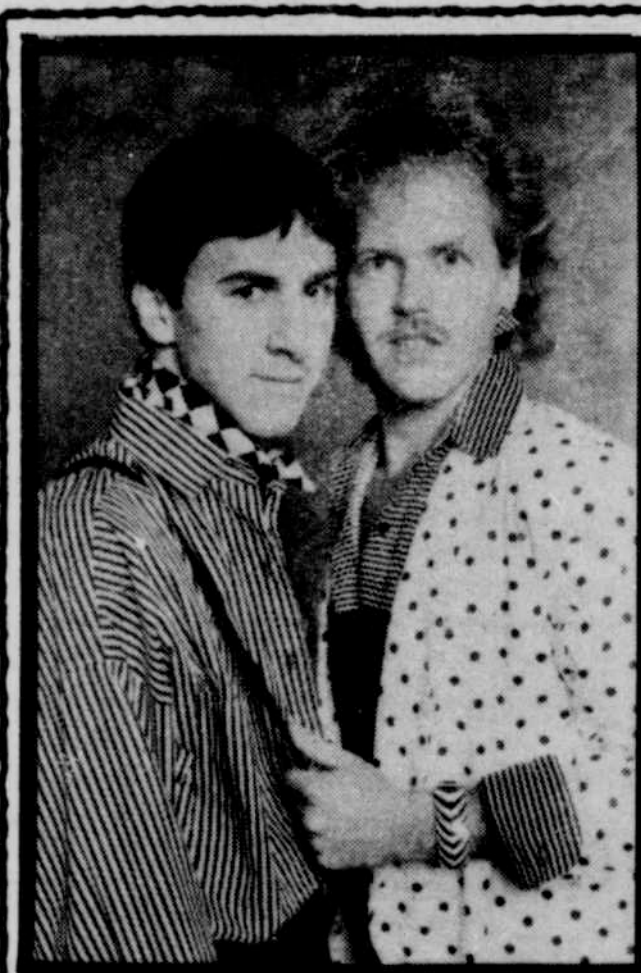
Lesbian Etiquette is collection of humorous essays by Gail Sausser talking about everything from her fantasies as a baby dyke to making dates through classified ads.

Also this month:

Author Rebecca Gordon, writer of *Letters from Nicaragua*, will be autographing her book **October 12**, from 1-3 pm.

A Woman's Place Bookstore
1431 NE Broadway
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