

Film Maker Encourages Youth to Reach for Dreams at Film Showing Supporting 4-H

An Alabama-based film producer told a group after watching his film that hard work, determination and luck can help you succeed in your career choice.

Lee Faulkner, producer of the independent film “Alabama Moon” told the audience of more than 150 Alabama 4-H youth and adults that his career in the film industry took many turns, but he continued his dream. The one-night showing of “Alabama Moon” at the Capri Theatre, Montgomery’s only independent cinema, was a benefit for Alabama 4-H.



Growing up in Tuscaloosa, Faulkner says he couldn’t afford to attend college and joined the Army following high school. While there, he became friends with servicemen who followed the Hollywood dream after their service ended. Faulkner was encouraged to join in, and he ended up working in the industry, first as a stuntman and later as actor before producing both independent and commercial films.

He appeared in “Paint Your Wagon,” “Ice Station Zebra,” “The Graduate,” “In Cold Blood” (where he met Truman Capote), and other films before venturing into production work.



Producer Lee Faulkner answers questions following the showing of “Alabama Moon.”

Based on the book by Alabama native Watt Key, “Alabama Moon” tells the story of 11-year-old Moon Blake, who has spent most of his life hiding out in Alabama woods with his survivalist father. After the land is sold, Moon talks two friends into following his father’s dying wish and embarks on a journey to Alaska.

The Fairhope resident says he read “Alabama Moon” on the recommendation of friends and immediately liked it. He decided to produce it as an independent film so he could have more control of it. “There are very few film companies that make family films today – they are hard to sell,” Faulkner says.

“And kids love the story and characters, so we wanted to stay as true to it as possible.” While they hired a screen writer to turn the book into a movie, they worked closely with Key to keep the movie in line with the book.



Alabama 4-H was well represented at the film, and everyone received a 4-H T-shirt.

“Everyone loved the project, which is very unusual in this business. I knew the book would move easily into a screenplay, which isn’t always the case.”

Faulkner says one of the challenges of making a family film is shooting with kids, which is difficult. “The challenge with a movie like this is the character of Moon. He’s the whole movie, but being a 12-year-old kid at the time, he could only work so many hours a day, had to go to school, so you’re really restricted on shooting.

“The crew shot with two cameras, and we occasionally used body doubles for far away shots,” Faulkner says.

The film, which cost \$9.5 million to produce in 2009, is now available on DVD and Video on Demand.



Faulkner talks to a movie fan following the showing.