

The Voyage of the Dawn Treader Most Inspiring Faith, Family and Values Movie of 2011

☒ All eyes will be on glitz, glitter and glamour of the 83rd Annual Academy Awards Show this Sunday as Hollywood's awards season reaches its apex. But another very different awards celebration did not go unnoticed. Celebrities, studio executives, writers and producers gathered February 18 for the 19th Annual MovieGuide Faith and Values Awards Gala.

While *The Social Network*, *The King's Speech* and *Black Swan* are Oscar favorites, it was *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* that won MovieGuide's \$100,000 Epiphany Prize for Most Inspiring Movie of 2010.

The Voyage of the Dawn Treader is the third in a series of Chronicles of Narnia movies Walden Media has released, and is the theatrical presentation of the acclaimed series of children's books by C.S. Lewis. The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, released in 2005, was the first movie (and book). It also claimed a MovieGuide award and an Oscar, and is the 38th highest box office grossing film of all time. In 2008, Walden Media released Prince Caspian: the Return to Narnia.

"We are hoping to do another Narnia film," says David Weil, CEO, the Anschutz Film Group, parent company of Walden Media that produces the Narnia films. "We are in discussions right now with our studio partner Fox about a fourth one which would probably be Musician's Nephew. In addition to that, our mandate as a film company is to continue to do family friendly films with uplifting messages."

Dawn Treader was released in every market in the world, and it

did three times more business outside the United States than it did in the United States, Weil says. It was received exceedingly well in Russia, France, Latin America and the Far East. "It just seems to be the right kind of movie for our times," Weil adds.

Toy Story 3 was selected by MovieGuide as the Best Movie for Families and *Secretariat* was named Best Movie for Mature Audiences. MovieGuide, like the Golden Globes, honors both motion pictures and television shows. Lifetime Television's *Amish Grace* was the winner of the \$100,000 Epiphany Prize for Most Inspiring TV Program.

Mao's Last Dancer and *Christmas With a Capital C* won the Faith and Freedom Awards for Promoting Positive American Values.

Actor Kevin Sorbo was the emcee for the awards ceremony and he also won the Grace Award for Most Inspiring Performance in Movies for his lead role in *What If...* Madison Mason received the Grace Award for Most Inspiring Performance in Television for his powerful portrayal of an Amish elder in *Amish Grace*.

"The major players have caught the vision," says Ted Baehr, founder and publisher of MovieGuide. "We had the chairman of Fox here tonight and representatives from Warner Brothers, Sony and many major companies. They know that there is a gigantic marketplace for movies about family, faith and values."

MovieGuide reviews movies and television shows on its website, giving details not only about the storylines but also about the presence or absence of faith, family and values. The reviews include warnings about the amount of sex, nudity, profanity, violence, and other objectionable elements in each show.

Actress Maria Canals-Barrera portrays the mother on *The Wizards of Waverly Place*, and she was an award presenter at this year's MovieGuide gala. "I go on line myself to check out

the reviews for films," she tells Charisma. "I have two little girls—seven and five—and I want to know what they will see. So when I heard that I could present an award here I was thrilled because I would love to be part of an awards ceremony that supports, celebrates, encourages faith, values, God, Christ and our beliefs."

Kevin Sorbo is best known for his role as Hercules. "I have always known about the MovieGuide awards," he tells Charisma. "Hercules had a lot of very strong moral stories and I was surprised that we never got nominated. So I have always known of them and said why aren't we getting those movie guide awards. I agree with what Ted Baehr started this whole thing you are missing out on an opportunity to reach a large audience. It is nice to see that this is gaining ground, becoming more and more popular. We need more and more of these movies to be made."

Each year at the awards gala, Baehr presents an industry report. In it he tracks trends and documents the growing success of movies that celebrate faith, family and values, with the percentage climbing to 60 percent of all movies made in 2010. Baehr argues that Americans want to view this type of movie, and that when the studios see the earnings potential, they make more of them. Movies with more violence or sexual scenes actually earn less money, Baehr says.

Actress Nancy Stafford was nominated as most inspiring performer for her role in *Christmas With a Capital C*. "I knew we had something special but I was shocked to be nominated because more and more Christian films are coming out," Stafford told Charisma. "To be among a short list of movies that get to be recognized by MovieGuide is just awesome. In a personal way it is more valuable to me than an Emmy or an Oscar because it is a recognition from a community of faith that you have done something that is not just funny, clever or cute."

Stafford is best known for her long-running role as Andy Griffith's legal partner in the television series *Matlock*. "I think more and more people in Hollywood are paying attention to faith and values," Stafford says. "Certainly, the community of faith has always paid attention, but I think studios are more and more paying attention. The report is full of hard data that you cannot dismiss. I am impressed that year after year he continues to be faithful and get the word out. I think we are seeing a difference, even with movies that are coming out of mainstream studios."

Roger Neal will celebrate 30 years in show business this year, and he has been following Ted Baehr and MovieGuide almost since it started. "I helped MovieGuide when they first started the awards years ago," Neal says. "One of those years *The Apostle* was nominated. Robert Duval was the lead in the movies and he came to the MovieGuide awards, and the next week he was at the Oscars. When Duval showed up, that signaled to me that the MovieGuide awards was something that Hollywood was starting to pay attention to. I am glad it is here because it some ways it pushes Hollywood to produce more movies that are more family friendly. Part of that is due to what Ted Baehr and the MovieGuide awards have done for all these years. They have definitely made a mark and impact on Hollywood."