

HOOT

Middle schooler Roy Eberhardt is the perpetual new kid on the block. Due to his father's job, Roy's moved so many times he's lost track of how many schools he's attended (six since kindergarten) and how many towns he's lived in (that would be ten) in his fourteen years of life. You could say he's perpetually a stranger in a strange land.

This time, he's left the big sky country of Montana for the tropical sun belt of Florida and a sleepy Gulf Coast hamlet named Coconut Cove. The first thing he must do (if he is to avoid being called 'cowgirl' by his new classmates) is trade in his boots for flip flops and his western 'dude' shirt for a tank top. The second thing he notices is that Florida does not have 10,000 foot mountains like Montana, but is as flat as a pancake. Lastly, he quickly recognizes that, just like everywhere else he's been, Florida has its share of bullies.

That's always been part of the drill for the new kid in town. And, on his first day at Trace Middle School, Roy's about to meet the biggest bully of them all –Dana Matherson, a hulking monster with a girl's name who greets his new schoolmate by painfully sinking his fingers into Roy's temples and smashing his face against the school bus window.

But, in an odd way, Roy is indebted to Dana. You see, if Dana hadn't dug his thumbs into Roy's neck and scrunched his face against the glass, he would never have spotted the barefoot running boy – a wiry, blonde-haired runaway without books, backpack or shoes – outpacing the bus in the stifling heat and humidity.

And, if Roy had not spotted the curious, mysterious running boy (whom he finds out is called Mullet Fingers), he would not have met Beatrice Leep, the running boy's scrappy stepsister and fellow 8th grader who just happens to be the toughest kid at school. Someone who strikes fear in the heart of every boy at Trace, even the bully Dana.

And, if Roy had not met Beatrice Leep, he would not have heard about the new restaurant planned for Coconut Cove – Mother Paula's All-American Pancake House, one of the country's most popular chains. Had he not known about the new eatery about to break ground under the watchful eye of the company's overambitious P.R. executive, Chuck Muckle, he would not have unearthed a disturbing threat to a local population of endangered owls, whose burrows happen to be right on the construction site where the malicious Muckle and his foreman, the dimwitted Curly Branitt, are racing against the clock to erect their new franchise.

And, if Roy had not tried to protect his new environment, he would never have experienced the thrill of a lifetime, one that brings him into contact with potty-trained alligators, the nest of burrowing owls, a group of poisonous cottonmouth snakes with strangely sparkling tails and a host of quirky human characters, including corrupt politicians, the beleaguered construction foreman, Mother Paula herself and Officer David Delinko, the diligent but clueless local beat cop whose investigation into some mysterious, extraordinary circumstances at the construction site may just earn him the detective stripes he so urgently wants.

Roy's Floridian adventure is turning out to be quite a 'hoot'!

New Line Cinema and Walden Media present *Hoot*, the motion picture adaptation of Carl Hiaasen's Newbery Honor family bestseller. The film is a Kennedy/Marshall Production and co-venture between Walden Media (*Holes*, *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Because of Winn-Dixie*) and New Line Cinema.

Hoot marks the big screen directorial debut of Wil Shriner, a veteran TV host ("The Wil Shriner Show"), director ("Frasier," "Becker," "Everybody Loves Raymond"), actor (*Peggy Sue Got Married*) and comedian, who also adapted the screenplay from Hiaasen's 2002 novel. Frank Marshall (*The Bourne Supremacy*, *Seabiscuit*, *The Sixth Sense*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*) produces along with singer/songwriter/author Jimmy Buffett, who marks his debut as a movie producer and provides five songs for the film. The executive producers are Toby Emmerich, Kevin Reidy and Gregg Taylor. The co-producers are Wil Shriner, Carl Hiaasen, Mark Kaufman and Michael Disco.

Logan Lerman (WB's "Jack & Bobby," *The Patriot*, *The Butterfly Effect*) stars as Roy, the Montana transplant whose valiant efforts to protect the environment endear him to his new Florida schoolmates. Luke Wilson (*The Royal Tenenbaums*, *Old School*, *My Dog Skip*) also toplines the cast as Officer David Delinko, the earnest, unenlightened local Coconut Cove cop investigating some mysterious incidents at the proposed construction site.

Hoot also boasts a cast of some of Hollywood's upcoming young talent, including Brie Larson (*13 Going on 30*, TV's "Raising Dad") as Beatrice, the scrappy fellow 8th grader who embraces Roy's assistance in saving the owls; Cody Linley (*My Dog Skip*, *Rebound*, *Cheaper by the Dozen*) as Mullet Fingers, the vagrant runaway who spearheads the kids' attempt to foil the restaurant's groundbreaking plans; Eric Phillips, in his very first motion picture, as Dana Matherson, the towering school bully who painfully antagonizes Roy upon

his arrival at Trace Middle School; and Dean Collins (WB's "Jack & Bobby," Fox's "The War at Home") as the goofy screwball Garrett, Roy's first friend at Trace.

The film's adult co-stars, a veteran cast of familiar faces, includes Kiersten Warren (*13 Going on 30*, *Intolerable Cruelty*) and Neil Flynn (NBC's "Scrubs," *Mean Girls*) as Roy's tolerant, yet exasperated, parents; Tim Blake Nelson (*Holes*, *Minority Report*, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*) as the besieged, outwitted construction foreman, Curly Branitt; Clark Gregg (*State and Main*, *One Hour Photo*) as the sinister pancake house executive, Chuck Muckle; Jessica Cauffiel (*Legally Blonde*, *D.E.B.S.*, *White Chicks*) as the vivacious actress who dons wig and aged makeup to portray the eatery's matronly namesake, Mother Paula; and longtime Hollywood star Robert Wagner (*Austin Powers* trilogy, TV's "Hart to Hart"), who embodies Coconut Cove's slick municipal leader, Mayor Grandy.

Shriner has assembled a talented team of veteran craftsmen behind the camera, including two-time Oscar-nominated cinematographer Michael Chapman (*Taxi Driver*, *Raging Bull*, *The Fugitive*), production designer Stephen J. Lineweaver (*Jerry Maguire*, *Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls*), costume designer Christopher Lawrence (*Showtime*, *S.W.A.T*) and film editor Alan Edward Bell (*The Story of Us*, *Alex & Emma*). Susan Humphrey, of Florida's Birds & Animals wildlife sanctuary (the *Harry Potter* series), oversaw the training of the various creatures (including a trio of burrowing owls) used before the cameras.

Hoot, which filmed almost entirely on location in the Sunshine State, with additional photography in Montana and Los Angeles, began principal photography on July 6th, 2005 and wrapped production on September 2nd, 2005. The film's principal locations included Ft. Lauderdale on Florida's Atlantic coast and the Gulf Coast hamlet of Boca Grande on Gasparilla island.

New Line Cinema will release *Hoot* (rated PG by the M.P.A.A. for "Mild bullying and brief language") in theaters nationwide on May 5th, 2006.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

AN AWARD WINNING BOOK'S JOURNEY TO THE BIG SCREEN

Author Carl Hiaasen's 2002 book Hoot was his first for young readers after delighting grown-up audiences over the last two decades with such satiric, salty, adult-flavored bestsellers as Strip Tease, Stormy Weather, Skinny Dip and seven others novels dating back to his 1986 debut, Tourist Season. The recipient of a prestigious 2003 Newbery Honor, Hoot has more than one million copies in print and spent well over a year on the New York Times Children's Bestseller list.

Hiaasen, the long-admired Miami Herald columnist, says he wrote Hoot "because it was something I'd never done before. I really wanted to write something that I could give to my nephew, nieces, stepson and young son without worrying about the salty language or adult situations. They all wanted to read the grownup novels, but I didn't think they were ready yet because of those adult situations."

Never dreaming he would write for such a young audience, Hiaasen adds, "I talked with my agent about such an idea. I never dreamed that anyone would publish a book that I would write for a younger crowd. But, I thought, 'wouldn't it be nice to have a book that (might) have the same attitude, the same spin, the same view and the same affection of Florida that my other books had but would actually be for kids? To tell a story that kids could dig.'"

While environmental themes of his beloved homestate prevail in every book he pens ("the trigger or the fuse, if you will, to everything I've written about and tried to do in journalism," says Hiaasen), the issue of the owls for Hiaasen "was a real story, a page from my own childhood. Where I grew up in West Broward, we had nests of burrowing owls right in our own neighborhood."

"After the novel was finished, my mom found an old album, a photo album," the author recalls. "I had taken this little Kodak Instamatic and gone out for a school project to photograph one of the last places where these burrowing owls nested near where I grew up. In the album, you see these tiny, little dots, these little owls standing at their burrows. I could drive you to that site now and it would be under about 25 tons of concrete. These developers came in and put up strip malls, just bulldozed all these little birds and their nests. Even at a very young age, I had a certain amount of anger, frustration and sadness in seeing this place that I loved so much disappear."

“It was something I only intended to do one time,” admits Hiaasen, who has since written a second novel for youngsters called Flush, published just as filming on *Hoot* wrapped. “After Hoot came out, it achieved a totally unforeseen popularity. It was a real eye-opener. I've gotten hundreds and hundreds of letters from children who read this book. They tune right away into the message and the characters, get right to the heart of what the book is about. They understood where I was coming from. There must be hope for the world because they got it.”

Hollywood didn't, according to the author, who has had only one other novel adapted onto the big screen (director Andrew Bergman's 1996 film *Striptease*, based on Hiaasen's 1994 bestseller, which starred Demi Moore and Burt Reynolds) and says about Hoot, “they shopped it around Hollywood and nobody seemed to be that interested.”

Surprisingly, most of Hiaasen's other books *have* been optioned (but remain unproduced) for the motion picture screen, including his most recent tome, Skinny Dip, and the 1986 title, Tourist Season, “which is the first novel I did, this very seditious and naughty little novel. The first time Jimmy Buffett ever called me was about optioning those movie rights. He loved the book, but the rights had already been taken. We still became friends and have stayed in touch all these years. He knew about Hoot and thought it would make a great movie.”

In addition to his legacy as one of the country's most popular, prolific and successful singer/songwriters, the Grammy-nominated Buffett is also a best-selling author and novelist in his own right. His three #1 best sellers (Tales From Margaritaville, Where Is Joe Merchant? and A Pirate Looks At Fifty) make him one of only six authors in the history of the New York Times bestseller list to have reached #1 on both their fiction and nonfiction lists.

“Carl is an old friend of mine,” echoes Buffett, another longtime Floridian. “When I heard that he had a new children's book, I bought it for my daughter. She was the catalyst in this whole thing. She's an incessant reader and said this was a really good book and that it'd make a great movie. After she finished it, I read it. I agreed that it would make a wonderful family movie, because it tells a story about kids outsmarting grownups while teaching them a valuable lesson about the environment.”

“The message of this movie is not only that are kids smarter than adults, but it's our world that they're going to inherit, and it's great to see activism at that early age,” Buffett continues. “Roy comes to Florida as a stranger from Montana and gets involved. And that's one of the

things that I loved about the story. So, in addition to its entertainment value, you hope that kids come away with a little bit more thought of how we affect animals, their environments, and their very existence. To do that in a kid's book I thought was pretty unique.”

Keen to produce his very first motion picture, Buffett remarks that “I’m always looking for something that can be entertaining for adults who like to take their children to movies. As a father myself, I’m always learning something new from my kids every day. I’m a grownup who still possesses the heart of a child or a schoolboy. When I read this, I thought this was something unique because Carl’s writing can be enjoyed by adults as well as kids. I was an old Rocky and Bullwinkle fan. Also Beanie And Cecil. Cartoons that had a little bit of satire that were written by adults for adults, but were also funny for kids. I’m also an old Travis McGee and Elmore Leonard fan, guys like Carl who write about the unusual culture of South Florida. As a writer myself, I tried to emulate those guys in some ways. It all made for a good story. That's what I saw in Hoot.”

“I’ve written scores for movies, even been in some myself, but I have never produced one before,” Buffett says about his interest in optioning Hiaasen’s book for his first motion picture production. “I’d never produced a movie before, but, hell, I run a rock-and-roll band, I thought producing can’t be that hard! The only other thing I’ve produced was a musical down in Florida of a Herman Wouk story. I loved the process, it was intriguing to me. All of a sudden, I met Wil Shriner up in San Francisco and we started talking. I knew he was a standup comic, and a friend of mine said he also directed episodes of ‘Frasier’ and ‘Becker’. So, I sent Wil a copy of the book asking him how to go about adapting it into a movie. Wil was so unique to this project because you had somebody that understood Florida, where he’s from.”

“If you know anything about Jimmy, you know that when he decides to do something, it gets done!,” Carl Hiaasen exclaims. “I called my agent and said Jimmy was interested. He’s never done a movie, but he knows everybody all over the place. There are Parrotheads everywhere. And a lot of them happen to run Hollywood studios, so why not see what he can do. The next thing I knew, there’s a jet landing in Marathon, Florida, and there’s Wil Shriner, whom I’d never met. But I knew his work from talk shows and standup. Then Wil and I flew seven minutes to Key West. Jimmy’s out fishing, he comes in, meets us for lunch and we start talking. Will and Jimmy both understood the book and they were very concerned about the heart and the spirit of this little story.”

“Jimmy is the whole reason this movie got made,” director Wil Shriner concurs. “Jimmy bought the rights to the book from Carl – they’re fishing buddies. Jimmy and I are also

friends...I've known Jimmy for a few years. We were talking one day, and he asked me to read this book Hoot. I'd read some of Carl's other work, and thought this was a cute book. I told Jimmy this would make a great little movie. And he goes, 'funny, that's what I was thinking. How do we do that?'. I told him in order to make the movie, he needed a great script that he could shop around. This was a sweet little coming-of-age story about a boy who gets caught up in the intrigue of these endangered owls. It's a wonderful little film about kids becoming friends. It's also a caper film, a mystery film and a buddy comedy all in one."

"So, we went to the Keys, Jimmy and I, to sit down with Carl," the director continues about their budding partnership with author Hiaasen. "But, Carl was busy writing books and Jimmy was touring. I, however, was at the end of my sitcom season. So, of the three, I had some time off. I told them I'd write it if I could direct it. In adapting a book, there's the book and the reader's interpretation of the book. So, as I adapted the screenplay, I tried to stay true to the book." Adds Buffett, "Wil is a great comedic writer, so he initially wrote it. Without tooting our own horns, you got two pretty successful novelists here that can also write. So, we collectively put the script together."

With draft in hand, the Florida trifecta of Hiaasen (a Sunshine State native), Buffett (an adopted Floridian) and Shriner (who spent his adolescent years in Ft. Lauderdale) approached four-time Academy Award-nominated filmmaker Frank Marshall, a longtime acquaintance of the singer (who had a small role in his Oscar-nominated *Seabiscuit*) to help get the film made.

"Frank and I have been friends for a long time," Buffett offers. "Let's face it – if you're going to produce for the first time, it's not bad having Frank Marshall as your producing partner. I initially bought the rights to the book just as an investment and basically financed its development from the beginning just to see what would eventually happen. And my first thought when I got the rights was to call Frank and let him know I bought the rights to this Carl Hiaasen book. Ask him what he thinks. What better sounding board would you go to?"

"We approached Frank when we had a script and he said it was really good," Buffett recalls. "He gave me some notes on it. We went back and redid the script based on the notes. Frank called me from Berlin, where he was producing *The Bourne Supremacy*, and said, 'man, you guys nailed this thing'. Frank then found people that were interested in doing the movie."

Marshall, who had earlier investigated optioning another of Hiaasen's novels, Stormy Weather, liked the idea behind *Hoot* because "in addition to the social issues that Carl

brought to his story, I liked the idea that kids are empowered to protect the environment and battle the establishment in a positive way.”

“I think it's very important that kids are aware of the environment and what's going on and what people call development or progress and how it can be so harmful to the things around us,” Marshall continues. “There are a lot of great messages in this book and film and certainly the storyline is interesting enough to carry them along in a really fun way. What I also love about Carl's writing is its edge and the satire to it while bringing up issues that I think young people should be aware of today. It's a story of growing up, taking charge of yourself and learning about the environment.”

Once Marshall had a workable script, he set out to find the right partner to bring Buffett's first movie production to the screen. “I remembered seeing the movie *Holes*, which Walden Media produced, and felt this film had very similar elements that seemed to fit their creative and educational mandates,” says Marshall. “So, Walden was a perfect match for this.”

“We had tracked *Hoot* because it became a best-selling book and a phenomenon the likes of which we hadn't seen since *Holes*” says Walden Media's CEO Cary Granat, about a project he hopes will mirror or exceed that of director Andrew Davis' 2003 box office hit (one of Walden's first motion picture productions), which was adapted from Louis Sachar's popular novel for young readers.

Adds co-star Tim Blake Nelson, who appears in both *Holes* and *Hoot*, “what Walden does so well is make films about young characters meant to be family friendly films with an adult esthetic that's not condescending.”

Founded by Granat, former President of Miramax Films' Dimension label, and education reformer Michael Flaherty, Walden Media, a subsidiary of the Anschutz Film Group, specializes in entertainment that sparks the imagination and curiosity of kids and provides parents and teachers with materials to continue the learning process.

“Walden was a company that I had founded after I left Dimension with the express purpose of creating a family label that made films which also have a strong learning element at their core. The heart and soul of *Hoot* is preserving a state both of mind and place that is fast eroding in this country and in the world. A state of natural beauty, of ecology, that no longer exists in our world,” Granat elaborates about the story's theme.

“In the movie, there are no Blackberries or iPods,” Granat points out. “Kids are not text messaging each other. It’s about being proactive at any age, about how young kids can change a day, a town, a society, by taking action. I want kids, families, parents and grandparents, teachers and after-school group leaders to all come away from watching this film and ask ‘what can we do?’ That’s part of the Walden mission, to show them what they can do.”

“The involvement of Walden was a bonus for us,” says Carl Hiaasen. “Walden had done *Holes*, which was a terrific book. In fact, one of the books I read before I even started writing *Hoot* to see what good young adult fiction was out there. It was a great book, and Walden did a great job with the movie. They did a lot of educational stuff that dovetailed not only into the book and into the movie, but into the whole subject matter. To me, that was a great bonus because they have such experience dealing with this particular audience of kids.”

“*Hoot*, much to my surprise, is required reading in middle schools now,” the author notes. “This connection with Walden is something the teachers and the kids are excited about. They’ve studied the owls, they’ve studied the south Florida habitat. They’ve studied about what’s happening in the Everglades. It’s a nice thing when you can put out a movie where kids can actually learn something from it.”

“The film will bring awareness,” says Wil Shriner about the plight of Florida’s indigenous burrowing owl. “We’ve been involved with the National Wildlife Foundation and the Save The Manatee Foundation. That’s the whole message of the film – that these birds are nesting here and should be protected while they’re nesting. If the film brings awareness that people can stand up and fight to save something that maybe cannot save itself, then that’s a good message.”

“One of the main messages of this movie is that a person of any age can make a difference in something,” offers 14-year-old actor Logan Lerman about the film’s ecological storyline piloted by his lead character of Roy Eberhardt. “I think it’s going to be amazing for people to actually learn more about these endangered owls, which is a cause that you can help with. This movie teaches you that you can be any age and do that. That’s what I found really great about this movie, and I think kids will learn from that.”

“*Hoot* is about these three kids who come from completely different backgrounds and yet come together to save an endangered species of owl,” says teen actress Brie Larson, playing the film’s female lead, about the movie’s theme. “There’s an overall message about the environment, obviously, in this. I live up in the desert. I’ve lived there for five years, and

there's all these beautiful mountains that I've watched just slowly become houses. It makes me kind of sad and it makes me think how cool it would be if three kids could change that. If more people did take a stand, we might be able to do something about that.”

Actor Cody Linley, the third key young cast member who plays the role of the mysterious vagrant, Mullet Fingers, interprets the film’s message by saying, “this restaurant comes along and wants to build a pancake house where the owls are. Their habitats are all going to be cleared out, bulldozed. So Roy, Beatrice and I try to do what we can to save the owls' habitat and make the pancake house go somewhere else. In my view the message of *Hoot* is about helping others out. Roy helps out Mullet Fingers. In turn, we help out the owls, help them keep their home. Roy helps me open up as a person. I help Roy be more brave. Beatrice helps me survive by giving me food and clothes. So it's like if you help one another, you'll get along so much better. Don't be afraid to be a friend.”

CASTING THE KIDS

“I set out to create characters that resonated in some way with their own experience but also who were smart...smarter than the grownups in the book,” Carl Hiaasen adds. “Often in real life, your kids end up smarter than you. This was going to be a story where the kids figure it out before the grownups and the grownups don’t rush in and save the day at the end. It’s the kids who figure it out and save the day.”

“These are kids who came out of my own childhood,” Hiaasen explains about the impetus for the story’s characters. “As a kid, I sort of put myself in Roy's position because this story is a chapter from my childhood. We had burrowing owls all over the place. Then developers came in and bulldozed all these little birds. My friends and I tried in our feeble way to discourage them with minor acts of sabotage that didn't work. I think that experience set in motion everything I've written including the grown-up novels, the newspaper columns and Hoot.

“Roy is the new kid in town,” the author elaborates about the character through whose eyes his story unfolds. “He is a character so many kids can identify with, especially in this day and age, where there's so much movement. People move around. I'd known kids like this who came from somewhere else. I wanted him, as well as the reader, to have an awakening when he comes to Florida, which he does skeptically and against his will. Coming from a very beautiful place, Montana, to discover this new world called Florida. Seeing the Everglades or the 10,000 Islands or the Keys for the very first time. The color of the water and all the different kinds of birds. I thought it would be a nice journey to take the reader on.”

“Roy's life before moving to Florida is kind of sad, because he's always moving around from place to place,” actor Logan Lerman notes about his character of Roy. “He can't stay in one place long enough to get to know the town, or get to know the people. He's gone to like eight different schools in a couple of years. He finally moves to Florida, and finds a place that he likes. He meets this runaway, Mullet Fingers, who is involved in this fight to save these owls. He tells Roy about it, and Roy wants to get involved. And there is this guy named Curly who runs the construction site, and Mullet Fingers and Roy sabotage it, trying to get Curly to stop doing whatever's he doing. It's pretty cool.”

“Mullet Fingers is a kid who doesn't fit in anywhere,” Hiaasen jumps in about the teenage runaway who initiates the fight to save the owls. “I get so much mail about that character because sometimes kids feel they also don't belong. It's vital for any kind of writing that the readers identify and plug into the characters. I always knew that they would like Mullet Fingers because he is an outsider but also a survivor. He lives alone out in the woods and he gets along just fine. It wasn't a surprise that, like me, they were going to be fond of that character.”

Seasoned sixteen-year-old actor Cody Linley was also fond of his character, saying “I saw Mullet Fingers as a wild child who's also a caring person. He's hard to explain because he's a different character than anybody else. He's not like a regular kid. His best friends are the owls and the animals that he lives with. He doesn't talk to anybody else except for Beatrice, his step-sister, because he's afraid of getting hurt because his mom hates him, she even sent him away to several military schools. So he has trouble trusting people. Then Roy comes along and once he gets to know him, he starts to trust him. And it's cool that he gets to have that friendship with Roy because Roy cares about him. He's a wild, cool kid who loves nature and runs around barefoot. I thought that was one of the coolest things about him.”

“His stepsister helps him out, but he's out there by himself,” Hiaasen augments about Beatrice, the only other character Mullet Fingers trusts. “Beatrice at first is sort of the class bully, but then you understand she's just trying to find her own way. She's got a good heart but she's a little on the tough side. And I remember riding a school bus as a kid with a couple of girls who were scary, they were so tough. I lived in daily fear of being beaten up by this one girl in particular. For a boy, you know, that's not too cool.”

“Beatrice Leep, whose nickname is Beatrice the Bear, is basically supposed to be the big tough girl that everyone's afraid of,” 16-year-old actress-singer Brie Larson states about her

character. "You're supposed to think that she's this big tough girl who's thrown kids in monkey pits and beats guys up. I think that deep down she hasn't really done any of those things, it's just hype. And Beatrice and Mullet Fingers are stepbrother and stepsister. She is definitely the motherly figure to Mullet Fingers because he doesn't have anybody. She's the only one he speaks to. She doesn't want anybody to find out about him because then he might get shipped off to juvie or another boarding school. She's just trying to be a good sister."

"I wanted to portray Beatrice a little differently than in the book," says Larson, an avid reader who admits to reading a book a week, and first perused Hoot at age twelve when her sister received a copy from their book club. "I think the book makes her seem outwardly tough and almost catty. I didn't really want her to be like that. Everything she says is forceful, but it has meaning and that's why you listen to her. I'm also not an athletic person, but I wanted to make sure that I was in shape. I think it's important that I looked athletic because she's supposed to be a soccer jock."

In choosing these three teen talents, director Wil Shriner "held casting calls throughout the country. Los Angeles. Chicago. Atlanta. Texas. We looked for kids with previous acting experience, like Logan, who nailed his audition, and was head-and-shoulders above all the other candidates for Roy. Logan was working on 'Jack and Bobby' at the time. I also knew his work from *The Butterfly Effect*. He knew the part, knew the character and we just went 'wow that's the kid!'"

"I had read the book before I got the part of Roy," Lerman offers. "I thought it was a really good book, really entertaining. When I read it, I thought this would make a really cool movie. I thought of Roy as just this good kid, a resilient kid, who just fights for what's right. He was a really great character to play."

"I knew Brie from working with her on the WB sitcom, 'Raising Dad', and thought of her when I was writing the script," Shriner continues about actress Larson, who embodied the role of Beatrice. "She was Bob Saget's 12-year-old daughter on that sitcom. She's just terrific, a great actress. So when this movie came about, I thought Brie was about the right age for Beatrice. She's also a singer and was touring with Jesse McCartney and was so busy. We could never get her in, so we tested two other girls that we liked, but I always thought it'd be great if we could get Brie on this."

"I was so excited when I found out they were making it into a movie," Larson states about winning the role and reteaming with Shriner. "I was actually on tour with Jesse McCartney

when I found out about it. I was really excited because I've known Wil for a really long time. He's one of my favorite directors, so of course I auditioned for him, although I really didn't think I was going to get the job. It still astounds me. I love Wil and I'd do anything for him. He is like my surrogate father. I loved what he did with this movie."

"We saw Cody, who plays Mullet Fingers, early on and liked him a lot," the director goes on about Texas native Linley. "He had the perfect look with a solid resume. Before we cast him, we were looking for more of a nature boy type character, a kid who sort of lived in the wild."

"We also felt that the character of Mullet Fingers might be the role where we could cast an unknown," Shriner adds. "Maybe we'd discover somebody, and we had the luxury to keep looking until shooting started. In the end, we chose Cody, a Texan with a resume of movie experience, as Mullet Fingers, and cast an unknown for the bully Dana."

"We liked Eric the minute we saw him on tape," Shriner enthuses about the 6'2", 275 lb. Chicagoan Eric Phillips, who embodies the role of the hulking school bully. "Eric was from Chicago and had done some work with Second City, but had never acted professionally before. He was terrific from the moment I saw him on tape. He did a great job. He plays the bully without being hateful. He's a funny bully. Even though he's not a very likable character in the movie, he makes him likable. And that's what I liked about Eric."

"I think what makes Dana so special is that name," says 17-year-old Phillips, one of the most popular cast members on the set. "It's a girl's name. Whereas other bullies might be a bully because that's the way they are, I think Dana's a bully because he's defending himself. If he picks on people, nobody's gonna talk about Dana or make fun of him for having a girl's name. You know, who wants to talk about the school bully? He's definitely not really a tough guy."

CASTING THE ADULTS

"The villains you need for fiction are in the papers every day," says Carl Hiaasen, who is well-known for populating his books with a colorful gallery of eclectic, eccentric characters and tough guys. "The luxury of writing a novel is that you can make it turn out the way that you think it should. For once, the bad guys get what they deserve. And that was always the attraction of working on fiction at the same time I was working as a journalist."

While the teenage school bully tortures Roy on his daily bus ride, the story's hero, in turn, torments the true bully of Hiaasen's story – "Chuck Muckle, Vice President for corporate

relations for Mother Paula's Pancakes," co-star Clark Gregg says about the character the author describes in his book as "having a name more suitable for a circus clown."

"Muckle, hardly a jolly fellow, is trying to get his 100th pancake house built," the veteran actor Gregg (a favorite of writer-director David Mamet) explains. "Unfortunately, he's trying to get it built on land that is inhabited by some endangered burrowing owls. Usually, Muckle just comes in for the ribbon cutting ceremony, or with the silver shovel on the first day of construction. But, there's a lot of problems with vandalism on this site. People sabotaging the bulldozer, stuff like that. So, he has to go down a little earlier and get things going in person, because this guy, the site foreman, Curly, is not able to handle it."

The filmmakers chose another seasoned performer, acclaimed actor Tim Blake Nelson, to portray Leroy 'Curly' Branitt, a character Hiaasen depicts in the novel as "the bald man under too much pressure. His eyelids twitched from lack of sleep and all day long he perspired like an Arkansas hog. Supervising a construction job was a large responsibility. And every morning brought new obstacles and headaches. Thanks to the mystery intruders, the pancake house project already was two weeks behind schedule."

"Curly is a man who's truly under siege," says Nelson, who donned a close-cropped coif for the part. "That's what interested me in the role. He's caught between the kids who are destroying his construction site and his boss, Muckle, the regional manager for Mother Paula's, who's berating him daily on the phone because of delays in construction. So he's caught in the middle. And it interested me to play a character under such duress."

"I think that Curly has chosen to compromise so that he can keep his job," Nelson elaborates about his character. "He's not idealistic, he's not heroic. He knows the owls are there, but he's more interested in keeping his job. He does, however, have a conscience and so in the end when he realizes that others have figured out that the owls are there, he doesn't side with Muckle in trying to cover them up. He's decent enough to be on the right side at the end."

Nelson also liked the role and the project because "what distinguishes this movie and what also distinguished *Holes* was a real adult aesthetic. There's nothing saccharine about this film. There's real narrative and character complexity. There's nothing simplistic or condescending about the story. It is three-dimensional in its portrayal of the character relationships. I really appreciated being involved in a family film that actually talks up to the children, not down to them."

“The story itself is very simple – a group of kids is trying to protect owls nesting in their natural habitat which is being endangered by a construction site to put in a pancake house in a wilderness that should be protected,” he continues. “The reason the story is complex is because all the inner relationships, particularly among the younger characters, are very real for middle schoolers.”

As for his own relationship in the story, Nelson adds, “Curly, who is a very comical character in the story, is quite obsessed with the actress who plays Mother Paula. And over the course of the shoot, particularly given the fact that Jessica Cauffiel was playing Mother Paula, we discussed that maybe it'd be nice if Curly ended up with her at the end.”

Actress Cauffiel (the *Legally Blonde* movies) calls the part of Mother Paula (and Kimberly, the actress who dons the gray wig and aged makeup to play the eatery's namesake in the film) “a wonderful role, because I think it's every actress' dream to play two characters in one film. And that's what appealed to me with the role – the opportunity to play a vacuous or prima donna-esque, quirky, vivacious actress who's somewhat unconscious, just ambitious and unfocused, in contrast to the wise, kind, compassionate, knowledgeable old soul.”

“Kimberly goes through a journey in playing the character of Mother Paula,” Cauffiel states about her dual roles. “She's initially somewhat unconscious of her behavior and just an actress with ambitions and not much direction. And then as she moves into the character of Mother Paula, she learns about these owls from the children, which changes something in her. She also meets this kind and gentle soul, Curly, who helps uplift her with his genuine honest nature and his giving heart. It changes her life, and that actually allows her to step into her power and finally stand up to Muckle, and help save the owls...and the environment.”

“What I loved about this story and the true magic I found in it was the way these children come together and utilize their imagination, their energy, their innocence and their passion to be stewards of the earth,” Cauffiel enthuses. “They connect with these animals and ultimately bring healing to these animals and to the planet. And, we, as an audience, reconnect with our childhood and the magic of that youth.”

Cauffiel (who in her audition transformed herself “to this little old lady with an umbrella as a cane, my own little rimless spectacles and this doily around my shoulders that I bought at a garage sale years ago”) liked the role because “I like to play really crazy, big characters. But she couldn't be so cartoony that we couldn't relate to her. They wanted to put prosthetics on me because we really wanted to make Mother Paula look old. But Wil said this is Kimberly,

an actress, who puts this makeup on herself. She's not getting paid any money. There's no professional makeup artist. She's got her little theater makeup kit, and she's doing her version of an old woman. And I loved every minute of it.”

The 30-year-old beauty (playing almost three times her age in the role) also loved every minute of the scenes she shared with the ageless Robert Wagner, looking decades younger than his seventy-five years, who plays the small but pivotal role of Coconut Cove’s grand Mayor Grandy.

The actress calls Wagner “a living legend. You've grown up with that face and that voice. And I thought if my mother or my grandmother could see this, what they would give to be in my shoes! What an honor to share the screen with a legend. It was really humbling as well as an educational experience. He's timeless and charming and has that old school, rat pack-esque romantic splendor and grace about him.”

“The mayor is a very interesting character in the fact that he has his constituency,” says Wagner, who is known to younger audiences for his role as Number Two in the *Austin Powers* trilogy. “He starts off as a dedicated man politically, but when this all comes up and the owls do surface, he decides to dedicate this place as an owl sanctuary, which is a big switch for the mayor.”

A longtime fan and friend of producer Jimmy Buffett (whom he met through his wife, actress Jill St. John), Wagner joined the project at Buffett’s insistence, saying “Jimmy is a friend and he told me about his project maybe a year and a half ago. Said he'd love to have me in the movie.”

“I also know Wil Shriner and am also a gigantic fan of Carl Hiaasen, who’s able to mix reality with humor in his books with characters that are very well defined,” Wagner continues. “I also think they did a great job of casting. I think these kids are marvelous. And Luke Wilson is a wonderful actor who contributes so much. It’s a film you can bring your family to and have a really good time and get a good feeling out of it.”

Actor Luke Wilson, who is well-known for such films as *The Royal Tenenbaums*, *Old School* and *The Family Stone*, rounds out the cast as Officer David Delinko, the diligent but clueless local beat cop whose investigation into some mysterious, extraordinary circumstances at the construction site could earn him the detective stripes he desires.

“Delinko is kind-hearted but bumbling,” says Wilson. “He tries very hard, but the harder the tries, the things go wrong for him, and he winds up getting under the gun with his police supervisor.”

Wilson signed up for the film after learning who was involved behind the camera. “I hadn’t read Hoot previously, but I knew about Carl Hiaasen and his other works. And of course I was familiar with producers Frank Marshall and Jimmy Buffett. I’ve always been a fan of Jimmy’s music. And after I got a chance to talk with Wil Shriner, it wasn’t a hard decision for me at all. I’m really happy to be a part of it.”

“I found myself liking Delinko,” author Carl Hiaasen relates about another character that provides many of the story’s comic moments. “He comes across as the bumbling police officer in the beginning, but he then turns into a good guy. And I found myself sympathizing with him, having known a lot of very well-meaning cops who were sort of bucking the system and whose captains or sergeants or lieutenants were constantly putting them down. Guys who knew they were right about a case when nobody would listen to them.”

“So, I found myself sort of rooting for him throughout the book,” he continues. “It’s funny how characters whom you don’t initially invest a lot of time in when you create them all of a sudden, when they come to life on the page, you like a lot more and you leave them on your own little stage a little bit more. And I found that true in the movie as well. It was quite a thrill for me to see someone like Luke Wilson playing Delinko.”

“I’m one of those writers that when I write a novel I don’t think of actors...you know, who would I cast,” Hiaasen adds. “I don’t do any kind of casting because they’re really my creation, they’re not actors. But then, when you see someone in the role that’s perfect...it’s a great feeling. That’s Luke playing Delinko.”

The author could never have imagined that producer Buffett would also join the cast “at my insistence,” Wil Shriner intercedes. “Jimmy was in *Seabiscuit* and a number of other movies. I knew he was going to contribute some songs, and I said ‘why don’t you be in it?’ We needed to figure out his tour schedule so he could fit it in. I made the teacher a marine studies teacher. Kind of an old surfer...tailored for Jimmy.”

“Mr. Ryan was always in a constant process of evolution,” Buffett observes about his cameo role. “Wil gave me a little bit of liberty to write the character, which was my biggest part in a movie so far. I worked two days and had three lines. He’s a biology teacher, a Florida guy who lived on the north shore of Hawaii. Now, he’s back teaching. He’s done the whole thing,

seen the world, and wound up back at home. Not a big stretch for me. I played him as a guy who tries to equate everything in the real world of school and marine science to an excuse to go surfing. The job was to make Mr. Ryan a teacher you'd like to have."

A TRUE FLORIDA FILM

"I always felt *Hoot* had to be shot in Florida," Wil Shriner asserts. "My main desire in telling this story was to capture the charm of old Florida, the way I remembered it growing up in Ft. Lauderdale. It was great to have so many charming and unique locations for the backdrop of our story."

"The important thing about *Hoot* is that the environment of Florida actually becomes a character in the movie," producer Frank Marshall offers. "So, it was very important that we shoot in Florida and, certainly, that we shoot in an area that is like what is described in the book." Adds Jimmy Buffett, "we wanted to stay true to the Carl Hiaasen vision of Florida."

"They understood Florida, how weird and peculiar it can be," Hiaasen states. "But, also, how wonderful and photogenic and just spectacularly beautiful the place is. Why it's worth fighting for. This is a movie about fighting for a place that you really, really care about. It couldn't have been filmed anywhere else."

The filmmakers secured veteran movie location manager (and native Floridian) Sam Tedesco (*There's Something About Mary*, *Any Given Sunday*, the "Miami Vice" TV series) to find the appropriate sites in which Wil Shriner and company could create the fictional town of Coconut Cove.

Coincidentally, Tedesco, who has served in a similar capacity on over two dozen projects during the past two decades, also supervised location duties on the only other movie adapted from a Carl Hiaasen novel -- 1996's *Strip Tease*, which also filmed on location in his own backyard, Ft. Lauderdale, and was, according to Tedesco, the last major Hollywood production to shoot entirely in the Ft. Lauderdale area.

"Wil Shriner and I grew up in Fort Lauderdale, in the same general time frame, so we had a sort of shorthand with each other about all of Florida," Tedesco offers about his collaboration with the director. "We found out how much we had in common growing up and the places we both knew in town. We also scouted the entire state of Florida looking for a romanticized version of what the Florida Keys might have looked like in the '40s or '50s, but clearly doesn't exist today."

“These days, when people think of Florida, they think of South Beach,” Tedesco points out about the Sunshine State’s contemporary image. “There are so many new high rises, night clubs and hip hotels going up. That’s the Florida that most people think of now. Especially film people. When they come to Florida to make a movie, that’s the look they’re generally after.”

“But Wil and I, having grown up there, knew that there was a Florida that’s disappearing fast,” he adds. “The mom-and-pop motels, the key lime pie restaurants, the shell shops, that kind of thing. And it’s just disappearing very quickly. The exciting part and the fun part about doing this movie was getting to do a post card of old Florida and make it the look of the entire movie while it’s still around.”

“People do think of Florida as South Beach and ‘Miami Vice,’” Wil Shriner echoes. “But, this movie is about the sleepy, little Florida we grew up in. The grand old Florida. For Carl particularly, it was all about seeing the Florida that is getting developed and developed. I tried to capture all these old little pieces of Florida that I think really tell the story.”

“Right now, I think it’s roughly 450 acres a day that are disappearing in Florida,” Hiaasen states. “Undeveloped acres that are disappearing to development every day. Roads, malls, condos, apartment buildings. 450 acres a day. That’s astonishing! There are many reasons to fight battles, not the least of them being to try and save a place so that your own kids and grandkids can maybe experience one tenth of what you experienced growing up. We would like some of this to be around for them. The great heartache would be to show them this movie and say ‘see what it used to look like,’ instead of being able to put them in a boat or take them up in a plane to see it for themselves. That’s our secret mission in all of this.”

Because the author’s fictional Coconut Cove is a Gulf Coast town, Sam Tedesco began his search in Tampa on Florida’s West Coast.. While 80% of the production was ultimately mounted in Tedesco’s hometown of Ft. Lauderdale, the seasoned movie scout knew he had to bring Shriner and company to a quaint, idyllic island on the Gulf Coast halfway between Ft. Myers and Sarasota – Gasparilla Island (discovered by pirate Jose Gaspar in 1890), on which the tiny town of Boca Grande resides.

“I had worked with the same producer, Kevin Reidy, on the Denzel Washington movie *Out of Time* in Boca Grande two years ago,” Tedesco recalls. “As soon as Kevin and I began thinking of places where we could create Coconut Cove, we immediately thought of Boca

Grande. There were three key locations on this project, and the small town atmosphere we needed for Coconut Cove was Boca Grande, which has that romantic, bygone feel of old Florida. In fact, it's a picture postcard of old Florida, even though Boca Grande has been discovered by relatively affluent people. As they've moved in, it, too, has started to change character." Even with the recent changes, "the beauty of Boca Grande created a timeless illusion for our fictional town," Wil Shriner confirms.

"I came over to Boca Grande to have lunch with my sister," producer Jimmy Buffett relates. "And I thought that this is kind of what a Coconut Cove is. It's modern Florida, yet there's Whitten's Boatyard and those beautiful vistas with that sun setting in the west that you don't get on the east coast. If you fly above there at 800 feet and you see that turquoise water in the Keys, that's a pastel vision unique to Florida's Gulf Coast. It's a postcard version of Florida. That's what we wanted to do – apply that vision to this great little story while staying true to Carl's vision of Florida."

"Jimmy had gone there to visit his sister," Tedesco chimes in. "Rode around in a golf cart, shot some video, super-imposed images on where he thought different locations would work. That's exactly the same as what we would have done if we had scouted on our own. We knew that Jimmy wanted us to shoot there, and Carl also knew Boca Grande well. It's such a one-of-a-kind location."

The company spent just one week (out of the film's eight-week shoot) in Boca Grande, filming on the Gasparilla Inn's beautiful golf course, Whitten's Boatyard ("it had a production value, a look, you couldn't create," says veteran production designer Stephen Lineweaver), the hamlet's quaint, vintage downtown retail district and a historic landmark called Journey's End, which doubled for Roy's seaside home in the film.

"I hadn't seen Boca Grande since the hurricane," Tedesco relates, referring to Hurricane Charley, the Category 4 storm that destroyed the Gulf Coast resort town in August 2004. "On one of our trips over there, I said to Wil we should try to take a look at Journey's End. I crossed my fingers that the house hadn't been devastated in the hurricane. They only lost a little bit of foliage. Their jaws dropped when they saw the house, because it just screamed old Florida. It's just this classic house on a beautiful location right on the gulf. We walked inside and it was even better. It had this old beach house kind of feel, to the point that the production designer and set dressers didn't do a whole lot to it. It was a delight to shoot."

The story's delightful fictional town also came to life on several diverse locations throughout Broward County on Florida's southern Atlantic Coast, which included the Bonnet House

Museum & Gardens in Ft. Lauderdale, a little-known, 35-acre barrier island preserve a 1/4-mile from the ocean (where Shriner launched filming on July 6th, 2005) which is populated with such wildlife as squirrel monkeys, the occasional manatee and one of the finest orchid collections in the continental U.S.; the Chaminade Madonna Prep School in Hollywood (the community immediately south of Ft. Lauderdale), which doubled for the town's fictional Trace Middle School (where Shriner employed 200 teenage extras for a week of "summer school," so-to-speak); and a municipal parcel of land in the center of town where the filmmakers created the restaurant construction site and the nest of burrowing owls.

"When I read both the book and the script, it said 'vacant lot,' which had to be beautiful enough and have an environmental aspect that would make everyone want to fight to save it," Tedesco emphasizes. "We found one great location, out in Davie, just drop-dead gorgeous with beautiful old oak trees, canopy and plenty of room to work. It had all the elements we wanted, except one – it was under the flight path of the airport."

"So, we went so far as to have a production assistant spend one 24-hour period out there and keep a log book of all the minutes lost per day to jet traffic," he continues. "That basically told us that we needed to find a new location. Incredibly, we found one right across the street from the Ft. Lauderdale police station in the heart of downtown. It was a piece of city-and-county-owned property that is undeveloped, surrounded by townhouses going up. It was just big enough for us to do those sequences which took us nine days."

Another key location for the movie was Mullet Fingers' hideaway, a setting director Wil Shriner altered from book-to-screen. "In the book, Mullet Fingers lived in an ice cream truck," Shriner relates. "I thought, we're shooting in Florida. Instead of an old abandoned ice cream truck in a junkyard, why not an old abandoned boat in a boatyard? We found this great old boat at the Riverbend Marina in Ft. Lauderdale."

"The weather in Florida is hot...we sweated a lot," Shriner claims, musing that the ice cream truck would certainly have been a welcome respite on most days. "It was like 100 degrees everyday! But no one ever complained about the heat." Adds author Hiaasen, when asked if he was sorry he didn't set his novel in Alaska, "we're supposed to be drippy and sweaty."

"We also survived three hurricanes while we were down there," Shriner recalls. "We had Wilma. The first one, Dennis, went around us. When we were in Boca Grande shooting, that one had just gone through. While we were shooting there, there was a tornado coming up the river, which ended up going another way. It almost shut us down."

Hurricane Katrina, whose eyewall landed directly on Ft. Lauderdale as a Category 1 storm on the afternoon of Wednesday, August 24th, 2005, did shut the production down for two days (before hitting New Orleans four days later)!

"I grew up in Florida so, for me, hurricanes are a big problem," Shriner adds. "During our schedule, they destroyed some of what you will see in the movie now, including the trees at The Bonnet House. It's kind of sad. We could end up being the visual memory of all that survives at that beautiful place. But, that's weather in Florida."

"We had a local television weather forecaster, Brian Norcross, who was available to us 24/7," Sam Tedesco states. "We consulted with him a lot, especially after the first three days of shooting, when we had a hurricane (Dennis) that just missed us. In fact, the day we moved from Ft. Lauderdale to Boca Grande, the hurricane was just passing Boca Grande. Thankfully, Dennis took a lot of the precipitation with it. The week after the hurricane passed, which was the week we were in Boca Grande, we had beautiful weather. Filming in the rainy season in Florida, between rain on a day-to-day basis, and the threat of a hurricane, can be challenging."

"I'd never been to Florida, so my entire exposure to Florida was through Carl's books," actor Clark Gregg chimes in, smiling at the memory of his first visit to the Sunshine State. "I was excited to go down there because I didn't know how hot it was going to be. What do I think about Ft. Lauderdale in August? I think they should have done this in January." Adds Shriner, "I had no idea that when I sat down and wrote 'fade in' that I'd be out there sweating my tail off making this movie."

THE BURROWING OWLS

At just nine inches and four ounces, the burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) is one of the smallest species of the owl family. Its habitat is both North and South America (in the U.S., primarily along the southern corridor of states, including most of Florida, Texas and Southern California). Nesting season runs from mid-February to mid-July each year.

Coincidentally, the world's largest population resides in Cape Coral, Florida (near Ft. Myers), where an estimated 2,000 pairs of birds are protected and preserved by the non-profit Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife, a volunteer organization dedicated to "preserving and enhancing the habitat of protected wildlife species and educating the community about its natural resources."

“The burrowing owls of Florida have a high profile because they’re found in people's backyards,” says Brian Mealey, President and Executive Director of the Institute of Wildlife Science in South Florida, who served as a key technical consultant on the film with respect to the owls. “The burrowing owl has a unique story in South Florida – they have benefited from urban development. Before this development, there was not a lot of literature on burrowing owls. The big development occurred in Cape Coral in the Ft. Myers area on the west coast of Florida.”

“A very large population of owls survived in these little lots that were being developed there,” Mealey points out. “Therefore, every empty lot had a burrowing owl. All of a sudden, the lots started disappearing. These empty lots were being built. So, the concerns then were would the owls disappear? But these owls immediately started moving into the front yards of people’s homes. And that was the first step in the urbanization of these owls. They benefited from what we have done. If we want to look at a positive story for development, these animals have been able to survive urbanization.”

This species, which nests in small colonies on plains, grasslands and desert scrubs, differs from most other owls in two ways – it is diurnal (active in daytime), not nocturnal like most owls, and nests in the ground (usually in abandoned squirrel holes), not in trees. Even amidst this unusual and unexpected survival, the burrowing owl has been listed by conservation groups as a “species of special concern” on the scientists’ rating of endangered species (a scale which graduates as follows – species of concern, threatened, endangered, extinct).

“When we started the movie, we weren't going to be able to use any real owls because they are endangered birds,” Wil Shriner states. “We looked at visual effects companies for a digital owl that would work. However, we didn't like the idea of them being fake. We wanted them to be real. So we were able to get some birds out of rehab.”

“Once we were given the script for the film, we had other owl options,” animal trainer Sue Humphrey clarifies. “Wil was pretty insistent that they had to be burrowing owls, which are very specific looking with their long, long legs. There were a couple of other owls that we considered because Fish And Wildlife initially said we couldn't use the burrowing owls. But, at the 11th hour, we were granted permission to use these specific owls.”

While all of the actual owls in the film are real, they had to be composited to show them with the actors and placed into the scenes. Handmade Digital, whose credits include *Little Manhattan*, *Idiocracy*, and *Suspect Zero* did the on set supervision and digital compositing.

Veteran wrangler Humphrey (*There's Something About Mary*, *Home Alone 3*, *Me, Myself & Irene*), of the Orlando-based company Birds & Animals Unlimited, obtained three burrowing owls (nicknamed Wil, Carl and Jimmy!) from the Miami Museum of Science's Bachelor Birds of Prey Center.

"I have done lots of bird work, from chickens to turkeys to parrots to different types of birds of prey like vultures," explains Humphrey, who also wrangled Banded Water Snakes, a pair of Rottweilers, a six-foot alligator and a three-legged dog named Uno for various other scenes in the film.

"On one of the *Harry Potter* films, I was able to train a barn owl. Typically speaking, I would never say the barn owl and the burrowing owl are very close. But, I believe that the experience I got with the barn owl helped me tremendously with these little burrowing owls. This was the first time that I personally worked with the burrowing owl. And it was fantastic! I can't even tell you how amazing it was working with these little creatures."

The museum (where Humphrey obtained three owls) works in tandem with a local foundation to rehabilitate sick and wounded birds of all species. With the approval of the U.S. Department of the Interior/Fish and Wildlife, the museum's Greta Parks-Mealey (who instituted the museum's Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in 1993, where her husband Brian, the film's technical consultant, has also had a long affiliation) allowed Humphrey and the production to have access to the owls whose rehab prevented them from being released back into the wild. This represented the first time the government has permitted the use of an indigenous, migratory bird in a Hollywood film normally protected by the Migratory Bird Act.

"The burrowing owl, like any bird in the U. S., is protected under the Migratory Bird Act," Humphrey explains. "All of our birds are protected. And unless it's an educational type of program, you are not allowed to use birds for entertainment purposes. Because of the content of this film, because it has an educational flair to it, we were granted permission by U.S. Fish And Wildlife to use these owls."

"We were then in contact with several different places, wildlife rehabilitation centers, that had some owls," Humphrey elaborates. "We had also talked extensively with Greta Parks-Mealey at the museum's Bachelor Bird Of Prey Center, whose husband, Brian, did his thesis on the burrowing owl. Brian was another invaluable resource because he knew so much about the burrowing owls. He had an incredible amount of information about their natural behavior and habitat."

“When the novel Hoot came out, my wife Greta was the first one who heard about it,” Mealey recalls. “She went down to the bookstore to buy it, and had Carl Hiaasen actually sign it. Then we read the book, finding out that this was kind of our story. We wondered how we could get onto the production. Everybody was trying to get my name in there. They finally called the Miami Museum Of Science, where I’d previously worked.”

Mealey and Humphrey discussed what she hoped to achieve in her training sessions with the three owls, which, she says, “was training the owls to look, to give looks in certain places for camera. A lot of POV shots in this film, so it was crucial that they could look. The other part was to have them going in and out of their burrows.”

“A lot of people familiar with the burrowing owls at this facility were concerned about the training process,” Mealey adds about their initial, exploratory discussions. “Was that going to hurt the birds? Would these birds adapt to this? Once we met with the animal trainers, they found out how scientific the process is to work with these animals. Sue Humphrey had great skills. And these animals actually started responding to her sound systems and cues. And we found out that burrowing owls have their own personalities.”

Humphrey requested the production’s Art Department build a tabletop burrow that she placed in the woods near the downtown construction site location, where she and Mealey worked for a few hours in the morning and late afternoon, seven days a week for one full month, using wax worms and crickets as incentive in training the owls for their motion picture debuts. After such a concentrated period of time working with the birds, Humphrey also noticed that each had its own personality.

“Jimmy was a renegade,” she comments about one of the three owls, all named for the film’s producers. “He was more of a wild type character, very much like a burrowing owl would exist in its natural habitat. Carl was tough. Carl had one wing. Not sure that was the reason, but he was tough and he was very mechanical with his movements. Still, a very nice and fun bird to train. And then, Wil was kind of the softie. Very inquisitive...liked to look around a lot. It was really interesting. The three owls were incredibly different in their personalities.”

“The wonderful thing about working with animals is that they’re all going to act differently,” she augments. “In teaching them all the same behavior, they all did it differently. Carl would come all the way up out of the burrow and walk six-to-eight inches. He’d stop, with a look like ‘this is my burrow.’ Wil would come somewhere in between that and just look around. Whereas Jimmy would only pop his head out and look around. And, the three owls ultimately

played all the owls of the movie. The big scene, the finale, where there were numerous owls, these three did all that.”

“We had great trainers with our owls, snakes, dogs, everything,” raves Wil Shriner. “The owls were trained to come out and get crickets. We had to have them come out of their hole, then go back into the hole. The trainers worked really hard with them. Then, we shot the elements where they come in and out of the holes and composited that into our scene. That’s how the owls magically appear and disappear.”

“Development in Florida is incredible. Every time you turn your head, there’s another new building or house going up,” says owl expert Mealey, acknowledging the theme of Hiaasen’s story. “They’re even encroaching on the Everglades. We have this Everglades Restoration Project, \$8 billion dollars for preservation, but they build all around it. There is no stopping it. And that’s where we’re beginning to run into problems. This problem is not going to go away, so you have to figure out a way to be a part of that process so that you extend the species’ life after its rehabilitation and release.”

”That’s where an institution like the Miami Museum Of Science, and other rehabilitation facilities in south Florida, comes into play,” Mealey adds. “So these animals brought into these facilities can be released again. Because if you can take one bird, rehabilitate him, mark him, put him back into the wild and he becomes a viable entity within wildlife, meaning he reproduces young back into the wild, you have just contributed to wildlife programming and nature.”

“The high profiles of the owls could be detrimental to them because people have to be aware that they are not pets,” the ornithological expert emphasizes about the film’s potential impact on the plight of this endangered species. “These are wild animals, protected by federal and state laws. You cannot have these animals in a cage in your backyard. Facilities like the Miami Museum Of Science and other non-profit organizations have special permits that allow them to keep birds that cannot be released back into the wild.”

“While this story is about the awareness of the owls, people must realize that it’s not only about owls. It’s about all urbanized wildlife. There’s a very positive story here – if you just look in your backyards, you’ll see how positive the urbanization process is. Let them nest. There’s a strong message about preserving wildlife and these owls,” Mealey stresses.

“I had parents who read Hoot and wrote to me saying they had no idea these owls were real,” Carl Hiaasen relates. “They thought I made them up like it was a Disney character. It’s

not just the fact that the owls happen to be cute, but that they are real and live in a beautiful place. And if you wreck that beautiful place, you take away their homes. These are not original messages, but they're still important. For Jimmy and me, over the years, I think part of our career mission has been to keep reminding people that there are things worth fighting for."

ABOUT THE CAST

Luke Wilson (Officer David Delinko)

A multi-faceted talent whose projects have earned him praise from critics and audiences alike, Luke Wilson continues to display his versatility in his upcoming projects.

Wilson most recently received rave reviews for his performance as 'Ben Stone' in the Twentieth Century Fox film *The Family Stone*, which co-starred Claire Danes, Diane Keaton, Dermot Mulroney, Craig T. Nelson and Sarah Jessica Parker.

Wilson made his acting debut in the critically acclaimed independent film, *Bottle Rocket*. The film was the first written and directed by Wes Anderson and co-written by his brother, Owen, who also co-starred. Following *Bottle Rocket*, Wilson went on to appear in various cameo and supporting roles before winning lead roles in Bruce McCulloch's *Dog Park* and in *Home Fries* opposite Drew Barrymore.

Luke re-teamed with Owen Wilson and Wes Anderson for 1998's *Rushmore*, which appeared on many Critic's Top Ten Lists, and then most recently in Anderson's *The Royal Tenenbaums*, in which Wilson appeared with an all-star cast that included Gene Hackman, Anjelica Huston, Gwyneth Paltrow, Ben Stiller, and Bill Murray.

In 2003, Wilson co-starred with Vince Vaughn and Will Ferrell in the Dreamworks hit comedy *Old School*. Other recent film credits include Rob Reiner's romantic comedy, *Alex & Emma* opposite Kate Hudson and in Sony Classics' *Masked & Anonymous* opposite Bob Dylan, Penelope Cruz, and Jessica Lange.

Wilson also appeared with Martin Lawrence in the hit comedy, *Blue Streak*, and opposite Heather Graham in *Committed*, which was nominated for a Grand Jury Prize at the 2000 Sundance Film Festival. He appeared in the smash hit, *Charlie's Angels*, and starred opposite Reese Witherspoon in *Legally Blonde*, which was nominated for a Golden Globe Award for Best Motion Picture - Musical or Comedy. In addition, Wilson reprised his roles for both sequels.

Wilson made his directorial and writing debut in the romantic comedy *The Wendell Baker Story*, in which he stars. The film also features Owen Wilson, Eva Mendes, Will Ferrell, Eddie Griffin, Harry Dean Stanton, Seymour Cassel and Kris Kristofferson. His oldest

brother Andrew Wilson co-directed the film with Luke.

This summer, Luke will be seen starring in Ivan Reitman's comedy *My Super Ex-Girlfriend*. He portrays a regular guy who dumps a superhero (played by Uma Thurman) who then uses her powers to make his life a living hell. The film is scheduled for release by Twentieth Century Fox on July 21.

Additional upcoming films include the Mike Judge comedy, *Idiocracy*, and Nick Guthe's *Mini's First Time*, in which he stars opposite Alec Baldwin, Carrie-Anne Moss and Jeff Goldblum.

Logan Lerman (Roy Eberhardt)

Logan Lerman most recently made his television series debut as Bobby McCallister, a bright young boy with a big heart who desperately tries to keep the peace between his mother and his older brother Jack in The WB's critically-acclaimed series, "Jack & Bobby." For his performance in the recently canceled drama, Logan won his second Young Artist Award as Leading Young Actor/TV Series.

Born and raised in Beverly Hills, California (where he still resides with his family), Logan's desire to act was ignited after seeing a Jackie Chan movie at age 2 1/2. After announcing to his mother that he was going to be an actor, the toddler soon landed an agent and booked two commercials back-to-back, earning his SAG card in the process.

The young talent made his feature film debut playing William, Mel Gibson's youngest son, in *The Patriot*, for which he shared a Young Artists nomination for Best Ensemble. After reuniting with Gibson (playing the actor as a young boy) in the hit comedy, *What Women Want*, he next co-starred in Penny Marshall's *Riding in Cars With Boys*.

That performance caught the attention of the producers of the CBS Hallmark Hall of Fame television movie "A Painted House" (based on John Grisham's novel), and they cast Logan in the starring role, resulting in his first Young Artists Award, this time for Leading Young Actor in a TV Movie/Miniseries/Special. He next returned to the big screen, winning critical acclaim opposite Ashton Kutcher in *The Butterfly Effect*. Currently, Logan is filming Joel Schumacher's *The Number 23* starring Jim Carrey.

When not working, the 14-year-old is an avid soccer and baseball player with an additional interest in tennis. When not involved in sports, Logan likes to play with his two dogs.

Brie Larson (Beatrice Leep)

Sixteen-year old actress/singer/songwriter Brie Larson most recently starred (and earned a Young Artists Award nomination) in MGM's *Sleepover* as a "bad girl" who likes to intimidate Alexa Vega and her friends. She also had a cameo role in Sony's *13 Going on 30*, starring as one of the popular girls out to make Jenna Rink's life as unpleasant as possible.

Brie became a proven triple threat when Universal/Casablanca signed her to a record deal to be overseen by recording impresario Tommy Mottola. She released her first single "She Said" with the debut of her first album, "Finally Out of P.E.," released in the Fall of 2005. She recently opened for Jesse McCartney on a nationwide tour, followed up that triumph as a headliner with the "Teen People" tour in the summer of 2005, and was one of the performers at the 2005 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City.

On the small screen, Brie starred in the Disney Channel's original movie "Right On Track," based on the true life story of the Ender sisters who were drag race champions. She also starred as Bob Saget's daughter 'Emily' on the WB's "Raising Dad" (with several episodes directed by Wil Shriner), for which she collected her first Young Artists nomination as Leading Young Actress. Additional TV roles include "Popular," "It's A Miracle," "Then Came You," "Hope & Faith" and "Touched by an Angel."

At six years old, the Sacramento native started at the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco. Relocating to Los Angeles soon thereafter, she landed an agent and her first professional job in guest spots on NBC's "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno." She next co-starred on the pilot for the FOX-TV sitcom, "Schimmel," based on the comedy of standup star Robert Schimmel. While working on the WB's "Raising Dad," she bought her first guitar and began dabbling in songwriting, which ultimately led to a contract with Universal/Casablanca Records.

Tim Blake Nelson (Curly Branitt)

Tim Blake Nelson has become one of Hollywood's most durable character actors, with a gallery of big screen roles as diverse as the dimwitted Delmar opposite George Clooney and John Turturro in the Coen Brothers' whimsical Depression-era comedy, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, the mysterious organ-playing warden of a 'precrime' prison in Steven Spielberg's sci-fi thriller, *Minority Report*, and the bumbling friend in Miguel Arteta's acclaimed *The Good Girl* opposite Jennifer Aniston.

Debuting on the motion picture screen in Nora Ephron's 1992 freshman directorial effort, *This Is My Life*, Nelson has logged over two dozen movie roles since, including such

acclaimed films as Terrence Malick's *The Thin Red Line*, Mike Newell's *Donnie Brasco*, Hal Harley's *Amateur*, James Cox's *Wonderland* and Jay Roach's blockbuster comedy sequel, *Meet the Fockers*. He also co-starred with Kenneth Branagh and Cynthia Nixon in HBO's acclaimed biopic, "Warm Springs," which received 16 Emmy nominations.

Nelson is also a mainstay on the independent film circuit, where, in addition to *The Good Girl*, he has co-starred in such projects as Finn Taylor's charming comedy, *Cherish* (alongside Robin Tunney) and Mark Mylod's upcoming comedy-drama, *The Big White* (with Robin Williams). He has three independent features about to hit the theaters -- *The Amateurs* with Jeff Bridges, *Come Early Morning* opposite Ashley Judd and *Fido* with British comic Billy Connolly.

Nelson has also established himself as an accomplished filmmaker, commencing his career behind the camera with his 1997 feature, *Eye of God*, a somber drama based on his own play (which he adapted for the screen) starring Martha Plimpton, Hal Holbrook and Kevin Anderson. Earning positive notices at the 1997 Sundance Film Festival, Nelson's directorial debut also received the top award at the 1997 Seattle International Film Festival, the Tokyo Bronze Prize at the Tokyo Film Festival and a Golden Seashell nomination at Spain's San Sebastian Film Festival. He also earned an Independent Spirit Award nomination for his work on the film.

He followed that auspicious debut with the 1998 short film, *Kansas* (also penning the screenplay) before returning to the feature film arena with the Miramax release *O*, a modern day adaptation of Shakespeare's "Othello," starring Martin Sheen, Julia Stiles, Josh Hartnett, and Mekhi Phifer. Like his first film, *O* screened at the 2001 Seattle International Film Festival, where Nelson walked off with Best Director honors.

That same year, he wrote-and-directed the searing Holocaust drama, *The Grey Zone* (based on his award-winning off-Broadway play) starring David Arquette, Steve Buscemi and Harvey Keitel, which depicted the story of the only armed revolt at Auschwitz. He is next set to write-and-direct the dustbowl drama, *Seasons of Dust*, starring Kate Bosworth.

Born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Nelson attended Brown University, where he became a Latinist in the classics department. Opting for the arts over academia, he headed to New York after college, studying acting at Juilliard before embarking on an Obie Award-winning career as a playwright. His original stage play of "The Grey Zone" won five "Village Voice" Obie Awards in 1996. He followed with the stage version of "Eye of God" (1997) and "Anadarko" (1998).

In addition to his writings for the theatre, Nelson has also appeared on the New York stage in such plays as "Innocent's Crusade" and "Mad Forest" at the Manhattan Theatre Club, "An Imaginary Life" at Playwrights Horizons, and "Troilus and Cressida" at Central Park's Delacorte Theatre.

Cody Linley (Mullet Fingers)

Sixteen-year-old actor, Cody Linley made his motion picture debut at eight years old as Spit McGee in the poignant family film *My Dog Skip*. For his work in the award-winning movie, Cody shared the Young Artist Award (along with Frankie Muniz) for Best Ensemble in a Feature Film.

Since that auspicious debut, Cody has been featured in such movies as *Miss Congeniality* (with Sandra Bullock), *Where the Heart Is* (with Natalie Portman and Ashley Judd), *Cheaper By the Dozen* (alongside Steve Martin and Hilary Duff), and *Rebound*, for 20th Century Fox. He also starred in the Artios Award-nominated *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town* with Jonathan Lipnicki and Eric Stolz.

A few of Cody's favorite television appearances include the CBS movie-of-the-week "Still Holding On: The Legend of Cadillac Jack" opposite Clint Black and Lisa Hartman and "Beyond the Prairie, Part 2: The True Story of Laura Ingalls Wilder." Upcoming for Cody, he will be seen as 'Jake Ryan' on the Disney Channel's new hit series "Hannah Montana."

Neil Flynn (Mr. Eberhardt)

Neil Flynn is well known to TV audiences as the tormenting janitor on NBC's Emmy nominated sitcom, "Scrubs," about to complete its 5th season.

Flynn's numerous feature film appearances including the hit movie *Mean Girls* as Lindsay Lohan's Father, Paul Thomas Anderson's acclaimed *Magnolia*, *The Fugitive*, *Chain Reaction*, *Home Alone 3*, *Rookie of the Year*, *Baby's Day Out*, and *Major League*.

In addition to his starring role on "Scrubs," Flynn has guest-starred on such series as "C.S.I.: Crime Scene Investigation," "Boston Public," "NYPD Blue," HBO's "Arli\$\$," "The Drew Carey Show," "That '70s Show," "Seinfeld," "Ellen," the WB's "Smallville," "The District," "Early Edition" and "Family Law."

Flynn, a Chicago native (from north-suburban Waukegan), acted in plays during his school years, but didn't pursue the vocation until he graduated from Bradley University in downstate Peoria. After college, Flynn returned to Chicago and pursued a career in the city's vibrant

live theater scene. He appeared at the Steppenwolf and Goodman theaters, and worked with Aidan Quinn (in "Hamlet") and Brian Dennehey (in "Galileo," at the Goodman), among others. For his work on the Chicago stage, Flynn earned two Joseph Jefferson Award nominations for Best Supporting Actor in "A Whistle in the Dark" at the Body Politic, and Best Actor in a Revue for "Farewell, My Compuserve" at Second City, Etc.

He later became a mainstay at Chicago's ImprovOlympic, renowned for performing and teaching long-form improvisational theater, and went on to be a member of the Second City Comedy Troupe in Chicago. He still keeps a busy hand in improv theatre, continuing to hone his skills at the ImprovOlympic West in Hollywood, where he has appeared for three years in the popular show "Beer, Shark, Mice."

Clark Gregg (Chuck Muckle)

Clark Gregg has spun a successful career on the New York stage into a growing profile in motion pictures and television as an actor, writer and director.

After graduating from NYU's renowned Tisch School of the Arts where he became a protégé of playwright and director David Mamet, Gregg joined Mamet, William H. Macy, Felicity Huffman and others to co-found New York's esteemed Atlantic Theater Company in 1985.

Mamet cast Gregg in his first film role, a small part in *Things Change* in 1988, the same year he made his off-Broadway debut in Howard Korder's play "Boys' Life" at Lincoln Center. Gregg's Broadway debut came in 1990 in the original cast of Aaron Sorkin's courtroom drama "A Few Good Men."

He continued performing on the New York stage throughout the 90's, appearing in new plays by Mamet, A.R. Gurney, Peter Hedges, Jez Butterworth and others. In 1991 he made his off-Broadway directing debut with Kevin Heelan's searing racial drama "Distant Fires" which was nominated for Drama Desk, Obie and Outer Critics Circle Awards. Gregg also mounted the Los Angeles production with a cast that included Samuel L. Jackson. That production won three L.A. Weekly awards including Best Director and was nominated for four Ovation awards. He also directed the 1997 off-Broadway revival of Mamet's play, "Edmond."

In the mid-nineties he shifted his focus to Hollywood, giving strong supporting performances in such films as Bryan Singer's Oscar-winning *The Usual Suspects*, Paul Thomas Anderson's Oscar-nominated *Magnolia* and Tod Williams' independent comedy-drama, *The*

Adventures of Sebastian Cole, for which he earned a Best Supporting Actor nomination at the Independent Spirit Awards for his striking turn as a transsexual.

Mamet cast him again as Doug Mackenzie, the local Vermont lawyer with political ambitions in Mamet's Hollywood satire, *State and Main*, a performance that earned him a piece of the National Board of Review Award for Best Acting Ensemble.

He next appeared in Steven Spielberg's *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence*, *One Hour Photo* with Robin Williams, Randall Wallace's epic Vietnam biopic, *We Were Soldiers*, HBO's "Live from Baghdad," Robert Benton's *The Human Stain* with Anthony Hopkins and Nicole Kidman, and opposite Catherine Keener in Nicole Holofcener's acclaimed independent film, *Lovely and Amazing*.

The collaboration with Mamet continued when he appeared as the Secret Service chief, Miller, in *Spartan*. He followed that by co-starring with Dennis Quaid and Topher Grace as corporate raider Mark Steckle in Paul Weitz's comedy hit, *In Good Company*. Upcoming films include Jon Kasdan's *In the Land of Women* opposite Meg Ryan, and the neo-noir thriller *The Air That I Breathe* with Kevin Bacon and Julie Delpy.

On television, Gregg is currently starring in the critically acclaimed new CBS comedy "The New Adventures of Old Christine" with Julia Louis-Dreyfus. Previously, he had scored recurring roles on the series "The Commish," "Sports Night" and NBC's perennial Emmy-winner "The West Wing," as well as guest appearances on HBO's award-winning comedy "Sex and the City," FX's "The Shield," "The Practice," "Law & Order" and "C.S.I.: NY." He starred with Joe Mantegna and Christopher Reeve in "Above Suspicion," and with George C. Scott in "Tyson," both for HBO.

In the late '90s, Gregg developed an interest in screenwriting. His first script came to the attention of director Robert Zemeckis and became the hit thriller *What Lies Beneath*, starring Michelle Pfeiffer and Harrison Ford.

Kiersten Warren (Mrs. Eberhardt)

Kiersten Warren has worked with such filmmakers as Roland Emmerich (*Independence Day*), Mike Newell (*Pushing Tin*), Barry Levinson (*Liberty Heights*, *Bandits*), Bruce Paltrow (*Duets*), Chris Columbus (*Bicentennial Man*), Callie Khouri (*The Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood*), the Coen Bros. (*Intolerable Cruelty*) and Gary Winick (*13 Going on 30*). Other

big screen credits include *Circuit*, *Black Cadillac* and *The Snowwalker* (opposite Barry Pepper).

Warren's telefilm credits include leading roles in the small screen adaptation of John Grisham's "A Painted House" (which starred Logan Lerman), "Grave Secrets," "False Arrest," "Silhouette" and "A Fugitive Among Us." She also starred in the Showtime project "Paradise" with David Strathairn and Barbara Hershey.

In addition to her recurring role as Goodman (13 episodes) on ABC's Emmy-and-Golden Globe nominated series, "Life Goes On," Warren has guest-starred on such series as "The West Wing," "Cybill," "Wolf Lake," "JAG," and "Fantasy Island." She worked with director Barry Sonnenfeld on ABC's "Maximum Bob" playing the spiritualist/mermaid Leann Gibbs opposite Beau Bridges. She appeared in "Saved By The Bell: The College Years" for a season and starred in two network pilots -- "Three Hearts" and "Hurricane Sam."

The daughter of a Baptist preacher, Warren was raised in Honolulu, Hawaii. A job as a cover girl model for a Japanese cosmetics company took her to Australia, where she studied acting at the Sydney School for the Performing Arts. After relocating to Hollywood, she landed her first acting job in a "Wonderful World of Disney" movie. She is the mother of actress Misti Traya (WB's "Living With Fran"), married fellow actor Kirk Acevedo (HBO's "Oz"), and recently gave birth to daughter Scarlett James.

Jessica Cauffiel (Mother Paula/Kimberly)

Jessica Cauffiel is a diverse comedic and dramatic actress with extensive training and background in the theater, musical theater and film and television mediums.

The Out of Towners

She began her career off-Broadway starring in the critically acclaimed musical "1001 Nights," written and composed by Tony Award winning composer and lyricist Robert Lopez, best known for his smash hit "Avenue Q." This was soon followed by recurring appearances in television favorites such as "Frasier" and "Law and Order," and films such as *The Out Of Towners*, with Steve Martin, Goldie Hawn and John Cleese; Jamie Blanks' cult hit *Valentine*; Todd Philips'

Road Trip; and *Urban Legends: Final Cut*. She is perhaps best known for her portrayal of Elle Woods' (Reese Witherspoon) airy, blithe sorority sister "Margot," in the films *Legally Blonde*, and the sequel, *Legally Blonde 2: Red, White and Blonde*. Since then, she recurred for two years on "The Drew Carey Show," and has appeared in films such as the Farrelly

Brothers' *Stuck On You*, with Matt Damon and Greg Kinnear; Brian Burns' *You Stupid Man*; the action spoof *D.E.B.S.*; *Guess Who*, and the Wayans Brothers' hit *White Chicks*.

She is also a trained vocalist who has sung on Grammy nominated albums, and by request from His Holiness The Dalai Lama, performed live in Dharamsala, India for him and 30,000 other monks and foreigners from across the globe for the 40th anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising.

Next, she co-stars alongside Sir Anthony Hopkins in Roger Donaldson's upcoming biopic, *The World's Fastest Indian*, and can be seen on the small screen as Tatiana, the Russian mail order bride on the smash hit "My Name Is Earl."

Jessica is also a nature-lover who has spent a great deal of her time researching, exploring and studying the world's indigenous cultures and their earth-based healing traditions, so Hoot and its message are very dear to her heart. She is honored to be a part of a film whose message is one of humankind living in right relationship, in harmony with each other and with Mother Earth's many glorious and wonderful creatures.

She hopes that these beautiful burrowing owls will open and touch others' hearts, the way they have hers.

Dean Collins (Garrett)

Dean Collins is well-known to teen audiences everywhere for his series regular role of Mike on Fox-TV's hit comedy, "The War at Home." Before that, Dean did eleven episodes as Warren on the WB's acclaimed dramatic series, "Jack and Bobby" and recurred on Fox-TV's late-night comedy staple, "Mad-TV."

On the motion picture screen, the 15-year old Los Angeles native (who began his career in commercials almost a decade ago) had a co-starring role opposite Dennis Quaid and Renee Russo in the comedy remake, *Yours, Mine & Ours*.

Eric Phillips (Dana Matherson)

Hoot marks Eric's professional film debut. Mr. Phillips hails from Winnetka, Illinois, a north shore suburb of Chicago. He was schooled at the legendary Second City in Chicago and is currently a member of the prestigious teen troupe at Second City, LA. The 17-year-old began acting as an 8th grader, in a stage adaptation of "The Wizard of Oz" at the acclaimed Winnetka Children's Theatre. He then went on to appear in several other productions there, including "The Music Man," "Happily Ever After" and "Aladdin."

Currently in his senior year at New Trier High School, Eric has logged leads onstage there in such productions as "The Laramie Project," "Tartuffe," "The Good Women of Szechwan," and "Our Town." Eric's voice can be heard nationally endorsing everything from fast food to comic books.

Robert Wagner (Mayor Grandy)

In a career spanning six decades, Robert Wagner has become one of the most popular, successful and recognizable stars in the entertainment industry.

Wagner's career boasts an impressive portfolio of movies for both the motion picture and television screens (100+ titles and counting) as well as headlining three hit television series - "Hart to Hart" with Stephanie Powers, "Switch" costarring Eddie Albert, and "It Takes a Thief" alongside the legendary Fred Astaire (the latter show earning him an Emmy nomination).

His feature film resume includes such titles as *Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story*, *The Pink Panther*, *Midway*, *The Towering Inferno*, *Wild Things*, *Banning*, *Harper*, *Prince Valiant*, *All the Fine Young Cannibals*, *A Kiss Before Dying*, *Broken Lance*, Darryl F. Zanuck's WWII epic *The Longest Day*, *Beneath the Twelve Mile Reef*, *The Mountain*, the 1953 version of *The Titanic* and *With a Song in My Heart*, which established his career. He also co-starred as Number Two, winning popularity with a whole new generation of moviegoers, in the *Austin Powers* trilogy (*International Man of Mystery*, *The Spy Who Shagged Me* and *Goldmember*).

Other recent projects include "Becoming Dick," for *E! Entertainment Network*, the science fiction adventure "Rocket's Red Glare" for Fox Family Channel, *No Vacancy* for executive producer Ron Shelton (playing against type as a malicious pimp opposite Lolita Davidovich and Christina Ricci) and the boxing drama *Play it to the Bone*, co-starring Woody Harrelson and Antonio Banderas (also for director Shelton). He reteamed with Banderas on his 1999 directorial debut, *Crazy in Alabama*, and has also starred in such unique projects as *The Kidnapping of Chris Burden*, *Tiara Tango*, *Sordid Affair*, the suspense thriller *The Road to Santiago*, with Anne Archer, Anthony Quinn and Charlton Heston and TBS' first original movie, "Fatal Error," with Antonio Sabato, Jr. and Janine Turner.

His successful television miniseries include "Heaven and Hell: North and South III," "Windmills of the Gods" and "Pearl" among others. In 1976, Wagner was chosen by Sir Lawrence Olivier to star with him in the television adaptation of Tennessee Williams' "Cat on

a Hot Tin Roof" playing the lead role of Brick opposite his late wife, Natalie Wood. His TV series guest-starring stints include a recurring role on ABC's "Hope & Faith," "The Fall Guy" and "Seinfeld."

Wagner also tours the country with his current wife, actress Jill St. John, breaking house records onstage in A.R. Gurney's play, "Love Letters." Despite his hectic schedule in film and television, he continues to perform on stage with various repertory companies and dinner theatre groups as a most in-demand leading man.

Wagner was born in Detroit, and moved to Los Angeles with his family as a youngster. He held a variety of jobs growing up in Hollywood (including one as a caddy for Clark Gable) before being "discovered" by a talent agent while dining with his parents at a Beverly Hills restaurant. He made his motion picture debut in a bit part in William A. Wellman's 1950 comedy *The Happy Years*, which led to small roles in other films like *Halls of Montezuma*, *The Frogmen* and, as a crippled soldier opposite Oscar nominees Susan Hayward and Thelma Ritter, in 1952's *With a Song in My Heart*. That performance landed the handsome, budding talent a contract with 20th Century-Fox.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Wil Shriner (Director/Screenwriter/Co-Producer)

Wil likes to stay busy, do it all and never be bored. On *Hoot*, he brought together his Florida background, twenty years of comedy, and award winning directing skills to take *Hoot* from novel to big screen family fare. With his screenplay adaptation of the book, he promised author Carl Hiaasen, producer Jimmy Buffett, and himself that he would stay loyal to the novel. Having attended 10 different schools himself, Wil connected with lead character Roy Eberhardt's desire to fit in. He also has a deep appreciation for the Florida environment and it's preservation because so much has changed since he grew up in South Florida and spent time commuting to school by boat.

Over the years Wil has worn many hats as a director, comedian, actor, writer, producer and host, and has established himself as one of television's hot comedy directors. *Hoot* marks his feature film debut as the screenwriter and director.

Among his many credits and triumphs on the small screen, Shriner won the Humanitas Award for a year 2000 episode of NBC's "Frasier" entitled 'Something About Dr. Mary' that sensitively dealt with racism. Another of his numerous "Frasier" episodes, 'The Proposal', earned an Emmy Award for editing in 2002.

Shriner has also directed episodes for the Emmy winner, "Everybody Loves Raymond," as well as the following comedy series; CBS's "Becker" and "Ladies Man", ABC's "My Wife and Kids", "Norm", "Married to the Kelly's", and "Two Guys and a Girl", Fox's "Luis" and the WB's "Raising Dad". In front of the camera, Shriner co-starred opposite Joan Allen in the Academy Award nominated "Peggy Sue Got Married," directed by Francis Ford Coppola. He has also made dozens of appearances on television shows like HBO's "Dream On" and NBC's "Search and Rescue" and "Amazing Stories." As a TV talk-show guest and stand-up comedian, he has made over 50 appearances with David Letterman, Jay Leno, Bill Maher and a dozen appearances with his idol the late Johnny Carson.

Over the years, Shriner has hosted hundreds of hours of television, including his own Emmy-nominated talk show, "The Wil Shriner Show." He was also a regular correspondent and guest host for five years on ABC's popular daytime show, "The Home Show." In addition to hosting live shows on ABC, CBS, NBC, A&E, HGTV and a number of Disney specials. Wil still performs his stand-up comedy across the country, in numerous nightclubs and at corporate and charity events. He has appeared at dozens of casinos in Las Vegas, Lake Tahoe, Atlantic City and Reno with such diverse talents as Joan Rivers, Jerry Seinfeld, John

Denver, Loretta Lynn, Tom Jones, Sam Kinison, The Gatlin Brothers, Neil Sedaka and Jay Leno.

When not in front of or behind the camera, this multi-faceted talent keeps busy working with many E-commerce and high technology companies as a spokesman, producer and comedian. His clientele includes Microsoft, Circuit City, Optika, RCA, Gemstar, Iomega, Engage, WEB-TV, Canon and Caesar's Palace, to name a few. In February 2000, he produced and wrote the Microsoft Windows 2000 launch, the largest product introduction in Microsoft's history. Two years later, he directed and wrote the Bill Gates comedy video shown at all of Mr. Gates' public appearances.

Wil Shriner was born in New York City when his father Herb Shriner, a popular humorist and television personality, gave birth to twins while hosting "Two for the Money," the 1950s game show now seen in reruns on Sony's *Game Show Network*. His twin brother, Kin, portrayed Scotty Baldwin of "General Hospital" for over two decades. Wil began his college studies at the University of Florida then moved west to attend film school at UCLA. His first job was in production for Max Baer Jr. on the film *Ode to Billy Joe* and for Dick Clark Productions before pursuing work as a stand-up comedian. He loves the challenges of all his careers over the years and only wishes he had more free time for golf, scuba diving, flying and being with his two children.

Wil is very happy with *Hoot* and feels proud that he has made a film that parents and their children can laugh at and enjoy together. He thanks the cast and the crew for all their hard work in the heat and humidity of a summer in the great state of Florida. He also hopes that kids will walk away from this film with the understanding that "one person can make a difference" when they stand up for something they believe.

You can visit his personal website at www.wilshriner.com.

Frank Marshall (Producer)

With an astonishing number of films to his credit as a visionary producer who irrevocably transformed American film, Frank Marshall has also excelled as a director and, transcending his chosen industry, found the time to devote his talents to numerous endeavors in public service and sports.

Marshall has over fifty films under his belt as producer, including *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, *Poltergeist*, *Gremlins*, *The Goonies*, *The Color Purple*, *An American Tail*, *Empire of the Sun*, *Who*

Framed Roger Rabbit?, *The Land before Time*, *the Back to the Future* trilogy, *The Sixth Sense*, *The Bourne Identity*, *Seabiscuit* and *The Bourne Supremacy*.

He has already made several trips to the Academy Awards, having been nominated in the Best Picture category in 1982 for *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and again in the same category in 1985 for *The Color Purple* with co-producers Steven Spielberg, Quincy Jones and his wife, Kathleen Kennedy. M. Night Shyamalan's 1999 box office smash, *The Sixth Sense*, was nominated for six Academy Awards, and the critically acclaimed *Seabiscuit* received seven Oscar nominations, including Best Picture.

As a director, Marshall helmed this year's critically acclaimed box office smash, *Eight Below*, as well as the thriller *Arachnophobia*, the sensitive true-life drama *Alive*, the 1995 hit adventure *Congo* and an episode of the Emmy Award-winning HBO miniseries, *From the Earth to the Moon*.

Marshall began his motion picture career as assistant to Peter Bogdanovich on the director's cult classic, *Targets*. He was then asked by Bogdanovich to serve as location manager for *The Last Picture Show* and *What's Up, Doc?* before graduating to associate producer on the filmmaker's next five movies, including *Paper Moon* and *Nickelodeon*.

Marshall was line producer on Martin Scorsese's *The Last Waltz*, the heralded musical documentary on The Band. He then began a two-film association with director Walter Hill, first as associate producer on *The Driver*, then as executive producer of *The Warriors*, both of which have also attained a certain cult status among cineastes. Marshall was also line producer of Orson Welles' legendary, unfinished film, *The Other Side of the Wind*, to which he periodically returned from 1971 through 1976.

Raiders of the Lost Ark marked the beginning of Marshall's epochal collaboration with Steven Spielberg, George Lucas and Kathleen Kennedy. Following the productions of *E.T.: the Extra-Terrestrial* (for which he was production supervisor) and *Poltergeist* (which he produced), in 1981 he formed industry powerhouse Amblin Entertainment with Spielberg and Kennedy. During his tenure at Amblin, Marshall also produced such films as Kevin Reynolds' *Fandango*, Barry Levinson's *Young Sherlock Holmes*, *Gremlins*, *Poltergeist*, *the Back to the Future* trilogy, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* and Spielberg's *Always*, *Hook* and *Empire of the Sun*, as well as his directorial debut, *Arachnophobia*.

Marshall left Amblin in the fall of 1991 to pursue his directing career, and together with Kathleen Kennedy, The Kennedy/Marshall Company was formed. The company's productions include a remarkably diverse group of films, including *The Indian in the Cupboard*, directed by Frank Oz; *Snow Falling on Cedars*, directed by Scott Hicks; *A Map of the World*, starring Sigourney Weaver and Julianne Moore; *The Sixth Sense*, starring Bruce Willis and Haley Joel Osment; *Olympic Glory*, the first official large format film of the Olympic Games; *The Bourne Identity*, starring Matt Damon; M. Night Shyamalan's *Signs*; *Seabiscuit*, the dramatic true story based on Laura Hillenbrand's best-selling book, directed by Gary Ross; and *The Bourne Supremacy*, directed by Paul Greengrass with Matt Damon returning as Jason Bourne. Currently in release is the Kennedy/Marshall production, *Roving Mars*, the IMAX documentary about the exploration of the Red planet, which he produced with director George Butler.

While at UCLA, Marshall, an L.A. native and son of composer Jack Marshall, ran cross-country and track and was a three-year Varsity letterman in soccer. Combining his passion for music and sports, he, along with America's premiere miler Steve Scott, founded the Rock 'N' Roll Marathon, which debuted in 1998 in San Diego as the largest first time marathon in history.

For over a decade, Marshall was a board member of the United States Olympic Committee and is the 2005 recipient of the prestigious Olympic Shield, awarded in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the USOC organization. Currently he is on the board of the Los Angeles Sports Council, Co-Chairman of The L.A. Mentoring Partnership and a member of the UCLA Foundation Board of Governors. He is a recipient of the acclaimed American Academy of Achievement Award, the UCLA Alumni Professional Achievement Award and the California Mentor Initiative's Leadership Award.

Jimmy Buffett (Producer)

Singer/songwriter/author Jimmy Buffett has used his travels and musical storytelling skills to explain the world-at-large to his far-flung legion of fans, affectionately known as 'Parrotheads', professionals by day who become colorful, tropical, outrageously-outfitted characters at night when Jimmy comes to town.

Born in the Gulf Coast town of Pascagoula, Mississippi, he was raised on the Gulf in Mobile, Alabama. As a boy, this "son of a son of a sailor" often took sailing trips with his father, a naval architect (experiences wryly documented in his semi-autobiographical songs).

He studied journalism at the University of Southern Mississippi, which led to work as a correspondent for Billboard magazine in Nashville, where he pursued his interest in the city's country music scene of the late 1960s. Contacts in Nashville led to a contract with Barnaby Records and his 1970 debut album, "Down to Earth."

By the time he recorded (in Nashville) 1973's "White Sport Coat and a Pink Crustacean," Buffett had relocated to Key West, Florida, the tropical paradise that eventually etched his persona and folk-rock style that still endears him to his legion of 'Parrothead' fans.

Since those early efforts, Buffett has recorded over forty records, most of which have gone gold, platinum or multi-platinum. Among the popular titles are "Living and Dying in 3/4 Time" (1974), which charted his first Top 40 single, "Come Monday"; "A1A," named for the coastal highway that hugs Florida's Atlantic coast; 1977's "Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes," which spawned the Top 10 million-selling hit "Margaritaville" and earned Buffett bonafide pop star status. "Margaritaville" became the anthem for the lifestyle Buffett depicted so vividly in his songs, which continued to soar on the music charts with the Top 10 album "Son of a Son of a Sailor" (1978) featuring another pop hit, "Cheeseburger in Paradise." His recording "Boats, Beaches, Bars & Ballads" is one of the biggest selling box sets in MCA Records history.

Buffett's newest CD, "License To Chill" (2004), debuted at #1 on both the Pop and Country charts, the first Number One record of his career. The collection, which features duets with some of country's biggest stars including Alan Jackson, Kenny Chesney, George Strait, Toby Keith, Martina McBride and Clint Black among others, spent 15 weeks in the Top 10 of the Billboard Country Albums Chart, and has been certified Platinum by the RIAA.

The album's debut single, "Hey Good Lookin'," the old Hank Williams chestnut, features Buffett with Jackson, Chesney, Strait, Keith, and Black. It was a Top 10 country hit, and the colorful video for the song continues in rotation on CMT. The single earned Buffett his second Grammy nomination in 2005 as Best Country Collaboration With Vocals for "Hey Good Lookin'." And there were two more 2005 nominations for the hit song -- Vocal Event Of The Year/Academy of Country Music and Collaborative Video Of The Year/CMT Music Awards.

Buffett and Jackson won the 2003 CMA for Vocal Event Of The Year for "It's Five O'Clock Somewhere." And the song won again, for Single Of The Year and Video Of The Year, at

the 2003 Academy of Country Music Awards.

Buffett released a number of records in 2003, including "Meet Me In Margaritaville: The Ultimate Collection," (which was recently certified double platinum), a two-CD retrospective, which spans 30 years of his career (1973-2003) and includes 38 digitally mastered/remastered selections. Also on shelves the same year were four live double CDs from shows that were part of his 2003 summer tour.

Jimmy's latest novel, [A Salty Piece Of Land](#), was released in November, 2004, and immediately entered the [New York Times](#) Bestseller List after reviews praised the tome as "very possibly Buffett's best work to date." With Buffett's three previous No. 1 best sellers ([Tales From Margaritaville](#), [Where Is Joe Merchant?](#) and [A Pirate Looks At Fifty](#)), he is one of only six authors in the history of the [New York Times](#) Bestseller List to have reached #1 on both their fiction and nonfiction lists. The other five authors who have accomplished this milestone are Ernest Hemingway, John Steinbeck, William Styron, Irving Wallace and Dr. Seuss.

You can hear Buffett's concerts globally, broadcast live on his Internet radio station, Radio Margaritaville. Conceived along the lines of an early 70's FM station, promoting variety, spontaneity and working outside the box, radiomargaritaville.com is a haven for rhythm and roll. According to webcast raters Arbitron and MeasureCast, Radio Margaritaville has been one of the highest ranked web channels on the Internet.

Although Parrotheads are known for having a good time, their outrageous concert behavior and dress code is offset by their truly inspiring philanthropic efforts. For years, hundreds of fan clubs have banded together in communities across the country giving their time, their money, even their blood, all in a spirit of camaraderie. Hard core fans all over the U.S., two Canadian Provinces, even the Land of Oz, all contain groups founded on fun and philanthropy in what Parrotheads proudly refer to as Party With A Purpose.

Carl Hiaasen (Co-Producer)

Carl Hiaasen a lifelong Floridian, is the author of eighteen books and the respected, outspoken columnist for the [Miami Herald](#). [Hoot](#) is his second novel adapted for the motion picture screen and his first project as a film producer.

A graduate of the University of Florida, Hiaasen joined the Herald as a general assignment reporter at age 23, and went on to work for the newspaper's weekly magazine and prize-winning investigations team. Since 1985, he has been writing his regular column (which appears in most Sunday editions), from which his controversial opinions have enraged readers, politicians and even his own bosses.

While toiling as a newspaperman, Hiaasen began writing novels in the early 1980s with his friend and fellow journalist, William D. Montalbano. Together, they wrote three mystery thrillers -- Powder Burn, Trap Line and Death in China -- which borrowed heavily from their own reporting experiences.

Hiaasen's first solo novel, Tourist Season, published in 1986, garnered acclaim from "GQ" as "one of the 10 best destination reads of all time." His next novel, Double Whammy, was the first novel ever written about sex, murder and corruption on the professional bass-fishing tour.

Since then, Hiaasen (www.carlhiaasen.com) has published eight other works of fiction – Skin Tight, Native Tongue, Strip Tease (adapted into the 1996 film starring Demi Moore and Burt Reynolds), Stormy Weather, Lucky You, Sick Puppy, Basket Case and Skinny Dip (recently optioned by director Mike Nichols). He also authored Team Rodent, an unsparing rant against the Disney empire and its grip on American culture.

Hiaasen's 2002 book was his first for young readers after delighting adult audiences over the last two decades with such satiric bestsellers as Strip Tease, Stormy Weather, Lucky You and seven others novels dating back to his 1986 debut, Tourist Season. The recipient of a prestigious 2003 Newbery Honor, Hoot has two million copies in print and has graced the New York Times Children's Bestseller list for two years now. Hiaasen, the long-admired Miami Herald columnist, published Flush, his second book for young readers, in September 2005. Flush is the story of a father-son team who sets out to expose a crooked casino boat owner who is illegally dumping waste into the ocean.

Together, Hiaasen's novels have been published in 29 languages (which, he quips, is 28 more than he can read or write). The London Observer has called him "America's finest satirical novelist," while Janet Maslin of the New York Times recently compared him to Preston Sturges, Woody Allen and S.J. Perelman. Hiaasen has also published two collections of his newspaper columns, Kick Ass and Paradise Screwed, which, he says, proves that he doesn't invent all the stuff he writes in his books.

Kevin Reidy (Executive Producer)

Kevin Reidy is a twenty-year industry veteran who has worked both on the movie set and in the studio suites.

Reidy most recently executive-produced two Carl Franklin films -- *High Crimes*, with Ashley Judd and Morgan Freeman, and *Out of Time*, starring Denzel Washington and Eva Mendes. The seasoned producer first worked with Franklin on his breakout hit, the 1992 thriller *One False Move*, on which Reidy served as executive in charge of production while at I.R.S. Media.

He also served in various producer capacities on the hit fantasy, *Ever After* (co-producer/UPM), the big screen adaptation of the popular video game *Mortal Kombat: Annihilation* (producer/UPM), the Independent Spirit Award-nominated *Loved* (line producer/UPM), the Renee Zellweger-Vincent D'Onofrio drama, *The Whole Wide World* (producer) and *Swimming with Sharks* (associate producer). He just completed executive producer duties on Randall Miller's *Marilyn Hotchkiss' Ballroom Dancing and Charm School*, the ensemble drama featuring Robert Carlyle, John Goodman, Mary Steenburgen and Marisa Tomei. The film was an official selection at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival and will be released by Samuel Goldwyn in a platform release on March 31st.

Before climbing into the producer ranks, Reidy served as unit production manager on such feature films as the Jackie Chan/Owen Wilson hit, *Shanghai Noon*, *Mortal Kombat* and *Overnight Delivery*, among others. His work in the television arena includes producing HBO's "Cheaters" and "The Jack Bull" and two other telefilms, "Natural Selection" and "Based on an Untrue Story." He also produced the pilot for the WB's series, "Dead Last."

As an executive, the New Jersey native and Stanford graduate (with two Masters degrees) served as C.O.O./Sr. Vice President of Production at I.R.S. Media. Previously, he was Vice President of international production and, from 1988-90, a casting director at Concorde/New Horizons Pictures, where he worked on a dozen features. He also earned a third Masters (M.F.A.) from the School of Dramatic Arts in Florence, Italy, where he studied under the likes of such acting luminaries as Vittorio Gassman, Anthony Quinn and Jeanne Moreau, among others.

Gregg Taylor (Executive Producer)

Gregg Taylor joined the Kennedy/Marshall Company in 2003 as senior vice president of production and development. His role has been to help develop projects for producers Kathleen Kennedy and Frank Marshall under their Universal Studios-based banner. In

addition to *Hoot*, recent releases for the company included *Munich* and the Imax-film, *Roving Mars*. Upcoming Kennedy-Marshall projects to begin filming this year, include: *The Bourne Ultimatum*, the third installment of the popular series, with Matt Damon reprising his popular role as Jason Bourne for Universal; and for Paramount, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, written by Eric Roth (*Forrest Gump*), directed by David Fincher (*Seven*) and starring Brad Pitt.

Prior to Kennedy/Marshall, Taylor headed Mike Myers' production company, Gratitude International. During his tenure, Taylor assisted in overseeing the Academy Award-winning animated blockbuster *Shrek* and its sequel *Shrek 2*. He co-produced the comedy smash *Austin Powers in Goldmember* and executive produced *Cat in the Hat* for Imagine Entertainment.

During the early years of his career, Taylor worked at the production companies of such filmmakers as Don Simpson, Harold Becker, Robert Redford and John Lyons.

Michael Chapman, A.S.C. (Director of Photography)

Michael Chapman earned two Academy Award® nominations for his innovative camerawork on Martin Scorsese's landmark 1980 classic, *Raging Bull*, and Andrew Davis' popular 1993 thriller, *The Fugitive* (also collecting a nomination from the American Society of Cinematographers for the latter).

Beginning his vocation in New York, the Massachusetts-born lensman became a protégé early in his career of cinematographer Gordon Willis, working as his camera operator on seven films in a brief two-year period, including Irvin Kershner's *Loving*, Hal Ashby's *The Landlord*, Alan J. Pakula's *Klute*, Robert Benton's *Bad Company* and Francis Ford Coppola's masterpiece, *The Godfather* (he also operated the camera for Bill Butler on Steven Spielberg's 1975 classic, *Jaws*).

In 1973, he reteamed with director Ashby, this time as director of photography (his first credit as cinematographer), on the Oscar-nominated drama, *The Last Detail*, signaling the beginning of an ongoing career in which Chapman has created some of the most enduring images ever captured in American cinema.

One of his first features behind the lens was Martin Scorsese's Oscar-nominated 1976 classic, *Taxi Driver*. The project marked the first of four with Scorsese, including his memorable 1978 rockumentary, *The Last Waltz*, *American Boy: A Profile of Steven Prince*,

and *Raging Bull*, for which Chapman earned his first Academy Award® nomination and won the National Society of Film Critics Award. His exemplary work on that film was included in *Visions of Light*, the celebrated AFI documentary on the art of cinematography.

Chapman's early work as a cinematographer also includes Martin Ritt's *The Front*, James Toback's *Fingers*, Abby Mann's historic, Emmy-nominated miniseries, "King," Paul Schrader's *Hardcore* and Philip Kaufman's remake of the 1956 sci-fi classic, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (Chapman would reteam with Kaufman on *The Wanderers* in 1979 and *Rising Sun* in 1993).

Over the last three decades, Chapman has worked with some of the industry's most prominent directors on films as varied as Robert Towne's *Personal Best*, Carl Reiner's *The Man With Two Brains* and *Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid*, Joel Schumacher's cultish vampire thriller, *The Lost Boys*, Richard Donner's contemporary updating of the Dickens classic, *Scrooged* and four Ivan Reitman projects -- *Kindergarten Cop*, *Ghostbusters II*, *Six Days, Seven Nights* and *Evolution*.

Chapman has also guided the camerawork on such films as *Quick Change*, *Shoot To Kill*, *Doc Hollywood*, *Whispers in the Dark*, *Space Jam*, *Primal Fear*, *The Story of Us*, *Eulogy*, *The Watcher*, *Suspect Zero* and David Duchovny's recent directorial debut, *House of D*.

In 1983, the gifted cinematographer moved from the camera crane into the director's chair for his directorial debut on the football drama, *All the Right Moves*, which also marked Tom Cruise's first starring role. He followed with *Clan of the Cave Bear*, the prehistoric epic based on Jean M. Auel's novel, and also wrote-and-directed the critically-acclaimed *The Viking Sagas*. For television, Chapman directed the 1986 telefilm, "The Annihilator."

In 2004, the legendary cameraman was honored with the A.S.C Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions to the art of cinematography.

Stephen J. Lineweaver (Production Designer)

Stephen J. Lineweaver had been an art professor and painter at the Albany campus of the State University of New York before commencing his film career in New York City as an art director on such films as John Sayles' allegorical *The Brother From Another Planet* (1984), Martin Scorsese's *After Hours* (1985), Jonathan Demme's comedy-thriller, *Something Wild* (1986), and Emile Ardolino's blockbuster hit, *Dirty Dancing* (1987).

In 1988, producer-director James L. Brooks approached the upstate New York native about designing innovative sets for his new TV series, "The Tracey Ullman Show," for which Lineweaver won a 1990 Emmy Award for Best Production Design. He also served as a visual consultant for Matt Groening on FOX-TV's "The Simpsons" (also a Brooks production) during its formative years.

After returning to the motion picture screen to design the independent film *Rosalie Goes Shopping*, Lineweaver hooked up with director Cameron Crowe for his 1992 drama, *Singles*, and reteamed with Crowe on his Academy Award®-nominated 1996 film, *Jerry Maguire*. During this period, he also reunited with Brooks on his 1994 film, *I'll Do Anything*, collaborated with such filmmakers as Ivan Reitman on the hit comedy *Junior* toplining Arnold Schwarzenegger and Danny DeVito, Michael Caton-Jones on the searing drama, *This Boy's Life*, starring Robert De Niro and Leonardo DiCaprio, Peter Segal on his comedy, *Tommy Boy* with Chris Farley and David Spade, and designed the hit sequel, *Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls*, starring Jim Carrey.

Lineweaver has also designed such big screen productions as Garry Marshall's *The Other Sister*, Brian Levant's *Snow Dogs* and *Are We There Yet?*, *Caught in the Act*, *City Slickers 2: The Legend of Curly's Gold*, *The Girl Next Door*, *How to Kill Your Neighbor's Dog*, and *Double Take*. Lineweaver is currently working on the Will Farrell comedy *Blades of Glory* for Dreamworks.

Alan Edward Bell (Editor)

Alan E. Bell has enjoyed a long affiliation with director Rob Reiner and his longtime editor, Robert Leighton, beginning as assistant editor on *Misery*, *A Few Good Men* (Oscar nomination for film editing) and *North*, then as associate editor on *The American President* and *Ghosts of Mississippi*. He shared editing credit with Leighton on *The Story of Us*, and went on to edit Reiner's comedy, *Alex & Emma*.

Bell's previous editing credits include Rob Reiner's ABC special on early childhood development entitled "I Am Your Child," and the Castle Rock productions of Antoine Fuqua's action-comedy *Bait* and Frank Darabont's Oscar-nominated *The Green Mile* (providing additional editing duties). He made his feature editing debut on *Icarus Descending*, cut the thriller *The Anarchist's Cookbook*, and served as additional editor on the recent sports drama, *Miracle*. He just completed editing duties on Mark Levin's romantic comedy, *Little Manhattan*. Alan also served as the visual effects supervisor on the last two mentioned films. On *Hoot* his visual effects company Handmade Digital did over 160 visual effects shots in house.

The Los Angeles native, an avid rock climber who supervised weekend excursions for Hollywood clientele, met editor Leighton through one of his climbing enthusiasts. Switching careers, Bell worked as an editing apprentice (sans salary) in Roger Corman's low-budget film factory before hooking up with Leighton on Reiner's 1990 Oscar-winner, *Misery*.

Christopher Lawrence (Costume Designer)

Christopher Lawrence began his industry career working as a costume supervisor with some of Hollywood's finest filmmakers, including Blake Edwards (*Switch*), Mel Brooks (*Life Stinks*), Garry Marshall (*Beaches*), Barry Levinson (the Oscar-winning *Bugsy*), Cameron Crowe (*Say Anything*), James L. Brooks (*I'll Do Anything*), Stephen Frears (*Hero*), Curtis Hanson (*The River Wild*), James Cameron (*T2/3D*), Philip Noyce (*The Saint*), Tony Scott (*Enemy of the State*) and Michael Mann (as associate designer on his Oscar-nominated drama, *The Insider*).

A favorite of designer Marlene Stewart, with whom he served as supervisor on six films and numerous other projects, Lawrence has also worked with such renowned designers as Academy Award-winner Albert Wolsky, Emmy-nominee Ellen Mirojnick and the late Oscar nominee Richard Hornung.

After debuting as costume designer on *The Anniversary Party* (co-directed by actors Alan Cumming and Jennifer Jason Leigh), the Los Angeles native reteamed with Mann on his TV pilot, "Robbery Homicide Division." He also designed such films as *Showtime*, with Robert DeNiro and Eddie Murphy, the thriller *Cellular*, the police actioner *S.W.A.T., 11:14*, starring Hilary Swank and Barbara Hershey, and the recent comedy, *The Alibi*. He followed *Hoot* by reuniting with actor-director Cumming on his latest project, *Suffering Man's Charity* and the thriller *Crank*. He also designed the wardrobe for PBS-TV's adaptation of the Tony-winning drama, "The Gin Game," which reunited Mary Tyler Moore and Dick Van Dyke.

A Los Angeles native, Lawrence began his industry career as a production assistant on "The Merv Griffin Show." He segued over to the popular syndicated hit, "Dance Fever," before a brief sojourn away from the industry as a clothier in a unique Beverly Hills boutique, Camp Beverly Hills, then as a designer for Esprit. He resumed his entertainment career as a costumer on the Emmy-winning TV series "Moonlighting" and "Pee Wee's Playhouse" before moving into the motion picture arena.

Phil Marshall (Composer)

Phil Marshall is a native Southern Californian and is the son of Jack Marshall (a prolific music composer for such television series “The Munsters,” “Laredo,” “Wagon Train” and many Tammy and Elvis movies).

Phil attended the University of Irvine, majoring in Research Psychology and Music Composition. While at UCI, he wrote music for many acclaimed television commercials with companies such as IBM, Mattel, Yamaha, Xerox, Carl’s Jr, Subaru, Mazda and others. Phil was classically trained by the renowned, Dr. Albert Harris and continues to orchestrate and conduct all his own works.

In 1986, French director, Lazlo Papas came to America looking for a talented music student to compose music for his short film, *End Of The Rainbow*. Respected for his symphonic work, Phil was highly recommended to score this unique art film that has subsequently won awards at eight film festivals worldwide, including Best Film Score in Chicago. This led his career towards feature films and television.

Since then Phil has been a very prolific composer in his own right. His feature film credits range for the highly acclaimed *Endless Summer II*, *Always* and *Nell* to a seven film collaboration with composer Angelo Badalamenti on the psychological thrillers *The Beach*, *Arlington Road*, *Secretary* and recently *A Very Long Engagement* for Warner Independent Features. Phil is currently working on *Blind Guy Driving* for James Keach.

On the television side, Phil has scored over twenty films for the Disney Channel, three films for the Family Channel, “American Daughter” for Lifetime and the top rated legal drama “Law & Order: Crime and Punishment” for producer Dick Wolf.

Phil’s talents don’t just lie in the film composing ranks. He’s won a producing Grammy for BB King’s album “Deuce’s Wild” and wrote a Guitar Concerto for Classical guitarist Christopher Parkening.

When he is not composing or playing guitar, Phil can be found participating in extreme sport competitions. He is a two time National Sailing Champion and competed professionally on surfing and windsurfing tours. An avid runner, he also enjoys golf (speed and regular), skiing and mountain biking.

Michael Utley (Composer)

Michael Utley grew up in Arkansas and was heavily influenced by the sounds of Memphis soul and New Orleans rhythm and blues. During spring break of his senior year at the University of Arkansas, Utley had the opportunity to record with Bill Black's Combo in Memphis. Then, after Tony Joe White had his hit with "Polk Salad Annie," Mike was invited to play on his second album. After he graduated from college with a BA in Zoology, Mike moved to Memphis and began working full time as a musician.

In February 1973, after Jimmy Buffett had moved to Key West from Nashville, he heard Utley playing on one of Jerry Jeff Walker's albums. He liked what he heard and asked Mike to play on his first ABC/Dunhill album *A White Sport Coat and a Pink Crustacean*. During this time, Utley was touring with Kris Kristofferson and Rita Coolidge and was the musical director of the band Speedway in the movie, *A Star is Born*. Simultaneously, he began touring with Jimmy and has been with him ever since.

Mr. Utley has recorded with an impressive list of artists including Aretha Franklin, Sam & Dave, Brook Benton, Arthur Conley, Ronnie Hawkins, Duane Allman, Buddy Guy, Junior Wells, Jimmy Cliff, Lulu, Petula Clark, Carmen McRae, Sam "The Sham", Jackson Browne, Booker T. Jones, John Kay (Steppenwolf) and Jerry Jeff Walker. Utley is also the accomplished producer of eleven albums with Mr. Buffett. He along with Mac McAnally produced Jimmy Buffett's 1st #1 album "License to Chill" in July 2003. Additionally, he produced Roy Orbison's Greatest Hits album, and was producer/musical director for the Cinemax special, "Black and White Night" with Bonnie Raitt, Jackson Browne, J.D. Souther, Bruce Springsteen, Elvis Costello, and Tom Waits.

Mac McAnally (Composer)

Singer/songwriter veteran, Mac McAnally, is also a producer, session player, publisher, band member, studio owner, comic, story teller, and so on, a basic modern day William Faulkner living in the music industry.

He has recorded 10 studio albums all on major record labels, and has written multiple #1 records for the Country Music charts as well as others that roamed the top 40 Pop charts. Over 30 national recording artists have recorded songs written by Mac. He has produced country records for Sawyer Brown, Ricky Skaggs and more. Mac was the first artist ever to be signed by David Geffen for Geffen Records; the next couple of artists Geffen signed were John Lennon and Elton John.

Artists such as Roy Orbison, Hank Williams Jr., Amy Grant, Travis Tritt, Linda Rondstadt, Nanci Griffith, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Reba McEntire, Dolly Parton, Alabama, Patty Loveless, etc., have hired Mac for his guitar playing or vocal harmonies.

As a member and producer of Jimmy Buffett's Coral Reefer Band, Mac has written a number of songs with Buffett, including two songs from Jimmy's current record: "Coast of Carolina" and the title track, "License to Chill." Jimmy also recorded Mac's song, "It's My Job" which appears on Buffett's '81 release, "Coconut Telegraph."

Now Mac has his own brand new record, "Semi-True Stories." The album contains ten songs influenced by rock, jazz, country, and gospel featuring Nashville's A-session players and members of Buffett's Coral Reefer Band. All songs were written or co-written by McAnally and two, "Semi-True Stories" and "Last Man Standing," have been previously recorded by Buffett himself. Mac and Jimmy have been friends and co-workers since the 80's, so it seems fitting that this release came out on Buffett's own Mailboat Records.

With the exception of "Stephon (The Alternative Lifestyle Reindeer)" recorded on tour with the Coral Reefers, the entire project was tracked and mixed at Mac's house in Muscle Shoals, AL.

Born in Belmont, Mississippi, Mac's songs speak the truth and revolve around stories of the South as well as realities of the world. Each song has a story behind it, and at his own shows, Mac draws in the crowd mixing humor with truth. His shows are roughly 40% storytelling and 60% music...Southern culture at it's finest.

Currently Mac is in producer mode coming off the double platinum success of Jimmy Buffett's "License To Chill" which he co-produced with Mike Utley. He's in the studio now with Little Feat co-producing a project featuring an all star cast of recording artists & musicians as well as working on another Jimmy Buffett studio album and live CD.

Mac also performs dates with Jimmy Buffett and his Coral Reefer Band, doing solo shows on Buffett off nights.

Savannah Jane Buffett (Music Supervisor)

Savannah Jane Buffett has been bouncing around the entertainment industry since she was born. A true jack-of-all-trades, her jobs have run the gamut from children's book author and freelance photographer to DJ and radio personality. As a native Floridian, she was thrilled to

compile the music for *Hoot*, attempting to combine both classic and younger artists in a mellow blend of music that can be enjoyed by all ages. She currently lives in Miami, Florida and works for Sirius Radio.