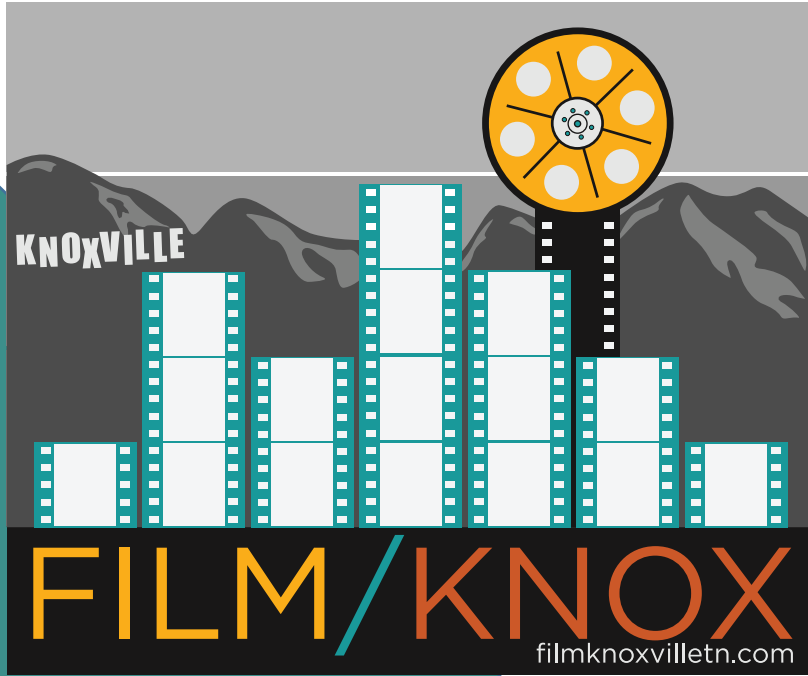


2019 PRESS KIT



Why Your Next Film Should Be in Knoxville, Tennessee

By Benjamin Lindsay

“We’ve just been trying to make Knoxville a little bit more film-friendly,” said Curt Willis, director of the city’s film office. Through his time there, Willis has overseen efforts to make filming in Knoxville easier. “We’ve made the permitting process easy here, and free, and that all goes through my office,” he told Backstage. “For example, if you want to close a street in Knoxville for filming, that’s free. And any city services are very affordable, so if you’re trying to get fire, EMT, or police officers for a shoot, they’re \$30 an hour. It’s a fraction of what they are in other cities.”

Not only that, but thanks to the city’s roots in TV production, there are always experienced, professional crew members to work on all facets of the film set—plus actors to spare. Rifkin hired talent from both camps to work on his movie, which wrapped filming July 1 and co-stars Chevy Chase and Ariel Winter.

The filmmaking efforts personal to Knoxville came in addition to the statewide incentives allocated by the Tennessee Film, Entertainment, and Music Commission each year, including a 25 percent cash rebate for qualifying Tennessee labor and vendor costs and, Willis said, \$2 million recently allocated to exclusively East Tennessee. (Previously, these funds were largely eaten by the larger markets farther west.)

For Rifkin, such incentives were of course enticing as an independent filmmaker, but the personal touch the Knoxville community brought to the process was what ultimately locked in his decision. It’s an endearment that made his little film “so much bigger, so much richer,” he said.

“I’d love to make more movies in Knoxville and I know other people here in Los Angeles would like to do the same—not only because of the dollars and cents of the incentives, but also because of the hospitality. It’s a real one-two punch that benefits production,” Rifkin added. “We’re beyond grateful, not only because it made the process very pleasant, but it really did benefit the film in so many ways that money just can’t buy.”

<http://www.backstage.com/news/why-your-next-film-should-knoxville-tennessee/>



-Continued

'American Idol' Alum Lauren Alaina to Make Film Debut in 'Road Less Traveled': Exclusive

By Michele Amabile Angermiller

"I am so excited to be doing a movie," Alaina tells *Billboard*. "This is a whole new world for me. I'm learning so much every day. We have such an awesome cast and crew and I can't wait for everyone to see this new side of me."

McNeeley said filming in Tennessee and working with the Visit Knoxville Film Office is an ideal marriage for movie and country music fans, alike. The city recently hosted the Adam Rifkin film, *Dog Years*, starring Burt Reynolds and Ariel Winter.

"As a boy growing up in Oklahoma, country music and it's roots in Tennessee were important influences for me. We are thrilled to be here in Knoxville making our first film, and to be collaborating with Lauren and Universal Music Group Nashville," said Executive Producer Kristofer McNeeley. "Hopefully this is just the beginning of a long relationship in the state bringing Tennessee and country music to millions of fans worldwide through film."

"We're proud to welcome Marvista Entertainment and the cast and crew of *Road Less Traveled* to Knoxville," said Curt Willis, Visit Knoxville Film Office Director. "This city has worked hard to establish itself as a competitive option for film production in the south and attracting projects like this is exactly what we had in mind."

<http://www.billboard.com/articles/news/7526452/lauren-alaina-american-idol-film-debut-road-less-traveled>

Visit Knoxville

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PRESS

December 16, 2016

Regal teams with Visit Knoxville Film Office to reward local productions

The Visit Knoxville Film Office, along with Regal Entertainment Group, has announced a new incentive for qualifying films produced in the East Tennessee area. In addition to the production advantages already offered locally, Regal will screen films produced in Knoxville for potential art-house distribution within their network of art theatres. The new initiative complements Regal's history of supporting local film communities.

"Synergy between the Visit Knoxville Film Office and Regal Entertainment Group makes perfect sense as we move forward to establish Knoxville as a competitive option for production," said Curt Willis, Visit Knoxville Film Office director. "We're grateful for Regal's support and are happy to offer filmmakers a possible solution to one of the biggest challenges they face once a film is wrapped—getting the final product in the hands of an exhibitor."

"We are proud to partner with the Visit Knoxville Film Office," stated Greg Dunn, president and chief operating officer at Regal Entertainment Group. "This is an excellent opportunity to expand our hometown's talent and economic development."

Most recently, the Visit Knoxville Film Office hosted *Dog Years*, an independent feature written and directed by Adam Rifkin and starring Burt Reynolds and Ariel Winter. Executive produced by Gordon Whitener and Neil Mandt, the film will retroactively be eligible for the new incentive.

"We could not be happier that Knoxville-based Regal is willing to work with the Visit Knoxville Film Office to make Knoxville a more lucrative filming destination," stated Visit Knoxville president, Kim Bumpas.

Knoxville productions already enjoy access to the following benefits:

- * 25% rebate on Tennessee spending from the Tennessee Entertainment Commission
- * \$200k spending threshold
- * Low to no cost on local services and locations
- * Production crew and equipment readily available locally
- * Close proximity to Nashville and Atlanta
- * Low cost of living—inexpensive hotels, catering, local travel, etc.
- * A supportive community

<http://www.filmjournal.com/news/regal-teams-visit-knoxville-film-office-reward-local-productions>



PRESS

May 09, 2016

Movie starring Burt Reynolds, Ariel Winter to film in Knoxville in June

By Maggie Jones

"Dog Years," an upcoming movie starring "Smokey and the Bandit" actor Burt Reynolds, 80, and actress Ariel Winter, 18, ("Modern Family"), will film in Knoxville beginning in June, according to a release from Visit Knoxville.

The film will employ around 100 people, and Visit Knoxville Film Office director Curt Willis has been coordinating with the film's producers, Gordon Whitener and Neil Mandt, and its writer and director, Adam Rifkin, so that locations, crew, talent, office space and hotels are available for filming, the release said.

"Dog Years" is still looking for actors, locations and local vendors. Those interested can email dogyearsmovie@gmail.com for information on casting calls and more.

Visit Knoxville and the film office will have a press conference about "Dog Years" later on, the release said.

The film is described as a dark comedy in an article from Hollywood website, the Tracking Board.

"The story revolves around an aging, former movie star who is forced to face the reality that his glory days are far behind him when he's invited to receive a lifetime achievement award from a tiny East coast film festival," the article said. "Embarrassed by the low rent event, he bails on the award and forces the emotionally unstable girl assigned to be his driver to take him on a soul searching tour of the landmarks of his youth."

"We are thrilled that the 'Dog Years' team has decided to bring their project to Knoxville," said Willis in the Visit Knoxville release. "In realizing the impact this film could have on our community, the city of Knoxville, as well as the county, have been very supportive in incentivizing this venture."

<http://archive.knoxnews.com/entertainment/movies/movie-starring-burt-reynolds-ariel-winter-to-film-in-knoxville-in-june-326c3755-a9c6-35b3-e053-01000-378669101.html>



PRESS

