

Is your child always racing around? Try Kids on the Run.

BY MOIRA E. McLAUGHLIN

If you're constantly chasing your on-the-move toddler or 10-year-old, Saturday's Kids on the Run event at Bohrer Park in Gaithersburg is the place to be.

Organized by the Montgomery County Road Runners Club, the "fun run" is designed to introduce little ones to the thrill of the sport and the value of fitness.

"The goal is to get them active and to get them participating in an athletic event," says Janet Newburgh, 70, a former marathoner who started the race years ago when she was raising eight children. "The idea was to get them to participate in something I found pleasurable and rewarding."

The event includes three races: the 100-meter "toddler trot," for age 4 and younger, and the half-mile and one-mile, open to kids 18 and younger. Parents are welcome to run along with their children in all races, and in the toddler event, any child old enough to walk can participate.

Even those tiny tots can see that "putting one foot in front of the other, and exercise, is fun," says race director Kimberly Price.

The event lets kids experience all the workings of a regular race for grown-ups: Children get a number to pin on and a T-shirt when they register. A photographer will snap their picture, and a digital clock captures their time. The 100-meter runners and half-milers receive ribbons at the end of the race, and the one-mile finishers get medals. The post-race snacks are especially

kid-friendly: Think apples, oranges, fish-shaped crackers, trail mix, fig cookies, pretzels and water.

The half-mile and mile courses are loops on mostly paved paths through the park, and there will be about a dozen race marshals to make sure no one gets lost.

Ultramarathoner Mical Honigfort of Gaithersburg plans to bring her 3-year-old to Kids on the Run for the second year. She echoes Price's sentiments, noting that she wants her kids to "see the racing scene."

Before the race, volunteers lead warm-up stretches with music and balls in a grassy field to get runners loosened up and excited. The event attracts about 250 children, and all participants receive a potted plant and stickers.

"There is not going to be the fastest child. There is not going to be a slowest child," Price says. "It's all just, 'Get out there.'"

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When is it? Saturday. On-site registration starts at 7:30 a.m. (You can also register online or by mail.) The toddler race starts at 8:30 a.m.; half-mile, 8:35 a.m.; mile, 8:40 a.m.

Where is it? Bohrer Park, 506 South Frederick Ave., Gaithersburg, 301-353-0200. www.mcrrc.org/races/KidsOnTheRun.

How much? \$7-\$20, depending when you register and if you buy a T-shirt.



KEN TROMBATORE

Degenet Riggs, then 4, took part in last year's Kids on the Run in Gaithersburg. The "fun run" introduces little ones to the thrill of the sport and the value of fitness.

Also Playing

Capsule reviews of recent releases playing in area theaters. Movies not reviewed by The Post are marked "NR" for not rated. For older movies, see the Movie Directory.

★★★ 21 JUMP STREET

The lack of originality or creative ingenuity that "21 Jump Street" symbolizes is addressed head-on early in the film, when a surly police captain played by Ice Cube tells two new recruits that the force has resurrected a defunct program from 30 years ago that sent undercover cops into high schools. The neophytes he's screaming at are Schmidt (Jonah Hill) and Jenko (Channing Tatum), a bumbling nerd and good-looking dullard, respectively, who were arch-opposites in their high school but have become best buds since going through the police academy. Despite the edginess and vulgarity, the production is suffused by an unmistakable sweetness, no doubt thanks to the film's co-directors, Phil Lord and Chris Miller. Hill and Tatum work joyfully in harness, developing a chemistry reminiscent of Will Ferrell and Mark Wahlberg in last year's similarly anarchic buddy flick "The Other Guys." This is "The Younger Guys," with more surreally funny drug trips and amusing cameos. "21 Jump Street" might be yet another product of Hollywood's recycling program, but it deserves to be noticed. **(R, 100 minutes)** *Contains crude and sexual content, pervasive profanity, drug material, teen drinking and some violence. Area theaters.* —Ann Hornaday

★★★★ THE ARTIST

A delectable homage to the silent movies of the 1920s, Michel Hazanavicius's romantic comedy plays like a sweet, airy confection.

The fact that "The Artist" is itself a silent movie — in black-and-white, no less — shouldn't deter viewers from giving it a whirl. "The Artist" opens in 1927, when the dapper film star George Valentin (Jean Dujardin) rules Hollywoodland. When George crosses paths with an eager newcomer named Peppy Miller (Berenice Bejo), he's cast in the role of mentor; but when talking pictures become the order of the day, she quickly begins an ascent up stardom's ladder, while George's fortunes begin their inevitable slide. Even the most arresting visual stunts would amount to little more than pastiche were it not for Dujardin and Bejo, who infuse their characters with palpable longing and regret. With equally able supporting performances, "The Artist" hews faithfully to the classics it so dazzlingly celebrates, offering a cautionary parable regarding the wages of fame but wrapping it in velvety aesthetic values, crisp storytelling and fabulous dance numbers. **(PG-13, 100 minutes)** *Contains a disturbing image and a crude gesture. Area theaters.*

—A.H.

★ ½ THE BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL

A blandly middling crowd pleaser, this film follows a group of seven English retirees who have taken up residence in a seedy Indian boarding house. The entertainment is directly proportional to the appeal of each character. At the delightful end of the spectrum is Judi Dench's Evelyn, a recent widow whose loneliness and hard-won wisdom is rendered in an affectingly nuanced performance. At the other end is Maggie Smith's Muriel, a nakedly racist coot rendered in a strident, one-note caricature. Some viewers may respond to the film's message that it's never too late for love. Others may groan at its reliance on paleolithic vaudeville humor. Colonialist stereotypes also abound: India is dirty and inefficient, and the food will give you the runs. The film is neither terrible nor great.

(PG-13, 122 minutes) *Contains brief obscenity and some sexual humor. Area theaters.*

—M.O.

★★★ THE CABIN IN THE WOODS

Like its spiritual heirs, "The Cabin in the Woods" comes not only to praise the slasher- zombie- and gore-fests of yore but to critique them, elaborating on their grammatical elements and archetypal figures even while searching for ways to put them to novel use. The opening scenes are when viewers meet the principal players, who hew telegenically to horror-movie conventions. When they all pile in to an RV and head for one of their cousin's new place on a rural lake, carnage is sure to ensue; when they encounter a spooky old coot at an abandoned gas station on their way, their tragic fates are all but sealed. We come for blood — and writer Joss Whedon and director Drew Goddard duly comply. As a playful departure from the torture porn that it obliquely lampoons, "The Cabin in the Woods" he film marks a welcome return of cheap thrills and simple bump-in-the-night frights, with some stinging self-critical commentary on the side. **(R, 95 minutes)** *Contains strong bloody horror violence and gore, profanity, drug use and some sexuality/nudity. Area theaters.*

—A.H.

★★ ½ CHIMPANZEE

"Chimpanzee," the follow-up feature to Alastair Fothergill and Mark Linfield's "Earth," is one part "Wild Kingdom" and one part wacky-talking-animal tale. As narrated by Tim Allen, the chimps at the center of "Chimpanzee" appear to think out loud as they forage for food, groom and play with one another and sleep in the Ivory Coast. Throughout the film, which revolves around the adventures of an adorable baby chimp that the filmmakers have nicknamed Oscar, Allen doesn't just describe the action but

also gives voice to Oscar's innermost thoughts. Although rated G, "Chimpanzee" features scenes of rival chimpanzee packs attacking each other. Some sequences are intense and frightening. And what happens to Oscar is genuinely, if only momentarily, sad. But nature is messy, and "Chimpanzee" doesn't shrink from that. Fothergill and Linfield exercise discretion when their cameras capture disturbing turns of event, but they don't sugarcoat the fact that life is hard for a chimpanzee, even one who's starring in his own Hollywood movie. **(G, 82 minutes)** *Contains some scary sequences and shots of chimps who are obviously not wearing pants. Area theaters.*

—M.O.

★★ DARLING COMPANION

Diane Keaton plays Beth, a middle-age mother of two facing an empty nest and little sympathy from her husband, Joseph (Kevin Kline), a workaholic back surgeon. Beth finds newfound purpose in Freeway, a sad-eyed dog she rescues and takes home on an impulse. When Freeway goes missing, the film chronicles the search for the dog and how it brings a group of friends, relatives and erstwhile strangers into newfound intimacy. "Darling Companion" benefits from some winning performances, including Dianne Wiest, Richard Jenkins and a splendid cameo from Sam Shepard as a crusty town sheriff. The best moments of "Darling Companion" play like "The Big Chill" redux, with the Motown-loving, kitchen-dancing college pals of yore now facing menopause, colonoscopies and the fading of the light. At least "Darling Companion" is willing to go along on that inevitable slide, even if it often seems on a path as aimless as old Freeway's. **(PG-13, 103 minutes)** *Contains some sexual references and profanity. At AMC Loews Shirlington and Landmark's Bethesda Row Cinema.*

—A.H.

★ ½ DR. SEUSS' THE LORAX

Like "An Inconvenient Truth" for the 12-and-under crowd, "Dr. Seuss' The Lorax" is a cautionary environmental tale with a thin veneer of entertainment on top. Based on Seuss's 1971 picture book, this musical adaptation, in eye-popping 3-D CGI, is undeniably less gloomy than the original. In the hands of co-directors Chris Reynaud and Kyle Balda and co-writers Ken Daurio and Cinco Paul, Seuss's slender though eloquent fable has morphed into something unwieldy and manic. It's simultaneously silly and preachy, and with precious room for little fun. Danny DeVito's Lorax — the mystical, mustached critter who speaks "for the trees" and who struggles, futilely, to stop the Once-ler — is even more messianic here than in the book, traveling back and forth between Earth and the clouds in a shaft of celestial light, like a furry Jesus. Seuss's book may have been a heavy-handed downer, but at least its heart was in the right place. "Dr. Seuss' The Lorax" is a movie that progressives can feel good about taking their kids to, without actually having a good time. **(PG, 86 minutes)** *Contains brief, mildly rude language. Area theaters.*

—M.O.

★ ½ FETIH 1453

"Making history is no job for cowards," announces the hero of "Fetih 1453," a Turkish war epic that's awash in virility. Battle flicks are big on bravery, and this account of the Turkish conquest of Constantinople doesn't stint on self-sacrifice. The movie begins with the announcement of Islam's prophet that the Orthodox Christian city will fall. It's left to young Sultan Mehmet II (Devrim Evin), a classic overachiever, to fulfill the prediction some 800 years later. Sword-fighting coach

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