

arts/entertainment

Bravo! brings 'drive-in movies' to homes

By Mary Kay Wayman

A new Cablevision service which begins Nov. 24 already has 3,000 subscribers and Cablevision general manager Wendell Owen expects that number to double.

The service, called Bravo!, will offer "drive-in theater-type movies," he said.

But not everyone approves of the new service.

Ron Kurtenbach, Lincoln Gazette publisher, said "Bravo! sounds like their (Cablevision's) bluest effort." Kurtenbach has appeared at several City Council meetings to complain about Cablevision, and has written articles in his publication about the service.

"They're not top-of-the-line movies,"

Owen said. "Just a lower class in quality movie."

Movies like "Big Bad Mama," "Death Machines," "Nightmare in Blood" and "Think Dirty" can be the public's with the Bravo! service.

Owen said the new service will offer "less movies and poor grade movies" compared to the existing Showcase service, for which he said they always promised top-of-the-line movies.

The new service is offered at a special price of \$5. This charge, plus the monthly cable charge of \$4.95, brings subscribers six "primarily PG and R-rated, action oriented" movies a month, Owen said.

This service is like Showcase in that a special hook-up is supplied to Cablevision

subscribers. But they need not have Showcase to get Bravo!, Owen said.

"We've done this in central Texas," Owen said, "and it was popular with a certain group of people."

Owen said the films are not more sexually explicit or violent than Showcase films.

"They're just a lesser class movie as far as theme and story." Owen stressed that the films are not pornography. The only difference between the R-rated films on the two services, according to Owen, was the quality of film.

He said he was excited about Bravo!'s Nov. 24 debut.

"It's another option for our subscribers to have to diversify their viewing," he said.

Kurtenbach said he thought the Bravo! service was part of the Cablevision company's efforts to "get the most amount of money from the people of Lincoln and the least amount of films."

"I think they're relatively unscrupulous as far as doing things to get the greatest saturation possible in Lincoln," he said. "If they have a way of attracting more subscribers they will."

Kurtenbach said Cablevision pledged to show good movies on Channel 9 when it came to town.

"What incentive do they have to show the movies on Channel 9 when they have Showcase and Bravo!?" he asked. He called the record of movies shown so far "deplorable and quite boring."

Mari Sandoz's life is explored

Native Nebraskan Dick Cavett talks with those who remember Mari Sandoz' life and work, Friday at 9 p.m. on NETV. The hour-long documentary, "Song of the Plains: The Story of Mari Sandoz," won a 1979 William F. Cody award for Television from the Old West Trail Association, and an honorable mention in the 1979 Eudora Welty-American Awards competition.

Actress Dorothy McGuire, also a native of Nebraska, is the narrator of the documentary, and reads selections of the author's works.

Sandoz is featured in film clips from television interviews made between 1959-1964, and a creative writing telecourse she made for KUON-TV. She was 40 years old when her first book, *Old Jules*, the story of her father, was published. The main work she did, however, was a six-book study of the progress of people in the Great Plains.

The program was produced by Gene Bunge, directed by Rod Bates, and researched and written by Judy McDonald. Robert Beadell, UNL music producer, composed the score.



Photo courtesy of NETV

Dick Cavett hosts the award-winning documentary of Mari Sandoz' life, rebroadcast on NETV, Friday, at 9 p.m.

Theatre presents 'Christmas Carol'

The UNL Department of Theatre Arts will be presenting a new musical adaptation of Charles Dicken's "A Christmas Carol".

The adaptation was written by R. Dale Wilson and directed by Scott Lank, graduate student at UNL in Theatre Arts. It is a full scale production with many community children involved as well as university students.

Performances will be at 8 p.m. on Dec. 7-8, 13-15 and 20-21, with 2 p.m. matinees on Dec. 9, 16 and 22.

Pat Overton, Howell Theatre manager, said group rates, which reduce the price of tickets, are available for both matinee and evening performances. Interested groups or persons should call the Howell Theatre Box Office, 472-2073 after 1 p.m. on weekdays to arrange for tickets.

Museum to present Christmas program

The Omaha Western Heritage Museum will present the fourth annual "Christmas at Union Station," beginning Friday at 7 p.m.

Itey Crummer, assistant director of the Museum, said special events are planned for every weekend in December, including choral groups, Christmas decorations and gifts on sale at various booths. The hours for the event are 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Admission is \$1 for adults and 50 cents for children.

Steinbeck's book indicates few changes in 18 years

By Scott Kleager

One of the great pleasures of reading comes when all the various pressures are finally put to rest. It's at this time that reading takes on another perspective besides learning: entertainment.

book review

John Steinbeck's *Travels With Charlie* gives to those who read for a living, a rare opportunity to read a book just for fun. From the start, one is struck by the casual style and journal-like honesty that differs sharply from most works at the stands today. Maybe it's because it's non-fiction—of course, compared with other non-fiction works it's much less ponderous. Or maybe the book's light style is indicative of the authors age. Steinbeck wrote the book at 60. Analysis aside, it's one of the few books to be read that doesn't require a rereading and the only work by this great author that is simple.

But don't assume that it's not worth reading and re-reading. On the contrary, although it may be simple and straightforward, the messages bear repeating.

Through its realistic portrayal of America and Americans in 1961, today's reader can gain a valuable perspective into how little the country has changed. The author's notes are disturbingly akin to what one finds on the road today.

It seems that even in 1961 when a person in a strange town asked directions, the answer was the same. "Turn left there," a man tells Steinbeck. "And about two hundred yards on Egg turn right at an angle. That's a twisty kind of street and you'll come to an overpass, but don't take it."

Most people were apathetic back then just as they are now. Steinbeck finds out in New Hampshire what most of us find when attempting to discuss politics in the Union: "And that's what I found all over the country—no arguments; no discussions."

Interestingly, the book also points out how the U.S. government's various agencies are burdened with a preponderance of ridiculous rules that cannot be broken. The author tries unsuccessfully to cross the Canadian-American border with a dog who has no "papers".

Steinbeck also finds that Americans, almost without exception, want to leave the place where they live. There are friendly Americans in ugly towns and unfriendly Americans in beautiful towns. There are Americans who love dogs and those who hate dogs with not too many people in between. He finds that states differ basically only in topography, numbers of people and—he points out comically—in their respective road sign language. Otherwise, notes the author, most everything else is homogenous. Things seem pretty much the same today.

On the other hand, Steinbeck makes it a point to show that for every place, particular interpretation depends upon who is doing the interpreting. In his typical reflective and skillful way he observes: "There are too many realities. What I set down here is true until someone else passes that way and rearranges the world in his own style."

Travels With Charlie is a likable book. Steinbeck's style need not be discussed here, except to say that this work is, stylistically, the same as his other works. There are no parts that require knowledge in the classics, so anyone can read and enjoy this novel by one of America's great writers.