

AGGIELIFE

George Orwell's novel *Animal Farm* made into TNT original movie by W.C. Fields

LUGGALA, Ireland (AP) — The actor-comedian W. C. Fields famously advised against working with children or animals, so he clearly would have balked at a film set without actors.

And yet that was the situation one rainswept day last fall on the set of "Animal Farm," the \$22 million TNT Original movie airing Sunday at 8 p.m.

Halfway through the autumn shoot, the animals took over. As in the book, so it was on set where the day's stars included the donkey portraying Benjamin and the gray mare playing Mollie, not to mention a potentially scene-stealing border collie named Spice in the pivotal dog's role of Jessie.

"There are no Winnebagos, no makeup and hair, no costumes, no perks, nothing," Robert Halmi Sr. said, the film's executive producer, explaining the differences between this shoot and just about any other in the veteran producer's long career.

For one thing, Halmi had to build the entire location, creating a little town — complete with electricity and phone lines — on a fraction of the 2,000-acre Guinness Estate in a grassy dip amid the Wicklow Mountains.

Then there was the film itself, a Hallmark Entertainment adaptation intent on honoring its source, as befits a producer who says bluntly of the venture, "This is it. I'll be happy if I don't do anything else in my life.

The goal is George Orwell, with satiric sting intact.

"There are no Winnebagos, no makeup, no costumes, no perks, nothing."

— Robert Halmi Sr.
Executive producer

"In America, this is probably over the heads of most people," conceded Halmi, who was 21 and living under Communist rule in his native Hungary in 1945 when Orwell's portrait of an animal upris-

ing as a parable for Stalinism was first published.

More than 50 years later, he is using his clout as an Emmy-winning producer to bring it to the screen. "For me, the most important thing — almost religiously — has been to do this book," Halmi said.

What he didn't want, he added, "was a Disney-esque adaptation or a cartoon. That would be Hollywood, and I'm anti-establishment."

"Animal Farm" did inspire a British cartoon feature in 1954 that radically softened Orwell's ending, and Halmi admits that even his live-action version leaves open an un-Orwellian door to hope. "There are always survivors" reads a key line at the end of the film.

Other versions of the same fable include an acclaimed, much-traveled stage version, directed by Sir Peter Hall, that began at London's National Theater in 1984. A separate youth theater production for 24 actors ages 11 to 14 will run in Leicester in the English Midlands in late October.

Wherever it is seen, this is still the story of Napoleon, the nostril-flaring pig who participates in an insurrection on Manor Farm — soon renamed the Animal Farm of the title — only to end up grandly sipping whiskey with the same abusive landowners whom the animals displaced.

Napoleon's excesses mirror those of man at his most beastly, as Orwell paints a ruthless pic-

ture of totalitarianism for all time.

The film marries live animatronics — the testy of Jim Henson's Shop in London — and computer-generated effects to bring the inhabitants to nearly life (Think *Babe* but more well as technically about the "If it's walking, it's a imal; if it's static and imatronic," visual effor Angus Bickerton said Postlethwaite plays owner of Manor Farm Stewart, Ian Holm and mond supplying the opportunist Napoleon. "The kick Squealer and the capee Jessie, respecti-

PEOPLE IN THE

Netanyahu speaks across the na

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu talked about a need for economically stable Israel in the U.S. public speaking tour he expected to net him a big come.

More than 10,000 people attend a conference Tuesday. Netanyahu, former President country singer Naomi Judd, and others gave motivational talks touching on everything from burn body fat to how to start business.

Shai Bazak, a spokesman said it was Netanyahu's first appearances planned on circuit. He earned \$60,000 for a 30-minute speech, Israel's Aharonot newspaper reported.

Netanyahu, who lost his election bid in May, told the crowd were advantages to being de more time with family, more and "you get to read about the er guy's problems for a change.

Harding to professional

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Harding, who became a professional figure skating world after her involvement in the bashing of rival Nancy Kerrigan, make her professional debut month at the Pro Skating onships.

Harding received a life from the U.S. Figure Skating association, she can skate professionally only in nonsanctioned events the championships Oct. 10-11 in Huntington, W.Va.

The event is for skaters for Olympic competition.

"I know I've made some mistakes in my life, but I've also taken from them and won't make mistakes again. I paid my dues," Harding, 28, said in *West* *New York Times*. "If people know me they will know I'm a person with a good heart."

Harding's manager, Rosenberg, told *The Oregonian*. "She's training well. She's doing her jumps. Her costumes are great. She's ready."

Moore diagnosed with brain disorder

EAST ORANGE, N.J. (AP) — Aley Moore is beginning to show signs of a brain disorder as an incurable degenerative brain disorder that had for several years, his doctors said yesterday.

Moore, 64, was diagnosed several months ago with progressive supranuclear palsy, a rare disorder related to Parkinson's disease, said Dr. Thomas Galski, who has been working with Moore at the Kessler Institute.

"He's in the very early stages of this disease, but vision problems have started to creep in," Galski said. He said Moore was having physical and speech problems.

Moore, known for the movie *Arthur*, said in a statement Wednesday: "I understand that one person in 100,000 suffers from this disease, and I am also one of those people. I am a member of the Screen Actors Guild, and we are working every day. I think, therefore, it is in some way a consolation of me that I have taken on this disease for myself, thus protecting the remaining 99,999 SAG members from this fate."

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