

'Barbie' joins \$1 billion club, sets another record

The Associated Press

Greta Gerwig should be feeling closer to fine these days. In just three weeks in theaters, "Barbie" is set to sail past \$1 billion in global ticket sales, breaking a record for female directors that was previously held by Patty Jenkins, who helmed "Wonder Woman." "Barbie," which Gerwig directed and

co-wrote, added another \$53 million from 4,178 North American locations this weekend according to studio estimates today. The Margot Robbie-led and produced film has been comfortably seated in first place for three weeks and it's hardly finished yet. Warner Bros. said the film will cross \$1 billion before the end of the day.

In modern box office history, just

53 movies have made over \$1 billion, not accounting for inflation, and "Barbie" is now the biggest to be directed by one woman, supplanting "Wonder Woman's" \$821.8 million global total. New competition came this weekend in the form of the animated, PG-rated "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem" and the Jason Statham shark sequel, "Meg 2: The Trench,"

both of which were neck-in-neck with Christopher Nolan's "Oppenheimer," also in its third weekend, for the second-place spot.

"Meg 2" managed to sneak ahead and land in second place. Third place went to "Oppenheimer," which added \$28.7 million from 3,612 locations in North America, bringing its domestic total to \$228.6 million. In just three

weeks, the J. Robert Oppenheimer biopic starring Cillian Murphy has become the highest grossing R-rated film of the year (ahead of "John Wick Chapter 4") and the sixth-biggest of the year overall, surpassing "Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania."

Paramount's "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" was close behind in fourth place with an estimated \$28 million.

BIZ: Excited to connect

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which are topped with fruit. One bowl also features chocolate and vegan whipped cream.

"We're excited to connect with other people who have dairy and gluten allergies who are looking for something," Joseph added. "We know it's a struggle to be dealing with an allergy. We're really excited to just offer people a place to come in and feel fresh and rejuvenated."

Blended is open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday and 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. The business can be found on Facebook.

almanac

Today is Monday, Aug. 7, the 219th day of 2023. There are 146 days left in the year.

ON THIS DATE

• In 1882, the famous feud between the Hatfields of West Virginia and the McCoy's of Kentucky erupted into full-scale violence.

• In 1942, U.S. and other allied forces landed at Guadalcanal, marking the start of the first major allied offensive in the Pacific during World War II.

• In 1971, the Apollo 15 moon mission ended successfully as its command module splashed down in the Pacific Ocean.

• In 1998, terrorist bombs at U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania killed 224 people, including 12 Americans.

Today's birthdays: Former FBI Director **Robert Mueller** is 79. Actor **John Glover** is 79. Former diplomat, talk show host and activist **Alan Keyes** is 73. Marathoner **Alberto Salazar** is 65. Actor **David Duchovny** is 63. Actor **Delane Matthews** is 62. Jazz musician **Marcus Roberts** is 60. Actor **David Mann** is 57. Actor **Charlotte Lewis** is 56. Actor **Sydney Penny** is 52. Actor **Greg Serano** is 51. Actor **Michael Shannon** is 49. Actor **Charlize Theron** is 48. Rock musician **Barry Kerch** is 47. Actor **Eric Johnson** is 44. Actor **Randy Wayne** is 42. Actor-writer **Brit Marling** is 41. NHL center **Sidney Crosby** is 36. MLB All-Star **Mike Trout** is 32. Actor **Liam James** is 27.

The Associated Press

AGENCIES: Relationship building continues in communities

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official source was very helpful."

According to Dubuque County's after-action report — compiled by an outside consultant — "The stakeholders advised that the predictable cadence and information provided during meetings with the IMT were essential to their internal decision-making and information dissemination."

Even so, one of the gaps White said the county government has is its own public information distribution system.

Jo Daviess County Health Department joined a collective of surrounding Illinois agencies in the Northern Illinois Public Information Officer Group, according to Director of Clinical Services Lori Stangl.

"Between that and all of our (health) partners locally, pulling that together, for a small county, was key," she said.

Jo Daviess also reached a higher vaccination rate faster than many area counties when COVID-19 vaccines became available, partly due to videos of local health professionals who were trusted in the community promoting or receiving the vaccines.

Brittany Hubanks, Clayton County manager for UnityPoint-Health Visiting Nurse Association — which the county contracts to manage its health

department — also said a local doctor and Board of Health member proved pivotal to their success.

"Being so rural and the demographics of the population, the disbursement of that critical information, we ran into some challenges there," she said. "Our Board of Health chair is a family medicine practitioner up in Guttenberg. She spent months doing a weekly article. And people looked forward to that. And because of who she is to that community, people really trusted and knew her. It was critical to have that trusted medical voice out there to provide the information and the 'why' of it."

Hubanks also said Clayton County benefited from the VNA's presence both there and in Dubuque County, where the group also contracts public health work.

"While our Elkader office has just 15 people working out of it, they are backed up by our Dubuque office," she said. "The ability to share staff when needed, the set-up of our organization was phenomenal to have that."

All the counties reported battling COVID-19 misinformation as a top challenge, but none dwelled on it when interviewed.

Jo Daviess County ran into staffing shortages, but it had a medical reserve corps in place — volunteers

trained enough to pick up shifts, in case of emergency. The county is recruiting volunteer staff in case of another emergency.

Many of the county's said that the pandemic revealed how distant public health had grown from elected officials, news media and other stakeholder groups before COVID-19 arrived. Closing that gap, Jackson County Health Administrator Michele Cullen said, remains a priority.

"One of the good things was we got to meet a lot of our partners," she said. "You knew there was an HR person at a major employer, but you didn't know them. The school administrators you were able to get a relationship with. Our nurse in Jackson County now speaks frequently on the radio shows, whether it's about heat-related issues — ways to avoid heat stroke and other related issues — or just answering questions."

White also said that maintaining relationships, especially with Dubuque County's smaller, more rural communities, is a top priority. She said the Health Department began offering N95 masks for Canadian forest fire smoke at a small city's request.

The Delaware County (Iowa) Health Department declined to participate in this story.

The Grant County (Wis.) Health Department said they believed after action reports were confidential, so that they could not participate.



Brittany Hubanks

LOVE: Mike proposed when Sandy was just 17 years old

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into his pocket and pulled out a comb," said Sandy Kapparos, now 75. "And just the way he was running that comb through his hair. I thought, 'Not bad.' So I walked over to see if I could get his attention, and he didn't even look at me. So I thought, 'OK, well, he's not interested.'"

But as Mike got ready to make his nightly run to take the carhops home, another girl wanted to sit in the middle seat. Mike wasn't having it.

"He said 'No, Sandy sits next to me,'" Sandy said. "So when he dropped off the other girl who was sitting in the front seat, I didn't move over. I thought he'd made a move, so I'll make a move."

Unbeknownst to Sandy, Mike had had his eye on her for a while.

"I had it bad," he said. "She was so good looking."

The courtship was short and the proposal was traditional, with Mike even getting down on one knee.

"I was only 17," Sandy said. "But that's what you did in those days. Today, if I had a 17-year-old come and say they wanted to get married, I'd be locking them in a closet. But it was kind of a godsend. I was one of 10 (children), and my dad died when I was really young. It was always a struggle for (my mom), and now I would be out of the way."

Three days before their wedding, Mike lost his job at A&W, and their upcoming nuptials was the reason why.

"The owner said he couldn't have a married man taking the carhops home," he said. "And I understood that."

The couple married on May 22,

1965, and recently celebrated 58 years of marriage. They have three sons — Mike Jr., Darren and Travis. They also have nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Their first home was the first floor of Mike's parents' house.

"I took the downstairs and turned it into two apartments," Mike said. "One for us and one for my grandmother."

A talented craftsman and woodworker, Mike had done everything from remodeling kitchens to restoring cars. But as a new husband, he just needed to find work.

He found it at A.Y. McDonald, but a serious blood infection took him out of the workforce for over two years. He then went to work for Flexsteel, and then John Deere, before opening The Upholstery Shop, where he spent 42 years repairing and upholstering furniture for private customers and local stores like Slumberland Furniture.

Sandy stayed at home with the boys, working a part-time job at Kmart and keeping Mike's books at the shop. The young family eventually moved into their own home in 1970, and it is still where Mike and Sandy reside today.

Eventually, Sandy went full-time at Kmart, where she started as a cashier and left after 38 years as the human resources manager. She also worked for six years as a bus attendant for Dubuque Community Schools.

"After I left Kmart, I thought 'What am I going to do?'" she said. "I thought I'd work in the school kitchen, but then I got a call from the transportation department. I really, really enjoyed it."

After Mike had heart bypass surgery in 2020, Sandy knew that it was



Contributed

Mike and Sandy Kapparos married on May 22, 1965.

time for him to close the shop.

"I called the manager (at Slumberland) and told him what the situation was," she said. "He said, 'But he's going to get better and he's going to want something to do. Let me make a space for him here, and he can work when he wants.' So that's what we did and it has worked out."

Although Mike still does upholstery work for Slumberland, Sandy has officially retired.

"Last year I told Mike, 'I'm going to be 75 and I think I need to retire. Time to sit home and bake cookies all day,'" she said.

But far from baking cookies, the couple has kept busy with traveling and their Friday date nights with Sandy's sister Judy and her husband, Tom Priebe.

Priebe, 75, of Dubuque, has known his sister-in-law Sandy since childhood.

"We've done those date nights for over 20 years," he said. "Every Friday night."

The two couples often travel together, and will soon enjoy a vacation to the Outer Banks in North Carolina. They have also traveled together throughout the U.S. and Europe, where the family tracked down a cousin (also named Mike Kapparos) on the Isle of Crete in Greece.

"We've been to every state except Alaska," Mike said.

Tom said his sister-in-law and her husband have always been inseparable.

"They hold hands a lot," he said.

"He sends her flowers for every holiday and birthday. They talk about how they met and how wonderful it was. They're just lovey-dovey."

Mike said their long marriage has worked because they have always been a team.

"If (Sandy) is making dinner, I'll set the table, and when we're done, I'll help her clean everything up," he said. "That's just how we always work."

Sandy said the best marriage advice she ever received was from Mike's mom, Violet Kapparos.

"She told me two things," Sandy said. "One was once you put that wedding ring on your finger, it doesn't come off. Then she said, 'That boy belongs to me. So if I'm going to give him to you, you have to know that there's a no return policy. And there is no getting a new model when you get tired of this one.' She wanted me to know that marriage is forever. And I've never forgotten that."

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