Wonder Woman brings ?Girl Super-Power? to Movies in the Park

By Brock Weir

Last year, Gal Gadot's new take on the classic character Wonder Woman introduced this kickass superhero to new generations of fans, and earning close to $1 billion worldwide at the box office ? now, her unique brand of Girl Power is coming to Aurora to kick off the Movies in the Park summer series.

Aurora's annual Movies in the Park gets underway next Thursday, August 16 at Ada Johnson Park (60 Hartwell Way) with Wonder Woman.

The series continues the following Thursday, August 23, with the classic The Incredibles, which takes place at Town Park (49 Wells Street), before finishing up at Hickson Park (155 Conover Avenue) on Thursday, August 30, with Disney's Coco.

Movies in the Park covers a lot of ground this year, and that is very much by design.

?With the series being only three movies, it is always a challenge to come up with the right combination of movies that will appeal to as many groups of people as possible,? says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town. ?We'll be closing the series with Coco, which has, I'm pretty sure, touched if not all, the hearts of little kids as well as families. We are really excited to pull that one into focus and close the series with it. As well, there is a huge buzz with Incredibles 2 being in the theatres right now that a lot of people might not realise that the first Incredibles is well over 10 years old now. We decided to feature the first Incredibles as a reminder where the second sprang from.

?In the past, we have had great success with having our Superhero movie of sorts throughout the years, and this year featuring Wonder Woman, is actually the first year that we have a dominant female superhero as the main character which is really cool. We really hope that is well-received.?

The genres of movies each year are selected based on surveys and feedback received from the year before, as well as making sure that Aurora's Movies in the Park series stands out from programs in neighbouring municipalities. That includes the pre-show programming that starts at 7.30, well before the movie unspools at dusk.

?Movies in the Park is not a unique concept, but what is unique is that Aurora does pre-movie activities for the family,? says Ms. Ware. ?For each movie, we have a strong crafts component and a strong interactive component. For instance, with Wonder Woman, we're going with a mission theme so families and kids can take the challenge of completing five of the missions we've put together and when they complete the five missions, they will actually get a membership card to a superhero society.

?We try to take the experience of the movie into something tangible and also to gear up the excitement of the families before they see the actual movie. Sometimes when you go to a movie theatre, there isn't the interaction before. They try to do it up at the screen, but we take it a three dimensional level in the fact you get to paint and do crafts and games pertinent to each movie.?

Beyond arts and crafts, there's something for adults too. Last year, to mark Canada 150, the Town introduced a trivia component to Movies in the Park. It was an instant hit that was a no-brainer for a comeback.

?You could hear the voices in the audience and they were really engaged in it. We decided to incorporate plans so that before each

movie there is going to be movie trivia that goes up on the screen with multiple choices. We are really excited to see whether or not that stays a favourite of the adults. The adults are bringing their kids for the enjoyment they get, but it is nice to see how engaged the adults were.

?Planning Movies in the Park is not something that is done whimsically or carefree because you only get three movies and you really want to make sure that you've made the best choice possible. Now that the posters are out and the marketing materials are out, there has been really positive feedback and response to it. Now it's time to have fun!?

For more information, visit aurora.ca/moviesinthepark.