

Dr. Seuss' Horton Hears a Who! To Arrive in Select Theaters with Captions and Audio Descriptions for Movie Fans of All Ages

On the 14th of March, in a city near you, under a movie beam's arch, with popcorn a golden hue, they are reading, they are listening, aisle by aisle to a film about Horton, the Whos... and all have a smile.

March 6, 2008. Boston, MA. Dr. Seuss' beloved story of an elephant who hears a tiny voice on a speck of dust, and his struggle to protect the speck while he convinces everyone in his world that they're truly there, has warmed hearts since the it was first published in 1954.

Now this story of friendship and courage is coming to the big screen, and thanks to Twentieth Century Fox Films, the Media Access Group at WGBH and over 300 theaters that that have installed WGBH's *Motion Picture Access*® systems, the film can be enjoyed by patrons who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired. Captioning and video description in movie theaters and on television have great potential as literacy tools, providing unusual incentive for kids to follow along with the story while building their vocabulary. That learning can be fun is a timeless lesson not lost on Dr. Seuss!

WGBH's Motion Picture Access, or MoPix®, systems enable people who have trouble hearing a film's soundtrack or seeing a movie screen follow the action via discrete "at seat" captioning and description.

How MoPix Works:

Rear Window Captioning® - The patented Rear Window Captioning system displays reversed captions on a light-emitting diode (LED) text display which is mounted in the rear of a theater. Deaf and hard-of-hearing patrons use transparent acrylic panels attached to their seats to reflect the captions so that they appear superimposed on the movie screen. The reflective panels are portable and adjustable, enabling the caption user to sit anywhere in the theater.

DVS Theatrical® - DVS Theatrical delivers descriptive narration via infrared or FM listening systems, enabling blind and visually-impaired moviegoers to hear the descriptive narration on headsets without disturbing other audience members. The descriptions provide narrated information about key visual elements such as actions, settings, and scene changes, making movies more meaningful to people with vision loss.

A captioned and described version of the trailer for Dr. Seuss' Horton Hears a Who! can be found on the MoPix Web site at

<http://ncam.wgbh.org/richmedia/media/horton/horton.html>

MoPix systems debuted in first-run theaters in late 1997. Today, there are over 300 systems installed in the U.S. and Canada, and over 100 films are captioned and described in time for their debut in equipped theaters every year. These systems were developed in

the early '90s with initial funding from the U.S. Department of Education. Since then, the costs to install the systems and to caption and describe films have been born entirely by the private sector.

WGBH's Media Access Group is working on this particular outreach and awareness effort alongside the Described and Captioned Media Program (DCMP), a project run by the National Association of the Deaf with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, which makes classroom media accessible to students with disabilities. Learn more about DCMP's Read Captions Across America campaign at (<http://www.dcmp.org/about/prelations/events.aspx>). This outreach is also being done in conjunction and in the spirit of the National Education Association's Read Across America campaign (<http://www.nea.org/readacross/index.html>).

The following "Coming Soon" MoPix titles will be of interest to parents and teachers of children who can utilize captioning and description in theaters:

- Nim's Island (Twentieth Century Fox Films) (Apr 4)
- Speed Racer (Warner Bros. Pictures) (May 9)
- Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian (Buena Vista Pictures) (May 16)
- WALL*E (Buena Vista Pictures) (June 27)
- Space Chimps (Twentieth Century Fox Films) (July 18)
- High School Musical: Senior Year (Buena Vista Pictures) (October 24)
- Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince (Warner Bros. Pictures) (November 21)

Exhibitors that have installed MoPix systems in select locations include:

- AMC Theatres;
- Carmike Theaters;
- CEC Theatres;
- Cineplex Theatres (Canada);
- Clearview Cinemas;
- Cobb Theatres;
- Consolidated Theatres;
- Crown Cinemas;
- Douglas Theatres;
- Empire Theatres (Canada);
- Jack Loeks Theatres;
- Kerasotes Theatres;
- Loews Theaters;
- Malco Theatres;
- Marcus Theatres;
- Megaplex Theatres;
- Muvico Theatres; and
- National Amusements Theatres.

Rear Window Captioning systems may also be found throughout Walt Disney World, Disneyland and other theme parks, and at many Imax Theaters and National Parks visitors centers, some of which also are equipped with DVS Theatrical systems.

A full list of theaters equipped with MoPix, as well as lists of current and additional coming soon titles, can be found at www.mopix.org. Those interested in attending a captioned or described film should check this Web site, and contact a MoPix-equipped theater near them for accessible movie schedules.

About the Media Access Group at WGBH

The Media Access Group is a nonprofit service of Boston public broadcaster WGBH, with offices in Boston and Los Angeles. The Group includes DVS, which has made television, film and video more enjoyable to audiences who are blind or visually impaired since 1990, and The Caption Center—the world's first captioning agency—which has made audiovisual media accessible to audiences who are deaf or hard of hearing since 1972. The third branch of the Media Access Group, the WGBH – Carl and Ruth Shapiro Family National Center for Accessible Media (NCAM), is a research, development and advocacy entity that works to make existing and emerging technologies accessible to all audiences. Members of the Group's collective staff represent the leading resources and experts in their fields. For more information, please visit access.wgbh.org.

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