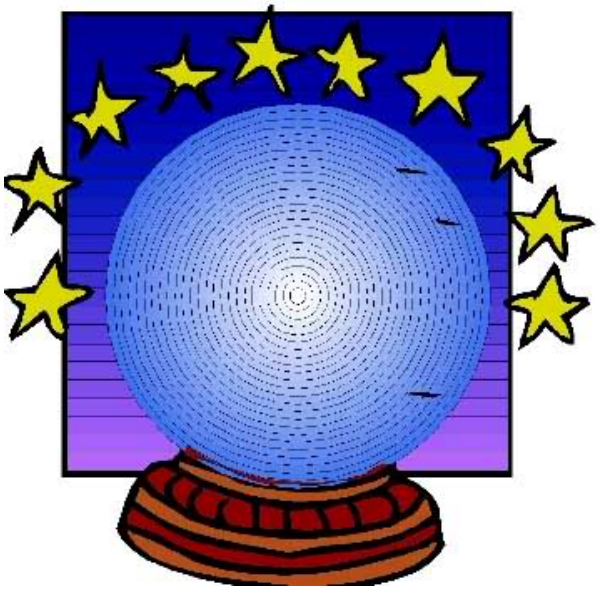
Three pretty notable theater releases as we get into the holiday season, which always features a slew of big films being released. Tonight, "The Twilight Saga: New Moon", "The Blind Side", and "Planet 51"all hit the cinemas, and Mitch has thoughts on all of them in this regular Friday night piece he does for us. Mitch also tells us about the week's big DVD releases, and some big projects being worked on ... including "Spider Man 4", the latest "Star Trek" film, and a movie based on the insanely popular video games "Call of Duty".



A brief personal note. I was touched by how many emails I have received in response to my article about my granddaughter Zoe's fight with CDH. Your heartfelt condolences meant so much to my family and me. I haven't responded individually to each one of them yet, as it's simply too hard right now to revisit these emotions time and time again; but please accept my most humble appreciation and thanks to each of you.

News and Rumors

~ Is there anything that might get me even remotely interested in "Spider-Man 4"? Maybe this; Anne Hathaway is rumored to have been approached to "star in the film". The same rumor says that she isn't there to replace Kirsten Dunst as Mary Jane...so the best guess is that they want her to be Felicia Hardy, aka The Black Cat.

~ Is JJ Abrams about to play it safe? That's my concern regarding a rumor I'm

hearing about the next Star Trek movie. The ingenious director has been reported to be looking to resurrect the Khan character in the next film, and may be looking to one of his "Lost" actors to play the role...Nestor Carbonell, who plays the ageless Richard Alpert on the series.

~ For those of you addicted to Blu-Ray, I have some great news. "Leon: The Professional" has been released in blu-ray format. Looks like there has just been another reason added to my list for "why I need a Blu-ray player for Christmas".

~ Lots of buzz about a movie based on the insanely popular video games "Call of Duty". Kevin McKidd (Lucius Vorenus in "Rome") is being discussed as starring in the adaptation.

~ The more I see of the cast list from Tim Burton's "Alice in Wonderland", the more excited I am to watch it once it's released next Summer. We all know of Johnny Depp as the Mad Hatter, and of course you must have Helena Bonham Carter (Mrs. Burton) as the Red Queen, but check out some of the others; Anne Hathaway as the White Queen, Christopher Lee as the Jabberwock, Michael Sheen ("Frost/Nixon", "Underworld") as the White Rabbit, Alan Rickman as the Caterpillar (RAH!), Timothy Spall (Harry Potter movies) as The Bloodhound, and Cripin Glover(?!?!) ast The Knave of Hearts. No truth to the rumors that LSD will be handed out at the theaters.

Stupid Remakes and Sequels

~ I had earlier talked about an upcoming movie based on the video game "Space Invaders". Turns out the movie will have nothing to do with the classic arcade game...instead it will be a romantic comedy about a man going out into space after suspecting that his astronaut girlfriend is cheating on him. Ooookay then.

~ The only good thing to come from the recession. Disney is pulling the plug on the McG directed remake of "Captain Nemo: 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea". Given how much McG sucked as the "visionary" behind the tepid "Terminator: Salvation", this is wonderful news.

This week's new movie releases:

The Twilight Saga: New Moon

Starring: Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson, Taylor Lautner

Plot: When Edward and his family leave Forks, Washington "for Bella's safety", Bella turns to wild living, and grows closer to Jacob.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Try getting close to the theater this weekend. They will all be full of teenage girls...and most likely their mothers as well, as this is one movie that is critic proof. I can vouch for that, as my youngest sister and her 13 year old daughter have already gotten all over my case, pleading me to "be nice" when I review it, as they are positive that it's going to be greater than "Casablanca". For those of us not drinking the Kool-Aid, our opinion of this film will probably be the same as our opinion of the first one; because that's all it really is; more of the same.

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The Blind Side

Starring: Sandra Bullock, Quinton Aaron, Tim McGraw

Plot: A disadvantaged teen in West Memphis is taken in my a rich, conservative white family who see the potential in him.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: It's a football movie, so you know I'm going to be wanting to see it...even if the central character in this true story ended up being drafted this year by the hated Baltimore Ratbirds. Decent buzz about this movie...but football fans that were fans of the book may be disappointed as the movie will be a lot sappier than the book, which had a lot more x's and o's breakdowns of offensive line play.

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Planet 51

Starring: The voices of Dwayne Johnson, Seann William Scott, Jessica Biel

Plot: The inhabitants of Planet 51 live in fear of alien invasion. Their paranoia is realized when astronaut Chuck Baker (voice of Dwayne Johnson) arrives from Earth. Befriended by a young resident, he has to avoid capture in order to recover his spaceship and try to return home.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: This one is getting blasted by the critics. I like the "human-as-an-alien" concept, but the delivery is said to be poor. The 5 - 8 year olds may enjoy it, but that's about it.

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New DVD Releases: Tuesday, November 24th

Angels &amp; Demons **-** Many critics said that this film was better than &quot;The DaVinci Code&quot;. I wasn't one of them. Now I will concede that there is a lot more action and fun in this movie, but it came at the
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expense of logic and a believable script. But it's still Tom Hanks, and he does a great job again as Professor Robert Landon. Definitely worth renting if you even half-way enjoyed the first movie.

***Four Christmases* -** Intelligent marketing, holding back this surprise hit from 2008 until the next year's holiday season. Vince Vaughn and Reese Witherspoon have some good chemistry as a couple "forced" to visit all four of their divorced parents.

***Funny People* -** Judd Apatow gets semi-serious in this tale of a Billy Crystal/Robin Williams type standup comedian-turned-actor (Adam Sandler) dealing with some serious life issues. Didn't quite satisfy Apatow fans looking for "Knocked Up" level yucks, nor did it draw in the non-Apatow fans intrigued by the story. I missed it at the theater as well, but will be adding it to my Netflix Queue.

***Shorts* -** Robert Rodriguez goes back to a kiddie movie for the first time since "Spy

Kids"...with disappointing results.

Calendar Watch

Next week; *The Road*, *Old Dogs, Ninja Assassin*

Upcoming Biggies (click on the hyperlink to view the available trailers).

Brothers - December 4 - Tobey Maguire stars as a soldier assumed to be dead. His unexpected return finds his house in an uproar as his brother (Jake Gyllenhaal) has taken head of the house responsibilities with his wife (Natalie Portman).

Invictus - December 11 - Clint Eastwood directs a

look at life of Nelson Mandela (Morgan Freeman) after the fall of apartheid in South Africa during his first term as president when campaigned to host the 1995 Rugby World Cup event as an opportunity to unite his countrymen.

The Lovely Bones - December 11 (limited, expanding at Christmas) - Peter Jackson's latest, about the ghost of a young, murdered girl watching over her family and friends' reactions to the event. Mark Wahlberg and Rachel Weisz star.

Avatar - December 18 - James Cameron has spent years putting together this big budget, CGI heavy film about a strange, distant world and its inhabitants. Not getting a lot of love from the fanbois, though.

Up in the Air - December 25 George Clooney as a corporate-downsizing expert whose cherished life on the road is threatened just as he is on the cusp of reaching ten million frequent flyer miles and just after he's met the frequent-traveler woman of his dreams.

Nine - December 25 - Musical version of Fellini's classic *8 ½,* about a famous film director and all the women he deals with. With Daniel Day-Lewis, Penelope Cruz, Nicole Kidman, Kate Hudson, Sophia Loren, and Judi Dench.

Sherlock Holmes - December 25th - Guy Ritchie's interpretation of the famous sleuth, with Robert Downey, Jr. in the lead role

The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus -

December 25 - A story-telling doctor's deal with the devil sends him scrambling to save his daughter on the eve of her 16th birthday. Terry Gilliam's wild tale is the last movie from Heath Ledger, who passed during shooting. In his place, Colin Farrel, Jude Law, and Johnny Depp all play the same character as Ledger, in a "Doctor Who" type manner.

The Book of Eli - January 15 - Denzel Washington as a lone man fighting his way across a post apocalyptic country in order to protect a sacred book that holds the secrets to saving humankind.

The Wolfman - February 12 - Lots of date changes for this remake of the classic horror

tale, starring Benicio Del Torro and Anthony Hopkins. Let's hope that doesn't mean that this is a stinker.

Shutter Island - February 19 - Martin Scorsese working once again with Leonardo DiCaprio in this mystery set in 1954. Pushed back from 2009 due to marketing concerns...this still looks like an incredible movie.