

Serving The
San Jacinto Valley

HEMET NEWS

Supplement to The Press-Enterprise

Scientologists throw a party for film studio opening

By LAURIE KOCH THROWER
Staff writer

The promise of a free dinner in an estate-like atmosphere, plus live entertainment, were enough to entice Barbara Moke to spend her Saturday evening behind the gates of Church of Scientology's newest film studio.

Moke, a volunteer at the Hemet Police Department, said her office received an invitation to the opening of The Castle, the sprawling film studio operated by Golden Era Productions in Gilman Hot Springs.

"This is the perfect place for a party," she said, while partaking of the buffet dinner on

The Castle grounds.

Golden Era Productions makes training and education films for Church of Scientology members. Members said the films made inside a 75,000-square-foot studio will be distributed internationally and produced in 53 languages.

To celebrate the opening of the \$7 million studio, Golden Era threw a party, and invited roughly 900 area leaders and members of the public to attend.

The exterior of the 35mm film studio is designed to resemble a Scottish castle, complete with turrets and battlements.

Political leaders from the San Jacinto Valley joined Michael Rinder, a board mem-

ber of the Church of Scientology International, in cutting the bright red ribbon tied across the stage at the front of The Castle.

Several local officials praised the church for its involvement in community activities.

"I would like to say on behalf of the city of Hemet, Golden Era Productions has really been a partner of ours," said Hemet City Councilwoman Robin Lowe.

San Jacinto Vice Mayor Joan Good presented Golden Era with a resolution from the city council marking the opening of the new facility, and Riverside County Supervisor Jim Venable presented a plaque.

As scissors cut through the ribbon, hun-

dreds of colored balloons rose out of the castle roof into the sky.

A troupe of bagpipe players led visitors into The Castle. The guests were split into groups and taken through the complex by six different routes.

Teri Pino and Debb Morgan joked about being a little nervous venturing behind The Castle's walls.

The two are emergency room nurses at Hemet Valley Medical Center, where they received their invitations.

Pino said that when Golden Era first settled in Gilman Hot Springs about 20 years ago, some people were a little wary of the

whole thing.

After touring The Castle, it will seem a lot less mysterious, she said.

Morgan said one thing was missing. "I want to see Johnny or Tom," she said.

However, Scientology's most famous members, Tom Cruise and John Travolta, couldn't even be spotted on the many film posters that lined the wall of the entrance to The Castle.

Films with titles like "The Solo Auditor" and "The History of the E-Meter," are designed to teach members how to apply the principles of Scientology founder L. Ron

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Doug Benc/Staff photographer
The Church of Scientology's Golden Era Productions Film Studio hosted the grand opening of "The Castle", a state-of-the-art film studio that is capable of holding 12 film sets simultaneously, built in Gilman Hot Springs, at the base of the San Jacinto Mountains.

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Hubbard.

Tour guides escorted people into the audition and dressing rooms,

and into the massive soundstage.

After the tour, guests were invited to mingle on the grounds, and be entertained by Celtic Gold, an Irish dance troupe, and The Golden Era Musicians.