

LOCAL

Watch a background scene from 'BOLIO' filmed in downtown Gardner: See who's in the movie

Scenes filmed depicted soapbox derby race on Graham St.



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G-Vegas became G-Hollywood for a day.

The cast and crew of “[BOLIO: Spirit of the Mustang](#)” were joined by dozens of local extras in downtown Gardner on Wednesday to film scenes for the movie which tells the tale of a depressed high school teacher whose life is forever changed when he meets a dynamic life coach.

A portion of Graham St. was dressed as the starting line for a soapbox derby race. In the scene being filmed Wednesday morning, extras were given handmade signs as props and pretended to be cheering as the racers approached their cars. Some background actors were directed to react directly to the camera as a Steadicam operator moved through the crowd.

Director Jim Issa could be seen coordinating the action and keeping the mood festive as the cast and crew waited on their marks under the hot sun.

Among those appearing as background extras in the scene was Angela Desrochers of West Townsend, who was joined by her daughters Olivia and Emily.

“We were told there was a movie being filmed in Gardner and that anybody could sign up to be extras,” said Angela. “It’s a really fun experience, and it’s good for the girls to experience this and see how movies are made.”

The Desrochers family will be notable onscreen because they were all dressed in green jumpsuits, at the direction of the movie’s wardrobe director.

“I’m excited but also a little nervous,” said Olivia, shortly before the cameras rolled. “They told me to try to not look at the camera, but that’s usually the first thing I would look at.”

Emily said she was interested in pursuing a career in acting.

“I like watching the filming,” she said.

Sherwood Dixon of Bolton said he signed up along with his daughter, Sofia, to be a background extra because he thought it would be a fun experience.

“A couple of the main actors were right in front of us, so it was really fun to be a part of something like this,” he said. “This will be something to show our family.”

Background extras treated to free lunch at City Hall

Among the notable actors appearing in the scene were Sarah Baker, Eugene Cordero, and Gabriel Hogan.

Although the background extras were not paid for their performances, they were treated to a free lunch that was served in Perry Auditorium inside City Hall.

Aniaya Marie Fisher, 14, of Gardner observed that the opportunity to appear in the background of a movie was not something that happened that often in this area.

“I thought it would be a fun thing to do over the summer,” she said.

As a schoolteacher on summer vacation, Diana Peters of Worcester thought auditioning to become a background extra sounded like a fun opportunity.

“I saw it advertised in the Worcester Telegram, and I thought it would be a fun way to spend the day,” she said.

Ryann Jerome, who also teaches school in Worcester, said she had some previous experience as a background extra with the same production company.

“I was in a Hallmark Christmas movie that they shot, and they kind of followed up with me and asked if I wanted to work again on this movie,” Jerome said. “I took theater in college, so this is something that I’m passionate about.”

Ruth Adams of Winchendon described herself as an aspiring actress.

“I thought this could be my first opportunity to spend some time on a movie set,” she said.

Additional scenes to feature school assembly, '80s mixer

Several of the background extras will be back in the city on Thursday to film a scene set at a 1980s-style mixer party. Additional scenes are scheduled to be filmed at the former Elm St. School building and the Blue Moon Diner. Scenes were also shot at a home on Bickford Hill Rd.

According to a prop sign in the scene, the race takes place in Grady Hills on Saturday, June 28.

Several children appeared as extras in an earlier scene that was filmed in a storefront that was dressed as the “Whiz Wheel Pottery Shop.”

The producers are still encouraging residents – especially teenagers – to sign up to appear as extras in the movie.

The current filming schedule is weekdays through Aug. 1. Extras must be non-union actors, and because these are voluntary roles there will be no compensation. All extras must be able to self-report to the location, and anyone under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

Anyone interested in signing up to be an extra can do so by emailing the producers at bolioextras@gmail.com or Joshua Cormier, the city's film liaison, at jcormier@gardner-ma.gov. The movie's website can be found [here](#).