

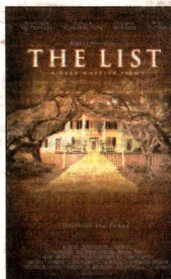


TRIVIA
Tom Kite was the first in PGA TOUR history to reach \$6 million, \$7 million, \$8 million, and \$9 million in career earnings.

11
DAYS TILL TEE OFF

Eduardo Romero is nicknamed "El Gato" (The Cat) because of the way he stealthily stalks and overcomes opponents.

**OPENING
FRIDAY: N.C.
DIRECTOR
DISCUSSES
LATEST FILM,
'THE LIST.'**
A9



'The List' opens Friday

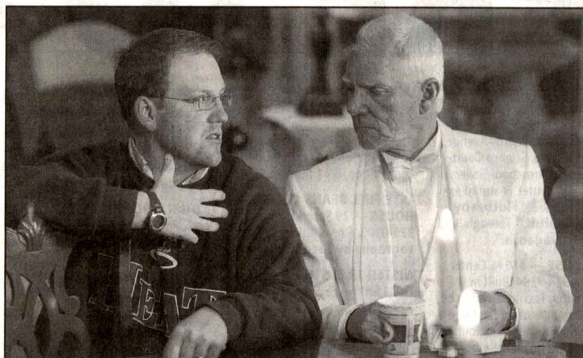
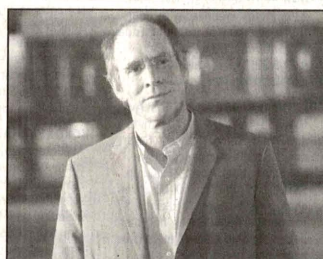
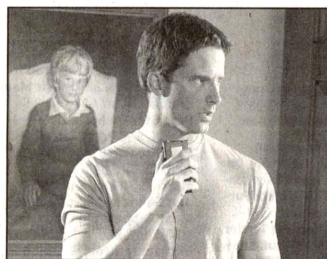
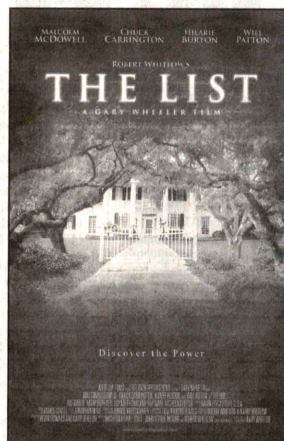


PHOTO COURTESY OF JONATHAN STANLEY, ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

ABOVE: Gary Wheeler, director, and Malcolm McDowell as Desmond LaRochette. **RIGHT:** The Poster for 'The List.' **BELOW (left to right):** Chuck Carrington as Renny Jacobson, Hilarie Burton as Jo Johnston and Will Patton as Michael Harriston.



N.C. director's movie playing at Carmike 14

BY DEE HENRY
RECORD STAFF WRITER

HICKORY

Even Gary Wheeler admits his first stab at filmmaking resulted in "the worst movie ever made."

He made "Corruption of the Soul" for a school project during his senior year at East Mecklenburg High School in Charlotte.

Undeterred by his first try, he and some friends traveled to New York that summer to make "The Dirty Half Dozen," the "second worst movie ever made," Wheeler said. That movie was followed by its sequel, made again in New York about one year later.

"We had a premiere for it; I walked out of the premiere," he laughs.

But Wheeler never gave up. "It's in me, whatever that means," he said, and that perseverance has paid off. His latest film, "The List," made through his Level Path Productions, broke the opening weekend record at the Ballantyne Village Theatre in Charlotte by \$5,000 when it opened there Aug. 10. The record was held previously by Oscar winner "Little Miss Sunshine."

It opens at Carmike 14 in Hickory on Friday.

The movie is based on the novel by the same name by Robert Whitlow, also a North Carolina native. The theme of the power of prayer, shown in the book and movie through the character of Daisy Stokes, was what really drew Wheeler to the project, although Stokes is not a main character.

"I couldn't sleep one night, so I ended up reading half of the book," he said. "It is so touching and so powerful."

But he adds that even a powerful message has to be packaged attractively.

"Ultimately, at the end of the day, it has to be a good story," he said, "and this is a good story. It's about a young man at the

'THE LIST' DETAILS

Genre: Suspense/Thriller
Rating: PG for thematic elements including some peril and brief incidental smoking

Run Time: 1 hr. 45 min.

Director: Gary Wheeler

Writers: Michelle Hoppe, Jonathan H.

Moore, Gary Wheeler and Robert Whitlow

Cast: Malcolm McDowell, Chuck

Carrington, Hilarie Burton, Will Patton

and Pat Hingle

Company: Level Path Productions

For more information: Call Carmike 14 for

showtimes at 304-0004, box office at

304-0089 or visit: www.thelist-movie.com

www.thelist-movie.com

crux of his life."

The young man is attorney Renny Jacobson (Chuck Carrington), who is left a percentage of the mysterious Covenant List of South Carolina, Ltd. in his father's will. He discovers "The List" consists of descendants of 10 men who, shortly after the Civil War ended, feared losing their wealth and so pooled it before dividing it between foreign banks. The accounts are now worth millions of dollars and a group of heirs, including Jacobson and Jo Johnston, played by Hilarie Burton of the WB's "One Tree Hill," are meeting for then to be inducted into the group. The secrets to be unearthed during the film have only started, as Jacobson continues to discover secrets about the group and his family.

Wheeler is pleased with the cast he hired for the film. He believes they have wide appeal and will draw a large, diverse audience.

In addition to Burton, whose television show has a large pre-teen and teenage audience, the cast includes Carrington, best known for his seven-year stint as Petty

Officer Tiner on CBS's "JAG."

Will Patton (Michael Harriston) appeared in "Remember the Titans" and "Armageddon," and Pat Hingle (Gus Eicholtz) is best known for playing Commissioner Gordon in the "Batman" movies.

Last, but not least, is Malcolm McDowell (Desmond LaRochette), who has two movies opening at the Carmike 14 on Friday. He also stars in "Halloween."

"I guess it will be the battle of good and evil at the Carmike as 'The List' goes against 'Halloween,'" Wheeler joked.

Wheeler, who is a Christian, said the casting and shooting of the movie went so smoothly he believes a higher power was involved. He calls the casting of Carrington "providential" as the actor happened to walk into a Wilmington Starbucks Coffee when Wheeler and a partner in making the film were discussing the role of Renny.

"(Carrington) was there for one week, on vacation with his family," Wheeler said. "And he intended to go to another Starbucks, but the wireless wasn't working."

Carrington auditioned and got the job during his vacation.

There's also the fact that filming took only 27 days — 25 in Wilmington and two in Charleston, S.C. Part of the speed was due to the weather, which complied with the script.

"It was such a smooth shoot. When we needed it to rain, it rained; when we needed sun, it was sunny," Wheeler marveled.

The crew was almost exclusively North Carolinians, including director of photography Tom Priestley Jr. Priestley's credits include "Midnight Cowboy," "Annie Hall," "Sophie's Choice," and "Amadeus."

"(The movie) looks beautiful and it's all because of him," Wheeler said.