

Making Our Way



A McMAHON / CHEYNE PODCAST

#68 • Season 3 • Episode 7

10/22/2025

At the Movies

Our Hosts

Janet Cheyne McMahon is a lover of family, dogs, nature, travel, books, and music. Born south of the Mason-Dixon line, she left after 9 months for parts north, landing eventually in Michigan, which will always be “where I’m from.”

Love of learning led Jan to a Bachelor of Arts (History, Political Science) at the University of Michigan-Dearborn (Go Blue), and a Master of Arts (Library and Information Science) at the University of South Florida. Amid all that, studied for a time with Rob at Colorado State University, a pivotal time in their lives.

Worked at the U of M-Dearborn Library, and then The Salvation Army Florida Divisional Headquarters, with the greatest reward being in serving as the Divisional Librarian. A librarian is who Jan is “in my soul.”

Jan and Rob have made our home in Florida since 1983, and live now in retirement with their dog, Skye, who makes it all the best adventure. They travel as much as possible, spending time in nature and in diverse places on this amazing planet. It has all been, and continues to be a fascinating journey, with hope of making a difference, in small ways, by being brave enough to speak and act on behalf of others.

Rob McMahon is a native Michigander, born in Saginaw and raised in the suburbs of Detroit. Rob attended Michigan State University, graduating in 1978 with a Bachelor of Science degree. He did graduate studies at the University of Michigan and the University of South Florida. Rob is retired, having spent 36 years in public education teaching both high school chemistry and biology and middle school science. He worked as a total quality management trainer for the Pinellas County School District and served four years as the president of the Pinellas Classroom Teachers Association. Rob cofounded a non-profit total quality management training center, The Learning Co-op, for Teacher Unions interested in applying the W. Edwards Deming continuous improvement principles to their day-to-day operations. He worked with teacher unions in Colorado, Maryland, New Mexico, North Dakota, Texas and Michigan. He also worked in a similar capacity with Jim Shipley & Associates. In retirement Rob has written a series of science related children’s books, and enjoys traveling with his wife, Jan, and their Black Labrador Retriever, Skye.

Deanna Cheyne, born in St. John’s, Newfoundland, earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Toronto (1996), studying with such luminaries as Elmer Eisler, Doreen Rao, Greta Kraus, Lois Marshall, and Rosemarie Landry.

Dee taught music at Mississauga Christian Academy, served as music director for Meadowvale Bible Baptist Church (Mississauga, Ontario), served as Assistant Divisional Music Director for The Salvation Army in Florida, is a former member of Tampa’s Master Chorale, and, for the past 18 years, has been a public school teacher.

Dee has visit 36 of the 50 U.S. states, and 12 countries. Her favorite destinations include France, Prague, New Orleans, National Parks, & Hawaii.

Dee & Jim live in Florida with Brigus (Golden Retriever) and Pip (Teacup Yorkie).

James Cheyne, born in Galesburg, Illinois, earned a Bachelor of Music degree (Theory and Composition) from Michigan State University (1978); and a Master of Music degree (Theory and Composition) from the University of Illinois Urbana/Champaign (1981), studying with David Liptak, Salvatore Martirano, and Ben Johnston.

Jim has served as music director for The Salvation Army in Central Illinois & Eastern Iowa, Orlando Area Command, and the Florida Division, served as a pastor with The Salvation Army, and was a public school teacher for 17 years.

In travel so far, Jim has visited 50 states and 27 countries. His favorite travel destinations include National Parks, New Orleans, Newfoundland, Argentina, Prague, & France.

Jim continues to write music and support Dee’s musical endeavors, and cooks whenever absolutely necessary. Jim & Dee live in Florida with their dogs Brigus & Pip.



L-R: Brigus, Jim, Deanna, Skye, Jan, Rob.
Inset: Pip

At the Movies

#68 - Season 3; Episode 7

10/22/2025

Hosts: Jan, Rob, Dee, & Jim.

| Making Our Way goes to the movies to review 7 films: *The Naked Gun (2025)*, *Superman (2025)*, *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, *Sharknado*, *The Thursday Murder Club*, *The Outfit*, and *War of the Worlds (2025)*.

[Music]

JIM (voice-over): You think you know someone, and then you ask them to name their 3 favorite movies of all time, and you're lucky if you guess maybe 1 of them. The 4 of us know each other well, but we've learned that our taste in cinema is - if not eclectic, at least surprising. We reviewed 7 movies for this episode - 5 were released this year, 2 are timeless classics.

Stayed tuned to the end where we reveal the results of our trademark 5-star review system, as tabulated by vintage Domion Voting Systems technology.

Now, join us - won't you? - as we Make Our Way to the Movies.

[Music]

JIM: This new Naked Gun movie. Have you guys seen it?

JAN: Yeah, we saw it.

ROB: Yeah.

JIM: See it in a theater? Rent it? Stream it? Avoid it?

ROB: I'd say wait till it comes to TV. It is good, and I think for a new generation that's not familiar with the Police Squad and Leslie Nielsen, that they will love it. But nobody did that like Leslie Nielsen did. He's just so good. Liam Nielsen does a fine job, and there's some really good parts of the film that that were very funny, but I'm jaded because I know the original. And maybe it shouldn't be a problem for me, but it is.

JAN: I don't have the expertise of Rob on the Police Squad. I did watch it, but with less enthusiasm than Rob. But I would also say wait till it comes out, see it streaming. I would watch it a second time because there's a lot that goes on that I didn't catch the first time. So I'd watch it a second time for that. And then I probably would close the book on that.

ROB: There are some things from the original that they've thrown in there that you wouldn't have any idea if you hadn't yeah if you hadn't seen the original before.

JAN: Yeah.

ROB: What do you call those?

JIM: Callback?

ROB: Yeah, or uh you know, just a...

JIM: Reference?

JAN: Review? Reference?

ROB: Reference, yeah...

JAN: Okay.

ROB: ...but it's like an homage, an homage to the...

JIM: Oh, homage!

JAN: Homage! An homage!

ROB: There you go. That's my French. I didn't know that was the word you were going for. An homage.

ROB: Right.

JAN: You know, in fairness to my judgment, there is hardly any movie nowadays that I wouldn't prefer to see at home. And I realize that's not the artistic approach. I just would rather be at home than in a theater and enjoy it that way.

JIM: When we go to the Tampa Theater, which is a dynamite experience, this is where I would depart and say, that's where to watch Christmas movies, their summer blockbusters, they had Casablanca, they had Wizard of Oz. We could go and see Wonderful Life, or whatever...

JAN: And I agree with that. That is a place I would go to see a movie. And it would be about the experience in that theater...

ROB: In that theater.

JAN: ...as well as the movie, but rarely do I have that anymore. Since COVID...

JIM: Yeah.

JAN: ...I've been to maybe two movies.

JIM: Oh yeah. Thumbs up? Thumbs down? Four stars? Five stars? How would you...

ROB: Thumbs up. It's it's good. It's well done. I wasn't sure Liam Neeson was right for the part. I thought when I first heard it, I thought, "This's gotta be a joke." But, he does a good job. And um what's her name?

DEE: Pamela Anderson.

ROB: Pamela Anderson.

DEE: They're dating in real life.

ROB: Oh that's right, they are. I heard that. Yeah.

JIM: When it comes on, I should check that out.

JAN: Yeah, you should.

JIM: All right.

JAN: You should - you'll appreciate some of the pokes.

JIM: Check it out. It's good. Do it at home. Dee, what movies have you seen recently?

DEE: We saw Superman in the theater.

JIM: We did.

DEE: I was okay. Yeah, it was good. I love the original with Christopher Reeves. But it was good. I think you can wait to see it at home.

JIM: This is one of those CGI action things which really benefits from a big screen. Do you think it's - is it worth - I mean we've got to...

DEE: I mean if you're if you're into those movies you would want to see it on the big screen.

JIM (voice-over): Voice-over Jim here. While editing, I noticed we didn't spend the time discussing Superman it deserves. This is a very good movie, and a refreshing return to the charm and humanity of Christopher Reeve. For me, good movies live on compelling stories, complex characters, and good acting, which Superman has, but for my taste, they're hidden behind the CGI-drenched eye candy we've come to expect in a culture stuck in spectator mode. You should be warned, this movie has Krypto the superdog, and ever since Old Yeller, John Wick, and Kristi Noem, I worry when dogs show up. For listeners who just have to know ahead of time what happens to the dog, I have a 5-second spoiler coming, so you might want to hit mute in 3, 2, 1. Ready? Krypto survives - barely. Everyone okay? With that done, let's get back to the discussion where Dee will tell us what she thinks is the best movie of all time, hands down.

DEE: The best movie of all time, hands down, is A Charlie Brown Christmas.

JIM: A Charlie Brown Christmas. What is it about it you like?

DEE: I've been a Peanuts fan. I cannot remember not loving Peanuts. It's my childhood, it's cozy, it feels safe. There's a sense of comfort when I watch it. It takes me back to a - a smell, a mood, being in my home, lying on the carpet, and everything is good in the world.

JIM: Yeah.

JAN: Nostalgic. It's nostalgic.

DEE: Yes.

JIM: That's good. Is that the one where the kids are singing or oohing to Hark the Herald Angels Sing...

DEE: Yeah, all of that is on there.

JIM: ...and they're reading the Luke Christmas story?

JAN: Yup.

DEE: Yeah, that's it.

JAN: I used that in a chapel at DHQ once.

JIM: That's nice.

DEE: Yeah, I mean there's a lot of movies I like, but if I go to the one that means the most to me, that's the one. And then THE worst one I could come up with, we saw with my niece, and it took a while for me to remember this one because I think I wanted to filter it out of my brain, that was Sharknado. And Sylvana...

JIM: Which Sharknado was it?

DEE: I don't know. I don't care. All I know is, it was horrid. And Silvana was like, "You have to watch this." And I'm like, "No, I really don't." It was ridiculous.

JIM: Yeah!

DEE: So anyways, that's the worst one.

JIM: Is it so bad it was good?

DEE: No, it wasn't even that.

JIM: No, it wasn't even that. I thought we had something redeeming.

ROB: So bad it was worse. *[Laughs]*

JIM: Sharknado. *[to Jan]* Do you want to go?

JAN: Yeah, I was excited to see The Thursday Murder Club. First of all, I enjoyed the book. There was a lot of hype about this coming out, but it's set in a senior citizen's residence, and they solve murders. There are four people, they work as a team, and they solve unsolved murders. And then they get involved in solving one that happened right there. Things I like about it are it's comfortable, it's cozy, it's got great actors, they act form a good ensemble. I'm not going to be startled by anything horrid happening. I like the way senior citizens are engaged in both the book and the movie. They're treated mostly with respect and when they're not, you recognize it as a poor choice. So, as a senior citizen now I know a little bit more about what it's like to be invisible and dismissed, and you miss the expertise that the senior citizens can bring to solving a problem. And that comes through both in the book and the movie. It's not heavy, it's charming, it's delightful, it's comfortable.

JIM: Yeah.

JAN: Rob saw it without seeing without reading the book, so he could speak to it.

ROB: It's very good.

JIM: We saw it last night.

DEE: Mm-Hmm.

JIM: And then I almost was going to take this as the movie that I want to talk about rather than the ones I got. So the principles in there?

ROB: Yeah.

JAN: Helen Mirren, Pierce Brosnan, Ben Kingsley, and uh Celia...

JIM: Imrie?

JAN: Yeah, yeah.

JIM: So it's those four and then someone came in after that, Dee. Who was that that you saw and said this is it?

DEE: Tom Ellis.

JIM: Tom Ellis, who we know from...?

DEE: Lucifer.

JIM: Lucifer. And you've always wanted him for a James Bond, didn't you?

DEE: Yes, because he plays Pierce Brosnan's son. I thought it would be perfect.

JIM: Well he did a good job in this, but he was underutilized. I mean he could do...

DEE: Yeah.

JIM: ...he can do a lot. So that was a delightful movie.

JAN: It's my hope that it becomes a series.

DEE: Yeah.

JAN: Because there's a series of books, and I think that ensemble would work well.

JIM: Should Naked Gun be a series?

JAN: Gosh no. Oh sorry.

[Laughter]

ROB: They could do another one. I mean I really think there's an another generation...

DEE: Yeah, I hear what you're saying.

ROB: ...of people that would uh would like it

JIM: So these two movies you've chosen are different age spectrum, right?

JAN: They really are.

JIM: Adolescent versus...

JAN: Senior citizen.

JIM: mature.

JAN: Yeah, mature.

JIM: Seasoned, yeah.

JAN: Yeah.

JIM: The thing in The Thursday Murder Club I really liked is when Helen Mirren walks out, whose character's name is Elizabeth.

ROB: Yeah.

JIM: And she walks out, and I'm thinking she's dressed just like she was in The Queen.

JAN: Yes.

JIM: When she played that.

JAN: Perfect.

JIM: And then it occurred to me, she's married to Jonathan Price in both movies. He played Prince Philip...

ROB: That's right.

JIM: ...to her Elizabeth.

JAN: This is why you need to take this movie, too, because you're gonna pick up on things that went flying by me.

JIM: When she walked out...

JAN: Yes.

JIM: ...you recognized right away...

JAN: I did.

JIM: ...that's when she's out in the in the countryside.

ROB: But he says that, doesn't he? He says...

JIM: "You look just like the queen."

ROB: "You look like the queen."

JIM: It's just one of those inside little winks that they give to the audience that I liked.

ROB: I missed that.

JIM: Yeah. And then towards the end, there's a scene that everyone will - I'm not gonna talk about right now, but I was really hit with the emotion of it. They got me on that one. I was expecting things to just kind of float across. No big scares, no big violence other than the murders. But then they they had a very meaningful scene, and Ben Kingsley finally had some lines to deliver. He really didn't have a lot to do in the movie until then. So would you say - well that's only streaming, isn't it?

JAN: Yeah.

DEE: Yeah.

JIM: Okay. If they can do a series, that would be nice.

JAN: The books are good. I would commend the book. I'm in a murder/mystery kind of mode right now, and...

DEE: So am I. I'm reading murder/mystery.

JAN: It can be light. I enjoy the trying to figure out what happened, not the actual murder part, but uh which is what this is about. Trying to figure out what happened.

JIM: Is there an author that you go to for that?

JAN: Well, I'm gonna go with Richard Osman and the series that he's done here, because that's what they are. And I just like the way his characters are developed. Louise Penny, she's from Quebec. We got to see her at a book signing. And uh William Kent Krueger.

ROB: Yes.

JAN: Good series. They're a little more tense than what I like, to be honest.

JIM: Have you ever read any, uh, Dick Francis?

JAN: Mom did.

JIM: That's what I was gonna say. She liked that. There was always something about horse racing in his novels, but was he a mystery writer?

JAN: Yes, but I didn't read I have not read his books, but I always associate mom with that.

JIM: Yeah, yeah. Rob was talking about a movie that's really going to appeal to younger kids. And Jan's talking about one that's going to appeal to a more mature audience. And I've seen two movies this summer that fit both of those. One is called The Outfit. The star of this is Mark Rylance. You might remember him from Bridge of Spies. So he's a tailor in Chicago during the mob time. His clients mostly are mob people. So, okay, this is going to be a mob picture, but the whole thing's taking place inside his shop. So there's nothing like The Untouchables and all the gunplay all over Chicago and all the period stuff. This is all within this shop. He becomes the center of "which way is this story turning"?

ROB: Yeah.

JIM: So he has a backstory that is revealed bit by bit by bit, and then finally at the climax of it, it's revealed - his backstory. But he's holding all the cards. And you can't figure him out. It looked like a play that had been filmed. There was Alfred Hitchcock movie called Rope, Jimmy Stewart, where everything was done right there in an apartment. Feels claustrophobic, but your imagination is going with it. Then there was one - I don't know if we saw this in the theater, Jan, when we were kids. It's called Sleuth, and it was Sir Laurence Olivier and Michael Caine, and they were the only ones in it. Who done it? Who's guilty? And the tension that they build up just by dialogue. You didn't need all the visuals of everything else. Everything happened right there in your imagination. And I would highly recommend this called The Outfit.

JAN: The Outfit.

JIM: On IMDB, the internet movie database, it gets a rating of 7.2, which is very good. And on Rotten Tomatoes, it gets a rating of 86%. Very high. And so I would recommend that one.

JAN: And would you recommend it to your sister?

JIM: Yes.

DEE: Yeah.

JAN: Really?

JIM: Yes.

JAN: Not too tense?

JIM: There's nothing gratuitous. When violence happens, it has extra shock value because once he spent all this time preparing this one suit - you're just thinking old-world craftsmanship - and then when blood gets on it, it's such a violent thing.

JAN: Okay.

JIM: So there is violence that comes into his shop. But it's all the world coming into his shop, not him going out and finding all these things. It's all done right there, and it feels very much like a play. And there's a reason it was done that way, which I'll say when I do this next one, that is, I think, one of the worst movies I've ever seen. It's called War of the Worlds.

JAN: Oh, I've heard terrible things about that.

JIM: 2025. And I had to figure out why it was done a certain way, because I also felt claustrophobic about this. Now you've got the original broadcast, 1938, '39, something like that. You've got this movie in the '50s with, uh, Gene Barry as the actor. Then you've got one with Tom Cruise as the actor, and you're just thinking, "More and more CGI, more and more fantastic, recreate these beasts, recreate all of this." This one is completely done from the point of view of a computer screen.

JAN: Oh God.

JIM: Everything's done that way. And devices. So your whole visual is what the computer is seeing. Now Ice Cube is starring in this thing, and he's some sort of Homeland Security - with a couple of mouse clicks he can look into everyone's room, exactly what they're doing, record every conversation. It's, it's hyper-surveillance guy. And he's got two kids his name is Will his daughter's name is Faith And then his son's name is Dave. And the idea is he's working really hard because he's trying to provide for his kids as a single dad. I found out the genre is called screenlife. A movie that's made this way is called a screenlife movie.

JAN: Okay.

JIM: You know, it's all point of view of devices. So I'm thinking, well, maybe they're aiming for a younger crowd. It has an alien invasion, which is what you're expecting from War of the Worlds. But it turns out what the aliens are after is our data. The creatures are attacking data centers and eating all the data because this is what they do for food. And I'm thinking, "Data is not a substance. Are they eating hard drives? What is it they're actually trying to eat here?" No, it's the data. So when they attack a data center, then all of your information on your phone is wiped off. And I'm thinking. "That makes no sense." At the end - I'm I'm gonna give it away because you're not gonna watch this movie.

JAN: You're right

JIM: The kid, who's named Dave, discovers that the government has a hyper-surveillance program they're about to launch, which is called Goliath.

JAN: Oh gosh.

DEE: No.

JIM: Yes, and it's called Goliath. And so Faith is going to have to come to the rescue here to help them defeat Goliath, and they do so through the help of an Amazon delivery boy.

DEE: No.

JIM: Oh, I should mention this is streaming on Prime.

JAN: Yeah, I saw that.

JIM: Amazon Prime. So it's Ice Cube, Eva Longoria, and then as I'm watching it, it occurs to me this feels very much like something that a sixth grader might write. Then I sort of felt guilty and I thought, "You know, maybe this is one of those. Like the the kid who wrote it as a story was like ill?" And I'm thinking maybe this is like a Make-A-Wish foundation that someone has granted this. No, the guy who wrote it is uh is a seasoned writer of things. And uh the guy who directed it - this makes sense - uh Rich Lee, he does music videos...

JAN: Oh.

JIM: ...because the tight - the editing is very tight. What I noticed about it, other than it it received on the out of 10 on the Internet Movie Database site, it got a 2.5.

JAN: Yes.

JIM: And on Rotten Tomatoes it got two percent. First of all, the style was a unique thing, but the editing of it and the visuals coming at you and the pace of it allowed absolutely zero imagination from the audience.

JAN: The first review I saw just now of audience reviews. It was, "By God, this was appalling."

[Laughter]

JIM: Now these two felt claustrophobic and I found out why. Both of these films were made during COVID.

JAN: Mm. Yeah.

JIM: The filming on War of the Worlds was something like two months. And then it was like two years of production to try and do the post-production stuff, all the effects. The one with Mark Rylance, The Outfit, was done during COVID in England, and they were sequestered there. And that could have been a way they compromise, but it actually they used it very creatively. So I like those two experiences of this is what you do when you've got Lockdown.

JIM (voice-over): Since recording this episode, The Naked Gun has indeed started streaming. I saw it on Paramount - not the big screen, but then, a TV is a big screen if you sit close enough.

We each rated our movies 1 to 5 stars, and then averaged them for the following scores:

For The Naked Gun, 3 stars out of 5.

For Superman (2025), 4 stars out of 5.

A Charlie Brown Christmas, a beloved classic at 5 stars each.

Sharknado, 1 star. Yeah, Dee had insisted on 0 stars, but participation trophies are still a thing.

The Thursday Murder Club, 4 stars, and so said all of us.

The Outfit, 5 stars each from Dee & me.

And finally, War of the Worlds, 2 votes somehow averaged out to 2 stars.

If you're listening on YouTube, please add your own reviews in the comments below, and please hit "Like" and "Subscribe" and all those other YouTube things.

And congratulations to you for doing what only the finest people do, and that is joining us here as we are Making Our Way.

Until next time.