

## FILM REVIEW

### One World Arts Film Festival



A scene from the documentary film "One of the Last," in the Rideau Bakery.

By Tony Wohlforth

The One World Arts Film Festival (<http://oneworldfilmfestival.ca/ottawa2017/>) is currently screening a series of documentary Canadian films, highlighting the changing landscape and diversity of Ottawa. The best news of all? All the screenings are free, compliments of The One World Arts Film Festival and its funding partner, the City of Ottawa and its Arts, Culture & Heritage Investment Program.

#### Ottawans on the Move

On May 6, at the Centrepointe Theatre (101 Centrepointe Drive), three films will screen, beginning at 2pm. *Ottawa's Streetcars Removed 50 Years Ago* is a short (10 minute) musical (made in 2009) about the time when streetcars rolled through Ottawa streets. The short film will be followed by *Bike City, Great City*, a 2013

documentary (40 minutes in duration) directed by Ottawa City Councillor David Chernushenko. The final film in the series, *Four Wheeled Furies*, is a 45-minute feature about women in Ottawa competing in a roller derby competition.

#### Ottawa Roots and Visions

On May 20, at St. Paul's University Auditorium (233 Main Street), the theme is diversity and immigration. The opening film, *One of the Last*, is a fascinating 50-minute feature directed by Ed Kucarek in 2006, focussing on the Kardish family which owns and operates The Rideau Bakery. This will be followed by *Racial Attitudes: The Architecture of Douglas Cardinal* – a 48-minute feature directed by Jim Hamm (2004) about the renowned aboriginal architect.

#### One of the Last - A Preview

The OSCAR had an opportunity

to preview *One of the Last* and speak with Ed Kucarek prior to its public screening. A resident of Old Ottawa South, Kucarek has made five films (along with his writing partner Jane Gurr). The most recent in 2014, *Partners for Peace*, follows a group of Canadian and American women in Palestine and Israel ([partnersforpeacefilm.com](http://partnersforpeacefilm.com)).

*One of the Last* is an endearing story, about four successive generations of family operating The Rideau Bakery. The Kardish family fled the pogroms in the Ukraine, migrating to Ottawa in 1926. Rideau Bakery was founded in 1930 and it is renowned for its rye bread, pumpernickel and challah. The film traces the art of bread making back to its origins in Eastern Europe. Archival footage along with an interview filmed in the Ukraine (by Andrei Zubok) brilliantly tell their story. The bakery has moved over the years, and the film traces this history along with the Jewish rituals which have made it a centrepiece of the Ottawa community.

Kucarek's fascinating film initiated a family conversation about who takes over the business. This theme of succession planning runs through many family-owned businesses and Kucarek and Gurr's film makes it a centrepiece of this fine documentary.

*One of the Last* had its world premiere on May 10, 2007 at the Toronto Jewish Film Festival and



went on to screen at the New York Jewish Film Festival in 2008. Funded by The Omni Television Independent Producer's Initiative (for \$100,000), *One of the Last* is the best and most poignant film I have seen about the issue of a family-run business. The music, scored by Andrew Huggett, brings their story to life as drawings of the bakery illustrate the changes over the generations.

The director, Ed Kucarek, will attend the screening on May 20th and participate in a Question & Answer session following the screening.

One World Arts is a volunteer based charitable organization which seeks to educate citizens of Ottawa-Gatineau on global issues. For further information, readers can contact: [oneworldfilmfestival@oneworldarts.ca](mailto:oneworldfilmfestival@oneworldarts.ca)

*Tony Wohlforth is an Ottawa-based freelance film writer. He is currently covering the Tribeca Film Festival in Lower Manhattan & The Hot Docs Film Festival in Toronto.*

### Old Ottawa South Native Dave Dawson Brings the Luck O'the Irish to the Gladstone

By Alexis Scott

Fans of Dave Dawson's work as a theatre maker have a real treat in store. In April, Black Sheep Theatre, a company that Dawson founded, will produce John Patrick Shanley's latest hit *Outside Mullingar*, a charm-

ing, twisted romantic comedy set on neighbouring farms in Ireland. "One of the main reasons I love John Patrick Shanley is we are dealing with real human conflict but always with a light heart and sense of humor."

Director, producer, and dramaturge, Dawson was born and raised in Old

Ottawa South. "I attended Hopewell Public School as a child and studied at Carleton University, so Old Ottawa South has always been a place I call home." Dawson was also the Artistic Director of Carleton University's theatre company Sock n' Buskin for ten years. He has directed more

than fifty plays and musicals, and his productions connect local and neighbouring communities. One of the highlights of his career includes Brenner Duthie's '33: *A Kabarett* which is currently on its sixth year of touring all over the world. This show, as well as many of Dawson's productions have been created and rehearsed in his Old Ottawa South living room!

Black Sheep Theatre is based in Old Ottawa South and is a company Dawson founded to produce homegrown theatre and to put the focus on creating quality entertainment for Ottawa audiences. "I felt that some of the best works weren't being produced because theatre companies had to program based on their mandate." Playwright John Patrick Shanley is a favourite of Dave Dawson and this will be the twelfth Shanley play produced by Black Sheep Theatre. "*Outside Mullingar* is a play that happens to be set in Ireland, but it is anything but far from home. It is a smart, funny and quirky play about family, good neighbours and the heart of a community. We recognize these interconnected lives from a small community, and the generation gaps are powerful but also hilarious!"

*Outside Mullingar* runs at The Gladstone from April 27th to May 6th. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.thegladstone.ca](http://www.thegladstone.ca) or by calling 613-233-4523.

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# CITY JOURNAL

OTTAWA'S URBAN NEWSPAPER

## Rideau Street bakery rises to occasion



by Jim Donnelly

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When the Kardish brothers first set foot on Rideau Street over seventy years ago, they hardly had enough money between the two of them to buy a bagel.

But that didn't stop the Ukrainian immigrants from investing in their first Canadian business venture.

"The two sons, Abie and Dovid, had to borrow money - \$500 each - to start the bakery," explains local documentary filmmaker Ed Kucerak of the venerable Rideau Street Bakery, which still churns out dozens of loaves, doughnuts and other goodies at 384 Rideau St.

Along with Jane Gurr, he's directed and produced a feature-length doc entitled *One of the Last* devoted to showcasing the life and times of the Jewish family's four generations - who fled Ukraine to escape years of anti-Semitic pogroms and land expropriation - since their arrival.

The documentary was fully funded by OMNI television as part of its Independent Producer's Initiative, and will air on the network later this month.

"They lived above it," he continues of the brothers, who along with entrepreneurial spirit toted a suitcase worth of bread and baking recipes from the old country. They proved a smashing success, as the film documents. "And during the summer they had to sleep on the roof because it got so hot in there."

Like many projects, Kucerak explains *One of the Last's* main ingredient was serendipity. "We were initially doing a documentary on lunch counters," says the director of the Discovery Channel's acclaimed film *The Secret Lives of Butterflies* (2002).

They soon paid a visit to the bakery, which itself features a lunch counter alongside its fleet of doughy creations. But after extensively interviewing current operators Louis, David and sister Debbie, they realized this was a story they couldn't pass up.

"People used to come to these places every day, and there was a whole feeling of community around them," he says.

"And one of these places in Ottawa is the Rideau Bakery."

The film was produced in English and Hebrew, Kucerak explains, and opens on a busy Friday morning. That's the bakery's busiest day, as orders are briskly placed by supermarkets, restaurants and synagogues before the Sabbath.



**Documentary producers Jane Gurr, left, and Ed Kucerak scarf down a Rideau Street treat.**

**Photo by Darren Brown**

last month's Toronto Jewish Film Festival.

And though Kucerak says the duo faced a slew of challenges making the film – most notably, how to sort through almost 100 years of history without becoming a textbook – he also explains that's what made it such an exciting project.

"The most satisfying part of releasing a documentary is seeing people react to your film," he explains. "They get something out of it, or it moves them in a certain way, and that is very satisfying."

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OTTAWA CITIZEN  
June 5, 2007

## BAKING OTTAWA'S BREAD ... SINCE 1930



BRUNO SCHLUMBERGER, THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

**David Kardish, at the Rideau Street branch, carries on the family legacy with his brother, Louis. 'They don't build these places anymore,' Mr. Kardish says of the bakery, which has no intention of closing up shop in the face of grocery store competition.**



# Filmmakers tell the story of an old-fashioned family bakery

The seeds of the Rideau Bakery, an Ottawa institution, were planted by matriarch Rifka Kardish in Southern Ukraine early in the last century. Now, a fifth generation has joined the family business, **CIARA BYRNE** reports.

Beside an old-style sandwich counter, in a family bakery that pre-dates the Second World War, David Kardish sits on a low orange and silver stool, swivelling back forth, and doing what he does best: dealing with customers.

"What's your best chocolate cake?" one walks up and asks.

"Black magic or chocolate truffle," answers Mr. Kardish, one of the owners of the Rideau Bakery.

Mr. Kardish, a man who still makes his own icing, says there aren't many bakeries left in the city like his.

"They don't build these places anymore," he says.

And he's not the only one who thinks this way. Tonight, Library and Archives will show a sold-out film about the bakery called *One of the Last*.

The film tracks the Kardish family bakery from its humble beginnings in 1930 to its prominent position in the community today.

Ottawa filmmakers Jane Gurr and Ed Kucerak take viewers through a bustling Friday at the bakery, weaving together stories of the past and present.

"It's one of the last bakeries

of that size, a medium-sized, family-owned bakery," says Ms. Gurr, as she tries to define the uniqueness of the Rideau Bakery. "Here's a business that keeps getting passed down."

What has been passed down are the recipes from the 1900s, from a woman who started baking in her small kitchen in Southern Ukraine.

"It's remarkable for a woman at that time to have all those children, have a bakery, to be an entrepreneur," says Ms. Gurr, describing the matriarch of the Kardish family, Rifka Kardish.

"She sounded like an amazing person and I was drawn to the story because of her."

Mr. Kardish's great-grandmother had 12 children and managed to cook up a bakery business to support the family while her husband, Moishe, taught Hebrew.

With it growing harder for Jews to live in Eastern Europe, the Kardish family left for Canada.

Once in Canada, brothers Abie and Dovid Kardish honed the skills their mother taught them and together opened the original bakery at Rideau and Nelson

streets in 1930.

Now, David Kardish and his brother, Louis, are carrying on the legacy.

Mr. Kardish is pleased with the way the filmmakers tell the story.

"There is something for everyone: emotion, humour and a lot of history."

The film also shows soft-spoken Pinhey Kardash, the last living child of Rifka Kardish, who died in February at the age of 97. He never got the chance to see his mother's story.

"He wasn't well enough to see the preview," says David Kardish.

There are so many stories contained inside the four orange walls of the Rideau Street bakery that smells of sourdough and apple strudel, says Ms. Gurr.

"I've found that as I've talked about it, everybody has a Rideau Bakery story," she says, adding she's amazed by the customers.

"There's always letters on the wall from some group saying, 'Thank you for sending those 10-, 12-dozen doughnuts for our fundraiser.'"

While the bakery has moved to different locations, the two bakeries currently run by the brothers have been operating since the 1960s. One is on Bank Street just south of Heron Road; the other sits at 384 Rideau St.

"It's unassuming. It looks as if time stood still in 1955," says Ms. Gurr, describing the cosy, familial surrounding. "It

doesn't have the pizzazz of other places."

Famous for its rye bread made with a sourdough starter, no sugar, oil or yeast, and no additives, Rideau Bakery makes "completely healthy bread," says Ms. Gurr.

"When I go, I have toasted rye with lettuce, tomato and tuna. It's perfection."

Mr. Kardish says baking is an art. But it's one that may be losing fashion. And it's a theme the movie grapples with. Who will take over? Who will be the fifth generation?

Mr. Kardish chose to leave his job in the high-tech sector to join the family business.

"My cousin's son has got involved in the past eight months. He loves the business," says Mr. Kardish reassuringly.

But Mr. Kardish knows there's tough competition.

He acknowledges mass-produced "baked goods" are hitting grocery stores and muscling smaller bakeries out.

It won't stop the Kardish family.

"You gotta have a passion for it. You gotta love what you do."

Mr. Kardish says the film shows this nicely.

"The film pulled everything together with the family, and that's what this whole thing is about."

*One of the Last* will be shown on television on June 17 at 9 p.m. on Omni 1.

June 14, 2007  
28 Sivan, 5767

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## Film profiles Ottawa's venerable Rideau Bakery

By **DIANE KOVEN**

*Ottawa Correspondent*

**OTTAWA** — It's a well-known yet unfortunate fact that family businesses in Canada rarely make it past the second generation, but Ottawa's only kosher bakery is a rare exception.

The Rideau Bakery, now operated by brothers Louis and David Kardish, has its roots in a small village in the Ukraine. The brothers' great-grandmother, Rifka Kardish, baked bread to support her 12 children while her husband, Moishe, taught Hebrew.

The recipes she used in the late 1800s were passed along to her sons Abie and Dovid, who opened the original Rideau Bakery in 1930 after immigrating to Canada.

The remarkable story of the Rideau Bakery, as well as the now very large Kardish family (many of whom have worked in the bakery at some point in their lives), has been captured in a documentary film titled *One of the Last*, produced with funding from OMNI Television Independent Producers Initiative.



From left, David Kardish, Debbie (Kardish) Baylin, Louis Kardish enjoying famous Rideau Bakery donuts. [Stan Goldberg photo]

## Rideau Bakery to be featured in new TV documentary

BY DESMOND DEVOY  
ddevoy@thenowemc.ca

We may never know the secret ingredients in their **bread recipe**, but we finally found out the secret of their success.

**"Hard** work, love of family, and **together,** you just can't beat **'em,**" said Louis Kardish of the secret behind the Rideau Bakery, the family-owned business which has been providing freshly baked bread and pastries to the Ottawa community since the 1930s.

**A TV documentary about**

the Sandy Hill institution, at 384 Rideau Street, entitled "One of the Last," premiered at the Library and Archives Canada's auditorium at 395 Wellington Street on Tuesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>.

"The show is called "One of the Last". We hope that the Rideau Bakery will be the lasting one!" said Rabbi Reuven Bulka, the host for the evening's festivities, during the premiere. "It's thanks to them that we're all well bread!" he said with a laugh, just one of many puns he used throughout the eve-

ning. Rabbi Bulka was also an interview subject on the show, which was filmed in September of 2005.

The bakery has touched many lives in what is now central Ottawa and beyond. Rabbi Bulka asked members of the community in the audience, who filled the auditorium, to stand if they had ever worked for the bakery.

"Like Rideau Bakery bread, they rose to the occasion!" he said of the nearly two dozen people who stood. "You who have grown up on bread from the Rideau

— Please see **BAKERY** on page 4



Bakery, you form the upper crust of Ottawa!"

"These guys have a future in show business!" Rabbi Bulka gushed of the three siblings that keep the business going, David and Louis Kardish and Debbie Baylin (nee Kardish). "What I'd like to hear next February or March is, 'And now, the Academy Award for Best Documentary goes to...'"

"We're just overwhelmed by the reaction to this," said the film's producer and director, Ed Kucerak. "We felt that this would be an amazing film. We wanted to tell the story of Ottawa and its

rich stories."

He and his creative partner, producer and writer Jane Gurr, thought of the idea three years ago when they were wrapping up another project, "Counter Culture," a documentary which looked at Ottawa's disappearing lunch counters, which included the Rideau Bakery's own counter.

One of the highlights of the film was footage taken in the Ukraine, where an associate of Gurr and Kucerak found the original home where the Kardish's ancestors had lived and had first begun baking. During the filming, the crew came across an old man remembered the Kardish's and their bakery, before they left for a better life in Canada. He led them to the now dilapidated old house that the Kardish family had once called home.

"It was completely by accident that that happened. It was one of those lucky things that happens in the film business," said Gurr.

For the Kardish family, it was more than just a happy historical coincidence. It was a visible connection to their past.

"It was just a name we heard of from our parents," Louis Kardish said of the Ukrainian village where his people came from. "They made it come to life for us here on the screen."

The bakery has been operating out of its current location since 1965. The first location was opened in 1930 but burned down in 1946. The second location was at Nelson and Rideau Street. The company has a second location on Bank Street. Despite the location changes, one thing has not changed about the bakery - the family still refuses to give up their famed, and secret,

sourdough recipe.

"We can't tell the recipe because then you wouldn't have to go to see us at the bakery," Louis Kardish said with a laugh during a question and answer session after the screening.

"It's an interesting film, seeing the link in the generations," said Bill Rodger of Barrhaven, who attended the premiere.

"You would have thought that a lot of the pressure in a bakery would cause a lot of conflict," he said.

Rodger is also a conisseur of the bakery's food creations.

"The apple turnovers are right next to the apple strudel. You can't go wrong!" he said with obvious delight. "The strudel is one of their highlights."

"I like the rye bread myself," admitted Jerry Turchyn of New Edinburgh, who did the location sound for the film. "I'm Ukrainian and my dad would take us to the Ukrainian bakery in Winnipeg on a Saturday morning and there'd be 25 people lined up outside. The Rideau Bakery is right up there."

While the culinary delights of the bakery were a nice draw for Turchyn, the conditions under which he had to extract sound for the film presented their own unique roadblocks.

"It was very, very noisy. It was challenging," said Turchyn. "They'd have the bread machines going and we'd be trying to do an interview." To combat this, the crew tried to film onsite interviews only during down-times. In spite of this, "I enjoyed working on it. It was a great experience. It's not often you get to parachute into a family and enjoy who they are."

The documentary debuts on Onmi 1 at 9 p.m. on Sunday, June 17<sup>th</sup>, with an encore presentation on the same station at 9 p.m. on Saturday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>.



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Ann Marie McQueen's wry look at pop culture, celebrities, cocktails and more ... Trends



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## News Showbiz TV

Sat, June 2, 2007

# History in the baking

## Story behind Rideau Bakery makes for touching documentary

By **ANN MARIE MCQUEEN**, SUN MEDIA



It's the rye bread they're famous for.

Now the story behind Rideau Bakery's popular, kosher, yeast and sugar-free loaves, made from a recipe dating back 100 years to Kamianets-Podilskyi, a city in southern Ukraine, is finally being told.

At its centre is Rifka Kardish, who started making the bread in her kitchen to support 12 children and her Hebrew teacher husband Moishe. She continued to build the business when her husband died, watching it grow even as her family was forced to leave their homeland.

It was the rich history behind the Kardish's beloved bread that fascinated Ed Kucerak, producer/director of a new documentary on the family business, *One of the Last*.

"The idea that in Ottawa, we're eating bread that comes from a recipe that comes from 100 years ago. Rifka had that recipe and was making the bread, but where did she get those recipes from?" marvels Kucerak. "It probably goes back hundreds of years. To me that's fascinating."

The documentary tells the story of Kardish, who passed on her skills to her children before Russian rule and pogroms against Jews forced them to leave for a new life in Canada. They landed in Ottawa and her sons ran the business in several locations.

Today, fourth-generation Kardish siblings David, Louis and Debbie are still involved in day-to-day operations at the Rideau and Bank street stores.

"This is the only kosher bakery that is the pre-eminent bakery for the entire city," says Rabbi Reuven Bulka in the piece.

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One woman marvels at how much a part of her life the bakery -- and Rideau St.'s popular lunch counter -- have been.

"Sitting here, having a salmon sandwich on Rideau Bakery rye bread and taking that bite," she says, "it's like that bite connects me and takes me right back."

Kucerak made the film with producer/writer Jane Gurr two summers ago, gathering footage here in Ottawa and in the Ukraine.

A colleague from Ottawa studying film in Moscow was charged with getting shots in the Kardish hometown, and just happened to stumble on someone who could show him exactly where the original bakery had been.

"By accident he bumped into that old man who told him about the bakery," said Kucerak. "It was just luck, pure chance."

Today the future of the Rideau Bakery is uncertain, as the fourth generation is torn between wanting the tradition to continue and wanting their children to follow their own career paths.

"Would anybody recommend their children go in it?" asks David Kardish in the film. "I doubt it very much. I suspect it's probably one of the last businesses like this around."

It's a tough dilemma for a family that has always stuck together, a commitment that impressed Kucerak from the beginning.

"The power of family to survive, to survive difficult times and the loyalty to each other, each generation, when times got tough, other members of the family would come in and pitch in," he said. "It struck me."

One of the Last is screening at the National Archives on Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. It will air on Omni Television June 17 at 9 a.m.

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# Rideau Bakery heading to the silver screen

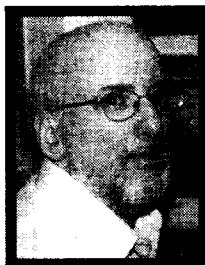
Like many other citizens of this fair city, I am crazy about Rideau Bakery bread. So much so that, whenever we have out-of-town visitors, we always serve it. For visitors I really like, I have even been known to take them on a bakery run to pick up triple marble, which, unfortunately – or, considering my waistline, maybe fortunately – isn't available at the local grocery store.

At the Bank Street store, I used to schmooze with the now-retired Annie Brozovsky, who seemed to be able to carry on a conversation while serving dozens of people at once without messing up an order. Funny how you always ended up with more delicious baked goods than you expected when Annie was there to serve you, and you always left with a smile on your face.

Talk about being at home. Annie was born in and lived above the old store on the corner of Nelson and Rideau streets. She remembers the apartment "being like a sauna," when the bakery ovens were on. As a child and teenager, she helped out her father and uncle. Once her own children were older, she returned to the bakery and spent more than 25 years there.

"I loved every minute of it. It was in my blood," she says.

A visit to the downtown store would



**Editor**

**Barry Fishman**

not be complete without sitting at the lunch counter and enjoying the entertainment as the regulars' kibbitz with each other and the bakery staff. Even the customers lined up at the cash get into the action, zinging one-liners back and forth.

The bakery first opened its doors in 1930 when brothers Dovid and Abie began baking, using their mother Rivika's secret bread recipes. Rivika, who owned and ran a bakery in Kamianets-Podilski, Ukraine, before emigrating to Canada, taught her boys well. They trained subsequent generations in the art of bread- and pastry-baking. Today, fourth-generation Louis Kardash manages the Bank Street store and his brother David runs the Rideau store, while their sister Debbie Baylin looks after the accounting and is the family historian.

Ottawa film producer/director Ed Kucerak and writer/producer Jane Gurr thought the story of the Kardash family

and their bakery would make an interesting documentary. The result is *One of the Last*, a moving and entertaining film about the history of the family and what its kosher bakery means not just to the Jewish community, but to the city.

The storyline did not start out that way. In fact, the filmmakers were first at the Rideau Bakery doing a documentary on ethnic lunch counters in Ottawa. They soon realized they had a much more interesting story and, at the Hot Docs film festival in Toronto, OMNI television agreed to fund the project.

"Watching them bake was like watching a dance. They all worked in such harmony," says director Kucerak. He especially enjoyed the Kardash family Shabbat dinner he attended and spending time at the bakery.

Kucerak, who is a regular customer, also had a personal reason for making the documentary.

"At the time, a number of anti-Semitic incidents had taken place in the city and I was pretty upset about it," he says. "I thought it was important to get this film made for the city. Here was this Jewish bakery that was much loved by the citizens of Ottawa."

Baylin calls the film a "lovely tribute to the family." Her only regret is her

Uncle Pinhey, who worked in the bakery as a young boy and is featured in the film, died before seeing the documentary.

Brother Louis was pleased with the film. He just wishes it was a bit longer than its 50 minutes so more family members could have been featured.

The fact Rideau Bakery has lasted four – rumour has it soon to be five – generations as a family-owned bakery is truly amazing.

"I am overwhelmed at four and thankful for every day," says Louis.

"It must be because we are too stubborn to give up," his sister laughingly adds.

The family plans to hold a screening of *One of the Last* on Tuesday, June 5, at 7:30 pm at the Library and Archives Canada auditorium, 395 Wellington Street. The cost is \$10 and tickets are available at both bakery locations. Proceeds will be donated to charity.

Following the film, a reception will be held – featuring Rideau Bakery products, I hope. Members of the Kardash family will be on hand to answer questions.

*One of the Last* will debut on OMNI 1 television on Sunday, June 17 at 9:00 pm. The film will repeat on Saturday, June 23, Sunday, August 26 and Saturday, September 1 on OMNI 1.