

Big Beach Reads and Uplifters Ranch Films Announce First Annual Uplifters Film Festival to Be Held in Pacific Palisades

*Festival to Aid Palisades Fire Recovery,
Pay Homage to Historic Hollywood Club
"the Uplifters"*

PACIFIC PALISADES, CA, UNITED
STATES, October 7, 2026

/EINPresswire.com/ -- Big Beach Reads and Uplifters Ranch Films announce that the first annual Uplifters Film Festival will be held in Rustic Canyon, Pacific Palisades Feb.18 – Feb. 24, 2027 at the Rustic Canyon Recreation Center, site of the historic Uplifters Ranch. Founded as a revival of the historic Hollywood club "the Uplifters," the Uplifters Film Festival continues the club's tradition: to provide a place for filmmakers and storytellers to showcase their work, network, and learn from one another against the backdrop of nature. The festival plans

to contribute to the continuing recovery of the Pacific Palisades community two years after the devastating Palisades Fire, and, in addition to Rustic Canyon Recreational Center, will host screenings at venues located in the Palisades.

The film festival will invite approximately 10 full-length feature films to screen "In Competition." 10 additional films from up-and-coming and first-time filmmakers will screen in the "Rising Voices" section. In addition, the festival will host special screenings of recent films, short films, and documentaries, and will hold a screenwriting competition for un-produced feature and episodic scripts.

"Uplifters Ranch Films is extremely excited to revive the historic Uplifters Club in the form of a film festival. Uplifters Ranch's history is unique in that the Uplifters Club put an emphasis upon



Uplifters Film Festival Logo

the importance of nature to the filmmaking process; for decades, the Uplifters Club simultaneously nurtured cinematic arts and the act of conservation. This made it an early pioneer in Hollywood's efforts to aid environmentalism. Like most of Rustic Canyon's residents, I was displaced by the Palisades Fire, and it feels like an ideal time to establish a festival celebrating the community, nature, and film," says Halle Arbaugh, Uplifters Film Festival's Director of Programming and Founder of Uplifters Ranch Films.

"We hope that by inviting Palisades residents and businesses to celebrate the cinematic arts and partake in communal activities in nature – in the spirit of the original Uplifters Club – we will start a new beloved tradition while paying homage to the Palisades' history," Arbaugh added.

In order to aid in the ongoing Palisades Fire recovery, the festival will host legacy screenings of classic films from original Uplifters members for residents of the Pacific Palisades, Santa Monica, and Malibu communities, with a portion of sales from tickets and festival passes donated to Palisades businesses affected by the fire.

Films from original Uplifters Club members Michael Curtiz (dir. "Casablanca"), L. Frank Baum (author, "The Wizard of Oz"), Clark Gable, Will Rogers, and classics produced by members like Walt Disney and Darryl F. Zanuck will screen at locations in Rustic Canyon, Pacific Palisades, and the surrounding neighborhoods as part of the festival's Legacy Program. The festival will also host Q&As between filmmakers, authors, and industry insiders, many of which will be open to members of the community.

Founded in 2024, Uplifters Ranch Films is dedicated to highlighting rising and original narrative voices in the film, TV, and literary worlds, using storytelling to empower and uplift filmmakers, with a focus on elevated storytelling and films from writer/directors. Uplifters Ranch Films was founded as the film and television production studio of Big Beach Reads, which aims to provide a platform for rising storytellers across literature and film to connect, work on projects, and circumnavigate the tightly gate-kept Hollywood system. Big Beach Reads, co-founded as a joint venture with Big Beach Films, producer of indie hits like "Little Miss Sunshine," "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood," and "Sorry, Baby," continues the tradition of producing stellar independent projects for film and television. Big Beach Reads and Uplifters Ranch Films are now independently managed by writer, producer and longtime Big Beach executive Halle Arbaugh.

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