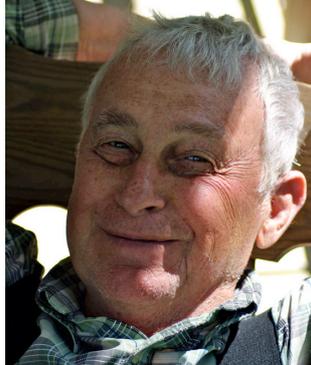


LOCAL FILM STUDIO TO PRODUCE “DOG MAN” DOCUMENTARY

Baton Rouge-based River Road Creative & Highland Road Films document the life of famed Louisiana Dog Trainer, Dick Russell (1938-2011)



In August of 2010, local filmmaker, Richie Adams, Owner/Director of the live-action & design studio, River Road Creative and production company, Highland Road Films, began documenting the life and legacy of Dick Russell, a world-renowned dog trainer living in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Over the course of 30 years, it is estimated that Dick Russell trained over 30,000 dogs in the Baton Rouge community by way of his six-week basic obedience classes—three classes per week, every six weeks, all year round, and along the way inspired countless professional and amateur dog trainers.

Adams first connected with Dick Russell when he needed three dogs for his first feature film, INVENTING ADAM, a romantic comedy. After completing the film, Adams and his wife adopted a dog, Charles, and knowing that if you wanted your dog trained well, you went to Dick Russell, they put Charles in Russell’s training class. Impressed by what he saw the first day, Adams knew he wanted to tell the Dick Russell story on film, and after Charles “graduated,” he approached Russell’s close friend, Holly Bonner, about the idea. She said, “Richie, not only do I think that’s a good idea, but you should know that Dick has been fighting cancer for the past 6 years.” Adams approached Russell with the idea, and Russell said, “When do we start?”

So Adams and Matthew LaFont, fellow River Road Creative team member, began documenting Russell’s Thursday night “Staring Lane” classes and attending his Saturday and

Sunday “socialization classes,” which he offered at no cost in a large open field near his home in Central. But Adams could tell that Dick’s health was suffering, and just five months into filming, in January 2011, Dick Russell lost his battle with cancer. Before he died, he turned over his life’s work to Larry Benoit and Mike Davis, who he had been mentoring to continue his method of dog training.

After Russell’s death, Adams and his team pursued the Russell story to San Diego, where Russell was posthumously inducted into the IACP (International Association of Canine Professionals) Hall of Fame. From there, the story led them to New York, Orlando, Houston and Chicago for interviews with some of the nation’s most respected dog trainers, contemporaries of Russell or students of his method. Adams learned that Dick Russell’s influence extended well beyond South Louisiana, and that he was the first person to introduce “socialization” in North America. Dr. Craig Alberty, Baton Rouge veterinarian, said this about Dick Russell, “There are people, like Dick Russell, that dedicate their lives to single purposes...that do many, many, many things unselfishly, that, because they touch the lives of so many different people, become legendary.”

After two years of interviews and 300 plus hours of film footage, and the majority of funding coming out of his own pocket, Adams realized that he needed help to finish the film properly. A friend told him about the Kickstarter website (www.kickstarter.com) that allows an artist or filmmaker to share his or her project with the public, and for the public to decide if they want to back it, and if so to select a pledge level. Adams researched the site, and on April 20th launched his own Kickstarter campaign, “Dog Man” – The Dick Russell Story, seeking support from the local and extended dog-training community. He reports that the campaign is going well and is approximately three-quarters of the way to meeting its initial goal of \$18,000 (the amount Adams has personally funded thus far), but needs to be completely funded by June 18th. Pledge levels reflect the theme of his campaign, e.g., the “Yorkie” Level at \$10, the “Border Collie” level at \$75, and (for those that want to go really big) the “Yellow Lab” Corporate Sponsorship level at \$2,500. Level rewards range from a physical copy of the documentary DVD before it is released to the

general public, to a custom dog collar bearing “Dog Man” The Dick Russell Story logo artwork, to Dick Russell’s last 6-week training course caught on tape.

Adams says that if the campaign fails to raise the full amount, funder pledges never get charged and the project receives nothing. Given the far-reaching influence that Dick Russell had on dogs and their owners in South Louisiana and well beyond the borders of Louisiana, Adams is hopeful that the pledge campaign goal will be met, and perhaps exceeded, so he can properly honor a wonderful man’s story!

To learn more about the campaign from Adams himself, visit www.kickstarter.com, enter the key words “dog man,” and click on the campaign video.

Lastly, on Saturday, June 2nd, join Zoe’s Kitchen (at their Perkins Rowe location) and Petz Plaza (the first “Yellow Lab” Level Corporate Sponsor) on the field next to Orvis for some “dog-loving fun.” A percentage of the proceeds from Zoe’s Kitchen will go toward the production of the film. Visit www.thedogmanmovie.com/zoes to learn more!

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For even more information, contact Richie Adams at 323.791.0471 or via email at richie@rrc.la.