

FOCUS FILM FESTIVAL

exploring the complexity of the human experience



PRESS RELEASE

February 15, 2008

March 8: A premiere screening of *The Way Bobby Sees It*
Featuring Redding's own Bobby McMullen and
Independent Filmmakers Jason Watkins and Wendy Todd

Join us at the Cascade Theatre, in Redding, for the screening of *The Way Bobby Sees It*. Special guests, Bobby McMullen and Independent Filmmakers Jason Watkins and Wendy Todd, will be on hand to introduce the film and take questions following the screening. Open seating tickets are \$10 through the Cascade Box Office or online, Carnegies, Chain Gang Bike Shop, The Bike Shop, Bikes Etc., Village Cycle, Sports LTD, and Holiday Market on Placer. March 8, Cascade Theatre, 7:00 p.m.

About the film: *The Way Bobby Sees It* is a gripping story about, Bobby McMullen, a mountain bike racer who rides downhill, fast and blind. Bobby, a Redding native, lost his vision as a result of diabetes in 1993. The film documents his mission to race the most difficult downhill course in the country. Tucked away in Downieville, California, this 17-mile course is treacherous for any rider, especially one who needs a guide to "see." "I use verbal commands and the shape in front of me," McMullen explains. "I can hear them (the guide) shift and hear their bike rattle. I don't see any detail, but I can find where they're at. Hearing their voice gives me depth perception and direction better than anything else."



Photo credit: Steve Behr

Bobby's mountain bike skills, fearlessness, and love for the sport help him ride gracefully, and sometimes not so gracefully, across cliff edges and down steep drop-offs. This is extreme sport at its gnarliest. *The Way Bobby Sees It* is one man's determination to live an active life even when the path is completely out of focus.

FOCUS Film Festival explores documentary and feature films which "focus" on and examine the complexity of the human experience: culture, relationships, aging, disability, lifestyle, and more. The Festival features productions from a wide range of sources bringing Northstate audiences an opportunity to experience innovation, creativity, and diverse perspectives through the medium of film. FOCUS Film Festival is a project of Far Northern Regional Center. For more information and past events see, www.farnorthernrc.org/focusfilmfestival

Contact: Mary Ann Weston, Festival Director/FOCUS Film Festival, 222-4791 x3430 or email: maweston@farnorthernrc.org



Bobby McMullen: Born and raised in Shasta County, Bobby is a Central Valley High School graduate who makes his home in Redding. He has traveled the world, but insists that “the best place for me is here.”

Bobby is a natural athlete who played high school sports and chose Utah for his college education so that he could ski. He completed a degree in Political Science and returned to the North State to begin law school. Then he lost his eyesight as a result of complications related to diabetes. His kidneys failed. He survived years of dialysis and two kidney/pancreas transplants. He has broken more bones than he can count.

In spite of challenges that would take most people out, Bobby is a passionate extreme sport competitor. He was a member of the U.S. Disabled Ski Team for seven years, and took part in the 1998 Paralympics in Nagano, Japan. After his second transplant surgery, Bobby began downhill mountain bike racing. He is a tenacious adrenaline junkie who competes with fully able racers and beats them.



Jason Watkins: Jason traveled down several career paths before landing in the movie-making world. He studied environmental policy in college, spent two summers as a truck driver, two winters as a ski bum, and worked as a salesman for a dot com company. It wasn't until he took an internship position at InCA Productions in Mill Valley, California that he found his true calling. At InCA he learned all aspects of documentary making and spent many hours after work teaching himself how to

edit. Jason took his skills down to Los Angeles where he worked as an editor and technician at Echo Post for two years. Upon moving back home to northern California, Jason worked in the Documentary Department of LucasFilm as an Avid technician. When the Avids were running smoothly, he provided a helping hand on shoots for the Star Wars: Episode III documentary for the DVD. After work and on weekends, Jason would apply what he learned to his own project; Singletrack MINDS. During the creation of Singletrack MINDS, Jason left LucasFilm for a Media Systems Technician position at Pixar Animation Studios where he currently works.

Wendy Todd: Wendy began learning video production as a volunteer at the Cambridge, MA cable access channel ten years ago. After completing several classes, she began producing music videos and short documentaries that were shown on cable access television. Wendy collaborated with a friend to produce a small concert video and a short documentary on the plight of locally-owned food vendors at Fenway Park called Feed the Streets. After moving away from Cambridge, Wendy took a hiatus from video production endeavors. While her interest in making documentaries continued to grow, she was focused on building a career in public health. In 2004, Wendy and her partner Jason Watkins committed to the creation of Singletrack MINDS; their first short documentary about an issue that plays a significant role in their lives. Currently, Wendy works at the Blue Shield of California Foundation and enjoys hiking and mountain biking in Northern California.

Available for interviews.

High resolution photographs provided on request.