

Palmetto Makes the Front Page

Palmetto is making news all over the country, and the response has been overwhelming!

Lights, camera, action!

Hillsboro grad making movies in the Sunshine State

By Kevin Carbery

Saturday, January 12, 2008 2:49 PM CST

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Sarah Morgan helps her husband Christopher K. Morgan operate Morgan Films Entertainment LLC.

It's an irony that while many people grow up fantasizing about working in show business but never do, Sarah Morgan is in it even though she had no aspirations for show business as a youngster.

Morgan, whose maiden name is Blanton, lives in Apopka, Fla., and helps operate Morgan Films Entertainment LLC with her husband, Christopher K. Morgan. Apopka is in the Orlando area.

"I was never interested in film," said Sarah, who is a 1998 Hillsboro High School graduate. "I was in Hillsboro and my only experience with a camera was with my folks' camcorder." She explained that after graduating high school, she attended the New College at the University of South Florida, where she met her future husband. Christopher was the one with the passion for film.

"Christopher and I work as a team," Sarah said. "He handles the creative side--scripting, story development, equipment and lighting."

Sarah, 27, is the executive producer of the film company.

"We're an independent film company," she said. "We formed informally in 1999. We incorporated in 2006.

"Christopher does all the creative aspects. I handle the business side."

Florida is a place that has more going for it as a film company base than people might think, Sarah said.

"There are a lot of aspiring actors coming out of Florida," she said. "Here in Orlando, we have three film schools."

She spoke of some of the work Morgan Films Entertainment has produced.

"We did a short called 'The Sunday Affair,'" she said. "We assisted in producing a couple music videos. 'Kalua Colada,' by a gentleman who goes by the name of Aquil, won a local award at a festival called Film Slam. It's hip hop."

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"'Palmetto' is a story about real-life situations," Sarah explained. "I think what sets it apart is it's not about rich kids in California, it's about real life, real people."

Viewers can get the first episode for free, then pay for downloads.

"It's all done through our Web site," Sarah said. "The pilot episode, we put on free to anybody. After this, it's 99 cents a download. It's an hour show that's available on demand.

"We have a new episode coming out each week. Three episodes have already been filmed. Depending on response, we'll see if we make a fourth, a fifth and so on."

Sarah noted that "Palmetto" is being released at a time when Hollywood programming, other than reality shows, is at a standstill.

"With the writers strike and a lack of new material on television, this is an excellent opportunity for us to get new material out there," she said.

Sarah said it has not been easy to get Morgan Films Entertainment off the ground.

"It's a lot of work," she said. "I do a full-time job working for my dad in Web marketing. Then, I work for Morgan Films at night. I'm working at least 80 hours a week."

She said she is maintaining her ties to the people and area where she grew up. Her mother, Beth Stevenson, lives in Hillsboro and her father, Brad Blanton, lives in Collinsville.

"About once a year, I get back," Sarah said. "I would just like to thank everybody for their support and enthusiasm in this project."

Even though she was not in drama while in high school, Sarah was a performer in marching, symphonic and jazz bands. She played trombone.

"She was one of my better students," said Mark Trautwein, who is retired as a band teacher from Hillsboro High. "It doesn't surprise me that she's doing something new. She was always open to new things and excited at what she does."

Brad Blanton said he is happy to see his daughter's pursuits in the entertainment field.

"I think it's great, a great opportunity," he said. "It does surprise me quite a bit she's gotten into it."

"I'm just excited to see the new Web episode come out to see what it's all about."

Stevenson said she was not shocked to learn that her child has taken on a new challenge.

"It was just completely unexpected for her to go into entertainment," she said. "But, the one thing I would say about Sarah is, she's not afraid to tackle new things. She's always interested in learning about anything."

For more information about Morgan Films Entertainment, go to .

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