

'Kingsman' sequel premieres early for nation's 'real statesmen'

By ERIC PILGRIM

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Days before the rest of the world had an opportunity to watch the much-anticipated action-packed sequel to "Kingsman: The Secret Service," enthusiastic Soldiers at Fort Knox beat them to the punch. Masterminds behind the plan to premiere "Kingsman: The Golden Circle" at Knox Friday said Waybur Theater was the fitting location.

"It just makes sense because of our location to Knox plus the great partnership between the post and Brown-Forman," said Joe Bollinger, director of military and transportation for Brown-Forman. "This is another great opportunity for Brown-Forman and Fort Knox to collaborate."

Based in Louisville, Brown-Forman has been producing Kentucky bourbon since 1870 and has developed partnerships with Fort Knox in recent years. When "Kingsman" director Matthew Vaughn decided to feature a new Old Forester bourbon blend called Statesman in his second film, Brown-Forman officials suggested he premiere the movie at Knox.

"It's a wonderful tribute to the real statesmen in our country," said Abby McDonogh, a public relations specialist for Brown-Forman.

The second movie's plot revolves around an evil person who develops a way to find the Kingsmen and kill them. To thwart this newest plot against them, the Kingsmen seek out their American counterparts, known as the Statesmen, equally determined to save the world from evil, albeit with uniquely American flair.

Shauna Clark West said the movie's heroes highlight the military's real-life role.

"The movie and what it stands for is about saving the world," said West, the commercial sponsorship and advertising manager for Fort Knox Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation. "What better way to say thanks to our statesmen than this?"

Two-hundred people purchased the VIP Dinner and a Movie package, which included a buffet with traditional English food and preferred seating at Waybur Theater.

Tom Miller and his wife Olivia took advantage of the dinner. Tom said he enjoyed the meal and bourbon samples as Olivia collected a door prize.

"That's a really nice flask," the Fort Knox postal carrier said after Olivia handed her prize to him. She agreed.

"This is an awesome night," Olivia said. "They should do it more often."

Tom agreed. "Dinner and a movie always makes for a good date night."

Waybur Theater featured more bourbon samples and red carpet photo ops for those who chose to partake of them.

Before the start of the movie, Old Forester's master taster, Jackie Zykan, thanked participants for attending and the Soldiers and Families for their many sacrifices in defense of the nation. The crowd cheered.

A final reminder of what the nation's statesmen fight for, the now packed theater stood for the playing of the national anthem.

"This movie celebrates why it's great to be an American," said Zykan. "Where else around here will you find America's statesmen? And where else would you find anything more American than Kentucky bourbon?"