

Hot Ticket

BY CASSIDY SHEARRER

Special Screenings

This week, Silver Spring's documentary-film festival celebrates its 10th anniversary, and you'll want to be there. Silverdocs, known for bringing filmmakers, producers, and documentary-lovers together, will feature 114 films and more than 35 panels and workshops. The AFI-Discovery Channel Silverdocs festival has long been a place for documentary filmmakers to mingle and share ideas, and you can be part of the action. From an unlikely rags-to-riches story about a Filipino man with Steve Perry's voice to a pair of filmmakers who happen to be in Egypt at the outbreak of the Arab Spring, something is bound to capture your attention. Here are a few film highlights:

Ann Richards' Texas

She was a Democratic woman in a state run by Republican men. After humble beginnings as an Austin schoolteacher, **Ann Richards**'s rise to prominence in Texas politics captivated Americans in the 1980s and 1990s. This documentary by **Keith Patterson** and **Jack Lofton** follows her path through state politics and into the national spotlight. Her popular speech at the 1988 Democratic National Convention and her reelection campaign for Texas governor against a young **George W. Bush** still strike a chord today. The film highlights how Richards's loss to Bush paved the way for contemporary Republican strategy. The film features interviews with **Lily Tomlin**, **Willie Nelson**, **Dolly Parton**, and **Bill Clinton**, among others.

Showtimes: Thursday at 6 p.m. and Saturday at 4:30 p.m.

Escape Fire

With many Americans lacking important preventive health care, the debate over the systemic problems in U.S. hospitals continues in the documentary *Escape Fire: The Fight to Rescue American Healthcare*.

Filmmakers **Susan Froemke** (known for *Grey Gardens*, among other documentaries) and **Matthew Heineman** highlight patients and doctors who are frustrated with the health care system. Nominated for the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival, *Escape Fire* looks for answers in interviews with the Defense Department's pain task force, community health center employees, and cardiologists who focus on

spending quality time with their patients.

Showtimes: Thursday at 6:30 p.m. and Friday at 4:15 p.m.

How to Survive a Plague

Remembering the health crises of the past, *How to Survive a Plague* looks at a team of activists who took on the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s. Journalist and filmmaker **David France** takes viewers back to a time when little was known about the disease and misinformation limited research, spread prejudice, and stalled solutions. The doc follows two groups who worked together to make their voices heard in Washington. Sure to be inspiring, this film may provide a counterpoint to *Escape Fire*, showing how past health care problems were improved by speaking out and taking action.

Showtimes: Thursday at 7 p.m. and Sunday at 8 p.m.

International Conference

One of the most exciting aspects of a film festival is the abundance of creative talent in a screening room at any given moment. Documentary filmmakers will take advantage of this by attending the Silverdocs Conference, which runs in tandem with the film festival. In-the-know industry experts will help newer filmmakers develop their promoting and distributing skills in panels and workshops. Go to <http://silverdocs.com/media/docs/CA612.pdf> for more information.

Tickets and passes to the festival are on sale now at the AFI Silver Theatre Box Office or online at <http://silverdocs.com/>.

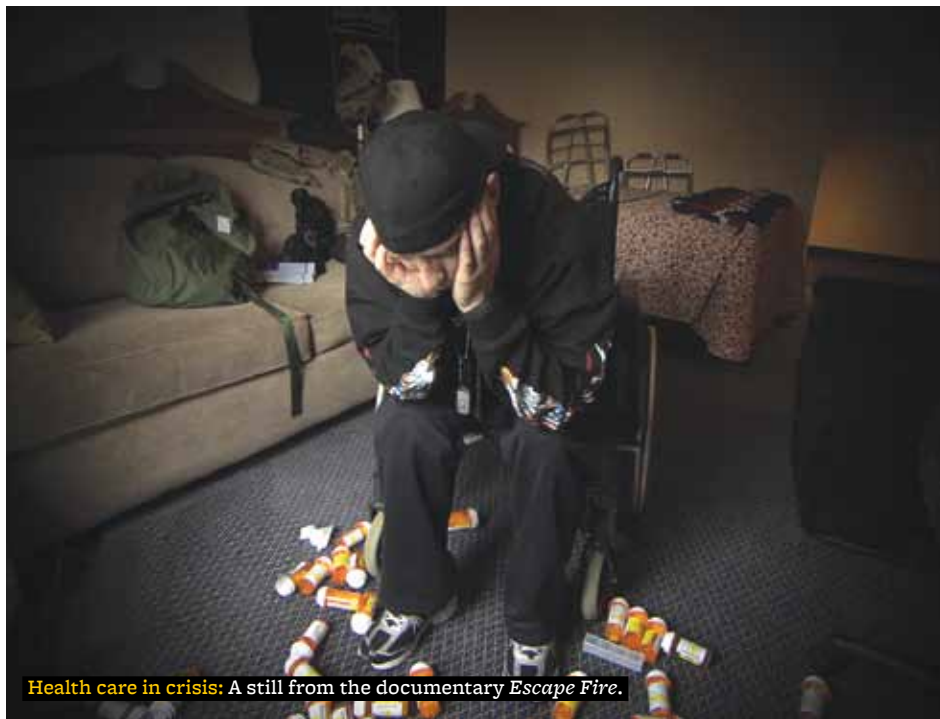
Aside from documentaries, we've got some other good events coming up this week:

Meet the Astronauts

Join astronauts **Pat Forrester** and **Lee Morin** to celebrate the work NASA does on our planet. The "NASA Day on the Hill: International Space Station Benefits for Humanity" event begins at 11:30 on Wednesday in the Rayburn House Office Building foyer. The reception, which begins at 5 p.m., includes hors d'oeuvres. RSVP at john.gaine@nasa.gov.

World Refugee Day

Approximately 15 million people worldwide are displaced refugees. Tuesday is World Refugee Day, a time to acknowledge the problem and develop solutions. The late Rep. **Donald Payne**, D-N.J., was known for his commitment to helping displaced people before his election to office in 1989, and he continued his work on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. A celebration of his efforts will take place on Wednesday, starting at 5 p.m. at B354 Rayburn House Office Building. RSVP at kconway@episcopalchurch.org. ■



Health care in crisis: A still from the documentary *Escape Fire*.