



Podcast Episode 206  
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## “The One Film You WILL Want to See This Fall with Your Family”

**David Loy:** Hi and welcome to *In the Loop* with Andy Andrews, I’m your host David Loy. Andy thanks for joining us today.

**Andy Andrews:** You sound like Dan Rather. Joining us on *In the Loop* with Andy Andrews. Andy, thank you for joining us today.

**David:** Andy let me grill you with some questions.

**Andy:** I’m excited to be here.

**David:** I’m glad that you’re here. Hey you were telling me about, we’re just kind of doing this off the cuff, because you were telling me about.

**Andy:** Off the cuff, like, oh yeah, like we script all the others. It’s like, you mean, we just thought

**David:** We did, we just think of this one. But you were telling me about, you are good friends with Michael Catt.

**Andy:** Michael Catt, who is the pastor at Sherwood in Albany, Georgia. And

**David:** Yes, extremely influential church.

**Andy:** Right, right. And you might know Michael because he is the producer of these films, this is the church that has done Courageous, Facing the Giants, Fireproof, and films like that. These are just awesome films.

**David:** And they've got a new project coming out.

**Andy:** Yeah, The Erwin brothers and Michael are producing this one, and it is called, Woodlawn, W-O-O-D-L-A-W-N. And I'm going to tell you, it is awesome. I have already seen, two times I've seen two different rough cuts of the movie as they were building it. And so I've seen the whole story, whole movie, just some of the particulars weren't done at the end.

**David:** Yeah, and ok, so let me give, this comes out October 16th, I think is the release date.

**Andy:** Yeah, and I mean, how many times have you heard me talk about the movie?

**David:** Right, exactly, rarely to never. But what's interesting here, is that this is not just, I mean, obviously Michael is your friend and you've been around these guys for a long time, and yes the movie is outstanding, from what you've said. But what's unique here is that you actually have a personal tied to the story.

**Andy:** You know, there is a part of this movie that, a part, a scene, a whole part of this thing, that is a story I've been telling for years. Because I've told my friends, I've told my boys, I've told my wife, because I had this amazing thing happen to me, I thought. Now obviously I was just one of the many people watching this but it was a huge part of my growing up as a teenager. And so I'll tell you what it is in just a second, but the movie is about a guy named Tony Nathan. And Tony

Nathan, in Birmingham, Alabama went to Woodlawn high school. And it was right when they were busing and there was just horrible racial stuff going on. And Tony was this unbelievable running back. Now the movie is about the spiritual transformation of that team. And it's about Tony Nathan leading that team and his character and it was just, I was blown away. And I don't wanna give away the movie. Jon Voight plays Bear Bryant in the movie. Because Tony ended up playing at Alabama, he ended up being an all pro with the Miami Dolphins, 9 years, two Super Bowls with the Miami Dolphins.

So here's the kind of background from me, when Michael said, hey we're doing this movie called Woodlawn, I'm thinking, Woodlawn, that can't be the high school. And he says, there's a guy named Tony Nathan. And I said, dude please tell me you're putting the game in there, at Legion Field? He said, oh yeah. I said, Michael I was there. And so here's the thing. When I was in 9th grade, I was at one of the high schools in Birmingham, across town, it was Berry High school. And in the 9th grade, I heard about this kid, you know, we heard about the riots that were going on across town. And Woodlawn high school had the kids bust in and it was just really awful. And as the football season started, somewhere in the middle of the football season, I became aware of this kid, Tony Nathan, who was two years older than me, he was a junior when I was in the 9th grade. And I became aware of him, he was just like, he was unbelievable. I mean, it was just unbelievable what he was doing. It's like, a running back that nobody could stop. And so I was really interested in him, and I was also intered in him, right. And I was also interested in him because I knew that the team had had a spiritual awakening. And that these guys were, I felt like they were like me. And so, I really, I watched really closely. Now when I was in the 10th grade and it was Tony's senior year, as this year started, and this was back before internet, before cell phones, we were still riding dinosaurs, it was just an amazing time.

(David laughing)

**Andy:** But what I'm saying is, during the summer, you really didn't hear anything about anybody. And I remember looking at the Birmingham News and seeing who the projected AllState people were. One of them was Jeff Rutledge at Banks, as quarterback. And the other that I recognize was Tony Nathan at running back, projected to be All State. And so I was really excited about this senior season of his. Now I'm in the 10th grade, every Saturday morning I would get at the newspaper and I would spread it out and I would find the Woodlawn. I wasn't even going to my own games, I wasn't even going to my high school games. Now this was across town so I didn't get to go to any of the games but I was following them and reading the articles about Tony and just blown away. Talking to my dad about them. My dad was a minister there, at the Shades Mountain, there in Birmingham, and so as the season progressed the big traditional power was Banks. And Banks high school was undefeated. They had Jeff Routledge and Jeff had already committed to Alabama. And then they had all the other great players and several of them had committed to major schools. But Woodlawn had Tony Nathan, alright. So both of these schools were undefeated as they were going through the season, you know, they're winning, winning, and neither of them lost. Well back then, these guys were in the same division. So even though they were undefeated, they could not go to the State Championship game against each other. They were gonna play each other at the last game of the season. And it was gonna knock one of them out of the playoffs. Now I won't tell you how all this came out but here's what I will tell you. When they announced this game, now, you got to understand, Banks is undefeated, and Woodlawn is undefeated. And people were aware of what has happened at Woodlawn. And people were aware that Tony has not yet committed to go anywhere. Rumors were that Bear Bryant had gone and personally spent the night at his house one night. And he didn't live

in a great neighborhood, right. And so it was just an amazing thing. And so Woodlawn had, I don't know, three or four thousand seats in their stadium, and Banks had five or six thousand seats in their stadium. And so as it gets closer and they realize these guys are gonna be undefeated when they face each other in the last game of the season, they said, let's change it and put the game in Legion Field, which is where Alabama and Auburn played, ok. This is this massive stadium. And so they were gonna put this in Legion Field, and everybody is very excited. But we're all thinking, ok, we're all be gathered in like, on one side or something, you know, a little dot of people in there. And they were projecting about 10 000 people, which is huge, which is massive for a high school football game, right. And so I actually talked to my dad into going. My dad and my sister and I went.

**David:** No way.

**Andy:** Yeah. And we get there, and first of all, we had to go early, we're coming from across the town so we went early because we weren't really sure how to get to stadium so thank goodness we went early. Because when we got there, they had one gate open in Legion Field and there must have been 20 000 people standing outside of the gate, ok. And it's the only time in my life that I have ever been fearful of getting trampled, because it was getting so tight, and so crazy. And my dad pulled my little sister up and put her on his shoulders, and we were waiting, waiting, pushing, everybody's pushing. And it's pass game time and they make the announcement that they're delaying the game. And so finally, finally we get in there. Well they've delayed the game again and we look when we're up in the stadium, we're up kind of toward the top, and we look out over the city, and you can see lines of cars stuck on the interstate. Now you know, in Alabama, they bring police in, close some roads but this is a high school football game, nobody thought anything. And there are lines of cars and the interstate's are on gridlock. Well the final count on that, there were 40 000 people at a high school football game, 20

000 were turned away at the gate, and they estimated another 40 000 could not get off the interstate, for a high school football game. And so this movie, there is a lot of drama that goes on with Tony and this situation there and his spiritual life. And there is one point where his father, he had awesome parents, and at one point and I'm watching this movie and I'm watching a rough cut David, I'm watching this stuff without some of the stuff filled, I'm seeing the whole story, I'm seeing all the actors, but some of the other stuff is not filled in, in the scenery. And so I'm watching it with a critical eye. You know, so that I can report back to Michael what I thought, and Adam was with me. And so we were both blown away. But there was this one point when this game is about to go on and Tony Nathan is down underneath in the locker room, and they tell, the referee come in and say, we're having to hold again. And the coach says, how many people are out there? And the referee says, a lot. So Tony Nathan goes into the bathroom and he's sick, he's so nervous, and they're holding it more. So his dad comes in and ask coach, says, can I talk to my son? And the coach says, of course. And so he goes in and pulls up a chair, and he says to Tony, he says, son, you just do your best, you know, God has put you in this position and he's given you a gift. And I watch some little boys yesterday running around with number 22's on them. And they want to be like you. And he said, you are carrying this now, he said, these people did not come to see Woodlawn tonight, they didn't come to see Banks, they came to see you. When he said that, you know, I'm watching with a critical eye, and I'm thinking, is that, I don't know, is that a little much? And then suddenly it hit me, oh my gosh, I did that. I went to that game to see Tony.

**David:** You were there for that reason.

**Andy:** Yeah. I didn't care about anything about Woodlawn. I didn't care anything about Banks, I went to see Tony. You know, I've never met him, still never met him, but I followed him throughout his life and just a man of great character that

had tough times beginning. But it is amazing to me that a 9th, 10th grader from Birmingham, Alabama, unsure of myself, you know, I wasn't a popular kid, I wasn't unpopular, I wasn't one of the smart kids, I wasn't with the jocks, I was kind of one of the faceless people, in a massive high school. And he was a huge influence on me. And so when Adam got to see this movie, and Austin was out of town and I asked Adam later, I said, do you wanna make sure, do you want Austin to see that? He said, dad, Austin has to see that movie. He said, that is just the greatest movie and I will even tell him that he has to watch it and he can't even get up and go to the bathroom.

**David:** That's fantastic, wow. Well I don't know that we've ever talked about a movie on the podcast but I think that is a testament to how moving and how impeccable this was to you. I think you've seen it once more, twice more since then? Is that right?

**Andy:** Yeah, I've seen it twice. And really, I'm just telling you, this is something, this has so many lessons in it.

**David:** For the whole family.

**Andy:** For the whole family.

**David:** And it is, I mean, obviously it's rated PG, this is something you can take the entire family to, as Andy said, Jon Voight is in there, Bear Bryant, Shawn Austin, who everybody is very familiar with, he was in Rudy and then in all The Lord of the Rings movies, Sherri Shepherd, very familiar face. There's a lot of big names.

**Andy:** Yeah, you'll recognize a lot. And get this, now here is something else. The kid who plays Tony Nathan, is Caleb Castille. Now when I used to watch Alabama, as a kid, I would see Caleb's father, Jeremiah Castille. And Caleb played for Alabama, he didn't play a ton, ok, but he played for Alabama. And one day, the boys and I were at the practice field and the boys were eating a watermelon with the players, and these nasty dill pickles with the players. It was really, really hot. And there was a young guy, kind of small, but just great, and he paid a lot of attention to Austin and Adam that day. And came and talked to me and that was Caleb Castille. And so I said to Adam, I said, do you remember Caleb? And I'm gonna tell you, man, he is awesome in this movie. So the movie drops, it comes out October 16th. It's coming up.

**David:** Absolutely. So this is.

**Andy:** Polly said, it's worth seeing just for the music.

**David:** Oh wow, that's great.

**Andy:** Because there's so many, so many songs you will recognize from that time.

**David:** And I'm sure that's a great, I'm glad you brought that up, because I think a lot of people see, oh that's a football movie and that might not be of interest to people who don't watch football.

**Andy:** It's really not a football movie, it's not a football movie. It's built around a football team and it's built around, but it's a movie about a family. And it's a movie about decisions, it's a movie about hardship, it's a movie about overcoming. And it is a movie that you want your teenagers to see. You know, I talked to Hugh Freeze, the head coach of Ole Miss, I guess, probably I talk to him every now and

then, and I talked to him the day after the team had seen this. Michael took a copy and showed it to the team. And of course they were blown away. But it's not, I mean, there is football in it, if you like football, you'll like that part of it but if you're not a big football fan, it's still.

**David:** It's still a great movie.

**Andy:** Yeah, it's not really.

**David:** That's very cool. Well Andy we're going to go and cut this one, this episode short, I guess today, but that's fine. I want to encourage everybody to go see Woodlawn. Again the release date is October 16th. Family friendly opportunity here. I'm sure everybody is seeing the previews, I mean, it's getting some major buzz in the press, people are talking about this all over the place. It's certainly not just us. But this is a movie worth going to see and a movie that I think will impact a lot of people.

**Andy:** And let me say this, if you're wondering, now wait a minute, this whole podcast was just kind of a commercial, ok. But let me just tell you this, Michael Catt, The Erwin brothers, nobody has any idea that I'm doing this. And so, and the reason that I am doing this it, number one, the number one reason that I will talk about this on the podcast is because I think it will be great for your family. And if something's great for your family, it will be great for your business, be great for your relationships. And so that is the number one thing for me. And if something wasn't good for your family, it wasn't great for you, you couldn't pay me to say it.

**David:** Exactly. And I think this is a testimony, I mean, you and Adam watched this together for the first time. I mean, you saw the impact that it had on him and

how he wanted to have that movie impact his brother, your other son Austin. So I think this is a resource, this podcast is resource, obviously you've given a recommendations for books for people to read, activities for people to do, to help their personal lives, their professional lives. And movies can also do that. And if we come across something that we think is going to help people then we're absolutely going to talk about it. So go check out Woodlawn. And if you want, we'd love to hear from you. After you've watched it, send us an email, send Andy a message or a post on Facebook or tweet him on twitter, and we want to hear what your thoughts are. You can also email us [intheloop@andyandres.com](mailto:intheloop@andyandres.com). Call us and leave us a voicemail 1800 726 2639, that's 1800 726 Andy. Tell us what you thought of the movie after you've seen it. Alright Andy, we will catch up with you next week. And thanks for your time.

**Andy:** Alright buddy, see you next week.

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**Would you like to run something by Andy? Contact us and your question might be featured on the show!**

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