



# Manhattan Beach director documents corporate greed in 'We the People' film

Michael Hixon Updated Apr 27, 2016 (0)



Market Basket CEO Arthur T. Demoulas was ousted by the grocery chain's board of directors in the summer of 2014. His firing created a firestorm of controversy, causing thousands of the company's non-union employees and well as millions of its customers to protest in an effort to bring back the popular boss.

In the new documentary "We the People: The Market Basket Effect," Manhattan Beach filmmaker Tommy Reid details the battle between corporate greed and the American dream. The film screens at the Laemmle Music Hall in Los Angeles from Friday, April 29 to Thursday, May 5.



Filmmaker Tommy Reid interviewing New Hampshire governor Maggie Hassan for his documentary 'We the People.' (submitted photo)



"This was a solidarity movement of people coming together in peace to rally together to boycott a grocery chain," said Reid, who directed the film and is one of the producers. "They had 25,000 employees walk out for six weeks, which stopped the vendors from giving their product to the grocery chain, which led the customers to revolt and boycott the grocery chain in all of New England ... over 74 stores. At the time, there were 2 million people in the New England area that boycotted their favorite grocery chain all in favor of wanting the employees to get back their boss because that's what made them happy to go to work."

The family feud in the Demoulas family went back decades, but it came to a head in a battle to control the nearly \$4 billion corporation between Arthur T. Demoulas and his cousin Arthur S. Demoulas. What it came down to, according to Reid, is Arthur T.'s belief that more money should be invested in the company and its employees and not in the Demoulas family pockets. When Arthur T. was ousted, it pitted the "99 percenters versus the 1 percenters."

"The 99 percenters were sticking their necks out ... they didn't want money, they didn't want fringe benefits or medical benefits, they wanted their own boss back because of the way he treated his associates and employees from top upper management down to rank and file baggers at grocery stores," Reid said.

Reid has had an eclectic film career, from producing the mob feature film, "Kill the Irishman," to directing the TV series "Dads Doin' Dishes," a reality show featuring celebrity dads creating meals for their families, which airs on the Parent Family Network. Reid has other projects in the works including the release of "The Whiffler" on VOD on May 15. Released in 2010 as "Screwball: The Ted Whitfield Story," the mockumentary about a man chasing the whiffleball home run championship gets a new lease on life.

### We the People

Acclaimed actor Michael Chiklis narrated the documentary 'We the People.' (submitted photo)

"In 2010, it came out very briefly with Warner Bros. online and then it fell to the back burner," Reid said. "I just got the rights back and I'm re-releasing the project because not many people saw it."

Also in the beginning stages is a documentary on beach volleyball, the rise of the AVP and the sport's recent turbulent times. "Kings of the Beach" will be co-produced by Manhattan Beach's Trey Comstock, who worked for the AVP and is a local musician. Reid said they are looking for financing to shoot this summer for a release date in Spring 2017.

"It was a lifestyle sport always battling corporate business," Reid said. "There was a fall out, sponsors fell out, the market crashed, sponsors went bankrupt and it left the players hanging. Still now to this day there has been a couple different takeovers of the AVP."

Reid said he enjoys working on different types of projects.

"It motivates you as a creator and as a thinker ... these are all stories that resonate somewhere in me to tell. There's a lot of passion behind each one," Reid said.

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