

"We could have gone locally and seen Return of the King, but we thought it would be a pretty cool event to see all three at once," Bell said. "It's just a good thing they're not one right after the other."

The 99 theaters participating in the trilogy marathon arranged numerous treats for fans, with some setting up buffets for the breaks in between the movies. Wynnsong provided food from Quizno's for its marathon-goers.

One store that caters to Rings fans set up a display at the theatre. Blades by Brown, of Lewisville, was on hand with a complete display of knives and swords reproduced from props used in the Rings movies.

"This is one of the few things I can feel like a kid doing," said Larry Ray, the company's webmaster. Ray donned a 4.5-pound chain-mail headdress and steel warrior's helmet to top off his armor. Most warriors like those featured in the Rings movies, he said, wore more than 60 pounds of armor.

In other areas of the country, people waited for days, drove for hours and paid up to \$250 for tickets to the trilogy.

Michael Brown, 22, a student at Johns Hopkins University, was first in line at the 900-seat Senator Theatre in Baltimore, arriving at 10:45 a.m. Monday with a tent, a sleeping bag and a box of PowerBars.

"I spent 10 hours waiting for The Two Towers to open, and about the same for one of the Harry Potter movies. I try to be first in line for just about everything that premieres here," Brown said. "I do this to myself because I love movies, and I feel like if I'm going to go see the movies, I might as well do it right."

Ordinary moviegoers, though, may feel daunted by the trilogy, directed by Peter Jackson and starring Elijah Wood, Viggo Mortensen, Ian McKellen and Sean Astin.

It began at Wynnsong 12 with the extended edition of The Fellowship of the Ring at 2:15 p.m.

The Two Towers, also in extended form, followed at 6:30 p.m., leaving room for a short break before the 11 p.m. start of The Return of the King.

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[Go Back](#)