

'Winds of Autumn,' ill wind that blows no good

Western avengers get more precocious with the passing years. Their partners get more ancient.

In the classic "True Grit," teen-aged Kim Darby enlisted the aid of 55-year-old John Wayne to help her track down her prey. As Rooster Cogburn, Wayne did it with one eye and won an Academy Award.

"The Winds of Autumn" offers 11-year-old Chuck Pierce Jr. as Joel Rigney, a Quaker lad. His helper, played by Earl E. Smith, made headlines as gunslinger Kid Pepperdine back in the Montana Territory. The Kid is no kid any more. He's almost 70 and his hands are "full o' rheumatism." He rubs them a lot.

The Kid's matched pair of pearl-handled revolvers and his shotgun have been laid away with his newspaper clippings for safekeeping in a large trunk at the foot of his bed. Pepperdine, a bachelor, has become a peace-loving Quaker farmer. Young Joel helps him with his wheat. When they have a few minutes to spare, Pepperdine teaches the lad how to use the shotgun, admitting that he "used to fool around with guns a little."

Into their peaceful valley ride J. P.,

'The Winds of Autumn'

Produced and directed by Charles B. Pierce. Screenplay by Earl E. Smith. Mature. 105 minutes.

The cast includes Jack Elam, Jeanette Nolan, Andrew Prine, Chuck Pierce Jr., Dub Taylor, Jimmy Clem and Charles B. Pierce.

Ma and her sons, Lester, Virg, Wire and Hog. The gang is right out of every television series ever created. Especially Hog.

The gang has just sprung Virg from a prison farm. Lester gets shot during a melee in a potato field. The gang stops off at Joel's place to get the buckshot out of Lester's back.

The winds blow a lot when there is dastardly action. Soon Joel's father, mother and sister are victims of the gang. Pepperdine takes the lad in. But not for long.

Joel takes the shotgun and takes after the gang in a windstorm to avenge the killings. Pepperdine, armed with his pair of pistols, sets out after him.

Along their separate ways, Joel and the gang stumble onto every stereotyped western character ever created by a

scriptwriter. There are friendly Indians who speak Indian Sioux instead of English, a white medicine man, dance hall girls and so on. Only a frontier dentist is missing. The cast could have used one.

Along with more blowing wind and snow, there is some splendid Montana scenery, dotted with autumn leaves.

Time marches on! Lester dies of blood poisoning. At his burial, Joel takes care of Virg with his shotgun. Fog rolls in and Wire picks off Ma. "I didn't know it

was you!" he screams, looking down through the lifting fog at her lifeless body.

In the nick of time, Pepperdine arrives. He rubs his hands, then rubs out the rest of the gang. He spots a conveniently located well. Into it go the pistols. Then Joel follows suit with the shotgun.

They ride into the sunset. Fortunately, they are weaponless. We may be spared a sequel.

Pops concert to open Blossom season

Blossom Music Center 1976 opens on Tuesday evening, at 8:30 with a Gala Pops Concert by the Cleveland Orchestra under the direction of Blossom Pops conductor Erich Kunzel, music director of the New Haven Symphony and frequent guest conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra.

Metropolitan Opera star Roberta Peters is the special guest star for this grand opening.

The program is highlighted by Tchai-

kovsky's "1812 Overture."

Another feature of the program will be Borodin's "Polovtsian Dances" from "Prince Igor," conducted by Holly Strawbridge, who earned the right to guest conduct the Cleveland Orchestra at last winter's "Scheherazade" auction.

The opening event is the annual Blossom women's committee night and one of the first of more than sixty performances scheduled for the Blossom season, which runs through September 11.

AN EYE FOR AN EYE AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.
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The Winds of Autumn

Produced and Directed by CHARLES B. PIERCE. Screenplay by EARL E. SMITH. Music by JAUME MENDOZA NAVA. Color by TECHNICOLOR. Filmed in PARAVISION.

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Read the PD business-finance section to tell the bulls from the bears.

At times it looked like it might cost them their jobs, their reputations, and maybe even their lives.

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