

Workshop series oriented for theatre, others

By Bruce Lantz

FORT ST. JOHN – The Peace River Zone of Theatre BC has started a series of workshops in the Northeast designed to

improve local theatre production while giving ‘civilians’ a chance to learn, too.

At the Peace River Zone AGM in September, the membership

stated a need for training in marketing, plus training in technical theatre, including stage management and lighting design. The zone is planning to offer a series of ‘Local Expert’ workshops in addition to more intensive sessions for actors and directors with professional instructors selected from the Theatre BC Talent Bank. The workshops will be open to both theatre clubs and anyone interested in learning about community theatre.

“It’s so expensive to bring experts in from elsewhere that we decided to source local experts first,” said Cynthia Livingstone, chair of the Peace River Zone. “Both the public and theatre people can learn the little tricks that make your life easier.”

She said they hope to hold series workshops also in Fort Nelson, Dawson Creek and Hudson’s Hope with topics ranging from sound, lighting and set design to costumes and stage management.

The first Local Expert workshop was conducted in Fort St. John on Oct. 20 by Kim Tait, whose specialty is costume construction. The four-hour session, on costume construction, was called Break Free of Patterns. Tait studied fine arts at Capilano College, holds a fashion design diploma from Fraser Valley College, and has worked for numerous theatre costume designers.

Planning is now underway for a stage management workshop

with an Equity stage manager.

Also, Theatre BC president John Stuart is doing a tour of this zone Nov. 1-3 with stops in Fort St. John, Hudson’s Hope and Dawson Creek. He will be teaching two different workshops - Improv in a Nutshell and Make It Clear: Using Intentions in Acting, as well as talking about ACToberfest, a new one-act play festival just held in Kelowna that will be coming to Prince George next fall. This non-competitive festival is a vehicle for small community theatre clubs to perform for new audiences and meet peers from different parts of the province.

The Peace River Zone Festival will be in Dawson Creek this year.



Bruce Lantz photo

Working on their costumes at a local theatre workshop are, from left: Cynthia Livingstone, Sarah Halse, Kim Scott, workshop leader Kim Tait and Mary Telford.

Personalities bring 'Beverly Hillbillies' characters to life

ADP

By Melanie Robinson

FORT ST. JOHN - Residents of Fort St. John can expect a few laughs this week if they are interested in theatre.

Local theatre group Stage North is putting on their first production of the year, The Beverly Hillbillies, throughout the week and they would love the community to come out and enjoy the show for all ages.

One thing that's guaranteed, said director Tom Kirschner, is seeing "grown people act

like children" which, he added, is part of making comedies fun. That and the good time cast and crew have while creating it.

Kirschner said the cast of the show really compliments the characters from the hit television show and that even through busy lives of work and families, the cast really came together.

"The groups been really good to work with," he said. "When you get

that many personalities in a room there are occasions where things clash but I would say maybe 99 per cent of the time this group's

been wonderful to be around, which is good. When you get 20 different personalities working in one room and they get along it's even better."

With new and experienced theatre members throughout the production and some cast members having to drop out at the last minute, there have been challenges but one thing is for certain, they've had and continue to have fun.

Kirschner said the stage manager of the show put it correctly when he said, "if peo-

ple in the audience enjoy the show half as much as we did putting it together then they're going to walk away with a big smile."

The show will be running from Oct. 25 to 27 at 7 p.m. with tickets available at the Cultural Centre. One thing is for certain, he said, it is guaranteed to be a good time.

"I think people will enjoy it, I really do and we're going to have fun. That was my number one rule when people got involved in the show is I said 'you have to have fun.'"



Melanie Robinson photo

Audiences can expect to see all the beloved characters from the show in the 60's including Granny, Elly May and Jethro.

Exciting season of shows coming from Stage North

By Melanie Robinson

FORT ST. JOHN – The residents of Fort St. John should get ready for a comedic and exciting season of shows from Stage North. With shows like *The Beverly Hillbillies*, *Seussical the Musical*, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)* and *American Buffalo*, Stage North has quite a line up.

The aim of the shows, which start Oct. 19 and run to early May, is to keep people laughing throughout the year.

“This year we want to remind our audience that theatre is fun,” said Laura Doray, a board member and a cast member for last years award-winning play ‘The Monument’.

“We had some great shows last year and we’re really proud of ‘The Monument’ and its success and we sort of

want to build on that, take that whole idea of award-winning theatre but do quality theatre in a fun, more exciting way.”

“By focusing on more comedies and musicals we hope to remind people, in February when it’s so dark and it’s always cold and it’s always winter, that the *Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)* is hilarious. It’s the type of thing where if you get yourself out to the theatre. You’re going to have a really good time. You’ll walk away feeling good.”

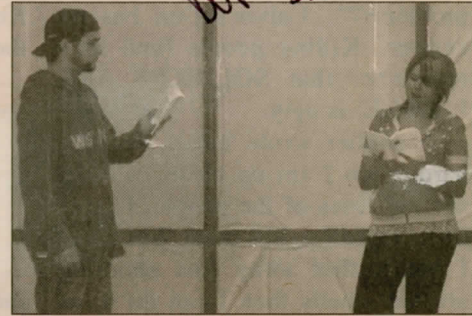
Auditions for the shows were held recently. The group is looking for about 60 roles to be filled for the plays and they’re always seeking people to work backstage.

“We had people here today that had never done a Stage North show before and we love to have all entry ages,” she said. “We could use more seniors, like 50-plus people but we take what we can get. I think that overall we’re pretty welcoming. We don’t judge people, we’re all volunteers just working for the same thing. I know some people get scared but be brave. We don’t judge. Come and play with us, come and have a good time.”

Doray said by doing plays with larger casts, it increases the chance of Stage North getting new members joining every year.

“We’ve really been growing, last year we had over 80 members and we really want to keep growing on those successes of getting more people out,” she said.

Anyone still interested in auditioning for any of the four plays, contact vice-president Blair Scott at bscott@terraenergy.ca. “He can put people in touch with directors and such, stage managers if they’re interested in working tech,” said Doray. For those interested in seeing if theatre is for them, Stage North is holding this year’s clean-up Sept. 8 at 11 a.m. at the Stage North space.



Melanie Robinson photo

Kris Przednowek and Aysha-Rae Bozarth gave auditions a try.

Dor 2007



Stage North

presents

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION
RETURNS WITH

DSP

SNOW FOLLIES

Dinner & Theatre

Friday, Nov. 9, 2007

Quality Inn Northern Grand

6pm Doors Open

6:30pm Dinner

7:30pm Shows

“This Is A Play” Stage North

“Work In Progress” Hudson’s Hope

Improvistational Theatre Stage North

Tickets \$40 each available at
North Peace Cultural Centre Box Office
Information: 785-1992

with some

Theaters blend for shows that highlight the actors' world

By Melanie Robinson

FORT ST. JOHN – The theatre groups from Fort St. John and Hudson's Hope are trying something new this year.

Reviving the Spirit and Stage North have worked together for the first time to put on two nights of comedy, consisting of a half-hour play by each group and 45 minutes of improv.

The Hudson's Hope group will be performing 'Work in Progress', a story of what goes through an author's mind while writing a book, and it promises to be a good show.

"Our production is lighthearted," said director Grace Okada. "I don't think it would be considered comedy but it is lighthearted."

She added working with the Stage North group has added a lot to what their group does.

"It provides us with an opportunity to put



Contributed photo

The improv group for the shows has been working hard to make the night something for all to enjoy.

our play on more than once," she said. "Usually we perform here once and in Hudson's Hope. That's about all you can do."

Stage North will be performing 'This is a Play', a three-person production highlighting the thoughts and egos of actors while they are performing on stage.

One of the play's actors, Kris Przednowek said it's more than just something for the community to laugh at.

"It really shows the community theatre spirit as well," he said. "I think it adds an element to the show."

The dinner and shows in Fort St. John will take place Nov. 9 at the Quality Inn. Tickets are available at the Cultural Centre.

The shows and dessert in Hudson's Hope will take place on Nov. 17, with tickets available at Shop Easy,

Marg's Mini-Mart, On the Rim or by contacting Greta Goddard. ^{DUP} 2007, Oct

Przednowek said it's worth going to one or the other.

"If you want to laugh for about two hours and enjoy some great dinner, and really who doesn't, I would suggest you come out to something like this."