

USD Theater Kicks Off Season With ‘Bus Stop’

BY SARAH WETZEL
For the Plain Talk

The University of South Dakota Theatre program is setting the Knutson stage for their first production to open next Friday and will run September 25, 26, 30 and October 1-3 at 7:30 p.m.

Matinee performances will also be held September 27 and October 4 at 2 p.m.

“It’s written and set in 1955,” said director Timothy Pyles. “It takes place in a diner in a small one-stop sign town in rural Kansas. What happens in the play is this diner is sort of a normal stop on the route of interstate buses traveling between Kansas City and Topeka and this particular night there’s a really bad snowstorm and the bus makes it to the diner but it can’t go on any further and so all the passengers on the bus are stuck in the diner all night.”

Though not heavy on action, ‘Bus Stop’ provides entertainment in the way of interesting exchanges between the characters according to Pyles.

“The playwright put a number of very different characters together in one room and sort of left them there for awhile and see what happens, take stock of their life stories,” he said. “Over the course of the play we sort of learn about each of the characters and their past and what they’re doing in the present. It kind of turns out that all of them in different ways are lonely and are looking for love in some form. That seems to be a common thread between them.”

As the audience gets to be familiar with the characters they will undoubtedly relate to a few of them according to Pyles.

“I’d say [the play is] about the human struggle with loneliness and the human need for love and the different ways that we all negotiate that, the different ways we try to solve that problem and fill that hole in our hearts,”



he said. “I think it appeals widely. I wouldn’t necessarily say there’s any one particular slice of the public that this play is aimed at per se. It’s set in the 50’s so there’s a certain sort of nostalgic quality to it at this point. It’s really a very contemporary story as well. It’s not really a plot-driven show as it is about getting to know characters.”

‘Bus Stop’ contains no real mature themes, language or violence according to Pyles, however he stated that it might be a little boring for younger audiences.

Any parents who elect to bring children should keep in mind that the show’s run time is two hours and not exactly action-packed.

“I think at times we assume kids are less curious than they are but I mean it’s not a kids’ show,” Pyles said.

Though the setting and cast of the show is smaller, it presents certain challenges for Pyles and the actors he is directing.

“It’s an ensemble piece so most of the characters never leave the stage once they go on, or at least they might leave once very briefly,” he said. “There are eight characters and for the majority of the play at least six of them are onstage continuously even when they’re not necessarily the focus. We might have a scene going on in one part of the stage with two people and that scene might go on for a fair bit but meanwhile there are four other people onstage who aren’t talking or the focus of attention. They’re just in the diner so they have to have things to do that are not distracting but that are also realistic. Reading a magazine or drinking a cup of coffee

or whatever.

“That’s a bit of a directing challenge,” Pyles continued. “They spend a lot of time in character onstage and still acting but not speaking and not even being spoken to. They’ve really had to work on developing really robust, three dimensional characters who can kind of live onstage.”

The play also has its merits.

“It’s sort of a show that has a lot of little scenes in it,” Pyles said. “Like I said, it’s all these folks in this diner but we break away to different groups of two or three that have conversations that we focus in on and then we move and focus in on somebody else. It’s a very earnest play. It’s a play that sort of wears its heart on its sleeve and I like that.”

Though not a comedy, Pyles said ‘Bus Stop’ does have a good amount of comedy in it.

“It’s kind of an optimistic drama,” he said. “There’s certainly some serious elements to it but there’s definitely some humor.”

The cast has only been rehearsing since August 21 according to Pyles who is looking forward to seeing the show finally come together.

“In a certain way theatre always comes together at the last minute just because it’s not till the last week that you combine all the different elements,” he said. “It’s not until the dress rehearsal that the whole set is done and you have the lights and sound up and running and everybody’s in costume and makeup. In another sense it’s a slow and steady progression from the very beginning. From the tech side we’ve been rehearsing with the actors since August 25 but on the design and technical side of things we had our first meeting back in May. That’s been going all summer.”

For more information or to reserve tickets, visit www.usd.edu/fine-arts/theatre or call 605-677-5418.

Cagle

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“46 percent of all people infected with HIV/AIDS are black, while blacks only make up 12 percent of the general population,” she said. “21 percent are Hispanic with only 17 percent of the general population identifying as Hispanic. 28 percent of those diagnosed are white, while the general population is 63 percent white. The most infections occur in the 25-34 age group, with the second most in the 13-24 age group.”

While nationally 64 percent of all new cases are transmitted by male to male sexual contact, Cagle said that doesn’t hold true for South Dakota.

“In South Dakota while the rate of infection for males is consistent with the national average, the rate of infections for females is much higher,” she said. “In South Dakota most transmissions occur during heterosexual contact or by intravenous drug users.”

Cagle said the sooner someone with HIV/AIDS receives treatment the better the outcome. However, because there is still a stigma associated with the disease there are many barriers stopping people from seeking treatment.

“If you live in a small town where there is only one doctor or medical clinic people are much less likely to get tested or receive treatments,” she said. “Also many are unaware of their status. Currently, one in eight people with HIV/AIDS are unaware of their status.”

She said the goal of the CDC is to create a high-impact HIV prevention plan

using interventions that are scientifically proven, cost effective and scalable.

“If the programs are targeted to the right populations in the right geographic area, we can achieve the greatest possible impact on the epidemic,” Cagle said. “With new tools and approaches we can achieve progress against HIV across communities.”

Cagle said unlike in the 80s where a diagnosis of HIV was usually a death sentence due to no treatments being available, most can live a long, happy life with treatment now.

“People have gotten complacent about the transmission of AIDS,” she said. “We need to continue to do more education, and make HIV testing part of routine medical care.”

She also said there are three keys to helping protect yourself.

“Know how HIV/AIDS is transmitted, use condoms and don’t think you can judge who does or does not have HIV by their looks,” she said. “No one knows what HIV looks like, it can be anybody.”

In addition to speaking at the Farber Forum, Cagle also was invited to visit with several classes held on campus including Victimology, Epidemiology and Public Health.

The next Farber Forum featuring speaker Douglas J. Hajek, a 1985 USD School of Law graduate will be held Tuesday, Sept. 22 at 4:00 pm in Old Main’s Farber Hall.

Hajek will be speaking on “When Citibank Came to SD: The economics, personalities & politics behind the move.”

The event is free and open to the public.

South Dakota Farm And Ranch Families Honored For A Century Or More On The Land

More than 100 farm and ranch families who have owned their land for a century or more were honored at the South Dakota State Fair, receiving a Century Farm or Quasiquicentennial Farm award from the South Dakota Farm Bureau and the South Dakota Department of Agriculture including several from the Vermillion area.

This year, 67 families were honored with the Century award for 100 years of ownership and 44 were honored with the Quasiquicentennial award for 125 years of family ownership. More than 80 of the families were able to be in attendance for the awards ceremony, held at the fair on Sept. 3 on the Farm Bureau Dakotaland Stage. Each family had the opportunity to say a few words about their farm or ranch as they were presented their award by Lucas Lentsch, South Dakota Secretary of Agriculture, and Scott VanderWal, President of the South Dakota Farm Bureau.

“Agriculture might appear much different today

than it did a century or 125 years ago, but the heart of agriculture has not changed—farmers and ranchers who are proud to care for the land and the livestock, their families and communities. South Dakota is built on the hard work, faith, and perseverance of these farm and ranch families. On behalf of Farm Bureau, I offer our congratulations to each and every one of these deserving people,” VanderWal commented.

Secretary Lentsch added, “It is a true honor to meet all of these families who’ve been able to keep farms in their family for 100 years, 125 years or even longer, and to hear their stories,” Secretary Lentsch added. “These families are the backbone of agriculture in South Dakota. It’s a privilege to serve them and all of South Dakota’s farm and ranch families.”

Since the program began in 1984, South Dakota Farm Bureau and the South Dakota Department of Agriculture have honored more than 2,880 farm and ranch families with these awards.

To be recognized, at least 80 acres of the original land must have been continuously owned by the same family, and they must be able to provide proof of the original date of purchase.

Area 2015 Century Farms honored

included:
Bosse Farm (Dean Bosse) - Elk Point
Thomas C. French, Randy and LeeAnn Freng - Mission Hill
Sealey Farm (John and Agnes Sealey) - Clay County



COURTESY PHOTO

Calvin L. Rosenbaum - Jefferson



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Bosse Farm (Dean Bosse) - Elk Point

2015 Quasiquicentennial Farms honored included:
Hans T. Ablid Homestead (Vernon Ablid, Carlan Westre, Richard Ablid, Kari Stormo Dolge, Eric Stormo) - Wakonda
Doug and Jeanne Hanson

- Elk Point (Photo not available)
Calvin L. Rosenbaum - Jefferson
Larkin L. Lovejoy Homestead (Eric Stormo and Kari Stormo Dolge) - Wakonda
Troy Walraven - Meckling
James R. and Ruth Williams - Wakonda



COURTESY PHOTO

James R. and Ruth Williams - Wakonda



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Hans T. Ablid Homestead (Vernon Ablid, Carlan Westre, Richard Ablid, Kari Stormo Dolge, Eric Stormo) - Wakonda And Larkin L. Lovejoy Homestead (Eric Stormo and Kari Stormo Dolge) - Wakonda



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Troy Walraven - Meckling



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Sealey Farm (John and Agnes Sealey) - Clay County

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