

Want to See a New Form of Theater in Cave Creek?

Written by Sarah Love

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EXTRA EXTRA!

New Form of Theater and Sanctioned Centennial Project,
In the Devil's Frying Pan, Premieres Feb. 3 – 19 in Cave Creek

Desert Foothills Theater presents original musical play about life in the Territory prior to 1912 -- Community project includes up to 100 cast members

In honor of Arizona's Centennial celebration, Desert Foothills Theater (DFT), a program of the Foothills Community Foundation, is presenting a new form of theater through an original play, *In the Devil's Frying Pan*, which tells the story of the founding of Arizona through first-person accounts of life in the Territory prior to 1912. This theatrical event, which has been recognized by the Arizona Centennial Commission as an Official Centennial Event and a Centennial Legacy Project, premieres Fri., Feb. 3 through Sun., Feb. 19 at Stagecoach Village, 7100 E. Cave Creek Rd., in Cave Creek. Show times are at 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, and at 2 p.m. on Sundays. Tickets range from \$15 to \$20 for children under 18, and from \$22 to \$30 for adults.

Meribeth Reeves, DFT managing director, said the community theater has taken on unique projects in its 37-year history, but nothing of this magnitude.

"We owe a tremendous amount of gratitude to writer Lori Vander Maten, who spent hundreds of hours researching Arizona history to write our first community play. This new form of theater will include up to 100 cast members from our community who will share stories, poetry, music, dance photography and other visual images about the people and events that brought about Arizona's statehood," Reeves said.



Vander Maten, a talented performer and director who holds a MFA from UCLA in playwriting, grew up in Tucson and has always been interested in Arizona history. Her husband, Michael, is an historical re-enactor and antiques collector, so she was familiar with some stories, but had no idea how this project would evolve until she began her research in July 2010.

"Writing this play and doing the research has transformed my view of this state," Vander Maten said. "I think there is a lot we can learn about ourselves in the 21st century by looking at the people who came before us and carved a state out of an extremely hostile environment. Their tenacity, courage, rugged individualism and inventiveness are incredibly inspiring to me. And, in the spirit of the community that fostered the founding of the state, we want this to truly be a community event. We held several public readings of the play and based script revisions on feedback from the actors and the public. This is a not-to-be-missed, once-in-a-lifetime event, and we'll be performing in other areas of the state, but Cave Creek gets to see it first!"

Director Mark Clemente said directing an original work is a first for him. "It has been great to be part of the process. My challenge as a director is to bring these first person stories to life and provide audiences a glimpse of territorial life, as well as make it interesting to all ages. Lori certainly provided me a great script that will be appealing to everyone. My job is to add the 'visual glitter' that will make it shine."

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To order tickets, visit www.desertfoothillstheater.com or call (480) 488-1981.

AZ Centennial Show: In the Devil's Frying Pan

Presented by Desert Foothills Theater, this original musical play tells the story of the founding of Arizona through first-person accounts of life in the Territory prior to 1912. The cast is comprised of 100 people from the community, many of whom provided feedback on the early drafts of the script to shape it into the final version. An officially sanctioned Arizona Centennial Event and Legacy Project, the play includes a mix of professional actors, families, students, and other residents interested in participating in this once-in-a-lifetime event.

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2 p.m. on Sundays

Location: Stagecoach Village, 7100 E. Cave Creek Rd., Cave Creek

Tickets: Range from \$15 to \$20 for children under 18, and from
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