

Curtain Call

Francisco Center for the Performing Arts

Home of the Spanish Peaks Players 127 Francisco, La Veta, CO 81055

Editor – Betty de St Jean

Volume 1

Issue 7

September 2006

FCPA Summer Season Huge Success

By Sam de St Jean

“It was without doubt, the best entertainment which has been given by home amateur in La Veta for sometime and the actors are to be highly commended for the way in which all performed their parts.” *Could they be talking about the Melodrama or Hotel Suites?* No, it was in a newspaper clipping dated January 23, 1904

The article went on to state “The players, of course, might be criticized and no doubt have been, but everyone will admit that the same thing could be successfully presented as an amateur performance in a larger town than this. What does need criticism at nearly every entertainment in La Veta is some of the audience, who seem to think they are the entertainers, and accordingly make themselves heard. If anyone does not care for what is going on, they can easily leave without disturbing others. The house was a full

one and about \$53 was taken in from the sale the tickets.”

Two other articles one dated February 27, 1904 mentioned the La Veta Comedy Club will present “The Deacon,” by Horace C. Dale. It’s a five act play and the cast has fifteen different characters. It states “It abounds with laughable situations which will keep the audience amused from start to finish. Reserved seats are now on sale for 35 cents at Kincaid’s store; general admission is 25 and 25 cents.” Some of the cast of characters included names such as Powell, Holmes, Steele, Lewis, Ownbey, Mauldin, Nance and Summers just to name a few.

The comedy club put on another production “Sweetbriar or the Flower of New York”, a 6 act drama. Miss Eva Erwin sang between acts and was accompanied by the orchestra comprised of Messrs Bemen, Hansen and Miss Mitchoff.

September 1904, the newspaper announced The La Veta Comedy Club will lease the Kincaid Opera House for a period of one year. They plan

to get some good traveling companies to show up in La Veta and use local sociable affairs and dances as well as amateur and professional dramatic companies to use the playhouse. The club would do a series of plays and a nicely conducted ball every once in awhile. It also said the stage will be enlarged and stage settings improved (*sound familiar*). The purpose of the club was to liven things up in La Veta and gain notoriety for La Veta (*yup, we plan to do that too*).

”Joe Ruggles or the Girl Miner” a comedy played at the opera house in November 1904. The play depicted life in the western mining camp. The article highlighted the various roles and the good acting. It was not a full house and they only made \$35 but planned to perform in Walsenburg.

Many of you probably don’t know where the Kincaid Opera house is located. It’s the building on the corner of Ryus and Main where “Desert Expressions” was located. On December 12, 1903, J.R. Voorhees placed a pipe system

of gasoline lights in the opera house similar to the kind used at the Smith and Lawton stores and the La Veta Hotel.

We thank Judy Pierce, local genealogist who was kind enough to share newspaper clippings about the La Veta Comedy Company that performed at the Kincaid Hall in La Veta. Judy has old photographs of actors she thinks may be associated with The La Veta Comedy Club. If you can help shed some light as to what play these folks are in or who they are, please contact me via email at samdestjean@centurytel.net.



photos furnished by Judy Pierce
La Veta Genealogist
They are believed to be from one of the early productions of the La Veta comedy club

What about the history of the players in La Veta? In a playbill

dated 1982, The Spoon River Players was formed in 1974 with the production of "The Spoon River Anthology", which was "Rosalie Runs Riot", "The Silver Whistle", and "He Done her Wrong". The group is comprised of community members from various walks of life and is a completely voluntary organization. No one receives payment for their services. Other productions were "A Thurber Carnival", "Star Spangled Girl", "Wait Until Dark", a musical "Oklahoma", "One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest" and "Butterflies are Free". In 1983, productions included "Blithe Spirit", "The Unsinkable Molly Brown", "A Streetcar Named Desire", and a melodrama.

The goal at that time was the completion of an annex building approximately 500 square feet behind the structure to house the properties and costumes. It would also have two restrooms for the performers and audience members.

They did succeed in building it but we who use it now, have run out of space for our props and costumes. One of the goals of the FCPA is to build another bigger facility to use as storage and build sets which is why it is so important to become a member or give a donation.

We have achieved our goal to install new seats, a new stage and lights but we need much more such as another building.

In reading these two playbills, some advertisers are still here in this town. Missing now are The Hungry Piglet at the La Veta Mall, Endrizzi's Pizza, Valley Voice, The Drive Inn, La Veta Western Wear, Panadero Ski Resort and much more. Gone but not forgotten.

Play Bill from the 1983 season of "The Spoon River Players"
Property of Nancy Christofferson, La Veta Historian



News of the Players

Greg Appling, co-director of Hotel Suites and board member resigned recently due to moving to Greeley Colorado. He started out in Dracula as Abraham Van Helsing and was in last year's melodrama as Ray Beeze, the vile veterinarian. He has directed several plays such as Murder, Music and Mayhem, our Dinner Mystery and Dearly Departed. Greg is now Director of Instructional Research & Effectiveness at Aims Community College. He will be dearly missed
Marta Moore also resigned due to work commitments at her shop called Valley Winds. She and Patti Kiehne who is also a businesswoman and owns Earthtones will be missed. Although they have resigned, they promise to continue their support to the theater.
We thank everyone who attended the Melodrama "Blazing Guns at Roaring Gulch" and "Hotel Suites". For some it was a first time experience to see our newly remodeled theater and others remembered the uncomfortable folding chairs and high stage from last year. They said the theater seats were very comfortable and the theater was beautiful. They also commented that the theater had individuals who did a wonderful job with set design and construction and extremely talented actors. Some said Hotel Suites was the best comedy they have seen

and based on the endless laughter that may be true.

Upcoming Events

A Celebration of Celtic Spirituality
Friday Sept 29th at 1:30-4 p.m.
Workshop led by poet, Jack Collom titled "New Approaches to Nature Writing". For more information please call Tracy Webb at the Inn of the Spanish Peaks 742-5313.

One of the greatest insights of Celtic Spirituality is the emphasis on the presence of God at all times and in all things (animals, forests, rocks, water). There is no separation of the sacred and secular - all are one in God. There is nothing outside of God and God's love. It is only our blindness that prevents us from seeing the glory that is in all things. (*St. Ninian, 5th Century*).

God speaks to our world from so many different places. Celtic Spirituality embraces a plethora of possibilities. The similarities of Native American Indians of our region as well as other earlier civilizations, including those world wide, speak to our own relationships and struggles on our spiritual journey in this 21st century. For more information please log on to www.stbenedictlaveta.org/celtic.html.

In November, we hope to bring the 1938's radio "War of the Worlds" broadcast and another Murder Mystery Dinner Theater.

Join Today

Good Amateur theatrics go back a long way in La Veta. If you would like to become a patron of our local theatre group then become a member of the Francisco Center for the Performing Arts and help continue La Veta's reputation as town that supports the arts with great theatrical performances. The Spanish Peaks Players need helpers too consider joining. You can become one of the:

Actors
Directors
Run the Box Office
Help clean up
Technicians are needed for Sound & lighting
Help with construction of the sets
Makeup and costumes

Just volunteer and we will find you a job.

Contact "Sam" de St Jean today at samdestjean@centurytel.net
Or check out our web site at www.lavettheater.org

(cont' on page 4)

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT 2006-2007

2006-07 Total as of August 27, 2006

		AMT.
Corporate Gold (\$500)	1	\$500
Corporate Silver (\$200)	2	\$200
Corporate Bronze (\$100)	2	\$200
Individual Gold (\$100)	19	\$1900
Individual Silver (\$50)	13	\$650
Individual Bronze (\$25)	36	\$900
Non-Profit (New) (\$15)	1	\$15

2005-2006 members as of May 6, 2006

3 Corp Gold (\$500)	\$1500
2 Corp Silver (\$100)	\$400
2 Corp Bronze (100)	\$200
24 Ind Gold (\$100)	\$2400
21 Ind Silver (\$50)	\$1050
42 Ind Bronze (\$25)	\$1050

Total	74	\$4365	94 Members	\$6600
--------------	-----------	---------------	-------------------	---------------

*Please support the Arts &
Community Theater
Become a member – Today!
Thank you*

Celebrate National Constitution Day
September 17th

