

# Vintage Hitchcock radio play makes way to Raton

By TIM KELLER  
The Chronicle-News

Spies, murder, love and other trademarks of Alfred Hitchcock come to life in the style of a 1940s radio broadcast of the master of suspense's early films. With "Sabotage" and "The 39 Steps," "Vintage Hitchcock: A Live Radio Play" is a double feature complete with vintage commercials, a train chase, and a big explosion.

This week, the Shuler Restoration Commission presents this throwback in time at both the Shuler Theater and, in a unique opportunity, two nights of dinner theater at Pappas' Sweet Shop. The dinner shows Thursday and Friday evenings have limited seating for 60 patrons and require advance reservations; call Bill Fegan at (575) 445-4746.

The entire production moves downtown to the Shuler Theater on Saturday night at 7, then closes with a Sunday matinee at 2 p.m.

The cast is a who's who of Raton's community theater community, most of who starred in last April's hit, "Arsenic and Old Lace." Costumed as radio actors of the 1940s playing other characters at their microphones, the cast is led by Mark Jansen and Clint

**"The idea of performing a radio play in the classic way with a 'studio audience' was intriguing and exciting..."**

**Veteran director Gail Dixon-Willden**

Henson as Hitchcock's leading men.

Theatergoers will recognize Howard Woodworth, Dave Proctor, Bill Fegan, Sara Kowalski, Adella Garcia, Desiree Martinez, Wanda Henson, and young Spenser Willden, even under their 1940s hats. Each actor plays multiple roles, coming to the radio microphones with a different voice for each character.

Veteran director Gail Dixon-Willden was convinced to take a part in each play when Billy Donati reminded her that Alfred Hitchcock himself made a brief appearance in each of his own films.

Donati - Billy D of KRTN radio - is shamelessly typecast as a radio

announcer, and he's taxed with multiple responsibilities throughout the airtime, just as he is at his day job. He plays the leader of a spy ring, a conductor and a Scotland Yard inspector - all while producing many of the live sound effects which, frankly, deserve co-star billing themselves in this unique show.

Donati spent weeks assembling and constructing the sound effects. When he first used his faux door-knockers in a rehearsal last week, Mark Jansen threw him some praise, remarking, "Hey, nice knockers!" As the cast's snickers subsided, he excused himself, "Well, somebody had to say it." The show is that kind of fun.

Because Donati is at the microphones for multiple roles, and because the sound effects sometimes require more than two hands, Stephanie Jansen spends the evening onstage as sound effects assistant. Costumer Ursula Garcia's presence is felt in the evocative 1940s suits, dresses, shoes, and hats of the radio actors bringing Alfred Hitchcock's many characters to life.

"Billy Donati and I have been discussing doing a performance of an old-time radio show for a few years

now," Dixon-Willden says. "The idea of performing a radio play in the classic way with a 'studio audience' was intriguing and exciting. Billy's expertise with sound effects is a gift and perfectly suited for this production. While directing, I kept thinking of Garrison Keillor's 'A Prairie Home Companion' radio show. Radio shows are a challenge because a small cast has to present numerous characters with different voices for each.

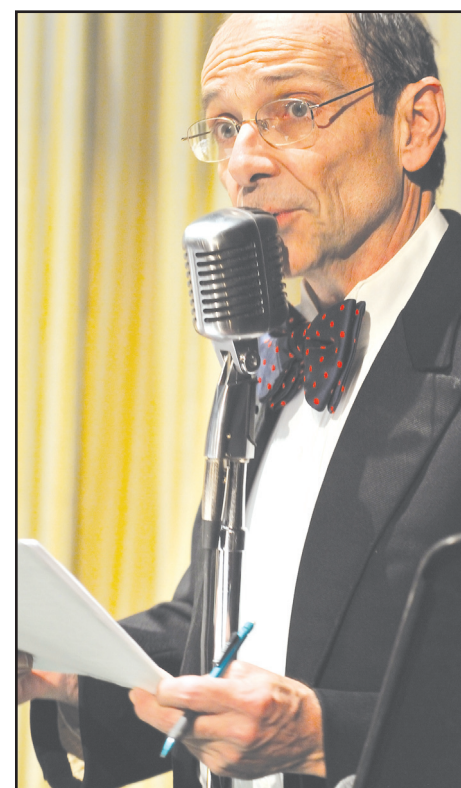
"Seeing a radio play on stage is lots of fun because of this - actually seeing the same actors be different people, with different facial expressions and demeanors, then watching the live sound effects of a door slamming, footsteps, birds chirping, and so on. It's a lost art...unless you live in Minneapolis and see Keillor's shows."

Patrons face a tough choice here. The Shuler Theater shows offer elaborate staging and lighting for the double feature of radio plays. The Sweet Shop shows include dinner: With two nights at each location, and Raton's small-town prices, it won't be surprising to see many choose a double double-header and opt to enjoy the show at both venues.



Photos by Tim Keller

Mark Jansen savors his leading role as Canadian Richard Hannay in "The 39 Steps" as director Gail Dixon-Willden follows Alfred Hitchcock's lead by appearing in the play she's directing.



Billy Donati (aka Billy D) is shamelessly typecast as a radio announcer, although he also plays Professor Bartlett, the leader of a spy ring in "The 39 Steps."

**FOX**  
BOX OFFICE OPENS 7:00  
SHOW STARTS 7:30  
through Thursday  
"THE BEST ACTION THRILLER IN YEARS!"  
LIAM NEESON  
**UNKNOWN**  
PG-13  
423 W. Main • 846-2851

**THE MOVIE PICTURE SHOWHOUSE**  
**ADJUSTMENT BUREAU**  
Sun - Thurs. 6:45 p.m.  
RATED PG-13  
**RANGO**  
Sun - Thurs. 7:15 p.m.  
RATED PG  
**BATTLE LA**  
Sun - Thurs. 7:00 p.m.  
RATED PG-13  
**MARS NEEDS MOMS**  
Sun - Thurs. 6:30 p.m.  
RATED PG  
3600 E. Main 846-0552

## MY TWO CENTS

Perhaps it is because of my rural upbringing or maybe I am just a weird loner: whatever the reason, I have much better luck figuring out and dealing with animals than I do people. Animals give clear signals that they are going to hurt you. People don't. Critters don't come to you with a hidden agenda. What you see is what you get.

I can tell you with some degree of certainty if a horse is a jug head. I can tell you if a snake is just threatening or is going to strike. The only real mess with an animal that I completely misjudged was when I tried to get a baby skunk out of my brother's carport, but I've already told you that story.

I'm not claiming to be Dr. Doolittle or the Dog Whisperer. I'd be lying if I said I was never hurt by an animal, because I have been. But my injuries occurred because I made mistakes. Each and every time was because despite the hard looks, posturing and warnings, I pushed the animal to bend to my will. Human relationships, however, are a whole other kettle of fish for me. No pun intended.

If I would've adopted a dog, bird, cat, goldfish, potbellied pig or any number of

## Fur, fins and feathers



**Nikki Thompson-Arko**  
Special to The Chronicle-News

critters for company rather than get married, my life would have taken a different path. I could whine and carry on that I am a woman oppressed by the male establishment. But I don't operate that way. Bottom line - I was a soft-hearted sucker who made bad choices.

You are probably thinking I am going to male bash. Well...I am...but just a little. But take heart, this is going to be an equal opportunity raking over the coals by the time I'm through. I am equally baffled by both sexes when it comes to human behavior.

I've given up on trying to figure out men. All you have to do is watch shows like "America's Funniest Videos" or "World's Dumbest" to see the kinds of things men do. I'm not talking about swindling old ladies out of their savings or leading a double life. I am talking about riding a grocery cart down two flights of stairs and being honestly

surprised when they get injured. Show me a boy who plays with bottle rockets and I'll show you a grown man who blows up pumpkins with M-80s.

There is no way to soft pedal it. Women are vicious to each other. Working women despise stay-at-home moms. Working moms launch the worst attack on full-time moms. Why? I don't get it. The other female behavior that boggles my brain is the fall out when two women find out that they are both involved with the same man. They turn on each other, when what they should do is pool their energy and resources to make the cheater feel their wrath. Women have enough stress in their lives, we shouldn't be so eager to turn on each other.

There was a time when men revered women and were content with a woman who kept a clean house and well-behaved children. In an attempt to train me as a good wife, my mother, grandmother and great-grandmother taught me how to cook, sew and keep house. By the time I was of "marrying age," however, I realized I had a boat-load of domestic skills that while coveted in the 1950s, were completely outdated.

My whole life I've had one pet or another. According to human behaviorists, those pets filled a void in my life that should have been filled by human relationships. Who's to argue? I'm the first to admit I am a little quirky. I don't mind if others say it. I'm used to it.

We see animals as inferior creatures to us, but yet when they have periods of discord, they simply separate. Why can't adults just say that the relationship is over and quietly part ways? Instead, people, with advanced motor abilities and higher conceptual reasoning, resort to verbal and physical threats. Parting couples key cars, burn clothing and tell anyone who will listen what a no-good, low-down dirty rotten scoundrel their ex is. Applications such as Twitter, My Space and Facebook makes spreading vicious rumors about an ex mate instantaneous to a wider audience. It makes no sense to me.

I am probably too old fashioned, but weren't things simpler before we were told we needed to "find ourselves." Women needed to set aside their families to forge their way in this male-dominated society, and men needed to discover and nurture "their feminine sensitive side?"

What a load of poo, if you ask me. I'm not sure I have a

feminine side so how are guys supposed to find theirs? If I want a soul sister, I'll join a book club. Childcare in this country is a joke. To compensate, many "forward thinking" people have implemented school programs for 3-year-olds. How many kids have you met who say they like school? Kids need the love and stability of a family, not two extra years of what they dread the most.

I'm not vain enough to think my ideas and observations are going to change the world. But I do know that the battle of the sexes shouldn't be a battle at all. The short answer is that people need to be honest with each other from the get go. If people were upfront about what makes them tick, like critters are, then perhaps it would put relationships on a more stable footing.

So for now at least, I've opted to be one of those crazy loners they show on Animal Planet who turns to pets for companionship. My dog doesn't complain about my driving. Odin is just happy to share the bed. And he doesn't gripe when I use his body heat to warm my icy feet. Name one person who is that loyal, loving and willing to go with the flow. Don't feel bad, I couldn't think of one either.

**2 great offers every week at KFC**  
**SPECIAL OFFER MONDAYS ONLY**  
**\$2.99 2-piece meal**  
plus tax | no substitutions  
lunch or dinner | no limit  
leg and thigh  
individual mashed potatoes with brown gravy  
1 freshly prepared biscuit  
**SPECIAL OFFER WEDNESDAYS ONLY**  
**\$2.99 chicken fried steak meal**  
plus tax | no substitutions  
lunch or dinner | no limit  
chicken fried steak with white gravy  
individual mashed potatoes with gravy  
individual cole slaw | 1 freshly prepared biscuit  
**dine in - drive thru - carry out**  
TRINIDAD 212 Nevada 719-846-7723

## SPORTS BRIEFS

Associated Press

### Air Force faces No. 1 Yale in first round

AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. — Air Force is celebrating its Atlantic Hockey Association title and getting ready for the NCAA tournament.

Air Force beat RIT 1-0 Saturday night for its fourth conference championship in five years.

The Falcons learned Sunday they will face overall top seed Yale on Friday in the first round of the NCAA tournament.

Two other Colorado teams are in the tournament. Colorado College will face Boston College in the first round Friday, while Denver plays Western Michigan on Saturday.

### Felton to miss Nuggets game

DENVER — Nuggets guard Raymond Felton said he would not play Monday night against the Toronto Raptors due to a sprained left ankle.

Denver also would be without guard Arron

Afflalo (left hamstring) on Monday against Toronto.

Felton, who was acquired in the deal that sent Carmelo Anthony to the New York Knicks last month, tweaked his ankle at Orlando last Friday and sat out the next night in Miami.

As he hobbled out of the Pepsi Center after morning practice, Felton said he would be ready Wednesday night against San Antonio.

Afflalo has been bothered by the hamstring for more than a week, an injury that sidelined him for three games. He suited up in three of the four contests on a recent road swing, but lasted just under 10 minutes Saturday at Miami before leaving.

### Tulowitzki has two HRs, Rockies tie

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Troy Tulowitzki is ready to move on to April.

The Rockies shortstop homered twice but Colorado squandered a six-run lead against the Los Angeles Angels and the teams ended in a 6-6 tie after 10 innings.

"It's only a spring game,

but I'll take it. I'm just excited — as the whole club is — to get the season going," Tulowitzki said. "This is going to be a very exciting club to watch, and day like this is better than a loss."

Colorado sent nine sent men to the plate in the first inning and had seven straight hits, including Tulowitzki's three-run homer that gave Colorado a 3-0 lead.

Tulowitzki added a solo shot in the third and the Rockies went up 6-0 later in the inning on Chris Ianneta's sacrifice fly.

But Esmil Rogers, in the mix for the No. 5 starter spot, faltered after allowing only two base runners in the first three innings. He yielded Torii Hunter's third home run of the spring before leaving with a 6-5 lead. Hunter finished 3 for 4.

After Angels' starter Matt Palmer allowed six runs on 10 hits in four innings, Vernon Wells had two of the Angels 10 hits, including an RBI double.

Wells' double and a run-scoring single by Alberto Callaspo pulled Los Angeles 6-2 in the fourth. The

Angles chased Rogers after he gave up Hunter's home run, a single and a walk to start the sixth. Peter Bourjos' single knotted it at 6-6.

### Greeley businesses get assist from UNC

GREELEY, Colo. — The University of Northern Colorado's unprecedented run to the NCAA men's basketball tournament has given Greeley businesses a boost.

The men's team won its first Big Sky Conference title at home this year to make the NCAA tournament. *The Greeley Tribune* reports that the Big Sky semifinals and finals in Greeley, followed closely by the state Class 1A high school basketball tournament, helped restaurants and hotels meet or beat March 2010 sales figures within the first 10 days of this month.

Kim Parker of the Greeley Chamber of Commerce says that between the two events, the Greeley-Evans area reaped an estimated \$350,000 economic impact.