

# Shuler spins 'Web of Murder' this weekend

By Tim Keller

Special to The Chronicle-News

RATON — In a summer season otherwise devoted to comedy and music, this weekend's opening of "Web of Murder" provides Shuler Theater audiences with a change of pace and scenery.

The moody murder mystery is set in a gloomy mansion on a remote bluff over the Pacific Ocean where unpleasant matriarch Minerva Osterman, played by Janese Little, has been confined to a wheelchair long enough to have drawn up a will.

For a reading of the will, she gathers everyone that stands to benefit, including her spinster daughter, her nieces and their partners, her housekeeper, and her doctor.

Before the will can be read, however, there's a death. Then another. Then another.

There's a deck of cards and lots of lighting and sound effects.

Playwright Jonathan Troy's 1964 murder mystery is filled with suspense and atmosphere.

Kaleidoscope Players artistic director Gail Dixon-Willden selected the play for its "interesting characters, secret passages and hidden compartments, a good mysterious premise, and a creepy isolated location."

For a director, she chose Raton native son TJ Mendez who had great success last year directing "Love, Sex, and the I.R.S."

"He had asked to direct something challenging this year," she says.

Mendez began with the set design, an edgy and disjointed mansion interior in which walls are only suggested. Paintings hang suspended and off kilter. A door stands without a wall to hold



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When the "Web of Murder" cast broke from rehearsals for a group photo this week, they enjoyed striking poses that might give clues to solving the play's murder mystery. From left are actors Jillian Solano, Brenda Ferri, Catherine Herrick, Janese Little, David Trudeau, Bethany Hernandez, Jason Wells and Zach Salazar. Mysteriously not included is H.M. Burluson.

it. He created lighting and sound effects to heighten the tension.

Finally, he stirred in an impressive cast of both local and visiting actors.

Jillian Solano and Brenda Ferri play Minerva Osterman's daughter and housekeeper, respectively. David Trudeau is Osterman's physician.

Bethany Hernandez and Catherine Herrick play Osterman's nieces, accompanied by their beaux played by Jason Wells and Zach Salazar.

That leaves one mysterious part played by H.M. Burluson at "The Man."

The plot is reminiscent of last November's Shuler Theater pro-

duction of Agatha Christie's murder mystery, "And Then There Were None." In both, the fun for the audience is in trying to figure out "whodunit."

In the tangled "Web of Murder," it won't be an easy puzzle to solve.

"Web of Murder" opens Saturday night with a 7:30 p.m.

curtain, followed by a matinee at 2:30 p.m. Sunday. Additional evening performances will be presented next Thursday and Aug. 2 and 3.

General admission tickets are available at the door — \$15 adults, \$13 seniors, and \$5 children. Additional information is available at the Shuler Theater, (575) 445-4746.

## Deadline extended to register for boat tours

The Chronicle-News

The deadline has been extended until Monday to register for a pontoon boat tour of Trinidad Lake that will discuss the history of seven former area coal mining towns.

The tours, which will focus on mining towns that were evacuated when Trinidad Lake was created,

are scheduled July 26 and 27.

Many of the towns, including Sopris, now lie under the lake.

LoRetta Archuleta, who has interviewed many of the towns' former residents, will lead the boat tour.

The tours start at 8 a.m. at the Trinidad Lake State Park visitors center and will

include a picnic lunch.

To register, call the Trinidad History Museum or stop by 312 E. Main Street.

The tours are sponsored by the Department of Parks and Wildlife, the Trinidad History Museum and the Colorado Tourism Department.

## Purgatoire River Anglers Trout Unlimited

Purgatoire River Anglers Trout Unlimited will be hosting two special speakers at their regular monthly chapter meeting on Thursday July 19th at 6:00 pm at Mt. Carmel Health, Wellness and Community Center. The program will begin promptly at 6:30. The two speakers this month are Julie Vlier, Manager of Water Resources for Tetra Tech, and Ken Neubecker. TU meetings are always open to the public and everyone is welcome to attend.

Julie Vlier, Manager of Water Resources for Tetra Tech, is pleased to do a presentation summarizing the "2011 Annual Report for the Purgatoire Watershed Monitoring Program". The report provides a comprehensive update of the companies monitoring efforts from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011. Come learn what the science is telling us and what the results have been from the monitoring program, especially since 2011 was such a dry year in this region of Colorado and New Mexico.

The monitoring program was originally established in April 2010 to collect and evaluate surface water data in areas of the watershed influenced by coal bed methane operations in Las Animas County, west of the Town of Trinidad and covers 640 square miles of land located between Interstate 25 and the Sangre de Cristo mountain range. It is comprised of continuous flow and water quality monitoring at nine gauging stations that were installed in April 2010 and monthly surface water sample collection at 27 sites. Data collected at the near real-time stations is available in a user friendly format accessed at [www.purgatoirewatershed.org](http://www.purgatoirewatershed.org). Tetra Tech was charged with design and implementation of the Purgatoire Watershed monitoring program with Norwest Applied Hydrology assisting with weekly maintenance at each of the nine gauging stations.

Ken Neubecker is the immediate past President of Colorado Trout Unlimited. He is visiting Trinidad to help teach the Ladies Fly Fishing Workshop, hosted by the TU Chapter, on Saturday, July 21, at Monument Lake. The main focus of his talk at the July 19th meeting will be projects that Colorado Trout Unlimited is involved in other regions of Colorado. He will also be available to answer general questions about water issues.

Ken is the Executive Director of Western Rivers Institute. The mission of the Western Rivers Institute is to change the water paradigm of the West, to change people's relationship with rivers and how they use water. The WRI works to inform and engage people in creating solutions for a future of healthy rivers, communities and agriculture in Colorado and the West.

Ken is the Environmental Representative on the Colorado River Basin Roundtable, serves on the Governor's Forest Health Advisory Council, the BLM Glenwood Springs Field Office RAC Sub-Committee and is on the Board of the Colorado Watershed Assembly. Ken has testified in Washington DC before Congressional Committees and Sub-Committees and the Forest Service Roadless Area Review Committee on oil shale, energy development, the Roan Plateau and the Colorado Roadless Rule. He has also testified several times before the Colorado General Assembly on water conservation issues and bills.

Ken has written extensively for magazines and newspapers on water and river issues. He has also given numerous talks on rivers, trans-mountain diversions and the need for a more balanced policy that protects rivers while providing water for other needs. He also teaches classes on Colorado water law, geography, history and issues at Colorado Mountain College in the Roaring Fork Valley. Over the past 35 years Ken has worked as a professional land surveyor, naturalist, wilderness and river guide, writer, photographer, teacher and organizer. He lives in Carbondale with his wife, Paula Fothergill and their "river schnauzer" Gus.

Purgatoire River Anglers Trout Unlimited and Pioneer Natural Resources invite you to these two presentations on Thursday, July 19, at 6:00 p.m. at Mt. Carmel Health, Wellness and Community Center.

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## 'Song' wrapping up its run

Courtesy Michael Tranter

The musical "They're Playing Our Song," ends its run at the Massari Performing Arts Theater this week. The final shows by the Southern Colorado Repertory Theater will be tonight, Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

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