

# COMMUNITY

## THE ARTS

# Grace & Glorie brings laughs, pulls heart strings at Shuler

By Tim Keller  
Correspondent  
The Chronicle-News

RATON – Grace Stiles is a cantankerous 90-year-old widow and cancer patient who checks herself out of the hospital so she can die alone in a cabin on her beloved Southern homestead. Gloria Whitmore is a New York City businesswoman with an MBA from Harvard; displaced to rural Virginia with a trunk full of heartbreak and guilt, she becomes a volunteer hospice worker. Gloria takes on Grace as her patient and an unlikely friendship develops.

The Kaleidoscope Players' production of *Grace & Glorie* at the Shuler Theater stage is the latest in a long line of productions spanning the U.S. and the world — since its 1991 Virginia premier, it's been translated into several languages. Matters of life and death give the play depth and meaning, while a city sophisticate caring for a stubborn farmwoman provides persistent laughter. Director Tom Evans says it's the funniest play of the Shuler Theater's summer repertory season, a slate weighted heavily to comedies.

Evans and his wife, actress Barbara Farrar, have been involved with *Grace & Glorie* from its inception when playwright Tom Ziegler brought it to The Shenandoah Valley Playwrights Retreat in the late 1980s. "We loved it immediately," Evans says. "We rehearsed it for twelve hours and did the first staged reading. From there, Barbara has played Grace in productions all around the country."

Estelle Parsons was cast as Grace in New York City, but Parsons missed shows while away on movie and TV jobs. Far-

rar was her stand-in, playing Grace off-Broadway in 32 of the production's 165 Times Square performances. Hallmark Hall of Fame made a movie starring Gena Rowlands and Diane Lane as Grace and Glorie. Farrar last played the role on stage ten years ago.

Nora Leahy last played Glorie ten months ago in an Indiana production also directed by Evans. "This time is fun," Leahy says, "because Barbara and I have each done the play before with different partners." Like the characters slowly developing a friendship, the actresses have learned to work closely, to build a comedy together.

"I've told Tom Ziegler that this is my favorite character ever," stage veteran Farrar says, adding, "I'm never going to outgrow the part!" Grace insists on calling Glorie by the nickname Glorie. It's not an easy fit for the younger woman, who struggles to help Grace amid the culture shock of a Manhattan sophisticate trying to cook on a woodstove or get water with a pump. "It's a comedy with a lot of heart," Leahy says.

Director Evans adds, "It's a down-home folks play, with people you know and can care about. The characters will remind you of your relatives." The heart and soul comes from the two women's developing friendship and their talks of life and death. Grace says, "Death is as much a part of life as being born." But no one dies in the play, resolutely a comedy to the end.

The final weekend performances of *Grace & Glorie* will be offered at the Shuler Theater July 31-August 2, at 7:30 p.m. Sunday matinees will begin at 2:30 p.m. Information and general admission tickets are available at the Shuler Theater, 131 N. 2nd St., Raton, New Mexico, (575) 445-4746.



Tim Keller / The Chronicle-News

Barbara Farrar and Nora Leahy (from left) discuss a will in a *Grace & Glorie* rehearsal last week. The mismatched "country mouse/city mouse" pair provoke plenty of laughter in a story deep with heart and meaning.



Photo courtesy of Scott Mastro

## Chronicle-News correspondent authors new book

Scott Mastro and his cute little terrier-mix, Georgia, are a familiar sight on the streets of the city. Always on the lookout for a story and photograph in his capacity as correspondent for *The Chronicle-News*, Mastro was no stranger to the writing world before he began his adventures in Trinidad. For several years Mastro traveled the world recording his sights and impressions before incorporating them into a series of short stories that range from the sublime to the ridiculous for his new book, *Blood Money: Tales from Two Continents*. The author, pictured above, sits for a recent book signing at Moby Dickens Bookstore in Taos, New Mexico. *Blood Money: Tales from Two Continents* by Scott Mastro is available through Savant Books and Publications.



Photos by Steve Block / The Chronicle-News

## Congressional Candidate Ken Buck visits city

Eight year-old Matthew Trujillo, above right, draws the winning name of Dale Yocam of Kim, who won a \$500 gift certificate at a recent County Republican Party Women's event at C & S Outdoors. Others in the picture include, left to right, Pat Trommter, Liz Aragon, Mary Ellen White, Shirley Bean, Toyleen Loudon and Shelly King. Liz Aragon, below left, visits with Fourth District Congressional Candidate Ken Buck at the County Republican Women's event at C & S Outdoors in Trinidad. Ed Trommter is in the background.

## CPW holds West Slope Mule Deer Summit

Special to The Chronicle-News

DENVER - Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), in coordination with The Keystone Center, will hold a West Slope Mule Deer Summit in Glenwood Springs, Colo., Aug. 9th.

The summit agenda includes presentation of a draft of the West Slope Mule Deer Strategy slated to be released early next month.

The event is free and open to the public. CPW and The Keystone Center invite public review and comments on the West Slope Mule Deer Strategy draft as it serves as a guide to future CPW efforts to increase mule deer populations in Western Colorado.

The summit is in response to recent mule deer population declines across the Western U.S. and specifically, several areas on the West Slope,

including the White River National Forest

"The declining mule deer population concerns our agency and many stakeholders across the state," said CPW Wildlife and Natural Resources Assistant Director, Chad Bishop. The West Slope Mule Deer Summit is intended to bring people together to identify shared strategies that ensure one of Colorado's most cherished species remains abundant for future generations.

CPW and The Keystone center have facilitated seven public meetings, including two on Colorado's Front Range and five on the West Slope, so far this year. Discussions between sportsmen, landowners, outfitters, biologists, wildlife managers, other state and federal agencies, local elected officials and interested members of the public have focused on issues facing mule deer and possible solutions.

Ron Velarde, CPW Northwest regional manager recognizes the value of this diverse problem-solving group.

"The experience and ideas we have heard really help us move forward in trying to increase mule deer to a healthy population number," said Velarde. "The summit will finalize our strategy for restoring and preserving mule deer on Colorado's West Slope."

Colorado West Slope Mule Deer Strategy Summit meeting:

August 9, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. (lunch will be provided) at the Ramada Inn, 124 W. 6th St., Glenwood Springs Colorado 81601

Register online at <http://keystone.org/muledeerstate-summit> to attend or be notified of when the draft Colorado West Slope Mule Deer Strategy is available. Learn about Colorado's Mule Deer Story at <http://cpw.state.co.us/learn/Pages/CO-Mule-DeerStory.aspx>.

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