

OVER THE PASS



"You'll get a million No's before you get one Yes. Fight for that one Yes."

– Kristi Hoopes, country singer, Parker, CO (Trinidad)



TRINIDAD-RATON CONNECTION

"What's the best advice that you can give?"

By **Tim Keller**
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The Chronicle-News

Photos by Tim Keller / The Chronicle-News

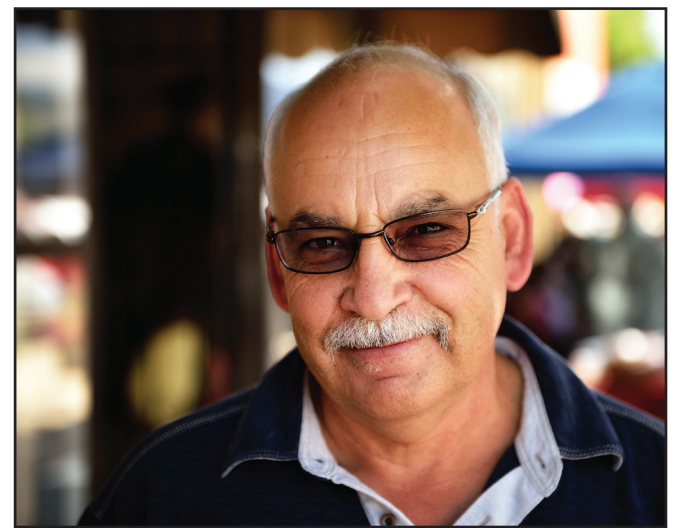


"Never give up on your dreams, no matter what they are. If you want to be a singer, sing your heart out. Don't be afraid of what people think."

– Anthony Garcia, community volunteer (Trinidad)

"Put God first and everything else falls into place. That's what I tell my kids. You trust Him and let Him into your heart, then you're not stressed all the time."

– Cindy Crawford, owner, The Sparrow's Nest antique mall, Pampa, TX (Raton)



"Do as much as you can while you can. See the world and enjoy life to its fullest. I'll be 78 this fall. Enjoy your kids and grandkids. They're the ones that keep you going."

– Mary Lou Archuleta, retired hospital and school cook, Springer (Raton)

"Don't listen to anyone else's advice. Take advice with a grain of salt. It's advice, not rules. Everyone has their own path."

– Nancy Greene, outreach & education coordinator, Denta-Quest, Denver (Trinidad)

"Stay healthy, have fun, enjoy life and be loving."

– Gene Sierra, operations manager, Albuquerque (Raton)

'Boeing Boeing' flies high, lands laughter

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chitect living happily in a Paris penthouse that came complete with a maid, Berthe, endearingly and hilariously played by Tamara Todres in her best role of the past two summers at the Shuler. Bernard enjoys his own kind of polygamy, balancing three airline stewardesses that each think she's Bernard's fiancée. Bernard successfully juggles the women with the help of the master schedule book for the world's airlines.

Working for different airlines, his fiancées are the American Gloria (Cassie Thompson), Italian Gabriella (Bussy Gower) and German Gretchen (Nora Leahy). Each gets her own accent, wig, and primary color—the American in red, Italian in yellow, German in blue. It all works, aided by a predominantly yellow set design with early 60s accents like a Roy Lichtenstein print, round mirrors and period furniture.

Two complications set the fun in motion. Boeing introduces a faster aircraft that will accelerate the arrival of each of Bernard's carefully scheduled girlfriends. He learns of this kink in his plan just as his old Wisconsin college buddy arrives for an unannounced visit. Compared to Bernard, Darren Hill's Robert Lambert is conventional, milquetoast and boring.

But not for long. Robert remains on stage as Bernard alternately escorts each of his gals off stage, leaving Robert to grow, in the course of one afternoon and evening, into more of a Lothario than Bernard. His transformation, prodded by the three winsome women, is at the heart of the play.

Robert joins the maid Berthe in reluctantly helping Bernard to keep his game afloat. The audience joins them in



Photos by Tim Keller / The Chronicle-News

Clockwise from above: When the curtain call arrives at the end of the Shuler Theater's current comedy "Boeing Boeing," the cast does a lot more than just hold hands and bow: They perform a choreographed go-go dance. From left are Ian McCabe, Bussy Gower, Darren Hill, Nora Leahy, Cassie Thompson and Tamara Todres. Bussy Gower's Italian bombshell airline hostess Gabriella is a handful for Ian McCabe's philanderer Bernard in the Shuler Theater's hilarious "Boeing Boeing," running through Sunday. Cassie Thompson's American flight attendant Gloria likes to play around, repeatedly catching Darren Hill's visiting Robert by surprise.



acter, actress Bussy Gower plays Italian firecracker Gabriella as a brassy sexpot who can knock Bernard or Robert to the floor with a sudden heavily accented exclamation. Nora Leahy, too, uses a thick accent to create the alternately endearing and frightening German, Gretchen. The play's four women each use a signature accent and a signature color to ramp up what repeatedly rises to cartoon-like humor, an impression accentuated by the color palette of Leahy's wonderful costume and set designs.

With such talent on stage, it's hard to see what director Blake White did here. Whatever it was, it was just right. His colorful and zany "Boeing Boeing" closes the Shuler summer season with great professional comedy.

Produced by McCabe and Leahy's Two Pigs Productions for the local Santa Fe Trail School for the Performing Arts, this summer's performances have been plagued with shamefully low attendance. No doubt the causes are complex, but more people should be out beating the bushes, sponsoring theater nights, bringing all their friends and waving banners for these magical productions. The acting company can't do that: its 18 professional artists

have been fully immersed in doing their jobs beautifully.

Use it or lose it: if audiences don't go out to see such great local theater, there will be no local theater. Even more than paychecks, actors need audiences. Do audiences need theater?

Four opportunities remain to experience "Boeing Boeing," Thursday through Saturday nights at 7:30 p.m., then closing with a 2:30 p.m. matinee Sunday, August 2. General admission tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 seniors, \$5 children, available at the Shuler Theater, 131 N. 2nd St., (575) 445-4746, www.shulertheater.com.

knowing exactly what's going on, unlike each of the three stewardesses who take the whole play to figure it out. In this "door farce," each time a gal goes out one door, another gal enters through another door. Increasingly panicked, the two actors revert to boyish behavior and manic physical humor that eventually channels slapdash TV cartoons.

Ian McCabe breaks loose with facial tics, contortions and pratfalls as Bernard increasingly loses control. Darren Hill literally turns somersaults and cartwheels; at one point, his face burns so red that it looks like he may explode.

All four actresses shine here. Todres makes Berthe the smartest person on the stage, co-conspiring as Bernard's enabler because it's as good as any other job she can get. Thompson's frisky American Gloria lacks the New York accent her character should have but it never matters: her energetic verve and assertive sexiness perfectly fit her fiery red outfits and playful provocations.

Absolutely undetectable within her costume and char-



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