



Tim Keller/The Chronicle-News

Hijinks ensue when tax inspector Cian Hazen, right, visits Vinnie Gumlich's New York City apartment to investigate Gumlich's marital status in the rollicking farce "Love, Sex, and the I.R.S." at the Shuler Theater through Aug. 4. From left, Joe Zink plays the landlord, Trinidad's Gumlich the likeable tax cheat, and Sara Kowalski his visiting mother.

'Love, Sex & I.R.S.' provides plenty of laughs at Shuler

By Tim Keller
The Chronicle-News

RATON — If they'd add the word "Laughs" to the title "Love, Sex, and the I.R.S.," they'd summarize the whole play, short and sweet.

The fourth of five comedies being produced this summer by the Santa Fe Trail School for the Performing Arts, the production opened a three-week run Saturday night at the Shuler Theater with key roles filled by four professional repertory actors imported for the season while making great use of several of the best of Raton's homegrown acting talents.

Able directed by T.J. Mendez, a returning professional raised in Raton, "Love, Sex, and the I.R.S." is a wild-eyed farce with so many sure-fired laughs that it's been produced in more than 10,000 theaters. Actors William Van Zandt and Jane Milmore wrote it on a typewriter in their dressing room during long lulls in the 1979 filming of the first

Star Trek movie, expecting to have a vehicle for themselves to perform once. To their surprise, the play's immediate success propelled its authors to successful careers in TV production and the writing of 22 more plays.

Mendez has tweaked the setting only slightly to bring it into the present, still in a New York City apartment. Kate and Leslie are hot and heavy on the couch center stage when we learn that Kate's engaged to marry Leslie's roommate Jon in two weeks. Before that twist can be unraveled, Jon arrives home to announce a more immediate problem: in doing their taxes over the past four years, Jon has saved money by claiming a marriage exemption for the male roommates. An I.R.S. inspector is coming to check into it.

Before he has time to resist, Leslie finds himself dressing in drag to appear as Jon's wife, giving the actor David Trudeau a field day as, once again this sum-

mer, he takes wearing women's heels to great heights of fun and farce. (Trudeau's even shaved his legs for the season.) Along with Trudeau and director Mendez, the other two visiting pros round out the lead roles, with Kyra Koelling playing Kate and Trinidad's Vinnie Gumlich as Jon.

But Raton's local repertory actors have parts more over-the-top than those of Kate and Jon, which, in a farce, makes them better parts. Cian Hazen is fabulous as I.R.S. Inspector Floyd Spinner, a key figure who continually surprises as the plot twists and turns. Joe Zink is the crude, beer-swilling landlord, Mr. Jansen.

Sara Kowalski gives a good natural performance as Jon's mother who has arrived unexpectedly when she learns of the approaching wedding; she drinks her way through the confusion as she learns of each deception about one beat behind the audience.

Two additional characters appear late in the play,

but actors Brenda Ferri and Clint Henson infuse their brief roles with plenty to enjoy. Ferri plays Leslie's girlfriend, Connie, understandably distraught to learn that her boyfriend has fallen in love with Jon's fiancé. Henson's justice of the peace, found by Kowalski on the subway, is brought in at the last minute to perform a quickie-wedding; Henson quietly milks the role for more laughs than appear on the page. (Billy Donati will play the justice of the peace in some performances.)

"Love, Sex, and the I.R.S." played to a packed auditorium on opening night Saturday, the audience boosted by the Raton Lions Club and a full tour bus down from Denver.

The remaining performances are July 28-29 and Aug. 3-4. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. with general admission tickets available at the door; adults tickets are \$15, seniors \$13, children \$5.

Players group to meet today on settlement

By Barry Wilner
Associated Press

NEW YORK — A vote on a settlement to the lockout is what every NFL fan wants. Nobody is sure when that might happen.

The players' executive committee will meet today in Washington after lawyers have worked through the weekend on issues that are holding up an agreement with the owners. Several people with knowledge of the meeting have told The Associated Press that no vote to recommend a deal is certain today.

The people spoke on condition of anonymity because the players association has not revealed its plans.

Owners approved a tentative agreement to end the four-month lockout on Thursday. But the players said they need more information before they can vote, and took issue with portions of the proposal. Several players only saw that full proposal late Saturday.

Should the players' executive committee vote to accept the deal, it then would go to the 32 team rep-

resentatives to approve. After that, some 1,900 players would need to vote, with a simple majority required for passage.

The 10 named plaintiffs in the players' lawsuit against the league — including Tom Brady, Peyton Manning and Drew Brees — must officially inform the court in Minneapolis of their approval of the pact, too.

Players also will need to vote to re-establish the NFLPA as a union; only after that happens could a full collective bargaining agreement be reached. But training camps and preseason games could occur while the sides put the finishing touches on a deal.

Only after the NFLPA is again a union can it negotiate such items as the league's personal conduct policy and drug testing.

But a person with knowledge of the executive committee meeting said it will be "to understand where things stand after this weekend's conversations. No talk of not voting, no talk of vote."

SPORTS BRIEFS

Associated Press

Alomar inducted into baseball hall of fame

COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. — With Puerto Rican flags waving in the breeze and many of his countrymen cheering in appreciation, Roberto Alomar was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame on Sunday.

Alomar, a member of the Toronto Blue Jays' World Series championship teams in 1992 and 1993, is the first player to enter the Hall of Fame wearing a Blue Jays cap and just the 20th second baseman to be inducted.

The switch-hitting Alomar won a record 10 Gold Gloves at second base, was a 12-time All-Star and a career .300 hitter. Full of baseball smarts and grace, he's also linked with one of the game's most tawdry moments — he spit on umpire John Hirschbeck during an argument in 1996. The two have long since moved past that, and Hirschbeck was invited to come on Sunday.

Rockies fall 7-0 to Diamondbacks

PHOENIX — Justin Upton went 4 for 4 with two doubles, a triple and three RBIs, and the Arizona Diamondbacks took two of three from Colorado with a 7-0 victory on Sunday in what might have been Ubaldo Jimenez's last start for the Rockies.

Upton, who reached base five times, has nine RBIs in his last two games.

The Diamondbacks, finishing a 6-4 home stand, scored five times on eight hits in five innings against Jimenez (6-9), reportedly available for the right offer before the July 31 non-waiver trade deadline.

Micah Owings (4-0), in a spot start as the Diamondbacks search for a reliable fifth starter, blanked the Rockies on two hits through five innings, striking out two and walking three. He also had an RBI single.

Arizona outscored Colorado 19-3 in the last two games of the series.

Colorado legislator won't seek re-election to House seat

Associated Press

MEAD — The chairman of the Colorado House Transportation Committee says he won't seek a fourth

term next year.

Republican Rep. Glenn Vaad of Weld County tells the Longmont Times-Call he may run for state Senate in 2012 instead.

A state reapportionment commission has given pre-

liminary approval to an updated map that would change the boundaries of Vaad's current House seat in southwest Weld County. Vaad tells the newspaper that he has decided not to run in the new district.

Vaad said he's considering running for a Senate seat currently held by Republican Rep. Shawn Mitchell. Mitchell is term-limited and cannot seek re-election next year.

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(PG-13)
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