



SPOTLIGHT

401 North 6th Street

March 17, 2022

www.fslt.org

Dates: Opening Night of *A Southern Exposure* will be Thursday, March 31. Other evening performances will be April 1-2 and 6-9. The Sunday matinee will be April 3.

Show Times: Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m. Patrons may be seated after 6:45 p.m. The Matinee begins at 2:00 p.m. Patrons may be seated after 1:15 p.m.

Flex Pass Seat Selection: Seat selection begins 7:00 a.m. **Saturday, March 19** for Flex Pass patrons. Select seats online at fslt.org or call the Box Office at 479-783-2966 (extn. 2) to request seats on the phone. Flex Pass patrons may also purchase a ticket for every pass they have.

General Public Tickets: General public tickets available beginning 7:00 a.m. **Thursday, March 24.** Purchase online at fslt.org or call the Box Office at 479-783-2966 (extn. 2) to purchase on the phone. Opening Night tickets \$20. Other performances \$12.

Box Office Phone Calls: Be prepared to leave a message with details about your seat/ticket request including a phone number where you can easily be reached. Volunteers will return calls during variable hours.

BRING A BUDDY!

Know someone who has never attended FSLT? Learn on page 3 how you can bring them with you to *A Southern Exposure*...**for free!**

Laughter and Tears On Tap in “A Southern Exposure” Opening March 31

“If this Madonna person sells a lot of records then she can afford to buy her some clothes. And while she’s at it she can buy a last name, too.”

– Hattie, *A Southern Exposure*

Two years after the show was originally chosen and cast, *A Southern Exposure* will finally make its debut at Fort Smith Little Theatre. This hilarious and touching comedy/drama, written by Kelley Kingston-Barnhart, plays March 31 through April 9. Directed by Lora Rice, this production was originally scheduled for April 2020. Rehearsals were underway when the theatre made the difficult decision to shut down due to the pandemic. Fortunately, the talented cast members were available to take up their roles two years later.

Raised in Kentucky by her grandmother Hattie (Cindy Clark) and two eccentric aunts, Ida Mae (Nancy Blochberger) and Mattie (Mary Beth McAlvain), Callie (Lindsay Vickery) stuns her family by moving to New York to live with her new boyfriend. Her dreams are soon dashed, then just as her world starts to brighten, she is forced to return home where she and Hattie discover the fiercest kind of love.

The veteran cast is supported by an experienced crew with director Rice at the helm. Katie Wallace serves as the director’s assistant, producer is Joe Graham, and Cliff Scott serves as the stage manager. Brad Nance is in charge of set construction, assisted by Gary Cameron. Jeremy Marston completed the lighting design while Joann Peterson serves as light technician. Jorgi Anderson, Jim Moody, and Sharla Cameron comprise the props team. Eric Krigbaum designed the sound while Mike Tickler serves as the sound technician. The crew is rounded out by specialty costume designer Hannah Marston, graphic designer Zack Valentine, make-up Ashleigh Mathews, and prompter Rebecca Crouch.

See A Southern Exposure on page 3





Commemorative Booklet

Distribution will begin at *A Southern Exposure* and will continue at future productions, subject to product availability. Pass Patrons will be offered one booklet per household at no charge (printing cost donation welcome). A limited quantity will be available to the general public. A donation of \$5 is suggested to offset printing cost.

Diamond Bracelet Raffle

The raffle for a Newton's Jewelers Vahan Diamond Bar Bracelet (valued over \$2,200) has begun. At each performance of *Smoke on the Mountain*, tickets were sold and one name was selected to go into the final draw on August 13. Those lucky entrants are: Bonnie Sher, Karen LeRosen, Sara Parkinson, Pam Langston, Deborah Covitz, Kevin Kelton, David Craig, Cindy Stewart, Vic Hall, and Curtis G. Hilvard, Jr. The bracelet can still be yours! Tickets will be sold pre-show at the next four productions.

Anniversary Apparel

Good news! More 75th Anniversary shirts have been ordered. Purchase in the lobby pre-show, order online at fslt.org, or email fslt75th@gmail.com.

Worth A Thousand Words

Check out our collaborative Facebook album called "Your FSLT" for fond memories and good laughs. Upload your own pictures at <https://www.yogile.com/yourfslt/upload>.

Coming Soon!

Watch for more 75th online activities. Walk Down Memory Lane (written remembrances), Volunteers Make It Happen (cast and crew photos), and The Rest Is History (the past in print) will be ready soon.

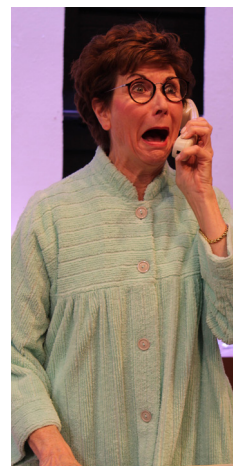
Director's Notes

This play came to me in a rather unconventional way. The women in this heartwarming, laugh-out-loud funny, and quirky (i.e. "Southern") story were inspired by the real life family of author Kelley Kingston-Barnhart. It just so happens that Kelley has a friend who lives here in the River Valley. This friend passed the script along to a volunteer at FSLT who then forwarded it on to potential directors, including me. I only had to read part of scene one before I was hooked and replied urgently, "I want first dibs on this one!"

We were off to a good start with production preparation for this show back in March 2020. Casting was done, set design was in progress, props were being gathered, blocking was in the works – then the world as we knew it shut down. Pandemic circumstances forced us to tear down our set, pack up our belongings, and store them away for the glorious day when the theatre could once again be filled with the sounds of laughter, lines, music, and power tools. Fortunately, my cast and crew were all able to pick right up where we left off and have worked hard to bring you a show that I believe will capture your heart.

This is a story about love, forgiveness, and letting go. The author wrote, "It does not reveal great truths about the human condition, but little truths about extraordinary women leading ordinary lives." I hope you enjoy it as much as we have enjoyed preparing it for you.

–Lora Rice, Director



UPDATED HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES

The following policies will be in effect for *A Southern Exposure*.

- While the wearing of masks for our audience is **not required**, attendees are **encouraged** to wear face coverings while inside FSLT except when consuming food or drink.
- To offer the best possible live theatre experience for our audience, performers will not wear masks while on stage.
- Attendance may be at full capacity. Physically distanced seating will not be imposed.

A Southern Exposure opens March 31

Performer Cindy Clark comments, "I first performed with FSLT at the old theatre on No. O Street, so I truly appreciate the history and consider it an honor to perform in this 75th year." Clark says she feels a special relationship to her character: "I had a wonderful relationship with my mother and grandmother, both now deceased. That helps me truly appreciate the bond between my character, Hattie, and her granddaughter, Callie. They squabble nonstop but truly love each other. I can often hear my mother's voice when reciting Hattie's lines, and sometimes it seems like Hattie and my mother were one and the same."

Mary Beth McAlvain is happy to return to another comic role at FSLT: "Before try-outs were held for *A Southern Exposure*, I had several people who had read the script tell me I should audition because the role of Mattie was perfect for me. It turns out that Mattie is sweet and kind, but has a touch of dementia and is frequently confused, so I'm not sure whether to be flattered or not!" [Mary Beth is not pictured here. Her appearance will remain a surprise.]

While Lindsay Vickery is the youngest actress in the show, she is a veteran of the FSLT stage. She says, "This is the first show I've participated in since COVID hit. This is also the first cast of only four people that I have been in, and I am loving the intimacy of being in such a small cast and sharing the stage with this group of older, experienced actresses."

Nancy Blochberger rounds out the cast as Ida Mae: "*A Southern Exposure* reminds me of *Steel Magnolias*, because both have good dialogue, strong women, and plenty of Southern comedy. My character is pretty

matter-of-fact, and she is rarely idle. She's always sewing, clipping coupons, making a grocery list, or running errands. Ida Mae is not shy with her opinions either. I think I can safely say that Ida Mae and I have a lot in common. Best of all, I love her lines - she has some real doozies."

Director Lora Rice is excited to bring the show to the FSLT stage at long last. "It's a heartwarming story and laugh-out-loud funny; that's my favorite kind of play to direct. It's about a family and their interactions, and it contains a range of emotions - laughter, heartbreak, anger, love, and forgiveness. Plus, the author of this play has informed us that she will be attending opening night. Now, that's pretty exciting!"

Assistant to the director, Katie Wallace, comments: "I really love FSLT and all the friends I have made here through the years, and of course I love watching the shows and working with my big sister, Lora. I would encourage others to participate if you enjoy live theatre like I do."

A Southern Exposure opens March 31 at 7:30 p.m. followed by additional evening shows April 1-2 and 6-9. A Sunday matinee is scheduled for 2 p.m. April 3. Tickets are \$20 for opening night and \$12 for all other performances. For Season Flex Pass patrons, seat selection will begin at 7:00 a.m. **Saturday, March 19.** Tickets will go on sale to the general public beginning 7:00 a.m. **Thursday, March 24.**

You can buy tickets and select your seats at fslt.org or by calling 479-783-2966 (extn. 2). To laugh, cry, and experience a renewed sense of family unity, don't miss *A Southern Exposure*.

Seat Tickets Checked By Ushers

If you selected your seats online, you can bypass the Box Office when you arrive and show your print-at-home ticket or your ticket confirmation on your smart phone to an usher. Alternately, go to the Box Office upon your arrival, pick up your seat ticket, then proceed to an usher at either aisle.

Sip Sip Hooray!

Oh the excitement of Opening Night! Courtesy of **Sodie's Wine and Spirits**, quality wine and champagne is served pre-show. At intermission, a special dessert is served along with brew from **Fort Smith Coffee**. Tickets are \$20. (By calling the Box Office, Flex Pass and Wednesday Night Subscribers can attend Opening Night for an \$8 fee.)



Bring A Buddy!
FOR FREE!

What's more fun than coming to FSLT? Why, coming with a friend of course! Courtesy of our generous patron, **Bill Engles (Engles Financial Services)**, you can invite a friend who has not previously attended our theatre to come with you to *A Southern Exposure*, and they can come **for free!** Having attended our performances for many years, Bill wants others to know about FSLT and to enjoy our productions as much as he does. So Bring A Buddy, and say thank you to Bill when you see him.

- Bring A Buddy is available to those who have any type of Season Pass and those who purchase an individual show ticket to *A Southern Exposure*.

- For each ticket you have, one free Bring A Buddy ticket may be requested.
- The purchased ticket and Bring A Buddy ticket must be for the same performance date.
- Bring A Buddy tickets are for newcomers (those who have not previously attended FSLT).
- Orders including Bring A Buddy tickets can only be processed by calling the Box Office at 479-782-2966 (extn. 2). This promotion is not available online.
- You will need to provide the newcomer's name, address, phone, and email address in order for us to process the order.
- This promotion is limited to 100 free tickets.

Fort Smith Little Theatre
SPOTLIGHT

P.O. Box 3752, Fort Smith, AR 72913

www.fslt.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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From the Top...



Sherry Hester (FSLT President) and Pettus Kincannon (WACF Exec. Dir.) check out wireless mic packs in the light booth.

Time seems to be flying – maybe because we’re having so much fun. We tapped our toes and laughed out loud during *Smoke on the Mountain*. Bravo to the cast and crew who launched our 75th Anniversary Season with this wonderful production. Next up is *A Southern Exposure*, a heartwarming story filled with laughter, love, forgiveness, and Southern charm. We are so pleased that the author is planning a trip to Fort Smith to attend our performance. Hosting a visiting playwright is very likely a first for our community theatre.

If that’s not enough excitement, anniversary activities are in full swing. Helping to underwrite our celebration is **Baptist Health-Fort Smith** (75th Season Sponsor), **Newton’s Jewelers** (Diamond Bracelet Raffle Sponsor), and **Calvert McBride Printing** (Commemorative Publication Sponsor). We are so grateful for their generous support!

We also are appreciative of our new wireless microphones made possible by gifts from **Benny and Martha Gooden** and the **Western Arkansas Community Foundation**. These mics have already proven to be helpful as they were used to amplify the beautiful voices in *Smoke on the Mountain*.

Sometimes it’s hard to believe we were dark for 18 months due to the pandemic. But now that we’ve reopened, the pace is fast and furious; we are making up for lost time. We hope you, too, will make every minute count and include live theatre as part of your own “reopening.” See you at the theatre!

- Sherry Hester, *President*

Next Up

The Whole Shebang, an off-season production directed by Joanne Peterson, will be performed 7:30 p.m. April 21-23. Tickets \$7 at the door.

Auditions

Auditions for *Moon Over Buffalo* will be held at 7 p.m. on Monday, May 2. Callbacks will be held on Tuesday, May 3.

The cast calls for 4 males between the ages of approximately 25-55+ and 4 females approximately 20-70+. Production dates are June 9-18. For more information on this classic comedy directed by Duff Taylor, visit www.fslt.org or find us on social media.



Season Flex Pass patrons are urged to select seats before March 24