

24 Hour Theatre Project returns



By Michael Riley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The 24-Hour Theatre Project returns for its second year on Nov. 9 at the Bancroft Village Playhouse, although the event has been around for more than a decade in the Bancroft theatre community. Andra Kauffeldt, a member of the Tweed and Company board of directors, actor, and volunteer, comments on this upcoming event on behalf of Tim Porter, artistic director with Tweed and Company. Kauffeldt, who's also hosting this event with Miriam [Hookings] and Porter, says that the 24 Hour Theatre Project is a great opportunity for someone to experience theatre magic without a big commitment and in a fun environment. She says if somebody hasn't been part of a theatrical production before, it's a great way to see what it's like. Aspiring playwrights and veteran writers alike meet at the Playhouse at 7 p.m. on Friday evening to start to write their short play of 7 to 10 minutes in length. We are looking for six to eight writers of any age. They submit their completed plays at 6 a.m. so event staff can make copies of their scripts for the rest of the participants. At 7 a.m., directors arrive at the playhouse and are given half an hour to review all of the plays. Then they are given half an hour to negotiate amongst themselves to determine who gets to direct each play, she says. Kauffeldt reveals that this can be a very entertaining process in itself. Some interesting 'deals' are made among the directors and they are given the rest of the hour to become more familiar with their choice. At 8 a.m., performers arrive for their one minute quick-fire 'auditions' in front of all of the directors. Once all the auditions are finished, the directors will select their cast and rehearsals begin by 9 a.m. There is a role for everyone and sometimes there are several for those who are up for the challenge. Everyone gets a part, even if a director has to create one! At 10 a.m., production enthusiasts arrive. They meet with each director to compile a list of props, costumes, light and sound queue requests and stage management instructions they need for the production. Once they have their instructions, they start 'finding' and 'sourcing' what they need to fill their assignments. All participants take a much-needed break at noon to share in a pizza lunch before dress rehearsals begin. After lunch, each director and their team are given a half hour 'tech rehearsal' where they pull everything together including blocking, sound and light queues, set and prop placement and stage management directions. If there is time, there is a quick run through or full-dress rehearsal before a break for dinner at about 5:30 p.m. At 6:30 p.m., all participants return to the playhouse to get into their costumes, hair and makeup. At 7 p.m., exactly 24 hours from the moment the writers pen initially touched their blank paper, the showcase begins for the audience. It's a crazy, fun, fast moving whirlwind of a day and it's amazing to witness what a group of strangers can accomplish together in 24 hours when they are focused on the same goal! she says. Kauffeldt says that Tweed and Company team members will be participating, including members of their governance board, in addition to performers from the community. She says that last year, they had five plays and about 30 participants and this year they're hoping to have six to eight plays and closer to 50 participants. She says that a number of local participants have also had roles in other Tweed and Company productions but she wants to make it clear that no experience is required and that's part of the fun and magic. Kauffeldt told Bancroft This Week that it's an amazing event and if you've ever

wondered what it would be like to be under the spotlight, wanted to create costumes to bring characters to life or learn some basic skills behind the sound board, this is the event for you. Participants of any age are welcome to join us for the event. Those under 13 years old must be accompanied by a participating adult for the full event. You can register as a participant on the Tweed and Company website and through the link on the Village Playhouse page. While pre-registration is not absolutely required, it is appreciated so we can tell the writers how many performers they are writing for, she says. We hope to see you at the Playhouse for this event!