

Tech upgrades to enhance Valhalla experience



Technology at the Boathouse Theatre has been upgraded.
Photo/LTN

By Evangeline Elston

Valhalla Tahoe has upped its game when it comes to professional technical and production staff for the 2015 Valhalla Art, Music & Theatre Festival. For the festival to become known for excellent productions including concert sound, theater lighting, and play direction, it must have topnotch staff in place to help realize the vision.

This year Valhalla has hired Kevin Male of Kevin Male Audio as the concert sound engineer. Male has gone through Valhalla's audio equipment assessing and rewiring and modifying the technical production booth in the Boathouse Theatre to make sure everything is in great shape. He has than 20 years of experience as a sound engineer and so far the concert sound has been "the best we've ever heard at the Boathouse", according to one opening night couple of concert-goers who came to hear Alasdair Fraser.

Joe Barnett, a recent graduate of South Tahoe High School, is

on staff for the summer as Valhalla's theater tech. Barnett gained his extensive knowledge and experience working in the STHS theater program under Liz Niven. Barnett has been able to assess some complicated lighting and technical issues at the Boathouse Theatre, implemented solutions, reprogrammed the lighting board and focused and re-gelled the theatre lights.

Though Valhalla has technical production limitations in the theater due to older equipment and limited resources, Male and Barnett have been able to maximize capabilities beyond what anyone thought possible.

Ethan Niven, a 2015 graduate of Southern Oregon University, is on staff as festival assistant and as director for Valhalla and the Dakota Foundation's production of "On Golden Pond", which opens July 2 at the Boathouse Theatre. Niven graduated with a BA in theater arts and a double minor in musical theater and stage management. He is a nationally ranked performer in 2015 through the Kennedy Center. Locals may know him from his memorable performances at Lake Tahoe Community College over the years and as director of the 2014 Dakota/Valhalla production of "A Servant of Two Masters".

The Valhalla Boathouse Theatre will be the ideal venue for "On Golden Pond", a classic American comedy/drama that's every bit as touching, warm, and witty today as when it debuted on Broadway in 1979. "On Golden Pond", written by Ernest Thompson, is a work of rare simplicity and is the genesis of the much-heralded film starring Henry Fonda and Kathryn Hepburn. This play explores growing up, growing old and growing closer.

The cast of the play includes Pam Taylor, Stephanie Grigsby, Ryan Adams, Jody Paslov, Thomas Rayo and Dave Anderson.

On Golden Pond will run July 5, July 9-12 and July 16-18. Tickets and information are at www.valhallatahoe.com.

Evangelina Elston is director of the Valhalla Art, Music and

Theatre Festival.