

Vacation From Hell

7 Devils playwright discovers 'what you need in life'

BY DREW DODSON

The Star-News

Being deprived of her suitcase for two weeks in Ireland put a damper on Kathleen Cahill's vacation, but gifted her the inspiration for her latest play, "The Robertassey."

"I think that the universe was maybe saying like 'you suffered, so here's this play,'" said Cahill, a Salt Lake City playwright.

Cahill is the featured playwright for this year's Seven Devils Playwrights Conference held at the Alpine Playhouse in McCall.

Cahill led a public writing workshop last weekend in McCall and "The Robertassey" will be read publicly on Saturday as the conference's grand finale. All Events are free and open to the public.

"The Robertassey" parallels Cahill's vacation to Ireland in 2016 in which her luggage was lost during a flight and not found until she arrived at the airport for the trip home. It also mirrors how the chaotic trip helped her make peace with aspects of her own personal life.

"I put together a lot of different feelings and attached them to this suitcase situation," said Cahill, a first-time participant at the conference.

Spending two weeks without her belongings in a foreign country forced Cahill to liberate herself from the material world bred by internet and social media, which became a prominent theme in her play as well as her life.

"For me, it was about what you actually need in life, what is necessary and what is fluff," she said. "It's kind of freeing to think that you really don't need that much."

Things That Matter

The newfound freedom enabled her to let go of trivial things bothering her and find a new appreciation for the things that truly matter to her.

"Life goes on and gets sort of refreshed," she said.

Memories from her 2016 vacation gone-awry ultimately found a home in the play as part of the odyssey of Roberta, the main character.

Cahill was struck by Irish speech patterns and vocab-

ulary, so she jotted quotes from people she met on the trip that now appear as lines in her play.

"They speak in this charming way that I love," she said, noting her internal conflict while calling the airline every morning to find out about her lost luggage.

"Part of me was enjoying it and the other part of me was hating it," she said.

Writing the play helped Cahill become more receptive to the idea that everyone embarks on odysseys in life through experiences that are more than they appear at face value.

But too many people are unwilling to have an open mind about their own odysseys, she said.

"I say their windows and doors are shut and they're just not available to what's happening to them," Cahill said.

The play aims to guide the audience toward a better understanding of their own journeys and the meaning of them.

It will also show audience members that they are not alone in their personal struggles with things like parental loss, family relationships and, of course, lost luggage, Cahill said.

"I think playwriting should be discovery," she said. "You just have this kind of amorphous feeling-thought bundle and you're trying to put it in some form that matters to you."

"When you write about what something means to you, it turns out that it also means something to others," she said.

Cahill has taken "The Robertassey" as far as she can after a year of writing, but is optimistic that actors and audience members at the Seven Devils conference will lead her to new ideas to explore, she said.

She is also excited to work with Denver-based Director Christy Montour-Larson and Bozeman, Montana, dramaturg Gay Smith on further developing the themes and characters of the play.



Photo by Sarah Jessup

Kathleen Cahill, left, conducts a playwriting workshop on Saturday at McCall-Donnelly High School while Abby Griffith, right, listens. Cahill is the featured playwright for this year's Seven Devils Playwrights Conference.

For a complete listing of events during the conference, visit <https://www.idtheater.org/2019-schedule.html>.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS 2019 SEVEN DEVILS PLAYWRIGHTS CONFERENCE

All events are free and start at 7:30 p.m. at the Alpine Playhouse unless otherwise noted.

TONIGHT TWO MINUTES AFTER DAWN BY VINECIA COLEMAN

For the past year and a half, Sam has been working and saving for a new house, caring for her ailing mother Leann, and juggling her relationship with her husband Jack.

As the medical bills begin to pile up and Leann slips further and further into a world of her own, Sam longs for a world free of the many burdens she is carrying.

Will the end of Leann's life offer Sam the future she's always dreamed of? Or will it force Sam to stand face-to-face with something she never saw coming: her present.

FRIDAY ¡O CASCADIA! BY RAMÓN ESQUIVEL

For Ayo, Eshana, Hyun, and Tlaloc, discovering each other among the waters, forests, and mountains of the Pacific Northwest offers glimpses of the lives they yearn to live, and the hope that together all things are possible.

But are they? As expectations of culture, family, society, and religion threaten to pull them apart, four friends struggle to hold their fragile world together, even as the Earth breaks apart.

SATURDAY 2 P.M., MCCALL-DONNELLY HIGH SCHOOL THEN, OF COURSE, ALL THE THINGS HAPPENED BY MAX REUBEN

What if you took all the things that happened: that time you bought a car, or buried a stray cat, or the time you waited for a ride in the rain, and turned them round and round like a kaleidoscope, tethering unremarkable moments and

half-memories into whole new narratives? This is the world of "Then, Of Course, All The Things Happened." One play, countless variations.

SATURDAY THE ROBERTASSEY BY KATHLEEN CAHILL

Hiker was a veterinarian who could tame wild animals. He was also an alcoholic. Now he's dead which should be the end. Except it's not.

Hiker wants his ashes scattered in

a Dublin lake, near the place of his birth. He moves heaven and Earth to make it happen. Including sending his oldest daughter Roberta on an odyssey to Dublin and beyond.

Or maybe that's not the story. Maybe this is a story about a woman turning 40 who doesn't know who she is or where she belongs.

Or is this just a simple tale about what happens when the airline loses Roberta's suitcase?

31st Annual Roseberry Arts and Crafts Fair

SAT. & SUN., JULY 6-7

9:30-5 p.m. July 6, 10-4:30 p.m. July 7.

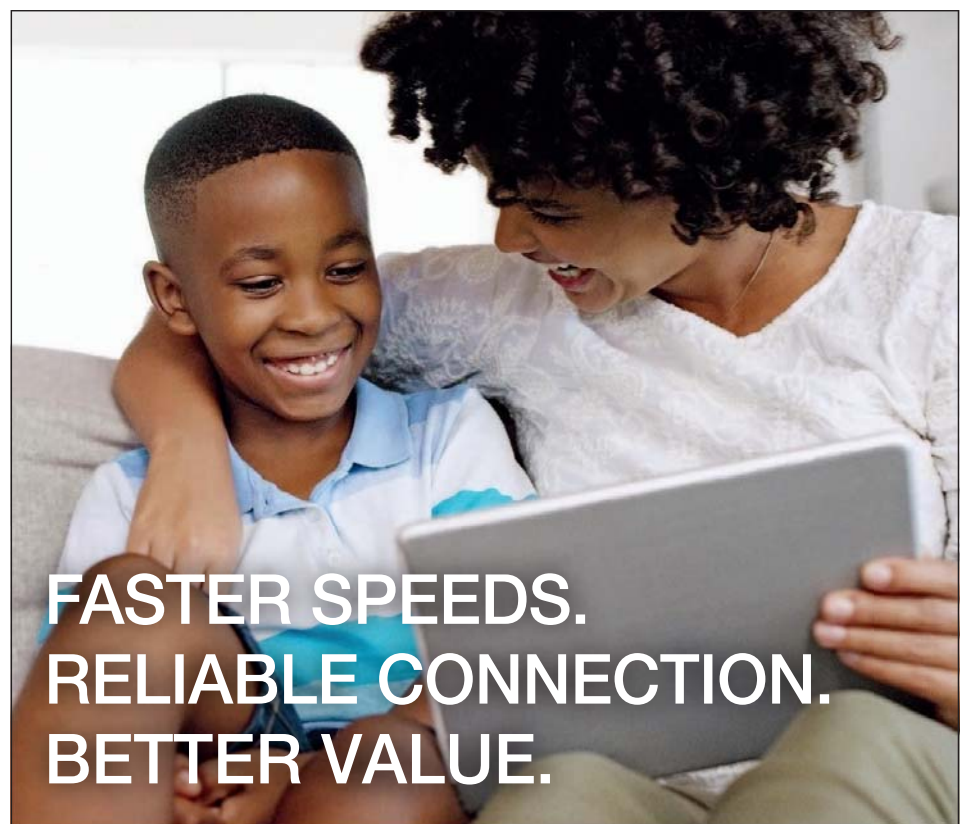
High quality arts & crafts, good food, historical museums.

In Historic Roseberry 1 mile east of Donnelly on the Farm to Market Road

Sponsored by The Long Valley Preservation Society



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THANKS

Riley's parents thank supporters of Frandrew fundraiser

To the Editor:

To everyone who has blessed our endeavor to acquire the much needed Seizure Assist Dog for Riley, thank you!

We have attained the funds needed to start the process for a Service Dog from 4 Paws for Ability trained specifically for Riley and his Dravet Syndrome Epilepsy.

So very many of you have donated not only funds but time, energy and heart towards this goal. We are beyond thankful and overwhelmed by the generosity of the community that we live in and all of those in our family and friendship-life circles.

We started this journey with Riley dedicated to raise him to the best of our abilities. We were shown very quickly that we would be reaching out to others as his needs stretched far beyond what we were capable of.

Humbleness is not a characteristic easily come by, but when you are staring such overwhelming challenges in the face, it becomes very clear that asking for help is what is best for the one you love beyond your own life.

Thank you again, and please look at our Facebook pages and Instagram for updates on this wonderful dog and the continued fundraising for the retrieving of the dog from Ohio.

Diane, Randy and Riley Peterson
McCall

