

# KeizerCommunity

KEIZERTIMES.COM

## Auditions for 2017 season Jan. 14

By DEREK WILEY  
Of the Keizertimes

If all goes as planned, Keizer Homegrown Theatre will have its own space by February, according to the company's founder Linda Baker.

"That is our goal. That is fingers crossed," Baker said. "We're really excited and it's a big jump for us. It will be smack dab in the middle of Keizer. We are thinking positively. We've planned a season. We have to be there. It's time to be in our own home."

KHT will open its 2017 season with *Love Letters*, the story of two childhood friends who stay in contact by exchanging letters. Written by AR Gurney, the piece will be read by different Keizer celebrities each night (Feb. 11, 12 and 14), including former mayor Lore Christopher and *Keizertimes* publisher Lyndon Zaitz.

Admission is \$20. "This is a little gift to Keizer, a celebration for the new space and a fundraiser to

"It's time to be in our own home."

— Linda Baker,  
Founder, Keizer  
Homegrown Theatre



see what we're doing and show us some love," Baker said. "We like having another piece in the season but we don't want people to work hard during the holidays."

Keizer Homegrown will hold auditions for the rest of its season on Saturday, Jan. 14 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at

the Keizer Civic Center, 930 Chemawa Rd. NE.

It's the second year in a row KHT hopes to cast most of its season in one day.

"It's just kind of a scrimmage, come and meet us and talk to directors and do some reading and get it all done in one fell swoop," Baker said.

Keizer Homegrown has built its 2017 season around *Dog Park, The Musical*, a script by Harry Segall that Baker picked up in Ashland a few

years ago and has wanted to do since.

"Generally what happens for us is one thing stands out, one play needs to be done and then we build around what that is going to be," Baker said.

"This year it was *Dog Park, the Musical*. That was the one that needed to be done. Just look at the title alone. It's a delightful little concept, the music is fun and it has a story. It has a book that catches your heart and the music just adds to it. It's been sitting in the back of my head for a while."

The musical about a sassy dog named Daisy who has promised her best friend she'll give the dating scene one more chance will run the last three weekends of October.

McNary graduates Andie Bean and Jeremy Clubb are directing the show.

"They are both musicians. They are both extremely tal-



File  
Christa Karschnia and Hannah Patterson act out a scene from *Time Stands Still* last March. The 2017 theatre season opens with *Love Letters* on Feb. 11.

ented people," Baker said. "You cannot argue with that team. They are so on it. We have wonderful people directing this year. I try really, really hard not to be the mother of the entire thing. It's very nice to have really smart people who are stepping up. It's going to be lots of fun."

Jay Gipson-King, president of the Salem Theater Network and an instructor at Chemeketa Community College, is directing *Hearts Like Fists* in May. The superhero comedy features a group of crime fighters tasked with stopping Doctor X, who is sneaking into apartments and injecting lovers with a lethal poison.

"It is just crazy enough to work," Baker said. "Young people do a lot of theater in high school but don't see

theater again so we wanted something that was clever. It's new theater but it's not offensive. It's not political. It's just a really clever, funny piece and we have how many comic book stores in this town? It's a good fit for Keizer. It's very witty and very funny."

Baker will direct two well-known plays in 2017—*Heaven Can Wait* in March and then *Romeo and Juliet* in July.

"For Shakespeare in the park, we really wanted to do something classic," Baker said. "I want something people can grab on to. We all know it. We all studied it. It was just time for that one to happen."

For more information on the KHT 2017 season or auditions, go to [www.keizer-homegrowntheatre.org/](http://www.keizer-homegrowntheatre.org/).

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