

Making It In Hollywood

■ Tribal member Jason Darcy is on the hunt as an extra and a stand-in, and is finally eligible to join the Screen Actors Guild.

By Ron Karten

It seemed too good to be true. As Tribal member Jason Darcy, 34, tells it, he arrived in Los Angeles one day and almost right away, he was working in show business every day. The key, he said, was discovering Central Casting, a company that routes budding actors to roles as extras in virtual every movie and television show produced.

For Darcy, television blockbusters like *Home Improvement* or *Melrose Place* are all part of his daily routine. He has worked as an extra on those sets as well as on blockbuster movie sets time and again.

He has been an orderly or a tech in the all of the CSI series, and one time, his character lost a fist fight with one of the stars in a nightclub scene.

From Darcy's point of view, the New York CSI is the best of the lot because "they treated you like a human being," which gives you an idea of some of what an extra puts up with day to day.

A lot of it is just sitting around, though. One day, he said, some of the extras could see that they weren't going to be needed and they took off to spend the day playing pinball.

A little more special is remembering the times he sat down for a chat with actor Kate Winslet or a cup of coffee with actor Richard Dreyfus.

"You were the one looking at me," said Winslet, who had been sitting alone until Darcy spied his opportunity and introduced himself. "What



Tribal Member
Jason Darcy

Photo by Toby McClary

were you looking at?" she asked.

In their scene together, Winslet's ex-boyfriend is getting married, and Darcy's character shakes hands with him.

In real life, they chatted about the business and what it takes to get ahead. Their movie, called *The Holiday*, is being advertised now for the holidays.

But Dreyfus was the one who told Darcy to keep at it. "Don't give up on your dream," Dreyfus told him.

"He was a major influence," Darcy said.

Charlie Sheen, star of *Two And A Half Men*, opened the door for Darcy on the set of that show by bumming a cigarette. "He had nothing positive to say," said Darcy.

"He was whining about his ex-wife, Denise Richards."

On the business end of things, Sheen told him, "If I didn't have a dad in this business, I wouldn't be where I am."

Which explains both what Darcy is up against as he moves his career forward, and why it is important that he take advantage of every opportunity to make new contacts.

"If you're a strong person and work at it, anything is possible in L.A.," he said.

From early on, there was something in Darcy that "made me want to entertain," he said recently at a restaurant in Eugene, where he is home for the holidays. "Since I was 10, I knew I wanted to be an actor."

He started his odyssey 10 years ago. "In 1996, I went to Los Angeles for the first time," he said. He spent his time almost every day appearing as an extra in productions. Personal events brought him back home in 1999, and for five years, he honed his acting at Actors' Cabaret in Eugene.

He started with some minor roles in *A Few Good Men* and *Hair*, the musical. Then, he played the role of Rocky in *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, Spider in *Jeckel and Hyde*, and the straight son in *La Cage Aux Folles*, which he said was very hard to play because the gay parts got all the laughs.

It was in Eugene that he conquered "that fear of being in front of a large crowd." That opened up a courage in him, he said, that now enables him to talk to anyone.

By comparison, he said, he was "shaking like a leaf" doing *A Few Good Men*.

Live theater also taught Darcy the art of improvisation. "You start learning that you've got to be prepared for anything to happen,

because it does," he said. "Busted lips, set change screw ups, and sometimes you have to help others get back on track." Darcy has had to be rescued himself. "If you forget your lines, whatever you do, don't stand there like a deer in the headlights," he said, "like I did once. You've got to say something." It allows others to help the show get back on track.

Meanwhile, Darcy has embarked on another end of the business. With a friend, he has written a vampire movie script.

"It's called *The Blood Scroll* and is based on an ancient scroll found by two brothers." The scroll sends them on a mission and the blood letting begins.

Hollywood being what it is, Darcy has already teamed up with a guy who makes vampire fangs for a living, and has the promise of help from a film crew from UCLA for free. Lights guys and director-types are also all willing to work for the film credits, but the equipment is going to cost them.

"There are so many possibilities out there," he said. And he is not giving up.

"I've always followed this thing that James Dean said: 'Dream as if you'll live forever. Live as if you'll die today.'"

The other morning, Darcy's older brother, Tribal member and Eugene Satellite Office Service Representative Jon Darcy-Chantell, caught him just after he woke up and was coming out of the bedroom. Jon asked Jason how he was doing, brother to brother.

And Jason returned the favor as he tried to pry his morning eyes open. "Do I look like I have @!#%\$*& bluebirds on my shoulder?" he said.

Ah, Hollywood. ■

National Meth Campaign Underway

■ November 30 was National Meth Day.

By Ron Karten

As the Grand Ronde Tribe works at using a two-year \$500,000 grant to fight meth addiction in town, the federal bureaucracy named November 30 National Methamphetamine Awareness Day and announced in a telephone conference from Washington, D.C., a new initiative backed by some \$500,000 more to bring meth education to Indian Country.

"The curse of meth is devastating," said Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne, "and particularly devastating in Indian Country."

"The impact on health is nothing short of alarming. Instead of an atmosphere where you'd hope that parents were cooking dinner for the family, they are cooking meth. No children should be sub-

ject to this."

The three-part plan — and Kempthorne promised that it would be in full swing by mid-2007 — includes research to find out what ideas will inspire folks in Indian Country, whether youth or adults; how to

translate those ideas into functioning public service announcements; and finally, finding appropriate ways to disseminate that information.

"We can prevent people from trying it even once," said Kempthorne. "That is a key."

The project is a joint effort that includes the Department of the Interior, the National Congress of

American Indians, Partnership for a Drug-Free America and The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and hopes to engage Tribes across the country at their local levels.

"Tribal leaders are looking at this globally," said Jackie John-

son, (Alaskan Tlingit) Executive Director of the National Congress of American Indians. "They're looking at high unemployment and ways to bring more jobs to the community; to elevate the standard of education. There's still almost a 50% dropout rate among Indians. All those are a piece of what we have to do."

Here in Grand Ronde, a \$500,000 federal grant from Administration for Native Americans, is now providing post-treatment services for Tribal members coming out of inpatient services or jail.

"We have opened up our transitional living center, a men's recovery house," said Social Services Manager Dave Fullerton. "We've got four beds filled now and room

for one more." Individuals can stay in Tribal transitional housing "as long as it takes to become stable and healthy," said Fullerton.

An ongoing local meth education campaign has brought in speakers ranging from the justice community to the medical community, and including people who have used meth but no longer use it. ■



Graphic by Geroge Valdez