



From left, Loren McCormac, Aaron Foster and Kathy Manifold rehearse for the annual Fall 10-Minute Play Festival from the Truckee Community Theater. COURTESY/TRUCKEE COMMUNITY THEATER

## Short takes

### Truckee Community Theater

**Some playwrights dazzle you with epics** about the big issues in life or take their time unwinding a tale of suspenseful drama.

Well, that isn't the Fourth Annual Fall 10-Minute Play Festival. Truckee Community Theater produces this show on Oct. 4 and 5, and it's for people who want some bite-size stage experiences.

"Why see one play when you can see eight in one night?" said Carrie Haines, artistic director of Truckee Community Theater. "It's truly amazing what can be accomplished in 10 minutes—a beginning, middle and end."

It's often that last part that grabs the most attention.

"What's really special about the scripts is that they all have a powerful ending, whether it's a drama or a comedy. All of them are very poignant," she said.

Haines said it's a particular joy to put on this show every year. Rehearsals are comparatively easy.

"Everyone has so much fun because there's so much variety," she said. "It has a film festival appeal."

That extends to the subject matter of this year's eight plays, which include a science fiction play for the first time. They range from a drama set during the Holocaust to another where actors are playing chickens crossing the road. Both local and national playwrights are featured in the annual festival. The theater company picks 16 plays so they don't repeat during the two-night run. This year, there were 40 plays submitted.

"In the past, we've obtained some plays from a publisher, but this is the first year that all the plays are original works,"

Haines said. "We received submissions from writers all over the country, in fact, all over the world. We're featuring a playwright from England this year, so now it's become international."

From there, the directors of each play—this year, there are 11 different directors, including Haines—held casting auditions the plays, which feature 30 different actors, age 14 and up.

"The directors start to fight over the actors to get which ones they want," Haines said with a chuckle. "That is a challenge we have, because there are some actors doing two plays and a couple doing three. We try to limit them because it does become demanding to memorize lines and different characters, but it's something that all the actors really love."

The Truckee festival has also become something that other companies in California are starting to emulate. Haines said she has attended the California Community Theater Conference and presented on the festival to great interest from other companies, including Sacramento.

"Now, others are following in our footsteps and presenting their own," Haines said. "We're one of the very few in the country that do this. It's brilliant all the way around, because it costs us almost nothing to put on and the patrons love it."

With a simple black-box setup and a variety of subject matter, the plays foster creativity and imagination from all involved. The audiences reward this every night with a vote for best play, but with no big prize. "A play I directed two years ago was a winner, and I just said, 'OK, we have bragging rights now,'" Haines said. □

The Fourth Annual Fall 10-Minute Play Festival takes place at 7 p.m. Oct. 4 and 5 at Truckee Community Arts Center, 10046 Church St., Truckee, California. Get more details at [truckeecommunitytheater.com](http://truckeecommunitytheater.com)

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