

KidsMAT summer camps let children try theater life

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By Kristen Takeuchi

This summer, area children will have the opportunity to learn and experience life on stage, as well as backstage, during the the KidsMAT theater camp put on by Montana Actors' Theatre.

A summer camp has been going on for around 20 years but it officially became an intern-led theatre camp called KidsMAT four years ago.

During the camp, kids have the opportunity to write and develop their own script, MAT's Artistic Director Jay Pyette said.

"We focus on creative development, team building and participation in every phase of production," Pyette added in the email. "We are far more interested in what the kids gain during camp instead of a 'glossy' end product."

College-age summer interns are hired by MAT to run the camp and direct the summer youth show which features middle and high schoolaged actors. This year the interns are Brandon Bergren, Katie Burke and Rebecca Severinsen.

Along with this year's interns, several former interns and regular MAT members, including he and Grant Olson, will help guide the interns, Pyette said.

Each camp session runs one week, Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Kids need to bring a sack lunch but snacks are provided throughout the day.

"On Thursday the kids return at 5 p.m. for pizza and a final rehearsal," Pyette said.

The children then perform a show for the public at 7 p.m.

Six camp sessions will be held this summer — three in Havre, and one each in Chinook, Box Elder and Hays-Lodge Pole. The Havre camps run June 11-14, July 16-19 and Aug. 6-9. The Chinook camp is June 18-21; Box Elder is June 25-28, and Hays-Lodge Pole is July 30-Aug. 2.

The registration fee for each camp is \$50 for the first child and \$30 for each additional child in the family.

Parents can register their child online at <http://www.mtactors.com> or they can pick up a registration form.

For Havre or Chinook camps, registration forms can be picked up at Bear Paw Meats, the Computer Center, The Press, the Chinook Pharmacy or Chinook Liquor Store.

For Box Elder camp registration, parents can contact Hillary Williams of Box Elder Schools at 352-3222, and Denise Perez can be contacted at 673-3019 for the Hays-Lodge Pole camp registration.

Pyette said he recommends kids sign up early because there had been a great demand for spots in the past camps and each of the six sessions is limited to 40 participants.

Call Pyette at 945-0272 for more info.

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