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MAT's Death by Chocolate is playing it again to sell-out crowd

By [Tim Leeds](#)

Montana Actors' Theatre's main fall fundraiser, the murder mystery gala Death by Chocolate, set for this weekend in the Havre Central Gymnasium at St. Jude Thaddeus School, is showing to a sold-out crowd.

This year's murder mystery, "Play it Again, Martina," is styled after an old murder mystery movie.

MAT Artistic Director Jay Pyette said the last tickets to the event sold out earlier this week.

The fundraiser allows people to buy tables with additional service — such as unlimited beer and wine, special "gumshoe" appetizers and free game wristbands, along with a dedicated service "dame" and chocolates on the table for this year's "Sam Spade's" table and wine on the table, serving "dames" and chocolates on the "Femme Fatale" table.

The night includes auctioned show sponsorships, "gin-joint" games, chocolates and food by the St. Jude Thaddeus School Booster Club, a promotional poster said.

"And murder, sweetheart, murder," it adds.

The event, held each fall by the local acting troupe, helps pay for MAT's season and activities. Those include eight to 10 productions during the main season, a youth production and the ever-growing KidsMAT summer theater summer camps and other activities through the year.

The night has a multitude of games and raffles, and, starting four years ago, the grand prize has been a trip to an event — within reason — of the winner's choice. So far, those prizes have been seeing Cirque du Soleil in Las Vegas, the Red Sox play in Boston, the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas and going to Dallas to see the Red Sox.

MAT's season this year kicks off with Hollywood icon Ed Asner coming to Havre to perform in "God Help Us" Oct. 12-14 — a show that already is almost sold out.

It then opens the musical "Sweeney Todd" in the Atrium Mall Oct. 19.

Its new 24-hour play fest runs Nov. 17, with a pantomime version of the classic "Peter Pan" opening Dec. 7.

The classic plays "The Glass Menagerie" and "Death of a Salesman" will rotate each week in repertorie theater with "Glass Menagerie" opening Jan. 17.

For Valentine's Day, MAT opens its run of "Cabaret," Feb. 14.

The troupe opens its traveling dinner show March 8 with "The 39 Steps," followed by "The Fantastic Mr. Fox" opening March 22.

"I Am (Not) My Mother" opens in Readers' Theater April 11, with the classic story of "Cyrano" opening May 10. Then the regular play season wraps up with the Youth Theater production of "She Kills Monsters" opening July 25, with the KidsMAT theater camps running through the summer.