

EMCT's Dead End-Killington Drive: suspenseful musical mystery

Theater Review

By G. Demarest

An effective murder-mystery has a culprit no one expects, least of all the audience. East Mountain Centre for Theatre's season opening dinner-theater production, *Dead End Killington Drive—The Jack-O-Lantern Murders*, is one that keeps you guessing until the very end, and then some.

"It's a fun show with all sorts of twists and turns," said EMCT veteran Katie Wacek, who plays FBI special agent Witt in the show.

Written and directed by EMCT president Richard Atkins, who has a small part, *Dead End Killington Drive* pays is a musical murder mystery that pays tribute to slasher-filmmaker John Carpenter. The songs deliver the bulk of the laughs.

"There aren't many Halloween-themed plays, certainly not many that are this colorful or musical," Atkins said.

The whodunit centers

around the Fletcher family—mom, dad, two kids and grandma—who are freaking out over a copy-cat killer who's mimicking the murders in a recently-released Carpenter film.

While the Fletchers' neighbors get bumped off one by one, the trick for the family is to stay alive. The treat for the audience is to guess who the killer is.

The show is peppered with several modern undertones: the FBI agent does a rap song; the teenaged-daughter is preoccupied with facebook on her constantly-in-hand laptop; her high-strung mother and aching grandmother both pop prescription drugs like candy, and then they sing a tongue-in-cheek song about the dysfunctionality of it all.

After the second intermission, ballots are passed out and the audience members get to vote on who they think the murderer is with a prize awarded to the winner.

It's all good fun right down to the end.

Dinner is catered by Greenside Café with the choice of beef, chicken or vegetarian, with a side of pumpkin ravioli that will make your mouth

water.

Dinner-theater tickets cost \$35 for adults, \$30 for seniors and students, \$15 for kids. Sunday non-dinner theater tickets are \$20, \$15 and \$10 respectively.

Dead End Killington Drive—The Jack-O-Lantern Murders

runs the next two weekends at Vista Grande Community Center on La Madera Road in Sandia Park. Show times are Fridays and Saturdays at 7 p.m. and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. For more information or to buy tickets go to emct.org or call 286-1950.

