



COURTESY PHOTO

The East Mountain Centre for Theatre will start its 10th season this weekend with "Dead End: Killington Drive — The Jack-o'-Lantern Murders. From left are Matt Fogarty, Madi Mateski, Cheryl Atkins.

## Play Brings Murders to Life

### 'Dead End' Includes Comedy, Dinner

BY LAURIE CLARK  
*Mountain View Telegraph*

The air is getting chilly. The trees are showing off how colorful their leaves can be. There is a crisp hint of a changing season in the air.

Murder is a great way to celebrate fall.

The cast of "Dead End: Killington Drive — The Jack-o'-Lantern Murders" hopes that you agree. The show, presented by the East Mountain Centre for Theatre and playing at the Vista Grande Community Center, begins its run on Friday.

Richard Atkins, director and writer of the play, says that "Dead End" is more than just a murder mystery. It has comedy, music, and if you go at the right time, there is even food — the dinner theater performances are catered by the Greenside Cafe.

But back to the murder. In an unlucky neighborhood in Sedona, Ariz., there is a murderer on the loose. He or she is bringing the plot of the latest horror movie to life, even going so far as to wear a jack-o'-lantern head like the murderer in the movie.

One could argue that the characters should have known better than to live on a street called "Killington Drive" — on a dead end street, no less! — but they live there anyway and soon start getting killed off.

One could also ask how to make murder funny.

"Through the characters. The characters are very colorful, the interaction between the characters ... there's a bit of campiness in some of the characters. The songs are fun. It's just my style of writing to find the humor in a serious situation," Atkins said.

As if writing and directing weren't enough, Atkins also has a role in the play, a Ger-

man professor of chemistry — and he seems to be having fun with the German dialect needed for the role.

For Atkins, the work isn't done when the last victim falls on Killington Drive.

Auditions for "Every Christmas Story Ever Told (And Then Some!)" begin soon after "Dead End" closes. Atkins didn't write this show, but he will be one of the directors.

"Dead End: Killington Drive" runs on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through Oct. 23, with a matinee on Sundays. Dinner theatre performances are on Friday and Saturday nights. The matinees do not have food available. Dinner theatre tickets are \$35 for adults and \$15 for children, and matinee tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for children. The Vista Grande Community Center is at 15 La Madera Road in Sandia Park. You can buy tickets on line at [emct.org](http://emct.org) or call 286-1950.