

THE SCENE

Pu
SEDONA
The Heart of the Valley

Feb. 11 through

The #1 news source for arts and entertainment in Sedona and the Verde Valley



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Stovall shares sneak peek of 'Sedona'

It's no secret that once Sedona takes a hold of you, it won't let go. Didn't Theodore Carl Schnebly, whose wife's name is now an international destination, know it right away?

Tommy Stovall did, too. "We moved here in 2002 from Texas. Every time I went back to Dallas I would tell people about Sedona and about the wonderful people and quirky characters," he said. "Everyone who lives in Sedona has a story."

Now Sedona has its own movie. Not a supporting role like in the 60 or so films from "Call of the Canyon" [1923, Richard Nix], "Angel and the Badman" [1946, John Wayne] and "Broken Arrow" [1950, James Stewart] to "Harry and Tonto" [1974, Art Carney], "Johnny Guitar" [1954, Joan Crawford] and "The Karate Kid" [1985, Pat Morita].

But now it has its own name-on-the-marquee, multiple-Google-hit, top-of-the-page billing.

Stovall's "Sedona: The Movie," filmed entirely in and around Sedona over a hectic 23 days, will have its world sneak preview at the Sedona International Film Festival at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 19, at the Sedona Performing Arts Center. The film will also be screened Monday, Feb. 21, at 5 p.m. at the Sedona Performing Arts Center and Sunday, Feb. 27, at 9:10 a.m. at Harkins.

The film kicks off the 17th annual 145-film festival, which officially runs from Sunday, Feb. 20, to Sunday, Feb. 27, on screens at the Harkins Sedona 6 Theater, the Sedona Performing Arts Center and the Sedona Rouge. Festival workshops also are scheduled at the Zaki Gordon Institute at Yavapai College.

The premise of the film mirrors one of Stovall's favorite TV shows, the equally quirky "Northern Exposure." "When we moved here and started meeting people, we talked about how it would make a good TV show or movie and we both loved "Northern Exposure." I started thinking of different characters and I came up with a story about a woman [Francis Fisher] who gets stuck here and can't get out. We just went with it from there," Stovall said.

Where it led was to a bunch of characters — some real like his friend Deb Lovejoy and some

created for the movie, and a score by Ebony Tay that complemented Sedona's beauty and plethora of local actors with a Native American-influenced sound recorded in natural surroundings, including caves. Stovall and Tay worked together on his first film, "Hate Crimes." For "Sedona," she engaged musicians from both Sedona and The Juilliard School to help record the soundtrack.

The film is still in final editing, and Stovall joked he "probably won't finish it until the afternoon of the screening," but he's excited and is quick to point out that "we had a lot of wonderful help locally and couldn't have made the movie without it."

From a cast filled with local faces — including Stovall's son, Trevor — to Sedona residents "who donated things, were extras or who helped out on the crew, everyone had a piece of it. Our hope was that everyone here could consider it Sedona's movie, not just ours. We wanted the community to be involved."

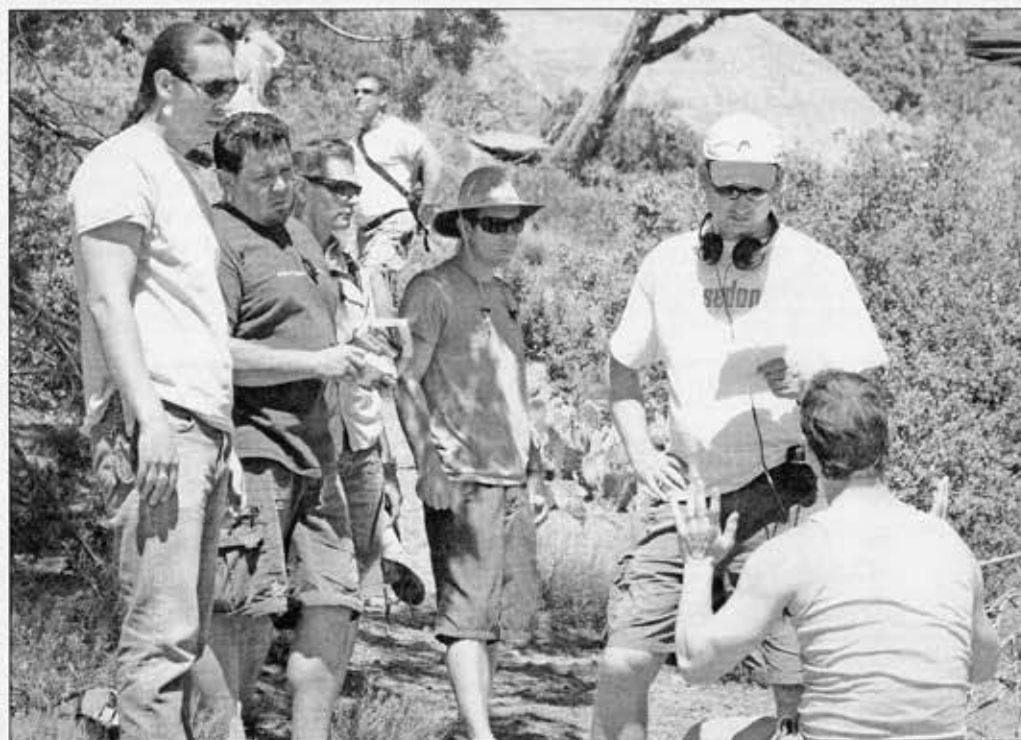
That involvement will continue through the screening because the audience reaction "may help us or point us in a certain direction" as he reaches out to other festivals and film distributors.

But one lesson he learned from "Hate Crime" will stay with him throughout the process: listening to his "gut." "That was the biggest lesson I learned

from 'Hate Crime.' As a new filmmaker, especially working with so many people in the business where everyone thinks they're experts and will tell you what to do and what not to do, most of the time your gut tells you you're right," Stovall said — just like his gut told him Sedona was the right place for him.

Priority Platinum and Gold Passes, and 10 and 20-ticket packages for the film festival are on sale now. Priority Pass holders are the first to be able to select tickets to the individual films as well as other benefits.

Platinum Passes are \$695. Sedona Film Festival members pay \$525 for advanced purchase. Platinum Passes include priority tickets and seating, access to the Filmmaker and VIP Lounge and all receptions, parties, the Awards Ceremony on Sunday, Feb. 27, and Oscar on the Rocks, a live Academy Awards telecast and celebration that evening.



Courtesy photo

PRODUCER, WRITER AND DIRECTOR TOMMY STOVALL, second from the right, works with cast and crew members during production of "Sedona: The Movie." Stovall will screen a sneak peek of the movie Saturday, Feb. 19, to kick off the Sedona International Film Festival.

Gold Priority Passes are \$395. Members pay \$295 in advance. Gold Passes include priority tickets and seating to all films.

Ticket packages of 20 are \$200. Members pay \$180. The 10-ticket package is \$100, \$90 for members. Full-time students can get the 10-ticket package for \$80.

Packages, other than for full-time students, can be purchased online at www.sedonafilmfestival.com or through the Festival Box office at (928) 282-1177. Student packages must be purchased through the Box Office and student ID's are required.

For more information, visit www.sedonafilmfestival.com.



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