

## **The Legends of Cripple Creek Bring Christmas Spirits to Butte Stage**

The spirits of the season – past, present and future – are alive as ever at the Butte Theater in Cripple Creek.

The ever-popular holiday show, *A Cripple Creek Christmas Carol*, is back, weaving the legendary 1890's characters into the classic Dickens' story. This show is a must if you are looking to get the family into the Christmas spirit.

True to its origin the show, written for the Butte stage by former melodrama actors from the Imperial Days, brings the true meaning of Christmas to Cripple Creek. From the days of Bob Womack and Winfield Scott Stratton, the tale of Scrooge mending his ways unfolds with professional and community actors with a serious measure of holiday cheer and comedy blended with the heartening story true to Dickens' classic.

The cast includes professional actors - Zachariah Gooch, this show's Scrooge, played by Mel Moser, Womack, this show's Marley, played by Chris Armbrister, Doc Susie played by Morgan Gengo, Thomas Crockett played by Mickey Burdick, Stratton and Fergus played by Rob Scharlow – as well as a host of community actors all volunteering their time and energy to stage this month-long show. Steph Hilliard is back as the humorous Mr. Strickler and the Shawna Seals steals the heart of the show as Little Tom, Crockett's crippled daughter.

Based on the classic, the Cripple Creek version relies on 1890's gold discoverer Bob Womack (Armbrister) to rescue the Scrooge-like Zachariah Gooch (Moser) from his selfish ways. Womack, who discovered the gold that made Cripple Creek famous, died in poverty. His ally in saving Gooch is 1890's mining mogul Winfield Scott Stratton (Scharlow) and mine owner Mollie Kathleen Gortner (Cyndi Ridder). The tale parallels the classic as Gooch scorns Christmas, terminates his clerk Crockett (Burdick) whose daughter Thomasina (Seals, and also played by Mahryn Barron) is crippled and frail. As usual the professional actors deliver stellar performances and the community actors, several are new this year, show their dedication to learning theater the best way – following the lead of their Thin Air Theatre Company comrades who know how to do theater best.

The show is followed by a traditional Olio/Musical filled with holiday cheer and caroling – one of funniest Christmas Olios yet.

A full house opening night was a great way to kick off this season. The fun-filled 2 hours of legendary historical characters, holiday music and good tidings drew a standing applause well deserved by this cast and crew of dedicated theatricals.

This popular show first took the stage in 2002 and was a favorite with locals and visitors alike. Thin Air Theatre Company (TATC) brings this show back to life in 2009 and as is the tradition with this Christmas show offers a gift to the community of reduced ticket prices. All tickets for the show are \$3 off the regular Butte season prices.

This production makes a perfect outing for the entire family, for Christmas and New Year's parties as it concludes its season with a New Year's Eve closing night show.

Shows at the Butte at 139 E. Bennett Avenue in Cripple Creek run Thursday, Friday, Saturday, at 7 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday at 1 p.m.. Tickets are reduced from normal seasons prices as a gift to the community: Adult \$12.75; Senior \$10.75; Children \$7.75; Groups of 20+ \$9.75 each.

For more information and to make reservations, visit [butteoperahouse.com](http://butteoperahouse.com).