

Friday
February 27, 2009

SEDONA, ARIZONA
VOLUME 46, NUMBER 44
2 SECTIONS, 22 PAGES

50¢

www.redrocknews.com

SEDONA RED ROCK NEWS

The Voice of Sedona and Oak Creek Canyon for 45 years

Sedona film shoots in Sedona

By Alison Ecklund
LARSON NEWSPAPERS

Everyone has a story of how and why they ended up in Sedona.

Once they've settled in, Sedona residents often turn to each other and mutter "only in Sedona," when they see a samurai walking down Highway 89A or watch a plane use that roadway for a landing strip.

That emergency crash landing on Sedona's main road, roughly five years ago, worked its way into Sedona filmmaker Tommy Stovall's latest film, "Sedona."

When Stovall drove up on the plane crash on Highway 89A, the first thing he thought was "what a great scene for a movie."

"Sedona" is a feature-length movie about miracles and being open to the opportunities the universe provides us, Stovall said.

The film takes place in one day, following Tammy Johnson from Oregon as she takes a wrong turn into Sedona and gets stuck when a tour plane runs her off the road during an emergency crash landing.

Just turned 50 and forced to face her own demons, Johnson encounters an array of quirky locals, including Deb Lovejoy, who'll be played by Lin Shaye.

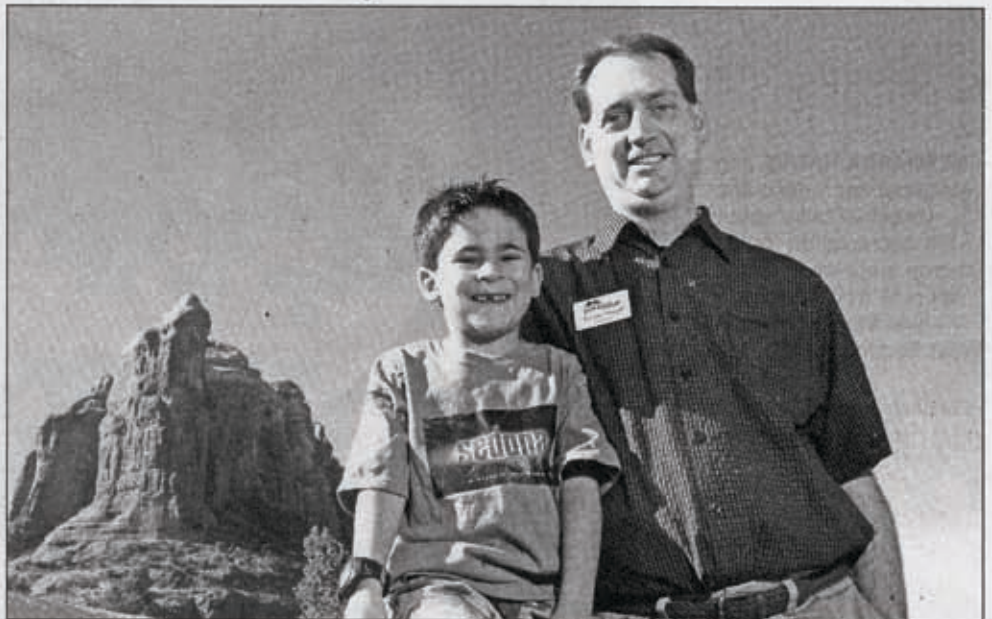
Lovejoy was one of the first people Stovall met in Sedona and he told her from the start she'd make a good character.

"You do write what you know," Stovall said. "You think of characters and hear certain people you know and hear how they'd talk and what they'd say."

It's a drama, but it's comedic, Stovall said, and the main character is Sedona.

"There have been a lot of movies made in Sedona, all the Westerns, but there's never been a movie about Sedona," Stovall said, "and this is a contemporary, current movie."

Stovall wrote, directed and produced his first film, "Hate Crime," in 2004. The film premiered at the Sedona International Film Festival in 2005, where it won Audience Choice for Best Feature and Stovall was picked as Best Director at the Breckenridge Festival of Film.



Michele Bradley Pacheco/Larson Newspapers

FILMMAKER TOMMY STOVALL hopes to recruit production crews from people attending the Sedona International Film Festival for his upcoming feature-length drama "Sedona." His 8-year-old son, Trevor Sterling Stovall, will play "Denny" in the mystical adventure starring Sedona.

It took Stovall 10 months of off and on writing to finish the screenplay for his second screenplay. He expects shooting to begin in June and take five to six weeks.

"I want this movie to be fun," he said. "I want it to be a great experience for all of us in Sedona."

"Hate Crime's" co-producers Marc Sterling and songwriter Ebony Tay will join Stovall as co-producers for "Sedona."

Tay composed the score for "Hate Crime," before attending Juilliard School of Music, where she recently completed a series of composing courses and will soon begin on a soundtrack for "Sedona."

Filming a movie in Sedona about Sedona has two potential economic impacts for the city.

First, cast and crews come to town, stay in hotels and eat out.

Second, the producers hope it will have a lasting effect as audiences worldwide view Sedona as a tourist destination.

The producers have a couple of well-known actors in mind, though no contracts will be signed until they have completed raising all the necessary funds.

"We'll get some well-known actors from Hollywood, but we'll also hold local auditions because there's some good talent here as well," Stovall said.

They want to hire as many Arizona residents as possible to take advantage of the Arizona tax credit, which is a state incentive for film productions in Arizona.

They also hope that people attending the Sedona film festival will be interested in assisting with "Sedona."

Anyone interested in applying for production crew in all departments can send resumes by fax to (928) 282-3776 or e-mail to info@passidg.com.

Alison Ecklund can be reached at 282-7795, ext. 125, or e-mail aeklund@larsonnewspapers.com