



< Making merry } From left, Greg Bryan and Scott Coopwood in *The Taming of the Shrew* in 2007.



## If you go

**The Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival** runs from July 9 to Aug. 17 at Sand Harbor State Park, just south of Incline Village. Shows begin at 7:30 p.m., but many people arrive earlier to enjoy a picnic dinner on the sand prior to the show. Bring your own low-back sand chair or blanket to sit on, or rent a chair for \$3. Food also is sold at Shakespeare's Kitchen. Ticket prices range from \$22 to \$67. For tickets and other information, call 800-747-4697 or visit [laketahoeshakespeare.com](http://laketahoeshakespeare.com).

### Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival takes control.

**S**UMMERTIME, SAND HARBOR, AND SHAKESPEARE — it's a potent cocktail of wonderful weather, exquisite nature, and timeless entertainment that's been delighting audiences of the Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival since 1976. With an in-house artistic director, this year's festival promises to inspire even more awe.

Following a nationwide search, Jan Powell was selected as artistic director in October 2007. In years past, festival staff members managed the venue and marketed the season, but artistic control stayed with an outside theater company.

This season, under Powell's direction, the festival stretches its wings with its first production of *Richard III*, a history play based on the short reign of the British monarch. Also on the bill is the romantic comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as well as a non-Shakespeare production called *Cambio*, a musical based on Victor Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and set in Havana.

"I want to bring Shakespeare performances that are vital, alive,

visceral, muscular, intelligible, delightful, exciting, and uniquely American," Powell says. "Some of our productions will have traditional historical settings, and others will be set in a different time or place, but all will share these essential qualities."

Filling the roles for these productions is a group of fresh faces hand-picked by Powell and the festival staff during auditions in San Francisco; Los Angeles; Portland, Ore.; Memphis; and New York City. The festival also held its first-ever local audition in Reno-Tahoe.

Be on the lookout for Reno-Tahoe area actors such as Joe Atack, Steve Coniglio, Michael Garland, and Ian Bedford.

Other items of note: Live music will accompany several plays. And after debuting to sold-out audiences last summer, *A Midsummer NightMARE* returns Aug. 26 and 27 as part of the festival's Midsummer Nights Series. The show was created by Christopher Childers, former Cirque du Soleil performer and current artistic director for *Le Reve* in Las Vegas. ■