

# THE SUN

YUMA, ARIZONA

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2006

## Ready for a little bingo action?

► Interactive play coming to Yuma stage

BY DARIN FENGER  
SUN STAFF WRITER

A pair of wacky sisters don't want you to win a frozen turkey this weekend.

That's because these gambler' gals, Sis and Babe, want all the prizes for themselves when they come to battle Yuma in a game of bingo Saturday. The fun-loving ladies will share, though, a hilarious peek into their zany lives, as told in a play starring two very creative men.

The folks behind "The Queen of Bingo," an audience-interaction play touring the nation, are already predicting a big hit in Yuma.

"Bingo, drag and a 10-pound frozen turkey. How can you go wrong?" said a laughing Shane Partlow, who dons a grey wig for the role of petite and polite Sis. "Audiences have just been loving the show. Towns off the beaten path are the best audiences we've had, in fact. Last week in Tiffin, Ohio, we outsold Joan Rivers."

The plot of the play — yes, there is indeed a plot — tells how the sisters play bingo every week at St. Joseph's. On the day in question, however, they arrive too late and are forced to play bingo out in the hallway. The audience, therefore, becomes the main bingo hall.



LOANED PHOTO

**THE WONDERS OF BINGO** will be celebrated when the play "The Queen of Bingo!" comes to Yuma. The audience-participation play, which will be held at 7 p.m. at the Historic Yuma Theatre, 254 Main St., stars two fellows who pull off performances of two gals who love nothing better than an afternoon at St. Joseph's playing bingo.

### GOOD PARTICIPATION

► "AUDIENCES HAVE JUST BEEN LOVING THE SHOW. TOWNS OFF THE BEATEN PATH ARE THE BEST AUDIENCES WE'VE HAD, IN FACT. LAST WEEK IN TIFFIN, OHIO WE OUTSOLD JOAN RIVERS."

"The Queen of Bingo" is set for 7 p.m. Saturday at the Historic Yuma Theatre, 254 Main St. Admission is \$15, with tickets being sold at the door and in advance at the theater.

And yes, everyone there that night will play bingo right along with Sis and Babe. Bingo cards will be tucked into pro-

grams that night so everyone can join the play for a "Middle Bird Special" and gamble for the frozen gobbler.

"People love the whole turkey thing. Sometimes you think they're coming just to get the turkey!" Partlow said during a phone interview from his Los Angeles home. "The playing

starts about halfway through. It really is a lot of fun."

But the real fun comes in that rare moment when two winners actually surface.

"That's when we have a one-legged race or Indian leg wrestling," Partlow said.

"The Queen of Bingo" began in 1996 as a two-woman off-Broadway show in New York City. It was retooled for travel and switched to be done in drag two years ago.

Partlow, who just finished starring in a production of "The Will Rogers Follies," said daring to go drag has turned out to be a fun challenge for him.

"Going from chaps to wigs, it's been a switch," he said, chuckling. "It's great because after the show people run up wanting to give me a hug or do my hair!"

Partlow, the son of a circus clown and a trick rider, has performed in 22 stage productions around the nation. He performed in "The Will Rogers Follies" with such stars as John Schneider, Tom Wopat and Perry Stephens. He also played in "The Sunshine Boys" alongside Dick Van Patten at Garry Marshall's Falcon Theatre in Burbank, Calif. His TV credits include "Will and Grace" and "Gilmore Girls." He's also appeared in the movie "Princess Diaries 2."

The guy who plays Babe, meanwhile, is actor Shawn Cassidy. He has performed in national tours of shows such as "Nobody Don't Like Yogi" and "The Lovely Liebowitz Sisters." When not on the road Cassidy performs on stages around his home town of Minneapolis, Minn.