Hal Pine Needle performs to Hamlet crowd

By Wade Allen

Legendary Tony award-winner and Emmy award-winner Hal Holbrook, famous for his spine-tingling impersonation of Mark Twain that blurred the trail for performers acting alone onstage, appeared in front of a sold-out crowd on April 16 at the Cole Auditorium on the campus of Richmond Community College in Hamlet.

A long show

The show, entitled “Mark Twain Tonight!” began at 7:30 p.m. and lasted until 9:45, a remarkably long performance for a 79-year-old Holbrook. He has been married to actress Linda Hargrove for 50 years.

Although Carter was not present, Holbrook’s fans cheered for him throughout the show and gave him multiple standing ovations.

Holbrook had guest appearances in 10 episodes of “Designing Women,” which starred Carter as Julia Sugarbaker.

Holbrook even directed several episodes of the hit show.

“It’s time to go,” Holbrook said toward the end of the show. “We are done.”

Issues

With only one 15-minute intermission, Holbrook stood up on stage for two hours and regaled the stories of Mark Twain, complete with accent and wardrobe to match Twain’s legendary image.

He consistently puffed on a large lit cigar while telling many stories from books like “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn.”

Holbrook made a few errors in a story that he told at one point, Holbrook got so comfortable in an easy chair that he fell asleep in the middle of telling a story.

You could have heard a pin drop from the audience. Holbrook’s fans wished that he had never woken up.

Finally, Holbrook awoke to the round of his own applause and the audience gave him a standing ovation.

“Thank you,” Holbrook said.

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‘Bike to Build’ marathon set for May 2

By Justin Walker

Bicycle enthusiasts from around North Carolina will participate in the “Hamlet Bikes to Build” marathon, May 2 in Laurinburg, N.C.

Prizes and recognition will be given to those raising the most money for the event.

Each registered participant will receive a $100 gas card gift certificate and others.

The tour will begin in the parking lot of the Rehab Center at 500 Lauchwood Drive, Laurinburg.

The first tour starts at 8:30 a.m. All others start at 4 a.m. and end at 3 p.m.

“TAXI OR SHUTTLE,” Holbrook told his audience.

He maneuvered through the very simple set consisting of a chair, two rings, small table and a podium.

“For years, I’ve never failed to keep the audience engulled in laughter,” Holbrook discussed many issues from more than 100 years ago such as the medical field and politics.

“All you need to succeed in medicine is ignorance and conﬁdence,” Holbrook said.

“Imagery you imagined you are an idiot,” Holbrook said.

“Imagine you were a member of Congress and I repeat myself,” Holbrook said.

Holbrook remained in the theatre for over two hours following the show, removing makeup, securing his costume and taking a shower.

He emerged from the side door at midnight, cleanly shaved with his hair wet.

“Thanks for coming out tonight,” Holbrook said as he approached his car.

He drove off alone in a new red Pontiac while talking on his cell phone.

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