

# The Rogue Valley Welcomes Calvin Marshall

Late last fall, Ashland and the Rogue Valley played host to the production of *Calvin Marshall*, a feature-length indie comedy about a college student's hapless attempts to make the school's baseball team.

Early on in the pre-production process, Santa Monica, California-based Broken Sky Films began talking with the Oregon Film and Video Office and the Ashland Chamber of Commerce about bringing the film to town. The husband and wife team—Gary and Anne Lundgren, director and producer, respectively—was happy to discover the state's new incentive package, which wasn't yet available when they last filmed in Oregon (2004's award-winning short film *Wow and Flutter*).

It was a big enticement for the production team to return to Southern Oregon.

"We actually always wanted to film here again after shooting the short," said Anne Lundgren. "But [the incentive package] was definitely the reason we decided to come here."

BSF found a great amount of assistance from the film office, as well as from the City of Ashland. Said Lundgren, "The community was incredibly supportive. We had a great experience."

The community's feeling was mutual.

"Productions are always wonderful to have in town," said Mary Pat Parker, director of public relations and marketing for Ashland Chamber of Commerce. The *Calvin Marshall* production in particular employed a lot of local people and gave the community a short-term economic boom, she said.

"Even the weather cooperated," she added, laughing.

Well, for the most part, anyway. A rainstorm did disrupt

exterior filming toward the end of the shoot, but not much time was lost, nor was the spirit of the filmmakers dampened.

*Calvin Marshall*, which began filming in late October and wrapped up in mid-December, utilized much of the area's resources, including dozens of cast and crew, numerous locations, and local equipment and prop rental houses.

The production brought on some big-name actors—Steve Zahn (who also recently filmed *Management* in Madras), Michelle Lombardo (*Entourage*), and Jeremy Sumpter (*Peter Pan*), among others—but the filmmakers were excited to bring on a lot of local talent, as well. Alex Frost, an Oregon native, plays the title role, and dozens of other local actors round out the cast.

According to Lundgren, the production employed a total of



Lead actor and local talent Alex Frost (facing camera) shoots a scene.

Photo by Lar Byrme

about 40 crewmembers, half of whom were "local local," and the rest of whom were from Portland, Seattle and L.A. There were only about 10 crew from outside of Oregon, she added.

"They did a great job," she said. "We had only 25 days to shoot, and in pretty hard conditions, weather-wise, [but] the crew all had really great atti-

tudes and worked really hard."

In addition, the filmmakers were able to draw on local equipment rental houses like Event Rental Communications and Pacific Grip & Lighting in Portland, both of which also provided equipment to Lakeshore Productions' *Untraceable*, as well as Oppenheimer Cine Rental in Seattle, which supplied cameras.

According to Parker, Ashland sees a "fair amount of indie films"—at least one or two a year. Most notable of these have been 2006's *Conversations with God* and 2007's *My Name is Bruce*, both of which filmed several weeks in town and spent a considerable number of production dollars.

*Calvin Marshall* is no exception. In fact, Gary Kout, the film's line producer and founder of Southern Oregon Film and Television, estimates that between \$400,000 and \$500,000 was spent in and around the Rogue Valley during filming, with an equal amount spent statewide.

With such a welcoming production environment and so many great resources, it's no wonder Broken Sky Films returned—and no wonder Southern Oregon's film business is booming.

*Calvin Marshall* is currently in post-production in Oregon, and the filmmakers plan to release the film in 2009.



(Left to right) Gary Kout (line producer), Richard Schaffer (2nd AC), Patrick Neary (DP), TJ Williams (1st AC)