

## Movie filmed near Lignite

By Kiara Crosby

Noticing one of the main characters shared her last name, Joann thought it was worth sending the gal an e-mail. That e-mail provided the film crew with a much needed portion of their movie puzzle, the perfect old abandon farmhouse.

Owned by Bobby Mau of Kenmare, Joann made contact with him and explained the situation. Giving full permission for the cast and crew to use the house, the community of Lignite then sprang into action helping the movie crew in anyway possible.

“Let’s just say we are all enormous fans of the community of Lignite,” said Holly Ellis, continuing, “Joann and families were like guardian angels for us.”

During perhaps the coldest snap of the winter, the film crew popped in and out of Lignite catching the eyes of locals and creating a little mysterious bug of wonderment.

Beginning Saturday, Jan. 17 and hanging around until Monday, the 19th after dark, the movie makers, all in their 20’s and 30’s, counted on the generosity of locals for the grueling hours of work.

At a time when the majority of the people stayed close to home, this dedicated crew was delighted the conditions were perfect to depict the scenes for the movie and jumped at the chance to capture the harsh winter landscape on film.

“I think they were the only people happy about the weather,” laughed Joann.

The film’s author, Dusty Bias told Joann they had been waiting a whole year for the right conditions. With the snow removal help from Jerome Bly, the crew easily drove to the farmhouse.

While a few of the cast and crew returned to Minot and stayed in a hotel, a few brave artists stayed on site in an RV and nearly froze.

Working long hours Donavon Ellis fed the filmmakers and Maureen Chrest at the 109 readied hot meals for them. Each time, the film crew grabbed the food and got straight back to the site and work.

“They were really starting to look tough,” recalled Joann.

Although many of the cast and crew either have family or friends in the area, there was little time to play and visit. The crew worked very hard and used every waking hour for work.

Invited to witness the filming Joann made her way out to the production site, “They were so intensely working, I felt like I might be in the way.”

With the production running a little behind schedule, and the cold causing various problems throughout the filming, this movie crew worked fiercely.

Interestingly, a couple of local ranchers were a bit uncertain when on the last day of filming one of the “dead” characters laid in the snowbank until the sun set. Only after inquiring further with friends and neighbors were they brought to light on the film’s happenings.

Careful to share the specifics of the movie, the crew told locals it's a dark, abduction, stolen identity story that gets a little quirky, as characters fall in love. Bias will work on editing the film until early fall. During that time, the crew of 10 will also go on to other projects and jobs.

"We are in post production now," said Holly. "That means the film will be edited. We will look for accessible submission opportunities, it will be marketed, and ultimately we will find out who is interested in putting the movie out to the public."

For those interested in keeping up with "Prairie Love" as the film develops, Holly invites people to email her at [hollyellis13@gmail.com](mailto:hollyellis13@gmail.com) to be put on a mailing list of the progress.

Marveling over the opportunity to use the location for the film, Joann said the crew was in awe and amazed with the area stating it was, "More than expected."

Pleased with the opportunity to meet such polite and kind filmmakers, the community of Lignite is eager to see where the film goes from here. More coverage on their entire production will be featured in the Minot Daily within the week.

Like location scout Joann said, "It is a fun thing to keep our eye on."