

# THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2005

## 3 REASONS TO SEE: CAPITOL STEPS

In December 1981, some staffers in the office of then-Sen. Charles Percy, R-Ill., thought they would perform a little Nativity skit for the office Christmas party. "But in the whole Congress, we couldn't find three wise men and a virgin," they said, so they put on a satirical revue instead. No trouble finding material for that.

Nearly 4,500 performances later, the group, now called the Capitol Steps, is coming to Scottsdale with its wicked parodies and insightful comedy.

Here are three reasons to catch the Steps as they breeze through the Valley:

**1 They're funny:** Forget Mark Russell: These guys actually are hilarious. They have a handle on what's really true of Washington. Group member Elaina Newport says, "Typically, the Republicans goof up, and the Democrats party. Then, the Democrats goof up and the Republicans party. That's what we call the 'two-party system.'"

**2 They're an equal opportunity abuser:** They play no favorites. The current cast of the Capitol Steps includes former staffers from the offices of 11 senators and seven congressmen from both parties. "Most of these politicians have since been defeated or placed under investigation," they say.

**3 They're topical:** Their repertoire is so fresh, they don't even know which of their bits they'll perform on a given evening: It depends on the day's news. But you can expect such songs as *Up Tikrit Without a Paddle*, *I've Taken Stands on Both Sides Now* and *Send in the Clones*.

— Richard Nilsen



CAPITOL STEPS

James A. Zemarel walks the Capitol Steps.