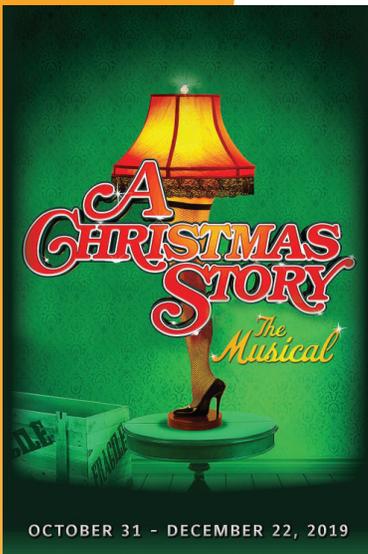


A NEWSLETTER DEDICATED TO GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS AND FRIENDS OF THE FIRESIDE THEATRE

## "A Christmas Story" is now a Musical!



"... you will be transported to a world of Christmas cheer, nostalgia, hilarious comedy, and warm family fun ..."

— Ed Flesch

I LOVE CHRISTMAS MOVIES. ALL OF THEM. "WHITE CHRISTMAS," "A CHRISTMAS CAROL," "HOLIDAY INN," YOU NAME THEM, I LOVE THEM. AND EVEN THOUGH I HAVE DVD'S OF JUST ABOUT EVERY CHRISTMAS MOVIE UNDER THE SUN, I WAIT UNTIL THE ACTUAL CHRISTMAS SEASON AND WATCH THEM WHEN THEY COME ON TV – TRADITION.

Like millions of other fans, I'm one of those folks who watches the A CHRISTMAS STORY 24-Hour Marathon on TNT every single year. I probably see it three or four times each year. Even though I know every line and everything that's going to happen I still never fail to be entertained and enchanted.

So you can imagine my delight a few years ago when they opened a live musical version of A CHRISTMAS STORY on Broadway. Now, not only could I enjoy watching it, but I could someday do my very own production of this Christmas classic.

Well, that time is now! This season The Fireside is presenting A CHRISTMAS STORY: THE MUSICAL and I get to bring all my favorite characters to life on our stage! It'll all be there – Ralphie, The Old

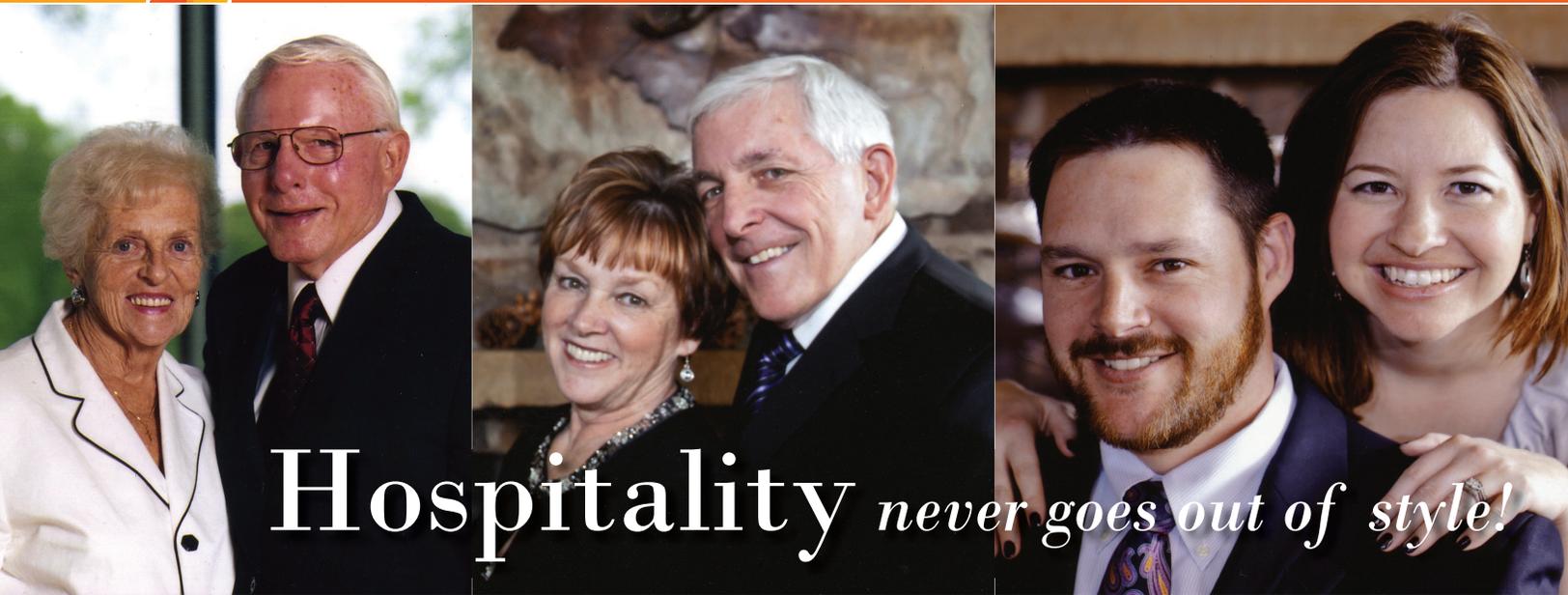
Man, the major award leg lamp, the bully Farkus and his henchman, Miss Shields, Santa, and of course Ralphie's Christmas wish for that Red Ryder Carbine BB Gun. But our production has something more than the famous film. It has music! Great music. Songs and dances performed by a cast of Broadway and Regional performers.



So whether you are already a fan of A CHRISTMAS STORY like I am or you are one of the very few who have never seen it, I guarantee that you will be transported to a world of Christmas cheer, nostalgia, hilarious comedy, and warm family fun when

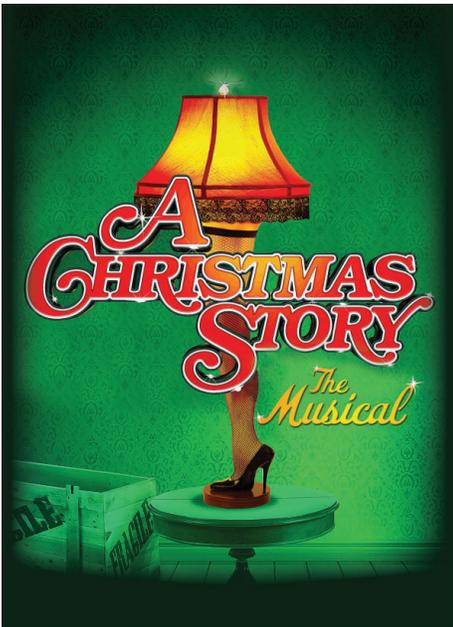
you come to see our production of A CHRISTMAS STORY: THE MUSICAL at The Fireside.

*Ed Flesch*



# Hospitality *never goes out of style!*

**IN 1940'S INDIANA, A BESPECTACLED BOY NAMED RALPHIE HAS A BIG IMAGINATION AND ONE WISH FOR CHRISTMAS - A RED RYDER BB GUN. A KOOKY LEG LAMP, OUTRAGEOUS PINK BUNNY PAJAMAS, A CRANKY DEPARTMENT STORE SANTA, AND A TRIPLE-DOG-DARE TO LICK A FREEZING FLAGPOLE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE OBSTACLES THAT STAND BETWEEN RALPHIE AND HIS CHRISTMAS DREAM. THIS NEW MUSICAL CAPTURES A SIMPLER TIME IN AMERICA WITH DELICIOUS WIT AND A HEART OF GOLD.**



Produced by the film's original Ralphie, Peter Billingsley, A CHRISTMAS STORY - The Musical opened on Broadway in 2012 to fabulous reviews. It was nominated for three Tony Awards, two Outer Critics Circle Awards, and six Drama Desk Awards. Broadwayworld called it a "twinkling

Christmas delight." Theatremania called it "good, old-fashioned musical comedy," and said that both those who loved the film and those who didn't or had never seen it would be pleased with what they found on stage. We think that will be the case with The Fireside's new production of the show as well.

The music for the stage version was written by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul who wrote music for the hit movies LA LA LAND and THE GREATEST SHOWMAN and for the hit Broadway show DEAR EVAN HANSEN. It's described by The Hollywood Reporter as a "peppy, period-flavored score with catchy lyrics and robust melodies that strengthen the characters and situations."

As we go to print with this edition of The Flame, Ed Flesch is in New York to cast the charismatic storyteller, Ralphie's mother, "the old man," and his lovely teacher Miss Shields as well as the cranky department

store Santa and other supporting adults. When he returns, he'll turn his attention to finding the perfect Ralphie and the other boys.

Here's a few more reviews to give you a flavor of the fun and help you promote your own trip to The Fireside this Christmas.

"This musical is everything a piece of musical theatre out to be."  
Broadway World Baltimore

"I was dazzled. You'd have to have a grinch-size heart not to feel a smile spreading across your face."  
New York Times

"Amazing! Hilariously entertaining! The greatest gift you can give your eyes and ears this holiday season."  
Albuquerque To Do

We'll see you for the holidays if not before!  
*Rick Flynn*

“Travel is about the stories you hear and the friendships you forge.”  
– *Bradley Walters*

**BRADLEY WALTERS HAD  
A VERY INTERESTING  
STORY TO SHARE!**

# Learning from each other!

Bradley Walters grew up performing Country Music in a Branson Style show with his family in theatres, concert halls, and on cruise ships as well as on television across Canada. He also became a Systems Analyst for General Motors. Then in 1986, the family had the opportunity for a long term performance contract at the World Expo in Vancouver, British Columbia and Bradley made the choice to give up his job and keep performing. But the performance schedule was primarily in the summer and fall, and his mother wanted to know what he planned to do the rest of the year! (Moms everywhere are smiling.) It seems to have gone something like this:

Bradley: "Who's going to hire me for a few months a year?" Mom: Why don't you plan some tours and start a travel company? Bradley: "I don't know how to do that!" Mom: "Yes you do, you've been booking the travel and hotels for us all along." Thus, a company was born.

Bradley said he started with what he knew, Nashville, and expanded from there. Now he travels 200 days a year from October to May. The rest of the year he performs with his family at the theatre they started 19 years ago in Ontario, Canada. A good portion of the theatre clientele ends up being his travel customers as well!

Travel with Bradley tours are all-inclusive and upscale. They are usually one to two weeks, sometimes longer, however we were pleased to make their acquaintance during a recent five day tour called "American Barn Stories - Heartlands of Wisconsin." From their overnights at the Grand Geneva Resort they visited The Fireside and other theatres, saw a series of painted barn quilts, enjoyed a traditional Wisconsin supper club, winery, and horse show before heading home through Amish country in Indiana. It was his first trip to Wisconsin but won't be his last as he's looking at return trip for New Year's Eve.

Typical tours for Bradley include one or two coaches. He escorts all of them, and if they run more than one coach he and the other guide switch back and forth so he gets time with all of these customers. He has, however, taken as many as 500 people to Hawaii at one time and not long ago took 400 people to Nashville to catch the Walters Family performing at Opryland. He considers himself very lucky to have a loyal customer base. Each new season of tours is announced at his annual travel show. That, plus his website and promoting at the theatre is about all he has to do. Even though he plans the tours himself, with help from his staff, he's still surprised at times by what sells out the fastest. "I always think I

know what will be the most popular," he said, "But I'm always wrong. That's why you need a good variety to choose from."

When we caught up with Bradley for this interview, he was busy watering flowers, preparing for the summer season to open at the Walters Theatre. When they first opened the theatre his family performed the whole season themselves. Now there's a nice mix of their own show plus an Amish Family Christmas, a Simon and Garfunkel tribute, a Big Band show, the Everly Brothers, and several other rock and country revues that each run for a week or two, eight shows a week. They seat 160, serve dinner before the show, and do it all in a fabulous converted barn. Bradley may not cut all ten acres of lawn himself but he's certainly involved as is the whole family. His mom and sisters run the office and his brother books the acts.

We wanted to introduce you to an interesting tour planner from Canada for a different take on what there was to do in Wisconsin, and found such a fun, rich, story about a performing family with their own theatre. It's true, everyone has their story, and just a few minutes with Bradley has us convinced that anyone who travels with him comes home with wonderful memories and tales to tell!

## Children's Auditions Held For ANNIE

On Wednesday, May 8, 153 young actresses aged 7 – 14 came to The Fireside in search of stardom! They were here to audition for the roles of Annie and the six orphans in our summer production of ANNIE which opens on July 18th. Each candidate was given the opportunity to sing a short song for Director Ed Flesch. Once everyone had been heard, he narrowed the field down through a couple of cuts and had some sing again. Normally that's enough information for him to go on for casting, but there was so much talent in that final group of 40 and it was getting late for these young performers. A callback was held where the final candidates read a scene in small groups showcasing each of the characters. They also sang part of "It's A Hard Knock Life," together and in groups, for Musical Director Mary Ehlinger. By the end of the night Mr. Flesch had enough information to choose his cast!



## A Few Minutes With Steve Watts

Steve Watts' biggest claim to fame at The Fireside is his role of the Bandleader in our live band shows – 13 in all since SWING ON STAR in 2005. He's taken us through the 40's, 50's, 60's, and 70's by single decade, combinations, or theme shows like VIVA VEGAS and HOLLYWOOD SINGS. This year's THAT'S WHAT I CALL ROCK 'N ROLL encompasses some of the greatest rock and roll hits of the 50's through the 80's. His favorites include the Beatles, David Bowie, and Led Zeppelin – each of which can resonate the most with him on any given day. He also kicks off the show in spectacular fashion! Since we took one season off from the band shows last year, we're especially happy to have him back. While he was away, one of his most regular gigs was to do a month or so at a time on various Cruise Ships doing a Dueling Piano act. He got to enjoy some time in the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, and the Baltic regions of the world and is planning another Baltic cruise this fall.

When Steve first started traveling this path of being a performer, his goal was to work in theatre and thought his piano playing ability could be a nice "side hustle." In reality, the piano playing has turned into his primary work. He still really enjoys the opportunity to perform in "book shows" like he's done here and at other theatres including 42ND STREET, BAREFOOT IN THE PARK, DAMN YANKEES, RAGTIME, and two particular favorites: Trevor Graydon in THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE and Sheriff Earl in ALL SHOOK UP. **We're also thrilled to announce his appearance as Daddy Warbucks in our summer production of ANNIE running July 18 to September 1.** He played FDR in our 2004 production, and when Ed Flesch approached him about playing Warbucks he agreed to jump on board. Steve has done 27 shows with us at The Fireside showcasing the wide range of his talents. We hope you get a chance to enjoy one of his performances, too this summer whether your preference lies more with rock and roll or the magic of Broadway.



# Inside the Kitchen

with Chef Mike



Hi everyone!. I hope you're all enjoying the nice weather. It's hard to believe I'm writing about our menu for A CHRISTMAS STORY. Where does the time go?

Our Featured Christmas Dinner starts out with our house made Tomato Bisque served with a Grilled Cheese Slider made with The Fireside's famous Cheddar Cheese Bread. What a way to start out a meal! The entree will include both Braised Choice Beef Short Rib with a red wine sauce and Chicken Cordon Bleu. Our Cordon Bleu is made with a breaded Chicken Breast topped with an herbed Cream Cheese lightly flavored with Dijon Mustard and topped with Jones Canadian Bacon and Jarlsberg Swiss Cheese. It rests on our Rosemary Velouté Sauce, one of the five mother sauces which is made from stock with cream added and flavored with Rosemary.

(Quick culinary lesson - the other four mother sauces are Tomato, Espagnole or brown sauce, Béchemel which is just cream with no stock, and Hollandaise. To a Culinnaire, these are the core to all the sauces we make.)

To finish your meal, we add Scalloped Potatoes and Spaghetti Squash, which I really like, topped with Tomato Concasse. Stay tuned for the finale of Gingerbread Frozen Custard Pie with a Molasses Crust topped with our house made Whipped Cream and Toffee Chips. Merry Christmas! Yumm!!

  
Executive Chef

## SEE WHAT'S COOKING

# Menu



### A CHRISTMAS STORY - The Musical

#### Featured Menu - October 31 - December 22, 2019

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday Matinees,  
Friday and Saturday\* Evenings, and Sunday Middays.

#### Tomato Bisque

Served with a Grilled Cheese Slider

Freshly Baked Breads from our Artisan Bakery

#### Beef and Bird

Beef Short Rib slowly braised in beef stock and dressed with a red wine demi-glaze and Chicken Cordon Bleu - a skinless Breast of Chicken, dipped in buttermilk and egg, rolled in bread crumbs and sautéed to a golden brown, topped with an herbed Cream Cheese with Dijon Mustard, Jones Cherrywood Smoked Canadian Bacon, and Jarlsberg Swiss Cheese on a Rosemary Velouté Sauce. Served with Scalloped Potatoes and Spaghetti Squash with Tomato Concasse.

#### Gingerbread Frozen Custard Pie

Homemade Vanilla Bean and Gingerbread Custards in a Molasses Crust topped Whipped Cream and Toffee Chips.

Coffee, Tea and Milk

**The Thursday Evening Signature Buffet** begins with our Signature Salad topped with Papaya Chutney Dressing and served with Freshly Baked Breads. Enjoy two special entree selections in addition to Beef Tenderloin and Roast Turkey from the Carving Station, Barbecued Pork Back Ribs, Chicken Tenderloin Tempura with Brandied Apricot Sauce, Beer Batter Fried Cod, Shrimp and Scallops Fusilli with Tomato Butter Sauce, Fresh Atlantic Salmon, Sweet Potato Soufflé, Whipped Idaho Potatoes and Roasted Farm Fresh Vegetables. Gingerbread Frozen Custard Pie plus coffee, tea and milk.

**The Sunday Matinee Brunch** begins with an assortment of Quick Breads and Pastries from our Bakery to enjoy with our Fresh Fruit Smoothie. Enjoy Chef Carved Jones Hickory Smoked Ham and Roast Turkey Breast along with the buffet of Eggs Benedict on Jones Canadian Bacon, Scrambled Eggs, Crisp Bacon, Maple Sausage Links, Chicken Tenderloin Tempura with Brandied Apricot Sauce, Biscuits and Sausage Gravy, Fresh Atlantic Salmon, Buttermilk Pancakes, Breakfast Potatoes, a featured Beef Tenderloin dish, and Roasted Farm Fresh Vegetables. Gingerbread Frozen Custard Pie plus coffee, tea and milk.

\*Saturday Evening's menu also includes an Appetizer course.

# 2019 Season

## Jean's Corner of the World



My world is a bit topsy turvy at this moment between selling the three remaining stellar 2019 shows, preparing to book 2020 with its seven must see shows, receiving requests for New Years Eve 2019, plus answering questions on the 2020 Christian Concert availability. Whew. What day is it? What year is it? But this is my favorite time of year with all the excitement and surprises. I LOVE IT!

### A CHRISTMAS STORY

Did you realize that the A CHRISTMAS STORY house has been restored to its movie splendor with public tours and overnight stays? Across the street is A CHRISTMAS HOUSE Museum with original props, costumes, hundreds of rare behind the scenes photo plus memorabilia. Where

is it you ask . . . Cleveland, Ohio where they filmed parts of the movie.

What is the show like? If you have seen the movie you will laugh at the following: snow suit, bunny suit, leg lamp, tongue on the flagpole, and of course the Red Ryder Carbine BB Gun. If you have not seen the movie you will find out and laugh out loud when you join us between October 31 and December 22, 2019. How can you NOT book this peek into a real 1940's Christmas with all the highs and lows with laughs and tears?

**Fun Fact:** A CHRISTMAS STORY Inspired "The Wonder Years" television show.

**REMINDER:** ANNIE will have a real dog performing the role of Sandy!

### BUDDY: THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY

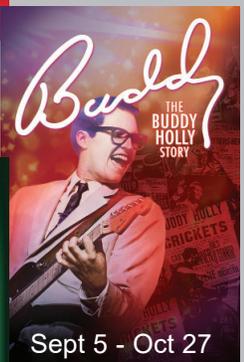
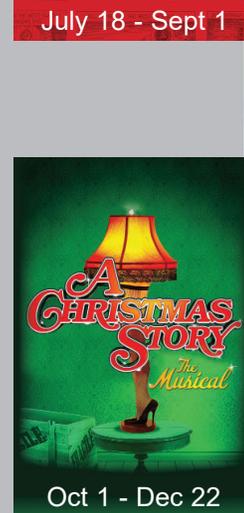
Anyone who loves rock and roll knows Buddy and his music. Here is one link that allows you to see a bit of this music filled biographical stage show: <https://youtu.be/9kBP80SutyQ>. For more information that you may be able to use to sell this show check out the website for BUDDY: The Buddy Holly Story. Lots of music teasers to enjoy and share.

**HELPFUL HINT:** If you are considering booking a show for this or next year but have not seen the production yourself, remember that we are happy to help. We have short blurbs in our brochures of course but we are always happy to share a bit more of the storyline or the "flavor" of the show. If you have specific questions we will go to the source (Ed Flesch) for an answer. Often there are websites or You Tube material we can recommend for you to learn a bit more about the show yourself making it easier to sell. Call us!

Box Office and Sales Manager  
groupsales@firesidetheatre.com



Promotional materials can be ordered through Group Sales or online at our web site. We look forward to helping you promote your trips to The Fireside.



# 2020 Season

The announcement of our **2020 Season** is coming soon to a mailbox near you. Both emails and mailings are being prepared now as details are finalized for next year's shows.

Stay tuned!



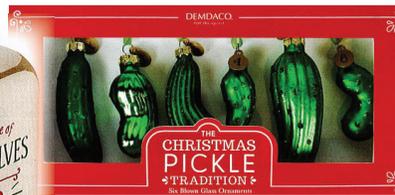
# Create Your Own Christmas Story!

**POSSIBLE DREAMS** IS THE NUMBER ONE SANTA BRAND WITH STYLES TO FIT YOUR DECOR AND YOUR STORY. DESIGNED IN THE U.S. AND HAND MADE BY SKILLED ARTISANS, NO TWO SANTAS ARE THE SAME. ARTIST ANN DEZENDORF HAS DESIGNED THESE CLOTTIQUE FIGURES SINCE 2003 AND EACH YEAR THEY BECOME MORE SOPHISTICATED AND COMPLEX. IT TAKES TWO YEARS TO BRING EACH ONE TO LIFE.



Demdaco's Party Starter Dice shown above are the perfect way to get people moving, laughing, and having fun in no time flat. They also have a Conversation Block to use at the dinner table that asks such questions as "What would you do if Santa got stuck in your Chimney?" and "What do you think makes Santa's reindeer fly?"

The centuries old Pickle tradition is now a game! Six special pickles, not one is the same, should be hidden in the tree for a fun Christmas game. Is it big, is it little, does it say number 1? Your family decides how this game is won. For the goal of this game is to create a fun way to choose who should open the first gift Christmas Day!



Water Lanterns continue to be extremely popular, creating beautiful light shining on the figures, surrounded with swirling glitter. They work on timers so you don't have to turn them on and off, and some are also musical!



**SAVE NOW! CALL 800-477-9505**  
**WWW.FIRESIDETHEATRE.COM**  
**groupsales@firesidetheatre.com**

**Groups are our specialty - visit early to get the best discount!**

## What is a group?

At The Fireside, there are many benefits for any group of 18 or more people attending a performance. You can hold seating with a small deposit while you finalize your exact count, due a few weeks before your visit. You'll also qualify for a discounted ticket price and your meal gratuity is included.

For weekday matinees, 18 paid tickets earns a complimentary package, for all other shows it's every 21st ticket. There is plenty of safe, free parking on-site for coaches. The Fireside is accessible to guests with disabilities; just let us know what special needs you have when making reservations.

- You can save over 20% with a group booking over individual ticket prices.
- The three-course dinner and show for groups of 18 or more in 2019 is \$73.80 (\$69.95 tax exempt) per person.
- **PREMIER GROUP RATE** offers an additional discount of \$3.00 per person when your group attends a performance of **A CHRISTMAS STORY - The Musical** from October 31 - November 24, 2019.
- **2019 Premier Group Rate** is \$70.63 (\$66.95 tax exempt) per person.
- The four-course Saturday Night Group rate in 2019 is \$78.02 (\$73.95 tax exempt) per person. For rates on optional entree selections call Group Sales.
- **2019 Premier Saturday Night Group Rate** is \$74.85 (\$70.95 tax exempt) per person.
- **2019 Youth Group Rates** for ages 14 and under with the youth meal are offered at \$52.70 (\$49.95 tax exempt) per youth.
- **2019 School Group Rates** are available for Mid-Week matinees as low as \$64.95 tax exempt rate per student. Chaperones qualify for the Group Rate.
- **Friday matinee and evening shows** have been added on December 6, 13, and 20 to help meet the demand for tickets to this show.