

A Christmas Story returns to the Wildey Theatre for four nights this weekend

by Steven Spencer, Staff Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Wildey Theatre is kicking off the holiday season with five live performances of A Christmas Story this weekend starting at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, November 30.

For four nights Curtain's Up Theater Company returns to the stage to tell the story of Ralphie Parker as he strives to get his coveted Red Ryder BB gun for Christmas.

In addition to the three evening shows at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday night there will also be two matinee performances at 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

Director Carol Hodson said no matter how many times audience members may have seen the movie they still enjoy the live performance which includes some added scenes not in the film.

"We're hoping this becomes a Christmas tradition with the Wildey," Hodson said. "It seems like this is such a timeless Christmas classic and the play is really very much like the movie. I've had audience members come up to me and tell me that A Christmas Story has always been their favorite movie but now the stage version is their favorite."

After weeks of preparation and rehearsal Hodson said the cast is ready to put on an excellent show over the weekend.

"I'm so proud of everybody," Hodson said. "Each year it just blows my mind the talent that is in this community, people just have no idea."

Hodson said with the tremendous response from last year's shows they decided to add and extra performance this time around.

"There was such a demand we decided forego that one extra rehearsal this year and open on Thursday night," she added.

Show times this weekend are 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday with 2 p.m. performances on Saturday and Sunday.

To purchase tickers or for more information on events coming to the Wildey Theatre this December visit WildeyTheatre.com and for more information on Curtain's Up Theater Company visit CurtainsUpTheater.com.

Directed by Carol Hodson this year's cast features some returning actors as well as some new faces including: Victor Hull as Ralphie Parker, Dianna Pallas as Mother, Anthony Tuzzo as The Old Man, Blake Moore as Flick, Carter Grigsby as Randy Parker, Johnny Reynolds as Schwartz, Shameem Coppotelli as Miss Shields, Mallory Pallas as Helen, Mary Elizabeth Benware as Esther Jane, Truman Chandler as Scut Farkas, Fred Faust as Santa Clause, Mitchell White, Sophia Bertolino and Lily Jurgena as Santa's Elves, Maggie Hertz, Maeve Durkee, Jonah Arico and Cooper Upton as classmates.