

Local theater to put on 'Miracle'

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“Miracle on 34th Street” will be presented on stage by Mountain Community Theater as its special holiday show, capping off the theater’s 30th anniversary season.

The play opens at Ben Lomond’s Park Hall, 9400 Mill St., on Friday, Nov. 30, and continues through Saturday, Dec. 22. The show, which was first brought to the stage by MCT in 2010 is the highlight of the season, according to Rita Wadsworth, one of the theater’s founders.

“This year is our 30th anniversary year, so we decided that we would bring back some of our favorites that we have done over the years,” said Wadsworth, who will play the head elf. “The crowning achievement for us is ‘Miracle.’”

A member-run nonprofit organization founded in 1982, MCT is Santa Cruz County’s longest continuously running community theater company. Thirty-seven actors make up the cast for the “34th Street” performance, 32 of which are locals, including 10 children.

Director Wendy Edwards said allowing people to express their inner actor is what MCT is all about.

“Community theater is about bringing people in that have never been on stage, but have always had the desire,” Edmonds said.

This year’s show is directed by Edmonds and stars three MCT alumni.

Daria Troxell takes the role of young Susan Walker’s cynical mother, Doris Walker; Michael LaMere stars as Kris Kringle’s attorney, Fred Gayley; and Peter Gelblum reprises his role as Kris Kringle, which he played in 2010.

Members of MCT were the first to adapt the film version of “Miracle” to the stage, but the theater was banned from collecting royalties after 20th Century Fox challenged the theater in court. MCT negotiated the rights to publish the play in 2010, and put it on that holiday season.

In addition to bringing back the play for the 30th anniversary season, a motorized sleigh and a spectacular light show are new to this year’s adaptation.

The audience will hear Christmas standards including “Must Be Santa,” “Here Comes Santa Claus,” “We Wish You a Merry Christmas,” “Sleigh Ride” and “Santa Claus is Coming to Town.”

The play is performed on Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., while the Sunday performances begin at 2 p.m.

General admission tickets are \$17. Child, student, senior and matinee tickets are \$10.



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Kris Kringle, played by local actor Peter Gelblum, is surrounded by children during a performance of 'Miracle on 34th Street.'

On opening night only, MCT will host an after party for the actors and audience.

For information: www.mctshows.org.

To comment, email intern Jordan Lewis at pbeditor@pressbanner.com, call 438-2500 or post a comment at www.pressbanner.com.