



Home For The Holidays

A Conejo Players Youth Production



CONEJO PLAYERS
THEATRE

Dec 8 - 10, 2023

Fri & Sat at 7:00pm
Sat & Sun at 2:00pm

Welcome to CONEJO PLAYERS THEATRE



I am thrilled to welcome you to the 65th season of the Conejo Players Theatre! As the only 100% volunteer-run community theater in Southern California, you have joined us in a truly special place. Our mission — “to share in providing the community with a year-round schedule of affordable live theatre produced to serve the cultural, educational, and entertainment needs of the community” — is deeply important to the wonderful people who give their time here.

As a lifelong theater lover, I have often felt the excitement of the shared live experience between performers and an audience. I have witnessed the power of great storytelling to touch, inform, (and even change) lives. Whether you are here to laugh, cry, or think (often all in one evening), we hope that this performance entertains as well as enlightens.

The theater is an amazing center of collaboration. Each production relies on directors, producers, performers, choreographers, designers, builders, crew members, ushers, and countless others. Working together creates a family of sorts. **We welcome anyone who would like to join our family of volunteers** - a truly generous and talented bunch. Try something new—we are happy to train! And, as we build back from lockdown, tax deductible donations are gratefully appreciated too. Feel free to contact me for more information and opportunities.

Thank you for joining us tonight, and enjoy the show!



Dana Marley-Koltb

Dana Marley-Koltb
President

Email: President@conejoplayers.org



Mission Statement

The mission of Conejo Players Theatre is to share in providing the community with a year-round schedule of affordable live theatre produced to serve the cultural, educational, and entertainment needs of the community; and to welcome and provide an avocational opportunity for all volunteers interested in the theatre arts to participate in the many activities of community theatre.

CONEJO PLAYERS THEATRE
presents

Home For The Holidays

A Conejo Players Youth Production

Conejo Players Theatre • Thousand Oaks, CA

Dec 8 - 10, 2023

Fri & Sat at 7:00pm • Sat & Sun at 2:00pm

The CAST

Oliver Wilson

Kale C. Cruz

Gary Saxer

Olivia Aflague

Ryan Berman

Ella Chyla

Andrew Kunesh

Jennifer Sorensen

Raedyn Sorensen

Kat Smith

Finn Rodriguez

Macy van Gelder

**Christmas Bells Quartet (Devery Holmes*, Diann Alexander, Shelley Saxer,
Dana Marley-Kolb)**

*on Friday 12/8 7pm show, **Jeannine MacAller** will stand in for **Devery**

The SETTING

Conejo Players Theatre Holiday Party

Special Thanks

**Zach Spencer, for the beautiful piano music
Our amazing cast and wonderful parents**

Production **STAFF**

Director **Elena Mills**
Producer/Stage Manager/Photography & Lobby Board **Mike Mills**
Music Director/Choreographer..... **Jennifer Sorensen**
Assistant Choreographers..... **Olivia Aflague, Raedyn Sorensen, Kat Smith**
Light Designer & Operator **Chris Savage**
Set Design **John Holroyd**
Sound Design & Operator **Erik Sorensen**
Audition Staff **Amie Smith, Penny Krevenas, Betty Fuhrmann, Rita McCaffrey**
Strike Crew, Set Construction & Decoration **Ryan Berman, Ella Chyla,**
..... **Robert Chyla, Kale Cruz, Olivia Enriquez, Beth Eslick, John Eslick,**
..... **Andrew Kunesh, Elena Mills, Corey Rodriguez, Delaney Rodriguez,**
..... **Finn Rodriguez, Gary Saxer, Amie Smith, Kat Smith, Raedyn Sorensen,**
..... **Rick Steinberg, Bridget van Gelder, Macy van Gelder, Oliver Wilson**

From **THE DIRECTOR**

I am so happy that we can have Home for the Holidays this year. During such difficult times we need something which can lift our spirits up and the celebration of different traditions is the perfect way to do it. This show is the result of the Youth Theatre Intensive program. This year our amazingly talented members Darrin Ingram and R. Shane Bingham (thank you so much guys!) were the instructors and together with other members introduced all aspects of the theatre to kids and teens. This program was very successful with many kids and teens participating in it, learning about onstage and backstage work and had a great time with Improv games. Darrin Ingram wrote the script for the show and with some help of our cast and the production team we have a nice, heartwarming story to tell you. I am thrilled to have had an opportunity to work with these wonderful people and I can't thank enough Jennifer Sorensen, who is our great Music Director and Choreographer, amazing singer and actress, but also a beautiful person! She brings so much joy and light to this production. Thank you so much Jennifer, I love you, love to work with you and so happy to do it again! And I feel so lucky to work with the many members of the Saxer-Sorensen family – three generations of this wonderful family are on stage! They dedicate so much to this theatre and always shine on stage! My husband Mike is the producer and I can't thank him enough for his endless love, support and hard work. I thank all people who work on the show: our amazing set designer John, our sound designer and operator Erik, light designer and operator Chris, all our wonderful parents, they worked very hard to make this show happen. And of course everyone on stage. My dream to see all generations of our beautiful volunteers came through! I adore these people, they work so hard with just a few rehearsals they learned all songs and dances and created the show which I hope will bring joy and holiday mood to all of you. Sit back, relax and let us make you happy. Oh, and don't forget to sing with us!

- **Elena Mills**, Director



Be part of the CPT family!

Volunteering at Conejo Players Theatre

At the heart of Conejo Players Theatre is its volunteer members. Our theatre is unique in the Conejo Valley, as it's operated on a solely volunteer basis since its inception in 1958; the theatre's board members, actors, production staff, and technical crew do not receive any monetary compensation for their services. But the rewards of volunteering with our theatre are many -- we provide a medium for creative self-expression, with opportunities to get involved both onstage and behind-the-scenes ... acting, directing, producing, stage managing, scenic design and construction, theatrical lighting and sound, costuming, and the list goes on.

We're proud of the dedication of our volunteers, and the services they provide are invaluable to our success. It's our volunteers -- both adults and children -- that have allowed Conejo Players to thrive since its humble beginnings. In return, our volunteers gain invaluable creative experiences while enjoying the fun and friendships that come with working in the ever-evolving atmosphere of live theatre. We invite you to join us in our efforts to support the cultural, educational, and entertainment needs of the community through the arts!

These are some of the volunteer opportunities available:

**Usher/Ticket Taker/Snack Bar • Costumes • Props • Set Builders
Sound Board Operator • Light Board Operator • Outreach Committee**
Email us at info@conejoplayers.org for these and other volunteer options.

We are often asked, "Why should I spend \$1 to become a Conejo Players Theatre Member?"

There are 4 reasons that we share:

1. By becoming a member, you are part of our CPT family for life. You are on our rosters and members can follow up with you to let you know what is going on at CPT.
2. When you fill out the form, you can opt in to receive our weekly newsletters and let us know what you are interested in doing, whether it be on stage or off stage. We can share with the Directors and Producers, Front of House Coordinators, Stage Crew team etc. what you are interested in doing.
3. By becoming a member and an active member, it gives you the opportunity to be a part of the direction of the theatre. You have a vote to make a difference on the direction the board takes. You can become a part of the board. You have decided you care about the theatre and want to make your voice heard.
4. You will receive invitations to exclusive Member Only Events!

We hope you do choose to become a member and join our family. We will work to find the best opportunities that match your interests!

Meet THE CAST



Oliver Wilson is a fourth grader at a local elementary school where he enjoys Robotics and reading. This is Oliver's second performance in theatre, and he is excited to be part of this amazing cast and crew. Oliver has performed as Young Shrek and Grumpy Dwarf in *Shrek the Musical* at a local high school. Oliver started his love for storytelling with his stop motion movies called "Stickbot" and he also loves creating puppet shows for his family. Oliver would like to be a director when he grows up.



Kale C. Cruz is known at home as "the Negotiator" for his innate ability to bargain and maneuver a deal. He is quick-witted and curious, and always has an interesting anecdote to share. Kale is a disciplined martial artist in Shotokan karate, and currently holds a blue/white belt and was recently selected as a senpai in his dojo where he assists in helping younger students. While Kale is just beginning his foray into theater arts, he already knows this will be his new passion.



Gary Saxer has been performing in the Conejo Valley for over 40 years. At Conejo Players recently he's been in the ensemble of *Bye Bye Birdie* and *Sweeney Todd*, Molokov in *Chess*, J.B. Biggley in *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, and Chauvelin in *Jekyll and Hyde*. He is an Honorary Life Member. He's delighted to be on this stage again with his daughter Jennifer Sorensen and his granddaughter Raedyn. Gary and his wife Shelley are looking forward to an exciting night before Christmas.



Olivia Aflague is very thrilled to be making her return to the Conejo Players stage!! You may have recently seen her in *The Lion King Jr.* (Hillcrest Arts Summer Camp) and *Descendants The Musical* (Young Artists Ensemble). Outside of theater, Olivia has a passion and talent for dance and is currently taking choreography classes to become a future choreographer. She would like to thank God for blessing her, her family for being very supportive and loving, and her dance teachers: Chloe Leeds and Jess Eubank for guiding her through her dance career. Enjoy the show and Happy Holidays!!



Ryan Berman loves to dance and act. She has been in several musicals such as *The Lion King* and *The Wizard of Oz*. She has a decorated dance background including Ballet, Hip-Hop, Tap, Jazz, Contemporary, Acro, musical theater and Pop star singing. She has also studied under maestros to learn keyboard, guitar and drums. When asked about the show Ryan said "I am so excited to be in this show and I have many friends here. I love my role and lines." Thank you to all our directors and other members of the cast. A special thank you to my family for always believing in me and pushing me to be my best- especially Madeleine, who I wouldn't be in theater without, and my brothers Casey & Beckett for being my inspiration." Xoxo- Ryan Berman



Ella Chyla is very excited to make her acting debut in Conejo Players Theatre's Home for the Holidays. Ella loves school and being a third grader. When Ella is not in school, she likes to stay active. She is in soccer, gymnastics, and will begin softball in the spring. Ella loves music, she plays the piano, and sings in her school choir. She wants to thank her Mom, Dad, Grandma and little brother for being her biggest fans. And she thanks her family for encouraging her passion in performance arts.



Andrew Kunesh is really excited to be a part of this production! He is a performer of many different crafts. He starred as Trent Trowel in *A Lighter Shade of Noir* and made his first appearance on stage as Lucas Beineke from *The Addams Family*. As a drum major, improviser, thespian, instrumentalist and vocalist, he loves spending time performing and showing off his talents!



Raedyn Sorensen is a Junior at Oak Park High School. This is Raedyn's sixth show here at Conejo Players, and she's so excited to be back onstage! She was a Munchkin/Lullaby Leaguer in *The Wizard of Oz*, a teen/policeman in *Hairspray Jr.*, Helen in *Bye Bye Birdie* and a spotlight operator for her Uncle Tanner's show, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*. She enjoys singing, Color Guard, art and playing the piano. Be sure to look for her in future productions as she's truly been bitten by the theatre bug!



Kat Smith is thrilled to perform at Conejo Players in this production of Home for the Holidays. Previous credits include Eulalie Shinn in *The Music Man Jr.* with Conejo Players, Evie in *Descendants Jr.* and Sour Kangaroo in *Suessical Jr.* with ARTS Blackbox Theatre. Kat would like to thank her family and friends for their ongoing love and support and the production staff for this incredible opportunity!



Finn Rodriguez is a charming 9 year old boy who proudly attends Bethany Christian School where he has performed lead roles and solo vocal and tap performances. Finn loves musicals like *Newsies* and *Bye Bye Birdie*. When not performing, Finn can be found tap dancing along with *Singing in The Rain*, playing soccer or surfing. Finn is grateful for the opportunity to perform with the Conejo Players. His hope is that this production will bring you all the magical joy during this Christmas season.



Macy van Gelder is 12 years old and a student at Lindero Canyon Middle School. She plays soccer, dances, and of course theater! This is her third show. She also took a small part in Agoura High School's production of *The Little Mermaid*. Macy is very excited to take part in the Conejo Players holiday show as it's her first time being on this stage!

Christmas Belles Quartet - Once upon a time, about 20 years ago, **Devery Holmes, Diann Alexander** and **Shelley Saxer** sang together at a CPT New Year's Eve celebration. They had such fun, they agreed that they would sing together again. Lo, these many years, at the Christmas party in 2022, they set a date! And expanding the group to a robust quartet, is CPT President, **Dana Marley-Kolb**! We hope you enjoy our for-fun-and-celebration quartet. Special note: on Friday 12/8 7pm show, standing in for Devery will be **Jeannine MacAller**.



Meet THE STAFF

Elena Mills (Director) is a proud Honorary Life Member and currently Vice President of the Conejo Players Theatre. During her 18 years of volunteering she has been set painter, costume designer, prop master, stage manager, actress, producer and director. Elena is one of the leaders of CPT Youth program and the House Managers Coordinator. Home for the Holidays is a very special show for Elena, because she has an opportunity to work with amazingly talented people. *Home for the Holidays* was created by wonderful CPT members, and Elena hopes that this show will put you in the holiday mood. "Thank you everyone who worked onstage and backstage, who made this show happen! A very special thanks to the parents of our young actors, who helped, supported and participated during the production process. One of the most incredible things is to serve the community, and CPT has been doing that the last 65 years! Much love to my family!" And for the audience members – thank you for coming and celebrating with us – "let's sing together!"

Mike Mills (Producer/Stage Manager) is a veteran and honorary life member of Conejo Players for over 50 years. During that time he has been behind and in front of the curtain countless times. Over the half century, he's met, friended and partnered with many wonderful people all working together to bring the best theater to our community. He also thanks his wife and director and marvels at her growth in Conejo Players. Mike looks forward to working and seeing all the fine talent on our stage for this beautiful tribute to the Christmas spirit.

Jennifer Sorensen (Music and Dance Director) is a TK Teacher at Red Oak Elementary in Oak Park and has grown up performing here at CPT and across the Conejo Valley. Some of Jennifer's favorite roles include Luisa in *The Fantasticks*, Rosa Bud in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, Laurey in *Oklahoma* and Shirley Markowitz in *The Producers*. She is excited to be on the production side as well as have the chance to share the stage with her Mom, Dad, old friends. She's also incredibly proud of this cast for their hard work!

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS



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