

Published December 19th, 2012

"The 13 Days of Christmas" Holiday Production Benefits Children's Hospital

Submitted by Marian Rule



From left, Peter Pan Foundation cast members Robyn Stephenson and Andrew Cope during the Dec. 16 performance of "The 13 Days of Christmas." Photo Thom Hayes

More than 100 local performers, ages 5 to 50, from Lamorinda and other local areas performed in the Peter Pan Foundation's (PPF) holiday musical, "The 13 Days of Christmas," last Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 15 and 16. The show was created and written by Campolindo High School senior Jayne Skinner and Acalanes High School junior Andrew Cope.

For Cope, the exciting part was the opportunity to see the show they wrote 'come to life' and to see the enthusiasm in the younger performers as they gained confidence on stage. "As our high school and college performers worked with the younger kids, we all learned something," he said. "The Peter Pan Foundation gave us huge opportunities while giving us the chance to benefit the kids at Children's Hospital Oakland who need our help."

"The foundation produces three shows each year," said Skinner, who also serves this year as the president of the Peter Pan Foundation's teen council. "Last year, Andrew and I had the idea that we could write the show set in the small town of Evergreen. The people of Evergreen are looking forward to the holidays, but something is amiss in town and it evolves into a mystery. Our 2012 version of the show was all new: still a mystery, but re-written to keep this year's audience guessing."

This year's third show, "Franc D'Ambrosio's Christmas in New York," will feature Franc D'Ambrosio, best known for his impressive portrayal of the title character in Broadway's Phantom of the Opera. D'Ambrosio holds the distinction of being the world's longest-running Phantom. He will be joined onstage by PPF founder Leslie Noel, and 90 young members of the foundation Friday, Dec. 21 at the New Rheem Theatre in Moraga. Doors open at 6 p.m. for a silent auction and appetizers. The concert begins at 7:30 p.m.

The Peter Pan Foundation (PPF) is a non-profit organization founded by Noel, who has led the efforts of hundreds of local youth in philanthropic activities; kids help kids, and use their musical talents and the arts to entertain and raise money for local charities. Celebrating its fifth anniversary, PPF hopes to raise \$50,000 for Children's Hospital and Research Center Oakland and for other local charities, all from the three musical production proceeds. For more information about the organization, visit www.peterpanfoundation.org.

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