



## Character Descriptions

- 31-44 Total (Named: 14, Ensemble 18-30)
- 11-15 Men (including 3 named characters)
- 10-14 Women (including 2 named characters)
- 6-9 Boys (including 6 named characters)
- 3-6 Girls (Including 6 named characters)



*A Christmas Story, The Musical* is set in Indiana in November and December, 1940. The Depression is just ending, and Christmas is approaching! Ralphie, our 9 year old hero, dreams of getting an air rifle for Christmas-- and not just any air rifle, but the Red Ryder Carbine Action BB Gun!

Listed below is information about characters in the musical. Watching the 1983 movie is a great introduction to the storyline, and there are excellent clips of various songs and scenes from the stage show online. MP3's of the audition and callback songs will be available on Lyric's website in mid-July.

### The Narrator

- Jean Shepherd/Narrator: (stage age: late 40's to early 60's). Jean Shepherd is the actual author of the books that the story is based on, as well as the actual narrator voice we hear in the 1983 movie! On stage, he is a warm, charismatic and engaging storyteller; omniscient but not overpowering. A good-natured curmudgeon with a deadpan sense of humor, "Jean" focuses the action, keeps the story moving and holds the audiences' attention with his presence and spark. Throughout the show, the actor playing this role acts as a narrator, interacts with the actor playing Ralphie, and appears in scenes as different minor characters--sometimes within one scene! This actor must be very comfortable with audiences, and must be able to "read the crowd" and tell the story at the same time. This actor sings one line at the end of the show, and does not dance. Audition song: either "A Major Award" or "Up on Santa's Lap".

### The Family

- Ralphie: (stage age 9). A 5th grade boy who wants an Air Rifle for Christmas: specifically the Red Ryder Carbine Action BB Gun. He is a bright, winsome, mischievous, cute kid...someone you wouldn't mind having as a next door neighbor. (He might shovel your driveway for you--and then use your shovel as a sled!) Not a smart-aleck or overly precocious, Ralphie's imagination drives several scenes. The actor playing this role carries several songs; he must be an excellent singer and fluent reader with mega-watt stage presence. Ralphie's dance is minimal. Audition Song: "Somewhere Hovering Over Indiana"; vocal range for Ralphie is F#3 to D5. [NOTE: Callback songs: "Red Ryder" and "Before the Old Man Comes Home" (with Randy). These two songs will only be used for callback, not at initial auditions].

- The Old Man: (stage age 30's to 40's). Gruff and grumbling on the exterior, Ralphie's Dad has a good heart. He doesn't overtly show it, but he does love his family. A blue-collar guy, he usually expects the worst out of most situations; but is transformed into a true "song and dance" man in his moments of fantasy. The actor playing this character must be a strong singer and a good dancer who isn't afraid to go "over the top" for comedic purposes. Audition song: "A Major Award"; vocal range for The Old Man is B♭2 to G4. [NOTE: Callback song: "The Genius on Cleveland Street". This song will only be used for callback, not at initial auditions].
- Mother: (stage age: 30's to 40's). She is the secret engine that runs the family, keeping the household together with a smile--despite bickering children, limited funds, an x-rated lamp in the living room window, a cranky furnace and a crankier husband. She would never let The Old Man know that she is more in charge than he is--as is appropriate for a housewife of this era! Vibrant, warm, affable--but not a pushover--she is always busy, especially anytime she is in the kitchen, and even more so at Christmas-time! The actor who plays this role must be an excellent singer, a good dancer, and must be very comfortable with children. Audition song: "What a Mother Does"; vocal range is G3 to D♭5.
- Randy: (stage age 7). Ralphie's younger brother, he is cute, cuddly, lovable and whiny--like most baby brothers! He looks up to his big brother, tries to keep up with him, and is young enough that he can be convinced to eat his dinner like a baby piggy! The actor playing this role must be an excellent singer, a good dancer, a fluent reader and have strong stage presence. This actor may also be a featured tap dance performer. Audition song: "Somewhere Hovering Over Indiana"; vocal range for Randy is F#3 to D5. [NOTE: Callback song: "Before the Old Man Comes Home" (with Ralphie). This song will only be used for callback, not at initial auditions]. {NOTE: *The actor playing this role must be eight years old at the time of auditions.*}

### **Featured Adults**

- Miss Shields: (stage age 30's to 50s) Ralphie's 5th grade teacher, a seemingly stereotypical 1940s educator--prim and proper, stern when necessary--though warm and even humorous when the situation merits it. In Ralphie's fantasy, she transforms into a dynamic, brassy, show-stopping belter and tap-dancing phenomenon! The person playing this role must be an excellent singer with a strong belt voice, an experienced tap dancer and an actor who can handle comedy AND children! Audition song: "You'll Shoot Your Eye Out"; vocal range is F#3 to D5. Auditionees for Miss Shields should bring tap shoes and be prepared to demonstrate a few tap skills.
- Santa: (stage age: 30's to 60's) The Santa Claus at Higbee's Department Store is ill-tempered, slightly inebriated and very unhappy with his job--nothing like the "Jolly Old Elf" of the Christmas stories! He gets rid of each kid as fast as he can--probably to

shorten his day so he can head for the nearest "watering hole"! The actor playing this role must be a strong comedic actor and singer, and must be comfortable with children. He may be part of the adult male ensemble. Audition song: "Up on Santa's Lap"; vocal range is B $\flat$ 2 to F4 (optional B $\flat$ 4).

## The Kids

The Kids' Ensemble is featured in several major scenes, and should plan on a robust rehearsal schedule! All of the Kids' Ensemble should be strong singers who can hold harmonies, should have tap dance experience and should be fluent readers. The artistic team plans on casting 3-4 girls and 4-5 boys all (stage age) nine years old, and one (stage age) twelve year old. Audition song: All kids will sing "Somewhere Hovering Over Indiana".

- Flick: (stage age 9/10) A classmate and best buddy of Ralphie's; Flick is the guinea pig in the flagpole licking experiment. The actor playing this role should be able to sustain and communicate with a serious lisp! Audition song: "Somewhere Hovering Over Indiana".
- Schwartz: (stage age 9/10) A classmate and best buddy of Ralphie; Schwartz becomes the scapegoat when Ralphie utters an unmentionable word. Audition song: "Somewhere Hovering Over Indiana".
- Esther Jane: (stage age 9/10) A classmate. Audition song: "Somewhere Hovering Over Indiana".
- Mary Beth: (stage age 9/10) A classmate. Audition song: "Somewhere Hovering Over Indiana".
- Nancy: (stage age 9/10) A classmate. Audition song: "Somewhere Hovering Over Indiana".
- 1-3 Ensemble girls (stage age 9/10): classmate, restaurant server, tap-dancer, Higbee's visitor. Audition song: "Somewhere Hovering Over Indiana".
- 1-3 Ensemble boys (stage age 9/10): classmate, tap-dancer, Goggle boy/Santa, Higbee's visitor. Audition song: "Somewhere Hovering Over Indiana".
- Scut Farkus: (stage age 12/13) A textbook example of a schoolyard bully, Scut is loud, obnoxious and intimidating. This truant is a year or two older than Ralphie and his friends, and wears a perpetual scowl under his coonskin cap. He always appears at the most inopportune time to harass his victims. In the end, when he and his sidekick, Grover Dill, are bested, they show themselves to the biggest cowards of all. Audition song: "Somewhere Hovering Over Indiana".

- Grover Dill: (stage age 9/10) Grover is Farkus's toady, and is always at his side. Younger and smaller than Farkus, Grover delights in being tethered to his "hero". His rapid-fire belly laughs, always heard with Farkus's threats, make them the scourge of the neighborhood. The actor playing this role may play other roles in the Kids Ensemble. Audition song: "Somewhere Hovering Over Indiana".

### **Adult Ensemble**

The Adult Ensemble will consist of 8 to 12 men, and 8 to 12 women (stage ages 20's to 50's). The artistic team would like to cast a mix of strong singers and dancers, who will play a variety of smaller roles in scenes, as well as performing in larger production numbers. Six to eight of the ensemble members will also play Santa's Elves in Higbee's Department Store. Flexible team players who are comfortable with comedy, theatre games, improv and children are eagerly sought for this production!

Audition song for ensemble men can be either "A Major Award" or "Up on Santa's Lap".

Audition song for ensemble women can be either "What a Mother Does" or "You'll Shoot Your Eye Out".