

Swamp Meadow Community Theatre Production Guidelines

It's a Wonderful Life (Holidays 2012)

Dear cast,

Hello! If this is your first play with Swamp Meadow Community Theatre (SMCT), then welcome! If not, well, then welcome back! Our goal, as always, is to put on a great show and have a lot of fun doing it. To do that and also make sure everyone is on the same page, we need to lay out some ground rules.

The Schedule: Cast members are expected to be present and on time at all rehearsals for which they are scheduled. Please plan to arrive fifteen minutes before the planned start of rehearsal. If someone doesn't show up, that makes it difficult or impossible to rehearse a specific scene and forces other cast mates to sit around with nothing to do. Check your calendar for conflicting school or work obligations (concerts, travel, etc.) and let us know now if you see, or even suspect, a conflict. If you must miss or be significantly late to a rehearsal, please ensure that you contact the production team well in advance so that alternate arrangements can be made. We understand that emergencies occur, but more than one missed or significantly late rehearsal is grounds for removal from the cast due to the impact on other actors and the production as a whole.

Drop Off/Pick Up: We take our responsibility for the safety and security of younger cast members very seriously. A sheet (and one of the production staff) will be at the door to verify that cast members have been signed in and signed out at the end of rehearsal. If someone else is going to bring the child home from rehearsal, parents must tell us at drop off so we are aware. We also ask that parents arrive fifteen minutes before the end of rehearsal, as they sometimes end early.

Homework/Projects: Our school-age members face a significant daily burden in terms of homework and school projects. Feel free to bring such work with you and utilize the time between your scenes to work on it. We do ask that you plan ahead and not put off significant projects to the last minute, when they may force you to miss rehearsal altogether. Such absences do fall under the above policy, as a matter of fairness to others.

Learning Lines: There will be a date in the schedule by which you will be expected to be *off book*. This means that you have memorized all of your lines and blocking. It is crucial for everyone to be off book when scheduled or it significantly impairs the effectiveness of rehearsal. If you have an especially difficult part or other challenges you think may prevent you from getting off book on schedule, it is your responsibility to bring them up early in the process with the production team.

The Shows: *All cast members must attend every show and every rehearsal during tech week (the week leading up to the first show) without exception.* On show dates you will be expected to arrive between one and two hours before show time, depending on the show and your part.

Medical Issues: We have no interest in invading your privacy, but if you have any medical issues that may affect or limit your ability to participate in production activities we ask that you do share that information with the production team so that we may be prepared. No one is excluded from participation for such issues, but we do want to be able to manage things in the manner that is best for both you and the show.

Age: We ask that parents of our youngest participants (under 8) plan on remaining with their child throughout each rehearsal. The parents of cast members under 18 are required to sign the accompanying form on behalf of their child and are responsible for signing their child in and out. Cast members over age 16 can sign themselves in and out.

Production Help: Volunteers are always needed and welcome! There are many roles that need filling over the lifecycle of the show from helping obtain donations and ads from local businesses to assisting with sign-in/out of cast members. Help is also needed during the production itself including back stage crew, costumes, props, sound, lighting, and more. If you or any of your friends or family might be interested in participating in any of these ways, please let us know. There will be a production meeting early in the rehearsal schedule and any interested persons are strongly encouraged to come and see what jobs are open and where you can lend your talents!

Facilities & Equipment: Actors may be required to handle valuable and/or fragile equipment (microphones, props, etc.). Those items should be treated with care and respect. Proper handling procedures will be explained when needed. We also must respect the facilities and ask that everyone follow all rules and treat any places we use with care.

Costumes: The Costume Designer of the production will let you know if you need to provide any parts of your costume. All costumes must be approved by the director and/or the costume designer and, once assembled, should not leave the facility. One exception is if the costume designer asks you to launder the costume between performances.

Stage Romance: If your part includes any romantic interaction with another actor, it is expected that you will manage such interactions with professionalism and respect. Failure to do so will result in immediate termination from the show. Expect to meet with the director to discuss the planning for such scenes to ensure that they are approached in a way that everyone involved is comfortable with. If you have any discomfort or concerns, please communicate them to the director or stage manager immediately.

Resolving Issues: We really want participation in this production to be a fun, exciting growth experience for all involved. If at any time you find that you have an issue or concern of any nature, we ask that you please speak to the producer, director or stage manager. We would like to help find a resolution to your concern immediately. If you feel for any reason that you cannot speak with the above leaders, please feel free to contact the Creative Director of SMCT.

Feedback & Participation: SMCT is very strongly committed to the idea that the best show is put on by the best, most involved team. Your input and ideas are a crucial resource for making this production the best it can be. If you have any thoughts or observations about either your own part or any other aspect of the show, please feel not just welcome but encouraged to share them. The director will make final decisions, of course, but many heads are richer and wiser than one. This should be an opportunity for all of us to learn and grow.

Advertisements: Even with all volunteer labor, putting on a show has considerable costs for sets, costumes, props, makeup, royalties, scripts, tech equipment, venue rental, etc. Unlike many community theaters, SMCT does not charge anyone to participate in our productions. Instead, money is raised through playbill ads sold to local businesses, supportive friends and family or other interested folks. We understand that this kind of “sales” work is not easy or possible for everyone, so in the interest of flexibility we have found that it works best to ask each cast member to provide \$60 in the form of sold ads *or* family contributions (*or* any combination thereof).

Concessions: Another way SMCT funds productions is by selling food and drinks during each performance. Each cast member is asked to provide some baked good (either homemade or store bought) and/or a twelve-pack of drinks. Sign-up sheets will be available. We also need volunteers to staff the concessions stand during the shows.

Contact/Emergency Information

Cast member: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Home phone: _____

Cell phone: _____

Allergy/Medical

If you have any allergies or conditions that should be known by the SMCT staff, please list them here. Feel free to discuss any special needs or considerations your child may have with the producer.

Scheduling Conflicts

If you already know that you will not be able to make any rehearsal or show dates due to vacations or other scheduling conflicts, please list them here.

Questions

Do you have any questions or concerns regarding our show and our operating procedures? Write them here.

Please sign and date to indicate that you have read the SMCT Production Guidelines, and return to the check-in table during the first rehearsal.

(Parent's signature required for cast members under 18)

Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Emergency Contact

Name(s): _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Drop off/Pick up

If you know that your child may be dropped off or picked up by people other than yourself, please list them here.

There is a lot more that goes into a production than just acting. Below is a list of opportunities for your involvement.

During rehearsals and/or performances:

- Sign-in table
- T-shirt orders/sales
- Playbill advertising collection
- Design and printing of playbill
- Cast/crew awards
- Weekly newsletter for cast/families
- Safety and wellness officer
- Set and stage construction
- Specific set/prop project
- Painting
- Artwork
- Making costumes
- Collecting props
- Shopping for needs
- Lighting
- Sound
- Curtain person
- Blocking recorder
- Organizing cast party

During performance week:

- Hospitality staff
(greeters/admission/usher)
- Ticket sales
- Organizing concessions
- Concession staff
- Baking
- Back stage help
- Physical help
- Cast mom/dad supervisor
- Make-up
- Photography
- Videography
- Providing trucks for set transportation

Other:

- Recruitment of volunteers
- Grant writing
- Fund raising

- Add me to the SMCT database so I can receive emails about upcoming activities.