

An Eagle Brook Star is Born!



What were you doing on November 20th at 2:00pm? 10-year-old Eagle Brook resident, Maddy Donatelli, made her "professional" stage debut as Ester Jane in Noble Fool Theatricals presentation of A Christmas Story adapted by Philip Grecian and based on the film by Jean Shepherd, Leigh Brown and Bob Clark. It was playing this holiday season on the Pheasant Run Resort Main Stage. Maddy and 10 other youth actors from all over the Chicago suburbs have put in many long hours rehearsing and preparing for the production.

"We are very excited about A Christmas Story," says Artistic Director and show Director John Gawlik. "This is the first time Noble Fool Theatricals is working with children on a professional show. The cast is outstanding, and the talent of these children never ceases to amaze me. It's also gratifying to see so many children who have trained with our Performing Arts Academy reach the next level."

"I cannot believe they are actually paying me, at 10, to perform with people I

love at my favorite place on Earth (NFT Main Stage)," says Maddy, who is currently enrolled at the Academy. "This is a dream come true." Maddy, a NFT veteran, has been cast in the previous Youth Ensemble Shows School House Rock Live Jr., Oliver and Once Upon a Mattress. Maddy decided to "go for it" when NFT announced second Open Audition for alternate roles to the two female characters. Moving into the professional arena has been an exhausting process, but one Maddy is taking in stride. Her days are spent attending school (Western Avenue), doing homework, playing the piano & clarinet, taking private vocal lessons and getting to rehearsal (some weeks over 20 hours of rehearsal time scheduled).

"It's like I really have a job," says Maddy "We come to rehearsal and are expected to be serious and ready to work." Cast as Alternate Ester Jane, Maddy has enjoyed taking tips and learning from the other adult actors. She can't decide which scene is her favorite, "There are so many funny moments, and the costumes and effects make the show SO COOL."

When asked what she's planning to do next, Maddy confidently says, "I'll audition for the next show ... and maybe have a few play dates with my friends."

Maddy's mom has been just as impressed with the production, "It was like watching the movie live!" She attributes her daughter's stage success with the training she has received through the NFT Academy. There are so many wonderful opportunities for children in this area to really explore theater. She encourages parents to check out the NFT Academy website for classes. Even the shyer kids have opportunity to come out of their shell and be a part of something magical. If you have a child, like Maddy, who is involved in theatrical productions, please contact Missy Donatelli (at mommissy@ameritech.net) and we'll try to showcase these "Eagle Brook Stars" in this publication, as well as list upcoming auditions and classes offered locally for "budding" stars.



Looking To See Maddy In Action?

Maddy, who has to be ready to step up and perform at ANY show, is scheduled to appear on: 11/20, 11/29 (5:00), 12/11 (10:00am), 12/18 (2:00) and 12/29 (5:00). After watching the preview shows, Maddy's mom says the performance is AMAZING and encourages Eagle Brook residents to take their kids, "It's like watching the movie live!"

Tickets are priced at \$27 on Wednesday through Friday and at \$38 on Saturday and Sunday. Dinner show packages are

available at \$49 on Wednesday through Friday and \$60 on Saturdays and Sunday. Overnight packages and group rates are available as well.

Pheasant Run Resort is located at 4051 E. Main St., St. Charles, IL. For tickets call the Pheasant Run Box Office at 630-584-6342, or visit www.ticketmaster.com. Additional performance information may be obtained at www.noblefool.org.

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