

# Milford Second Street Players

*proudly present*



# *Humbug*

**Written by John Wooten**

**Directed by Titia Halfen**

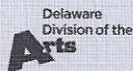
**Nov. 25, 26, 27 & Dec. 2, 3, 4, 2011**

**Riverfront Theatre**

**2 S. Walnut Street, Milford, DE 19963**

Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.

This program is made possible, in part, by a grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency dedicated to nurturing and supporting the arts in Delaware, in partnership with the National Endowment of the Arts



# HUMBUG CAST

Eleanor Scrooge.....Becki Polk  
 Bobbie Cratchit..... Lezlie Eustis  
 Caroler #1 ♦ Tess ♦ Present..... Debra Passwaters  
 Caroler #2 ♦ Ellie ♦ Lisa ..... Kate Forehand  
 Caroler #3 ♦ Tug ♦ Bill ♦ Benson.....Josh Gross  
 Past ♦ Carl..... Curtis Howard  
 Ben ♦ Marley ♦ Gravedigger ..... Malcolm Keen  
 Phyllis ♦ Nellie ..... Allie Buchanan  
 Caroler #4 ♦ Juan.....Robbie Butler  
 John ♦ Robert ♦ Future.....Mike Geisweidt  
 Sarah ♦ Nurse.....Sharon Buchanan  
 Young Phyllis ♦ Tammy .....Sydney Gross

## ACT I

Present Day

Eleanor Scrooge's Corporate Office  
 16<sup>th</sup> floor of a Manhattan High Rise

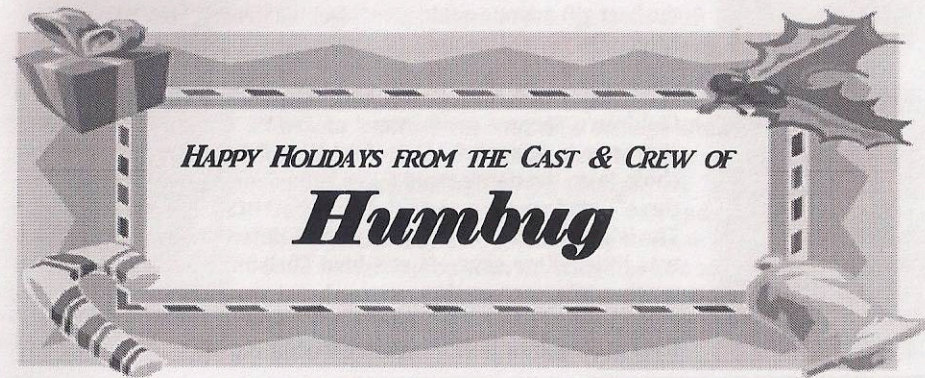
## ACT II

Same Day

Eleanor's office

# HUMBUG CREW

Director..... Titia Halfen  
 Assistant Director ..... Jerry Cox  
 Producer..... Mark Dissinger  
 Stage Manager ..... Melissa Janson  
 Assistant Stage Manager ..... Debbie Lonski  
 Set Design ..... Titia Halfen  
 Master Carpenter ..... Chris Annand  
 Set Construction & Painting..... Cast & Crew  
 Special Set Painting ..... Bill Walton  
 Lighting Design ..... Mark Dissinger  
 Sound Effects..... Nita Gary  
 Props..... Cast & Crew  
 Costumes ..... Sharon Buchanan & Cast  
 Publicity ..... Susan Newark  
 Tickets..... Tracy Dissinger, Valerie Andrews  
 Hospitality ..... Ben Lonski  
 Playbill ..... Steve Twilley  
 Playbill Advertising .....Joan Lofland, Dan Marabello



# MEET THE CAST AND CREW OF *Humbug*



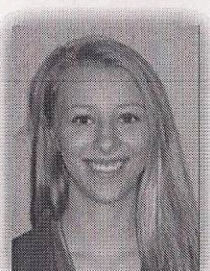
**Becki Polk** (Eleanor Scrooge) celebrates her 11<sup>th</sup> year with Second Street including appearances in *Gypsy*, *Caught in the Net*, *Meshuggah-Nuns*, and *Babes in Toyland* just to name a few. She reminisces that "Christmases before I lost my mom were all about getting the family together and celebrating. I miss her most around the holidays." She says that "in real life I endeavor to be the opposite of Eleanor Scrooge. I don't want to have regrets for spending too much time on things that didn't really matter and not enough time on making memories that will last a lifetime." Becki lives in Milford with her dogs, Cody and Tiny.



**Lezlie Eustis** (Bobbie Cratchit) has appeared in SSP's *Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, *Over the River & Through the Woods*, *Annie*, and *Dinner with Friends*, and many other shows with Possum Point Players, Milton Theatre, and Kent County Theatre Guild. With relatives living in Wisconsin, Lezlie doesn't have family Christmases as she once did. But she says that "having spent 20 years in the military, we tried to make every time we were together special." Lezlie now lives in Milford, still goes to church on Christmas Eve, and celebrates the holidays with her husband, John, and daughters, Melyssa & Adara.



**Debra Passwaters** (Caroler#1, Tess, Present) was assistant director for *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*, directed *The Three Bully Goats Griff*, and has appeared in such SSP shows as *Meshuggah-Nuns!* and *Greater Tuna*. Debbie believes that the message of *Humbug* "is about forgiveness and learning to right your wrongs. It's never too late to tell an estranged family member that you love them, or reach out to someone in need, or to spread the gift of joy by giving of yourself. Friendship and love is the best gift anyone could give." Debbie lives in Milford and is an RN for Delaware Hospice.



**Kate Forehand** (Caroler#2, Ellie, Lisa) has appeared in SSP's Children's Theatre productions of *Red Vs. The Wolf* and the title character in *Rapunzel*. At Milford High School, Kate sings in the choir, is on the dance team ("I've been dancing ballet since I was three"), and was a principal dancer in MHS's *Bye Bye Birdie* and *The Wizard of Oz*. "Christmas is much different now from when I was little," Kate says. "I still love Christmas but there isn't as much excitement as there was when I would wait for Santa to come." But she admits, "There is still some little kid in me!" Kate lives in Slaughter Beach with her mom, Kris.



**Josh Gross** (Caroler 3, Tug, Bill, Benson) returns to the Riverfront stage after making his theatrical debut in the Children's Theatre production of *Rapunzel*. "Working with this cast has been very rewarding," Josh says, "especially being onstage with my daughter, Sydney." Josh lives in Millsboro with his wife, Penny, and their daughters, Sydney and Jacklynn. A favorite Christmas memory was spending the holiday with the family at Disney World. "Watching the Osborne Family Spectacle of Lights is incredible! It can make anyone love Christmas!" Josh adds, "I love seeing Christmas through the eyes of my children."



**Curtis Howard** (Past, Carl) is thrilled to be making his stage debut in *Humbug*. "The cast is amazing and they have been so helpful to me. I've learned so much from everyone involved." Curtis feels that the main difference between Christmas today and those when he was a child is "the type of excitement I get at Christmas. When I was younger I could not wait until Christmas Day to open my presents from Santa. Today I can't wait until everyone opens their gifts from me, which makes me feel like Santa." Curtis lives in Houston and enjoys spending the holidays at home with his lovely wife and mother-in-law and father-in-law.



**Malcolm Keen** (Ben, Marley, Gravedigger) has appeared in Second Street's *The Miracle Worker*, *Babes In Toyland*, *Our Town*, and many other shows with other theatre companies. Malcolm says, "As we get older, the actual Christmas experience changes but what never seems to change are the memories of Christmas past. The love and caring of family, the compassion for those less fortunate, the bright-eyed wonder and jaw dropping astonishment of children, and the remembrance of those who helped shape us into what we are today." Malcolm lives in Lewes and is the membership coordinator with the Rehoboth Beach Film Society.



**Allie Buchanan** (Phyllis, Nellie) returns to the stage after just directing SSP's Children's Theatre production of *Rapunzel*. She has performed in many of the Children's Theatre shows and was the Sour Kangaroo in *Seussical—The Musical*, SSP's 2010 holiday show. Allie is very excited about Christmas this year. "I'm going back to my mother's hometown in North Carolina to visit family I haven't seen in a couple of years. Christmas is a time to be with loved ones, to just enjoy your life, and be blessed with the family you have." Allie lives in Georgetown with her mom (and fellow cast member), Sharon, her cat, Bear, and dog, Polly.



**Robbie Butler** (Caroler #4, Juan) considers himself to be a "newbie." This is his first time onstage after working behind the scenes as part of the stage crew in SSP's recent production of *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*. He finds *Humbug* to be a "funny spin on a great classic. The cast and crew have been great and make it easy and entertaining to come to rehearsal." Robbie lives in Harrington with his daughter and says that, "Christmas is much more 'magical' when you're a kid. But now it seems to me to be much more fulfilling *having* a child...seeing the excitement and anticipation through their eyes."



**Mike Geisweidt** (John, Robert, Future) most recently appeared in SSP's production of *Our Town*. Other Riverfront stage appearances include *The Miracle Worker*, *Arcadia* and *Rumors*. He says that *Humbug* is "a fast-paced, funny show that will entertain audiences and help to get everyone into the holiday spirit. Though some of the costume changes are rather hectic, I have enjoyed the chance to play multiple characters in the show." Mike recalls that as a child, "the joy of Christmas Day was receiving gifts. Today, the joy comes from giving, especially when the gift truly touches the recipient."



**Sharon Buchanan** (Sarah, Nurse) is a new SSP Board member and has previously costumed many Second Street Players' regular season and Children's Theatre shows. She has also been onstage in various SSP Children's Theatre productions including her most recent role as the witch in *Rapunzel*. "Fairy Tales and musicals are my favorite," she says. Sharon lives in Georgetown with her daughter, Allie, and combines work schedules at Harrison Senior Living and Nanticoke Memorial Hospital. "It's been such a joy to share the stage with my daughter in *Humbug*," Sharon says, "and usher in the holidays with such a spirited cast and crew."



**Sydney Gross** (Young Phyllis, Tammy) is a fifth grade student at the Southern Delaware School of the Arts. The young actress has appeared in numerous shows with local theatres including appearances in SSP's Children's Theatre productions of *Toy School*, *Three Bully Goats Griff*, and *Rapunzel* (in which she appeared with her father, Josh). "I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work in my second show with my father," she says. "It has been an incredible experience being able to act with him!" Sydney recalls a special Christmas "when my grandmother surprised our entire family with a trip to Disney World for Christmas."



**Titia Halfen** (DIRECTOR) has been the assistant director for many shows including *Funny Money*, *Moonlight and Magnolias*, *Christmas Story*, and *Barefoot In The Park*. But *Humbug* marks her solo directorial debut. She has also appeared onstage in such shows as *Nun-crackers* and *Our Town*. Titia lives at Prime Hook Beach with her mom and dad where she says "Christmases are spent simply sharing the day together and watching all of the old stories— especially *Scrooge*. We spend each day together but life is sweeter when we can share our traditions." Trish adds, "This has been a wonderful cast and crew. I am so proud of all of them!"



**Jerry Cox** (ASSISTANT DIRECTOR) is a community theatre veteran but *Humbug* marks his first time with Second Street Players and his initiation as an assistant director. He has previously appeared onstage with the Kent County Theater Guild, the Phoenix Players, and the Milton Theater. His most recent appearance was in *Move Over, Mrs. Markham* with Possum Point Players. Jerry remembers being very excited as a child at Christmas, "unable to sleep, rising early, and rushing downstairs to look under the tree. We always shook presents before opening," he recalls, "except for that mini-bike I got one year. I miss that child-like innocence."



**Mark Dissinger** (PRODUCER), SSP Board member and treasurer, is back behind the scenes after producing *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* and directing SSP's summer comedy, *Barefoot in the Park*. He is a frequent SSP director for such shows as *Cinderella*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Annie*, and *To Kill a Mockingbird*. "I especially enjoy our holiday shows," Mark says, "as they're the perfect way to get the family in the mood for this joyous season." Mark and his wife, Tracy, share a home in Milford with daughter, Libby, and various four-legged creatures. Each Christmas they look forward to traveling back to Pennsylvania to spend the day with family.



**Melissa Janson** (STAGE MANAGER) is a new SSP Board member but very experienced behind the scenes and onstage with SSP. Among her favorite onstage appearances are *Dinner With Friends* and *Dearly Departed*. Melissa recalls that, as a child, her mom and dad would dress as Santa and his elf, then go to deliver toys to friends' children. "It put a smile on my face to see those kids' faces light up when Santa walked into their house." She encourages everyone to "remember that Christmas is not just a holiday. It's a feeling deep inside of you...so share that feeling all year long." Melissa lives in Milford with kids, Megan and Tyler.



**Debbie Lonski** (ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER) is a newly elected SSP Board member who made her stage debut at Riverfront in this fall's *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*. She remembers Christmases when girls got toys like baby dolls and stuffed animals. "Today, it's cell phones, and computers!" she says. Debbie owns Exquisite Nutrition in Dover and lives in Magnolia with her husband, Ben. "This Christmas is going to be very special," Debbie says. "Our family gets to share it with our first grandbaby, Khole Ra. I thought being a mother was out of this world, but being a grandmother is sensational!"

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE...

When I first read *Humbug* I was excited about this new twist to one of my favorite Christmas stories. Growing up, it was and still is a family tradition to gather around the television and watch this old and familiar Christmas classic. We enjoyed the 1951 film version with Alastair Sim as Scrooge. It felt real with the black and white filming and the old English village where Scrooge and the Crachit family lived. It was a little bit scary with the ghosts of Marley, Past, Present and Future, but I always felt full of hope by the end of the movie.

Tonight, I hope you enjoy our not so scary ghosts and this new modern version with a few fun changes as we bring *Humbug* – the "Christmas Carol" of 2011 – to you.



*Titia*