

# Blackhorse players putting on a holiday production of The Wizard of Oz

Some members of the Blackhorse Village Players are very busy this holiday season preparing to mount their latest Children's holiday production, The Wizard of Oz.

While this play is a condensed, non-musical version, it still features everyone's favourite characters and promises plenty of audience participation to delight the young and the young at heart.

When the play opens the audience finds their three unlikely heroes, the Scarecrow (played by Lynn Khreli), Tin Man (Sylvio Couture) and Cowardly Lion (John Milne) in a forest where they had just been attacked by "mean magical trees" while on their way to rescue Dorothy (Jade Poirier) from the castle of the Wicked Witch of the West (Chandra Mulder). When the trio fails to get help from the Good Fairy (Michelle Lanoue), they decide to recruit some unsuspecting Munchkins to help them as they take the audience along on their journey to save Dorothy and

find the great Wizard of Oz.

"Compared to the full length plays Blackhorse is known for, the children's shows seem small on the scale, but the amount of heart and time put in to them is huge!" commented director Cheryl Phillips, who also headed up last year's holiday production Patchwork. "We have a total of eight members pulling this all together, their enthusiasm is enormous! Many of the costumes and props were made by the actors themselves. They have done a fantastic job. I couldn't be more pleased. A few final touches and we'll be ready for the kids."

Another interesting fact is Blackhorse had presented this play 26 years ago. The theatre group is not in the habit of repeating shows, but plenty of time has gone by, and The Wizard of Oz is a classic story. The only character to reprise his role is John Milne, as the Cowardly Lion. John, (who was recently awarded a Lifetime Membership for 30 plus years of involvement with the troupe) joked that it was a lot easier to memorize

his lines back then.

To add to the holiday fun, children will have an opportunity to meet the cast

and have their pictures taken with their favourite character(s). Parents are encouraged to bring their

cameras. There will also be a special draw for the adults. All proceeds from this event will go toward the theatre's

technical fund for upgrades to the lighting and sound systems.

Performance dates are Jan. 6 and 7 only, with two performances each day — at 1 and 3 p.m. You may reserve seats in advance by calling the box office at (905) 880-5002. Admission is \$5 per child. Parents and guardians are required to bring a non-perishable food item equivalent to \$5. In lieu of food, a \$7 admission fee will apply to each adult. There will be no assigned seating. Rush seating only.

The members of the Blackhorse Village Players would like to take this opportunity to express warm wishes to their patrons and their families this holiday season, and thank them for continuing support of community theatre.



Sylvio Couture, John Milne, Jade Poirier, Lynn Khreli and Michelle Lanoue have been rehearsing their parts in The Wizard of Oz.

## Holiday food safety tips

### Reduce the risk of food-borne illness during the holidays

The holiday season is a special time, when friends and family get together to share good company and good food. York Region Health Services reminds residents that food-borne illness, also known as "food poisoning," may happen if improper techniques are used when preparing and serving your holiday meals.

Follow these party-hosting precautions to help prepare and serve a safe holiday gathering:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with liquid soap and warm water prior to preparing, handling, serving and eating food.
- Always use clean dishes, cutting boards and work surfaces when preparing, handling, serving and eating food.
- Thaw frozen food products in the refrigerator or in the microwave, never on the counter.
- Avoid cross-contamination of products. Keep and store raw meats, poultry and seafood separately and away from ready-to-eat food products.
- Provide serving utensils and avoid direct hand contact with food products.
- When possible, serve food products immediately after preparation.
- If you are hosting a pot-luck, encourage guests to bring non-perishable food items and restrict the preparation of hazardous foods to your household.
- Ensure hot food products stay hot and cold products stay cold. Use chaffing dishes to assist in keeping food products hot and use ice to assist in keeping food cold.
- If the food products are held at the proper temperature during the party, they can be stored as leftovers. If the food products are left at room temperature for more than two hours, they should be thrown out.
- Uncooked eggs may contain salmonella bacteria. Be cautious when preparing, serving and consuming products that may contain raw eggs. This includes homemade eggnog and Caesar salad dressing

For more information on safe food handling practices or other health-related questions, contact York Region Health Services Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 or visit [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca)



*"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will towards men."*

*-Luke 2:14*

*At the birth of our Saviour, we wish you and your loved ones, peace, contentment, joy and a very merry holiday season.*

**From the management and staff of the Simcoe-York Group of newspapers.**