

Laugh along with 'A Christmas Story' at the Sierra Madre Playhouse



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A classic Christmas comedy that is focused almost entirely on one young lad's passionate desire to own a Red Ryder Carbine Action 200 shot Range Model Air Rifle. Come on, what nine year old boy from America's upper Midwest wouldn't want a Red Ryder Carbine Action 200 shot Range Model Air Rifle just as much as Ralphie? But when he brings up his dream gift for Christmas mom shoots it down simply saying "You'll shoot your eye out." Ralphie is discouraged but not willing to give up.

Moving along his quest we are treated to variety of experiences, people and ideas many of them foreign to those who know only Southern California. A young boy so totally covered with winter clothing he could fall off a roof and wouldn't get hurt, a dad who is the only one to make the dogs bark and enters every contest imaginable and a school teacher as tough as nails are all common to Northern Indiana and as presented in *A Christmas Story* sheer delight.

One element that is sadly universal is the school bully who Ralphie and his friends are often required to fend off. No serious damage is done, but at one point Ralphie does take action against the bully.

The story is to some significant extent narrated by the adult Ralphie a/k/a Ralph as portrayed superbly by Jackson Kendall. He weaves the story together as the actors, many of them very young, deliver the story superbly. With each passing day Christmas gets closer and Ralphie's passion for getting his beloved Red Rider Carbine Action 200 Shot Range Model Air Rifle — with compass in the stock — seems ever less likely.

Then just before Christmas Ralphie and his family visit the Higbee's Department store where in a last ditch effort Ralphie asks Santa Clause for a Red Ryder Carbine Action 200 shot Range Model Air Rifle and is devastated when Santa tells him no because "It will put your eye out."

This is a show where the trip is far more important and fun than the end. That said the question begs: does Ralphie ever get his dream, the Red Ryder Carbine Action 200 shot Range Model Air Rifle with a compass in the stock? Well now for that you will need to see the show because I ain't tellin.' But this reviewer will make this one confession: I grew up not far from Northern Indiana and when I was nine years old I indeed had a Red Ryder Carbine Action 200 shot Range Model Air Rifle — but with no compass. Nevertheless I can fully understand Ralphie's passion.

As is the norm for the Sierra Madre Playhouse the show, *A Christmas Story* is deeply entertaining with abundant humor, all presented by a clearly talented cast under the exquisite direction of Christian Lebano who also serves as the Sierra Madre Playhouse Artistic Director.

It is absolutely a fun romp so don't miss it. It is at the Sierra Madre Playhouse, 87 West Sierra Madre Boulevard, Sierra Madre, California now through December 31st, 2017. There are a variety of show times and dates on Tuesdays through Sundays so to pick the day, date and time most convenient for you simply call: 626-355-4318 or visit their [website \(http://www.sierramadreplayhouse.org\)](http://www.sierramadreplayhouse.org).

Making the experience even more enjoyable there is abundant free parking right behind the theatre. And if you have never been to Sierra Madre it is a beautiful town with several superb restaurants, so make a full day and/or evening of it and enjoy the moment fully.

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