

December 5-7, 2025

**KVTA STUDIOS BLACK BOX THEATRE
1 STUART DR. KANKAKEE, IL 60901
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT:
WWW.KVTA.ORG**

THE CHRISTMAS SCHOONER

A MUSICAL



**Directed By:
Sharla Ronchetto**

**Book:
John Reeger**

**Music & Lyrics
Julie Shannon**



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"CHRISTMAS SCHOONER is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.mtishows.com"

KVTA

A Note from the Director . . .

I first read the script of *The Christmas Schooner* last fall when it was suggested to the KVTa Board for consideration. I had never heard of the show before; and I do love shows that are inspired by true stories. And what a beautiful story this is to share! I hope you enjoy this heart-warming story about a family who braves the storms to bring Christmas joy to the German immigrant families in Chicago in the late 1800's.

My heartfelt thanks go out to our immensely talented cast for choosing to take part in this production. Their voices are like a choir of angels; and they bring goosebumps to me every time I hear them sing. Thank you for your hard work, the long hours, and your tireless dedication to bringing this show to life.

I would also like to thank the creative team that helped direct this production. Thanks to Beth for being my sounding board, my detail manager, and my second set of hands. Thanks to Mike for tackling the complex choral score and painstakingly teaching it to our talented cast. Thanks to Jordyn for the researched and historically inspired choreography and movement.

Thanks to the production staff: Paula, Mike, Sara, Rozy, Carole, Kayla, Dana, and Cole. I appreciate your hard-work and dedication to the performing arts in the Kankakee River Valley!

Lastly, I would like to thank the audience for attending our production. Theatre is a communal art form, and it is not complete until it is shared with an audience. Thank you for completing our show!

Sharla Ronchetto

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KVTA BOX OFFICE INFORMATION

Tickets can be purchased online at www.kvta.org.

For information, please call 815-935-8510.

Kankakee Valley Theatre Association is a not-for-profit organization. Ticket prices cover only a fraction of the cost of each performance. We welcome volunteers and appreciate donations of any size. We invite you to become a member of KVTA. Contact any Board Member for information or visit www.kvta.org.

KVTA is a Proud Member of:

- Community Arts Council of Kankakee
- Illinois Arts Council Agency
- American Association of Community Theatre
- Illinois Theatre Association
- Kankakee Chamber of Commerce
- Manteno Chamber of Commerce

Musical Synopsis of Scenes

ACT I

Scene 1-The Stossel Home

We All Have Songs Company
That's America Alma, Gustav, & Karl
The Mummies Are Here Steve, Rudy, Oskar, & Peter
The Blessings of the Branch Peter, Martha, & Storytellers
The Letter (Reprise) Company

Scene 2-On the Dock at Manistique

Another Season on the Water Storytellers

Scene 3-Swallows Hill

When I Look At You Peter

Scene 4-The Stossel Home/Bow of the Molly Doone

What is it About the Water? Company

Scene 5-Bow of the Molly Doone/Chicago Dock/Karls' Bedroom

The Christmas Schooner Company

Intermission-There will be a 15 minute intermission

Entr'Acte

Song of the Hungry Peasants Storytellers

Act 2

Scene 1-Streets of Chicago

Winterfest Polka Storytellers

Scene 2-The Stossel Home

Loving Sons Alma & Karl
The Strudel Waltz Alma & Peter

Scene 3-The Stossel Home/On the Dock at Manistique

Another Season on the Water (Reprise) Storytellers
Hardwater Sailors Karl & Storytellers

Scene 4-Bow of the Molly Doone

Scene 5-Hospital Hallway

Questions Alma
When I Look at You (Reprise) Gustav & Alma

Scene 6-Bow of a Schooner/Chicago Dock

What is it About the Water? (Reprise).....Karl, Gustav, & Storytellers
The Blessings of the Branch (Reprise) Alma & Mary Claire

Finale **Company**

Cast of *The Christmas Schooner*

(*Denotes first appearance in a Kankakee Valley Theatre Association production)

Alma Stossel.....	Richelle Prokop
Gustav Stossel.....	Andy Babinski
Peter Stossel.....	Andy Breeden*
Karl Stossel (age 9).....	Chloe Shinabarger
Karl Stossel (age 15) / Storyteller.....	Lucas Gifford*
Rudy / Storyteller.....	Jackson Day
Oskar / Storyteller.....	Liam Lohrbach
Steve / Storyteller.....	Paul Snyder
Hans / Storyteller.....	Pine Kimery
Officer Wells / Storyteller.....	Randy Fisher
Enid / Storyteller.....	Caitlin Fletcher
Martha / Kate / Storyteller.....	Heather Day
Rose / Storyteller.....	Jackie Pletsch
Olive / Storyteller.....	Amy Shinabarger
Mary Claire Daughtery / Storyteller.....	Kolbee Shoufler
Frida / Storyteller.....	Charlee Mosher

Orchestra Members

Keyboard.....	Gwen Fox
Keyboard.....	George Kwain
Woodwinds.....	Lori Buckman
Cello.....	Beth Darin
Harp.....	Zandrea Brandt
Percussion.....	Sarah McDaniel

Production Staff

Director.....	Sharla Ronchetto
Assistant Director.....	Beth Sutter
Vocal Director/Conductor.....	Mike Snyder
Choreographer.....	Jordyn Clark
Production Coordinator.....	Paula Sutter
Costumer/Hair.....	Rozy Labriola
Set Builder.....	Mike Spilsbury
Set Decorator.....	Sara Christensen
	Scott Christensen, Danielle Hanus, Val Lohrbach
Rehearsal Pianist.....	Gwen Fox
Properties.....	Carol Snyder
	Mike Snyder
Stage Manager.....	Kayla James
	Megan Pilbeam
Box Office	Tricia Kohan
House.....	Andy Purcell
Concessions.....	Katie Udstuen
Split-the-Pot.....	Jim Kravat
Stage Door Lounge.....	Kimberly Hall
Program.....	Christine Case and Kimberly Hall
	Sharla Ronchetto, Courtney Stephens
Publicity.....	Jordyn Clark and Jackie Pletsch
	Pathfinder, Andrew McBurnie, Sharla Ronchetto, Karen Shoufler
Lights.....	Cole Pilbeam and Courtney Stephens
Sound.....	Main Street Music Production
	Dana James

Meet the Cast



Andy Babinski (Gustav/Young Karl Understudy) Andy has returned to Bradley after pursuing a career in theatre for over 20 years and is currently looking to earn a Ph.D. in Theatre. He's thrilled to be back at KVTa and is looking forward to playing Colonel Mustard in the upcoming *Clue: On Stage*. There's no place like home!

Andy Breeden (Peter Stossel) Andy lives in Kankakee with his husband. He's excited to be back on stage, making his KVTa premiere after directing shows over the past ten years. He currently directs the spring musical at Manteno High School, where he teaches Spanish. He would like to thank the amazing cast and crew for bringing this heartwarming story to life. Andy says, "How lucky we are to live and work with such talented people!"

Heather Day (Martha/Storyteller) Heather and her husband, Robert, live in Bourbonnais with their children Emma and Jackson (aka Rudy), with whom she's excited to share the stage! This is her sixth KVTa production, the most recent being the role of Mrs. Phelps in *Matilda*. Heather writes, "Thank you to my incredible family for their support, and especially to Robert for his loving partnership through the ups and downs."

Jackson Day (Rudy) Jackson of Bourbonnais is son to Robert and Heather Day and in 8th grade at St. George. He has done several KVTa shows, including most recently *Matilda*. Jackson says, "Thank you to the cast and crew for bringing joy to my life, for having such a great time, and for all the hard work you have put into this show."

Meet the Cast



Randy Fisher (Storyteller/Sailor/Officer Wells) Randy lives in Bradley, IL and has been around the KVTa family since 2002. He has performed in many shows, from *Brigadoon* to *Fiddler on the roof* to *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (twice) to most recently *Matilda*. Along with being on stage, he's also done choreography for *Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up?* and *Grease*, as well as assisted with others. Randy loves being part of this show and says, "I am very grateful for all the love, support, and encouragement I have been getting, both from auditions and bringing this show to life with this incredible group of people. Thank you to Dakota and Adyson for always being my biggest fans!"

Caitlin Fletcher (Enid/Storyteller) Caitlin and her wife, Paige, are from Bourbonnais. This is her second show with KVTa, the other being *Seussical*, in which she played a Who. Caitlin is thankful for the KVTa staff giving her the opportunity to be part of this beautiful story and incredible cast, as well as to Paige for supporting and encouraging her to do this.

Lucas Gifford (Teen Karl/Storyteller) Lucas lives with his family in Clifton. He is currently a student at Kankakee Community College studying psychology. This is his first show with KVTa, and he wants to thank the community for being so welcoming and supportive. Lucas is very excited for the show and hopes to continue doing shows in the future.

Meet the Cast



Pine Kimery (Hans/Storyteller) - Pine lives in Bradley, Illinois with his father, Brant Kimery, and is a senior at BBCHS. This is the fourth KVTa production he has been in, with the most recent being his role of Officer Barrel in *Urinetown*. He has also recently performed in the pit as the first chair violist for BBTEP's *Seussical*. Pine would like to thank not only the cast of *The Christmas Schooner*, but the entire KVTa community for providing him with a safe, welcoming space to be involved in theatre.

Liam Lohrbach (Oskar) Liam lives in Ashkum with his parents, Valerie and David. He is a 9th grader at Central High School in Clifton. Previously he was seen on stage on KVTa's *Shrek Jr.* Liam would like to add, "Thank you to the staff at KVTa and my family and friends for introducing me to this wonderful community and helping me out of my shell."

Charlee Mosher (Frida/Young girl) - Charlee lives with her family in Limestone. This is Charlee's third show with KVTa, her most recent being *My Son Pinocchio Jr.*

Jackie Pletsch (Rose/Storyteller) Jackie lives in Bourbonnais and is employed as a business manager for Joseph A. Schudt Engineering. She played the role of Mrs. Clairee Belcher in the KVTa production of *Steel Magnolias* and looks forward to playing Yvette in the upcoming production of *Clue: On Stage*. Jackie adds, "I'm so very grateful for the incredibly talented friends I've made through KVTa, and to the Directors and Staff of *The Christmas Schooner*, who refrained from throwing their shoes at me during rehearsals."

Meet the Cast



Richelle Prokop (Alma Stossel) Richelle lives in Peotone with her husband, Alex. She is the Musical Director and Show Choir Choreographer at Peotone High School, and she is a manager at Cornerstone Coffee House. She has been in a handful of productions with KVTa, most recently being their annual Night in Sleepy Hollow. Richelle writes, “Thank you so much to the amazing cast and crew of *The Christmas Schooner*. This has been an incredible experience, and I’ll cherish these memories forever.”

Amy Shinabarger (Olive/Storyteller) Amy lives in Bradley with her husband, Jon, and daughter, Chloe. She works as a band director at J.L. Nash Middle School and Clifton Central High School. This is Amy's 3rd show as a cast member, including most recently in KVTa's *Hello Girls*. Amy wishes to thank *The Christmas Schooner* cast for giving their all to every rehearsal and performance.

Chloe Shinabarger (Young Karl) Chloe, daughter of Jon and Amy, lives in Bradley and is in 6th grade at Bradley Central. Chloe has been in many shows, most recently as a marionette in *My Son Pinocchio Jr.* Special thanks to Andy Babinski for making this an unforgettable experience.

Kolbee Shoufler (Mary Claire/Storyteller) Kolbee is 13 years old and lives with her family in Watseka. This is Kolbee's sixth KVTa show, with her favorite role being Lavender in last season's production of *Matilda*. Kolbee writes, “Thank you to my fellow cast mates, Heather Day and Andy Babinski, for helping me with my Irish accent. And to my parents for letting me be in two shows at the same time.”

Meet the Cast



Paul Snyder (Steve/Storyteller) - Paul is a resident of Kankakee and has been a part of KVTA for many years. He has played several roles, such as King Arthur (*Spamalot*), Nathan Detroit (*Guys and Dolls*), and Frranz Liebkind (*The Producers*). He most recently played Mr. Cladwell (*Urinetown*). Paul says, "Thanks go to cast and crew for yet another excellent production. Enjoy!"



Meet the Production Staff



Sharla Ronchetto (Director) Sharla and her husband Greg live in Bourbonnais. Sharla has been active with KVTa for many years, both on and off stage. Most recently, she directed KVTa's *Urinetown* this fall. She would like to thank her husband for his continued love and support of her theatre adventures.

Beth Sutter (Assistant Director) Beth lives in Bonfield and is employed by Applied Systems as a customer support tech. She has assistant directed several other KVTa adult and youth productions, the last one being *Shrek Jr.* She would like to thank Sharla for this opportunity to work with her and learn from her. She would also like to thank her parents for their support!

Mike Snyder (Vocal Director/Conductor) Mike is retired from the Manteno School District where he was director of Bands and Choirs for 35 years. He has been active with KVTa both on stage and in the orchestra pit for more than 40 years.

Jordyn Clark (Choreographer) Jordyn and her husband Sam live in Ashkum, and she is employed by the I-Kan Regional Office of Education. She most recently played the role of Ms. Trunchbull in KVTa's *Matilda*. Jordyn states, "Huge thanks to Sam for always being the most supportive theatre husband a girl could ask for."

Meet the Production Staff



Paula Sutter (Production Coordinator) Paula is from Bonfield where she lives with her husband Mark. She is retired from the I-KAN Regional Office of Education where she worked for 32 years. Paula says, “Thank you to the cast and staff for making my job easy!”

Rozy Labriola (Costumer) Rozy lives in Bourbonnais and is employed as a support technician for an insurance software company. In her spare time, she writes YA novels and runs a small business called Eternal Moon Creations. This is her fourth show working with Sharla and her 23rd year with KVTa.

Mike Spilsbury (Set Construction) Mike has lived in Kankakee area his entire life, except 4 years in the U.S. Navy Seabees, and he recently retired after 36 years as a Construction Project Manager with Azzarelli Construction/KVCCI. He was very involved with KVTa 20 years ago in both set construction and the KVTa Board, and the organization is so happy to have him active again. Mike says, “It has always been a pleasure to work with all the very talented KVTa actors, show directors, and KVTa board members.”

Sara Christensen (Set Decorator) Sara and her husband Scott live in Kankakee with their two girls. She is employed by the I-Kan Regional Office of Education. Sara would like to thank Sharla for the opportunity to try something new, as well as her family and all the people who encouraged her throughout this adventure.

Meet the Production Staff



Carol Snyder (Props) Carol is a retired ICU RN and started working backstage 30 plus years ago as her three children and husband, Mike, acted onstage. She would like to thank Sharla for trusting her with creating all the bits and bobs that the actors need on stage.

Gwen Fox (Rehearsal Pianist/Pit Keyboardist) Gwen is a retired Kindergarten teacher and lives with her husband, Michael J. Fox, in Bonfield, Illinois. She is a mother of 3 and a grandmother of 6! She has been rehearsal pianist for several KVTa productions, as well as playing keyboard in the pit for *Seussical*, *Newsies*, *Hairspray*, and *Mama Mia*. She is always amazed at the talent that is in this community!!!

Acknowledgements

I-KAN Regional Office of Education ~ Dr. Patricia High, Superintendent
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through federal funds provided by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Why Support KVTa?

The vitality of a community is determined by its cultural resources. KVTa strives for excellence. Like all other organizations, KVTa depends on support from the community to achieve this excellence. KVTa is a volunteer, community-driven organization. It takes many volunteers and many, many, man hours to produce one show. In our production season, we stage five regular season shows and more often than not, a summer production or a theatre camp for the local youth.

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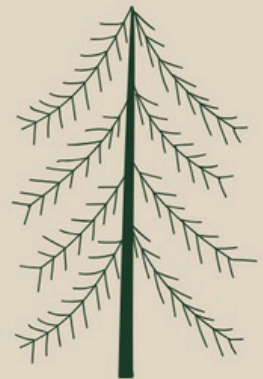


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