

valley youth theatre

For Immediate Release
October 12, 2007

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Valley Youth Theatre to Collect Stuffed Animals at **A Winnie-the-Pooh Christmas Tail** Operation Noah and Hospitalized Children to Benefit November 30 through December 23

(Phoenix) – Youngsters attending Valley Youth Theatre’s 12th anniversary production of *A Winnie the Pooh Christmas Tail* are being asked to bring a new stuffed animal with them to donate to kids who won’t be able to be up and around this holiday season. For a third year, **Valley Youth Theatre** is working with Operation Noah to collect new stuffed animals which will eventually find a friend in a local pediatric ward. Operation Noah, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, was founded by Chandler teen Dennis Fries in 2004 who, after undergoing medical testing, became aware of the need for providing something to comfort children during their hospital stay. “A soft, cuddly stuffed animal can be a great source of comfort to a child” says Dennis, “So I started Operation Noah and have distributed 22,000 stuffed animals to 65 hospitals across the country so far.” Valley Youth Theatre hopes to exceed last year’s collection of nearly 2000 stuffed animals.

“*A Winnie the Pooh Christmas Tail* is the classic tale of friendship, thoughtfulness, and holiday spirit.” says Producing Artistic Director Bobb Cooper. “We are proud to offer this opportunity for young people to put these virtues into practice by working with Operation Noah again this season.”

Based on the beloved stories by A.A. Milne, with music and lyrics by James W. Rodgers, *A Winnie the Pooh Christmas Tail* has become a holiday tradition for families in the twelve years Valley Youth Theatre has been producing it.

Performance times are as follows:

Fridays, November 30, December 7 and 14 at 7:30pm; Friday December 21 at 10:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Saturdays, December 1, 8 and 15 at 11:00am, 1:30pm, and Saturday, December 22 at 11:00am, 1:30pm, and 4:00pm; ; Sundays at 12:30pm and 3:00pm; Tickets are \$18 per person, adults and children two and up, and can be ordered through Valley Youth Theatre’s box office at 602-253-8188, ext. 2. For more information about Valley Youth Theatre visit www.vyt.com. For more information on “Operation Noah”, contact operationnoah@cox.net.

Named by the Arizona Republic as one of the “Top Ten Places to Become a Future Star”, Valley Youth Theatre is a nationally recognized non-profit organization that targets young people age 7 – 19 for participation in and attendance at quality live theatre productions. VYT’s mission is to inspire young people to be the best that they can be by providing them with lifelong lessons through a wide range of performing arts opportunities. VYT is an award-winning theatre company whose Alum include American Idol, Jordin Sparks and Broadway Star, Max Crumm. Valley Youth Theatre is supported in part by the Arizona Commission on the Arts with funding from the State of Arizona and the National Endowment for the Arts. Partial funding also is provided by the Phoenix Arts Commission through appropriations from the Phoenix City Council.

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