



For Immediate Release
October 27, 2005

Contact: Carolyn McBurney
602-253-8188 x301
Carolyn@vyt.com

Valley Youth Theatre and Operation Noah collect over 700 Stuffed animals in
first weekend of *A Winnie-the-Pooh Christmas Tail*
Through December 23

(Phoenix) – Valley Youth Theatre’s 10th anniversary production of “A Winnie the Pooh Christmas Tail” is full of furry friends, but they are not all onstage this year. Recognizing that there are many children unable to be home for the holidays, **Valley Youth Theatre** has teamed up with “Operation Noah” to collect new stuffed animals. Theatre-goers are being asked to donate a new stuffed animal at each performance which will eventually find a friend in a local pediatric ward. The first weekend of performances netted over 700 stuffed animals for the project. “With three more weekends to go, I am very optimistic that this will be our biggest success yet.” says Dennis Fries, the Valley teenager who founded “Operation Noah” following a hospital stay of his own. To date he has donated 12,000 new stuffed animals to children facing a hospital stay.

“A Winnie the Pooh Christmas Tail” is the classic tale of friendship, thoughtfulness, and holiday spirit. Eeyore is gloomy on Christmas Eve since his “very handsome tail” is missing. Pooh, Piglet, Rabbit and Tigger organize the whole Hundred Acre Wood gang into a search. Will the friends find the tail in time for the Christmas Eve party? Based on the beloved stories by A.A. Milne, with music and lyrics by James W. Rodgers, this production is sure to be a holiday hit with all ages.

Directed by VYT’s artistic and education associate, Katie Rex, and based on Bobb Cooper’s original award-winning direction, performance times are as follows: Fridays at 7:00pm; Saturdays at 11:00am, 1:30pm, and 4:00pm; Sundays at 12:30pm and 3:00pm; December 21st, 22nd, and 23rd at 12:30pm and 3:00pm. Tickets are \$15 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.

Valley Youth Theatre is a non-profit organization that targets young people age 7 – 19 for participation in and attendance at quality live theatre productions. Its positive impact on youth provides them with lifelong lessons through a wide range of performing arts opportunities. VYT is an award-winning theatre company most recently winning 31 arIZoni Awards for theatrical excellence in the 2004-2005 season.

“A Winnie-the-Pooh Christmas Tail” is sponsored in part by APS. 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 Office of Arts and Culture through appropriations from the Phoenix City Council.

###