

Pacific Northwest (Washington, Oregon and Alaska)

On behalf of the Vale Elementary PTO, we would like to say thank you for coming to the Vale Elementary School in Cashmere, Washington, for the second year in a row. Lauren Suttle and Kirk Seaman did an excellent job with our kids. It was a very positive experience especially since all the kids who auditioned were given a role. In watching the play "Treasure Island" beyond Lauren and Kirk's expertise you got a true sense that they connected well with the children and were able to pull the best performance from the kids. It was a pleasure to watch the kids bring the characters to life and work as a team towards a common goal under Lauren and Kirk's leadership. I along with my fellow board members highly applaud Lauren, Kirk, and the Missoula Children's Theatre for their hard work and efforts. Job well done!!

Cashmere, WA

Any presenter looking for a quality children's show, which involves dozens of local children, should consider booking Missoula Children's Theatre. The MCT program is outstanding. The performances are darling - and in less than a week, too! The kids involved learn about responsibility, making choices and making friends. Plus, the children put together a performance that is impressive. It's hard to believe that such a professional show can be pulled together in such a short time. This year's MCT staff (Lisa and Ryan) was exceptionally good. They worked well with the children and were such fun.

Moses Lake, WA

I want to express my appreciation of the top quality work Michael and Amy did at the Chehalis, WA production of *The Fisherman and his Wife* in November '98. They worked so well with the children and provided the community with a fabulous play. I certainly hope Michael and Amy are still with your company and that you can pass along my sincere thanks for a job well done. I'm a teacher and I know they were positive, encouraging and had very high expectations for the "budding" thespians. I hope we will see them again.

Chehalis, WA

The Wiz of the West was performed this weekend at my daughter's school (she was a munch kin)! What a delightful show! Tory and Joshua were a hit with all the children. They were great! We appreciate the talent you provide and the wonderful entertainment. We commend Joshua and Tory for a job well done!

LaConner, WA

Your organization's structure and background support is invaluable. We followed your PR recommendations – the other guidance was accurate and timely. Thanks. Your directors, Tory and Joshua are fantastic wonderful people. They are really what makes the week work. They were organized and businesslike, yes – but most importantly enthusiastic, kind, creative, talented and gave to the kids a consistently positive outlook. Wow, are they good.

Olympia, WA

I just wanted to send you a short note of thanks and appreciation. In 1999 Shona Strauser and Gregory Steen came out and in 2000 Anne Sisson and Daniel Rezac came out. Both teams were extremely impressive! They could sing, act, direct and manage a cast of children of all ages. Their patience was endless and talent phenomenal! They are very professional and make the Missoula Children's Theatre shine. Again...thank you! You make February a special time of year here in Colville.

Colville, WA

MCT is really a remarkable children's touring theatre. You do it better than anyone else I've heard about. We could not get away with skipping a year with MCT – the children and parents would rebel! This year we had 199 youngsters show up for our auditions – a huge number. The show could have been cast several times over! Keep up the good work. *Treasure Island* by MCT was one of the best MCT productions I've ever seen. The story was fun, fast-paced and allowed the children to really "reach a new stage" during the show. The MCT team of actor/directors was professional and really talented performers. In addition, they worked with the local

children cast in the play wonderfully. The kids loved them, and the residency was very successful: Not only did the cast put on a darling show, but the young actors involved in the week-long residency learned lots about acting and life. The students at the four educational workshops were delighted with what they learned about stage make-up and acting. And as always, the community loved the play itself. MCT is a unique and remarkable theatre.

Moses Lake, WA

Several teachers have commented how being involved in this play has helped their students tremendously with self-esteem and accomplishment. The Tour Actors' personalities really helped with this achievement.

Sedro-Woolley WA

It was with great joy that we experienced the fruits of your labor on January 19, 2002 at the Washington Center for the Performing Arts. And we can relay the fact that the entire audience was amused and entertained. I simply cannot believe how your brilliant worker/artists, Jeff Pawlik and Ashley Pendley brought this play to fruition after just four days!!! They are truly excellent at their craft. Our six-year-old granddaughter, Savannah Dunlap, was one of the "ladies/lords." She was enthralled. Regardless of her participation I intend to see all of your productions in our fair city and am passing the word. Our sincere thanks to you.

Olympia, WA

We wanted to thank you for the wonderful job Tom Goodrich and Kim Katz did in organizing and presenting *Red Riding Hood* through the Ellensburg Parks and Recreation Department during the week of February 11-16, 2002. Their professionalism, energy and innate ability at being "in tune" to the kids allowed the aspiring actors and actresses to learn how to work as a team and respect each other while having fun. We are grateful for the opportunity this production gives to not only our children but also our community. We look forward to having the Missoula Children's Theatre return to our community.

Ellensburg, WA

Rainbow and Dewey brought their own special gifts that they shared with our community in a personal way. I felt they were very inclusive in interacting with our young actors. They were in charge but yet had enough empathy and compassion to work with them modeling responsibility and admiration. We think and feel this is a great service to our students who otherwise get left out due to lack of parent/school support in the performing arts. Just keep up the good work.

Shelton, WA

MCT is more than a theatrical production. The program and mission address all eleven character education traits. Students come away with a sense of accomplishment and pride. In 20-25 hours 60 students of varying ages and degrees of ability gel to form a unique bond with one common goal. Can't say enough about the program.

Ketchikan, AK

The Tour Actor/Directors were wonderful with the students! The two leads were both Special Education students. Melissa and Don did not know this and with their guidance both leads did a fantastic job and their self-images were soaring!

Sedro-Woolley, WA

The directors are masters of many skills. They gracefully float between being caregivers to teachers, planners, coaches, administrators and actors themselves. Their thoroughness and thoughtfulness make this a very enjoyable event.

Twisp, WA

Our tour directors May Schmolke and Nellie Gelhaus were awesome! They were both very professional and worked beautifully with the children. We unfortunately had a low number of kids audition; however, Mary and

Nellie remained positive and created a successful experience for all students involved. I am always amazed at what the children are able to do in such a short time. It's truly amazing how it all comes together and is so successful. I know this is in part due to the strong actor/director teams and training they must receive. It is such a positive experience for young children to be involved and to be exposed to the arts. It's unfortunate that these are the programs to be cut when budgets fail, or there is a push towards academics. So kudos to your organization we look forward to working with you again next year.

Walla Walla, WA

Jill, Josh and Nicki were great! I really appreciated the clear behavior expectations for the kids. Their use of classroom management techniques was outstanding. Their enthusiasm and ability to work with kids of all age ranges made it a wonderful week. What a wonderful opportunity for our kids! Many of the kids who were in the production have not had the confidence or skills to excel in other areas. This was the perfect opportunity for them to step up and shine! Thank you!

Harrington, WA

Maurice and Stephanie were awesome! They worked well with the kids, were very kind and appropriate and were easy to work with. They were successful in "helping kids reach a new stage!"

Walla Walla, WA

Our students are still talking about Scott and Jessica, still singing the songs from the play and our small, rural community members say that this is the best thing that has happened here in a long time! Thanks! The excitement was awesome!

Curtis, WA

Thanks so much for giving our small-town students this opportunity to experience theatre. Many of our students audition and participate year after year and see it as a highlight of the school-year.

South Bend, WA

Our parents were simply delighted and impressed with what was accomplished in five short days.

Green Acres, WA

Special needs students are put on the stage. It has become a community event that people look forward to.

Deer Park, WA

A girl who was adopted from a Bohemian orphanage by a local family tried out. She is very short for her age, has Gypsy heritage and a European accent, looks five years younger than her actual age, and was not well-accepted by her classmates. As an orphan she had learned to fend for herself and thus developed habits and verbal expressions that are offensive to her classmates. The actors did not know these things about her and gave her a part based on appropriateness and potential. She received parts several years in a row. In my conversations with her, I judged that getting parts with MCT and being with actors who had confidence in her abilities did a great deal for her self esteem.

Newport, WA

The first year an eight-year-old special needs girl was unable to complete the audition because she was too shy to even state her name; the parent decided not to have her participate. The next year the girl auditioned and was cast and her mother felt the experience was fundamental in helping her child overcome anxiety towards other children and social situations.

Curlew, WA

I will never forget one particular rehearsal. We had a child in the cast that was developmentally delayed but reasonably high functioning. He did not always "get" where he was supposed to be. In the middle of rehearsal,

the MCT director stopped a scene to call attention to one of other participants who had so kindly guided "him" to the right place. The MCT director then proceeded to tell the cast how important helping others was on the stage but more importantly in life and how we would all need help in some situation some day. It was a life lesson those kids (myself included) will never forget.

Portland, OR

Our overall educational goal was to give our K-12 students an opportunity to enjoy various components of drama and theater. We are a small school (142 K-12 students) with a community that is very supportive of the arts (school music program, community theater group, local Opera House Society historical-renovation group), but we cannot fund a drama program for the students. MCT did an outstanding job of exposing our students to theater through the workshops and through the actual play production at the end of the week.

Harrington, WA

Gladstone does not have a drama program for primary or middle school. This is the only opportunity for students to perform in a musical or drama production until they get to high school. It is run as a summer recreation program on a fee basis, as the community school is funded on a self-supporting basis.

Gladstone, OR

As a result of a recent levy failure, our school district had to eliminate our fine arts offerings for elementary students. We continue to offer music at the high school level. We do not offer drama, speech or debate at any level. MCT provided us with an opportunity to bring a new experience to our children. Our community has never participated in such a wonderful experience.

Brewster, WA

MCT allows our students of all grades K-5 to come together and build something positive as a team. The level of excellence is set very high and our students rise to the occasion. The week always creates opportunities for new friendships across the age span and facilitates school enthusiasm and unity. The students are transformed each week as they stretch themselves in a direction they may never have stretched themselves before. The week significantly impacts their public speaking skills and presentation skills.

Portland, OR

We have one family who lives A LONG way out of town and is typically reluctant to make any extra trips to town. One of our teachers called the mother to encourage her to allow her daughters to audition for the MCT production. The teacher pointed out what a great experience it would be for both girls--especially the youngest who is a natural "drama queen." The mother seemed certain that neither child would be interested, but after checking with the girls she found that she had assumed incorrectly. In the end, both girls were allowed to be in the production. The oldest even got one of the more prominent roles. The parents helped get them to every practice and even stayed late after the last production to help the MCT crew pack up their supplies. What a great experience for that family!

Harrington, WA

MCT brings together students from schools that are over 30 miles from each other, giving the students a chance to get to know each other in a non-competitive environment (usually they just know each other from sports events) and many friendships have developed as a result. During MCT week the students relax after rehearsals at the local swimming spot and its great to hear the students singing the songs and re-enacting the scenes. The MCT experience helped convince our school's high school drama teacher to include younger students in her productions.

Curlew, WA

Our whole community so anticipates each MCT experience. The school is all the buzz the week before. Since we have done 9 shows with MCT, our students know the level of expectation we have for them. They always meet or exceed our expectations. Students who are quiet and shy, step out in confidence and courage. Students,

already confident, "pour it on" and off we go. Most shows end with the cast going to the local ice cream shop, singing each MCT song from the show, dancing, and laughing. It is truly a celebration of childhood. These students have memories of grade school that will be with them always thanks to MCT.
Portland, OR