



NASHVILLE  
REPERTORY  
THEATRE



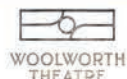
# elf

## The Musical



PRESENTED BY  
**amazon**

**DECEMBER 21 - JANUARY 1, 2023**  
TPAC'S JAMES K. POLK THEATER  
**NASHVILLEREP.ORG 615-782-4040**





**Book by:**

Thomas Meehan / Bob Martin

**Music by:**

Matthew Sklar

**Lyrics by:**

Chad Beguelin

**Choreographed by:**

Christie Zimmerman

**Directed by:**

Micah-Shane Brewer



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# Helping Buddy Find His Dad!

## Notes from the Director



Welcome to the theatre! We're so glad you're with us for this special performance of Elf the Musical.

I love this time of year! There's always a magic in the air as the holidays near. Time feels extra special, and for a moment, we experience the world through eyes of a child. The traditions of decorating Christmas trees, listening to music, giving gifts, experiencing the lights, and sharing time with friends and loved ones are very special. It's a time of reflection, remembrance and renewal.

Like many of you, the movie of Elf is also part of my holiday tradition. There's something so joyous and uplifting revisiting the story of Buddy the Elf every year. And while the movie obviously isn't a musical, we can guarantee you that this musical version captures the fun of the movie with some fantastic music and spectacular choreography that's going to leave you all in the holiday spirit.

Elf is a wonderful celebration of love, innocence and hope. Buddy's perspective of the world is heartfelt and often times hilarious. In the midst of chaos and despair, Buddy can be a fun-loving reminder to look for the good in the world and find a little more faith and trust in the people around you. Elf is also a beautiful reminder to focus on what is most important and making memories with those who matter.

We enjoy making traditions at the Rep, and what a better way to spend time with friends and family than experiencing live theatre! We're honored you've chosen to spend the holidays with us, and we hope that coming to the theatre will become one of your holiday traditions.

It's been a pleasure bringing Elf to life onstage and working with this talented group of artists. You're in for a treat! So, sit back, relax, and find your inner elf! And don't forget...The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear!

Happy Holidays!

Micah-Shane Brewer



# CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

BUDDY THE ELF	Born human, raised at the North Pole as a Christmas Elf, Buddy is eager to find his place in the world. He is a child at heart and has a childlike curiosity that is endearing but gets him into trouble.
JOVIE	Buddy's girlfriend. She works at Macy's and has a bit of a cynical outlook on life and love because of the men she has dated. She is caught off guard by Buddy's genuinely big heart.
WALTER	Buddy's workaholic father. He is a children's book publisher, but lacks the childlike spirit that Buddy has. He is selfish, tense, and generally angry at life.
EMILY	Walter's wife. Though she is sweet and willing to take him in, she thinks Buddy is crazy at first. She wishes Walter would spend more time with their family.
MICHAEL	Buddy's stepbrother who is excited to have a new friend and brother. Unlike his parents, he doesn't take much convincing to have Christmas spirit. He wishes his father would spend more time with him.
DEB	Walter's secretary. Takes an instant liking to Buddy simply for the novelty of it. Though she aims to please and is a bit of a suck-up, she feels under appreciated.
MANAGER	A manager at Macy's. A good, friendly person just trying to do the job and get by.
MR. GREENWAY	Walter's boss. He is what Walter will become if he continues down the path he is on. A tyrannical, workaholic who cares nothing about the people around him or who work for him.
SANTA	Just another workingman. Loves his job and Christmas, but also likes to relax and watch the game when a rare opportunity arises. A natural storyteller.
CHADWICK	One of Walter's right-hand men. He is desperate to keep his job, and is the more simple-minded of the two.
MATTHEWS	One of Walter's right-hand men. He is desperate to keep his job and is the schemer of the two.
ENSEMBLE	They play elves, New Yorkers, office workers, etc.



# SYNOPSIS ACT ONE



When he sits down to watch TV after his Christmas deliveries and realizes that the football game he tried to TiVo has been recorded over, Santa decides to tell the Christmas story of Buddy, the Elf.

Lights up on Buddy, an oversized elf, excitedly getting ready for another day's work in Santa's workshop ("Happy All The Time"). At work, Charlie, the shop manager, informs the Elves that they must work twice as hard this year because more and more humans no longer believe in Santa, and that Christmas spirit is what makes Santa's sleigh fly. Later, Charlie checks on Buddy's progress at making toys. As usual, he is way behind the others and feels terrible about it. Charlie asks him to take a break and, as he does, Buddy overhears a conversation in which Charlie reveals that Buddy is actually a human — Buddy's worst nightmare. Santa sits Buddy down and tells him the story of how he accidentally brought him back to the North Pole when Buddy's mother died. He tells Buddy that his father lives and works in New York City but is on the "naughty list". Determined to save his father with Christmas spirit, Buddy sets off for New York ("World's Greatest Dad").

When he arrives at the office of his father, Walter, in the Empire State Building, Buddy finds him ranting to his wife and son about Christmas being a complete annoyance ("In the Way"). Walter is stunned to hear Buddy's declaration that he is his son and calls security to take him away. They drop him at Macy's, where a manager mistakes him for an employee, sent down from the corporate office to check on things. As they decorate the store, all of the employees begrudge their overly happy new co-worker until they, too, catch Buddy's infectious Christmas spirit ("Sparklejollytwinklejingle"). When everyone goes to leave for the night, Buddy asks Jovie, his favorite co-worker, on a date. She accepts. The next morning, a department store Santa arrives. Buddy accuses him of being a fake, and they fight. The police are called and take Buddy to his father's apartment.

Emily and Michael are at home, trying in vain to build Michael's science project. Buddy agrees to help if they will, in turn, muster up some Christmas spirit to write letters to Santa. They sit down to ask for the one thing they never get: some quality time with Walter ("I'll Believe in You"). Buddy fixes the science project to high-fives and hugs just as Walter walks in. Resistant at first, Emily talks him into allowing Buddy to stay the night. In the morning, a Fed-Ex man arrives with the results of a DNA test. When they first met, Emily plucked one of Buddy's hairs to send off for testing, and the results confirm that he is Walter's son ("In the Way - Reprise"). Buddy is elated, but Walter is not... especially since he must take Buddy with him to work so Emily can attend a meeting.

Newly clothed in a business suit, Buddy is excited to accompany Walter to work ("Just Like Him"). When Walter's boss comes in and threatens to fire him, Buddy's rambunctious curiosity and playfulness are not a welcome distraction. Later that night, Jovie and Buddy go on their date. At first, it isn't going well, but things soon turn around. Buddy promises to give Jovie a real Christmas, starting with a Christmas Eve dinner at Tavern on the Green like she's always dreamed ("A Christmas Song"). They kiss. Meanwhile, Walter is still at work and has just been given a manuscript for a children's story that could save his job. Buddy bursts in to tell Walter that he's in love and, while Walter talks with colleagues, Buddy decides to make "snow" by putting the manuscript through the shredder. With the manuscript destroyed, Walter explodes with anger and tells



# SYNOPSIS ACT TWO

The Santa from the beginning of the play hurries back from intermission to take up the tale of Buddy, the Elf, once again.

Back at the apartment, Buddy leaves a letter to apologize and say goodbye to Walter, Emily and Michael. He then wanders NYC until he ends up at a Chinese restaurant with several other "Santas" and "Elves" on Christmas Eve. They complain about the state of Christmas and children these days ("Nobody Cares about Santa"). When they leave to return home to their families, Buddy remembers that he was supposed to go on another date with Jovie. Elsewhere, she waits in front of Tavern on the Green, upset that Buddy is two hours late ("Never Fall in Love"). Buddy arrives, apologizes and gives Jovie the snow globe that Santa gave him when he left the North Pole. Still upset, Jovie leaves.

When Emily and Michael find Buddy's note, they are deeply saddened. Emily tells Michael that, although she loves him, Buddy is crazy for believing in Santa at thirty years of age. Just then, Santa's sleigh flies through the sky and makes a renewed believer out of both of them ("There Is a Santa Claus"). They rush to Walter's office to tell him, finding him desperately trying to come up with an idea for a new children's book before his boss arrives to hear the pitch. The boss, Greenway, arrives and, as Walter begins his awful pitch, Buddy enters. As a present to Walter, Buddy gives Greenway the story of Buddy the Elf ("The Story of Buddy the Elf"). Greenway loves it, but he wants to change the elf to a horse... and he wants Walter to work on it all through Christmas Eve and the next day. Walter quits, having finally decided to spend time with his family, as Greenway storms out.

When Michael tells Buddy that they saw Santa's sleigh land, Buddy realizes that the sleigh has run out of the Christmas spirit that allows it to run. They run to help, finding Santa sitting glumly beside his sled ("Nobody Cares About Santa - Reprise"). Buddy spots a camera news crew nearby and grabs the microphone to beg all of New York to believe, sing and spread Christmas spirit so that Santa can fly again. Jovie arrives and is convinced, as other random New Yorkers join the movement ("A Christmas Song - Reprise") and Santa's sleigh again takes flight. Santa invites Buddy to return to the North Pole with him, but Buddy decides to stay, finally feeling like he belongs.

We transition back to the Santa that began both acts as he closes the storybook and goes to answer the knock at the door. In enters Michael, Emily, Walter, Buddy, Jovie... and their new baby, Buddy Hobbs, to celebrate Christmas as they now do every year ("Finale").



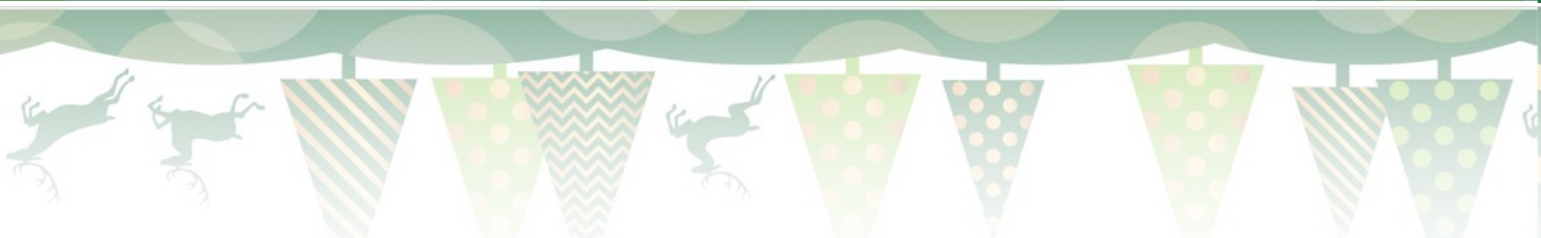
# Candy, Candy Cane, Candy Corn, COSTUMES!

## Notes from the Costumer Designer

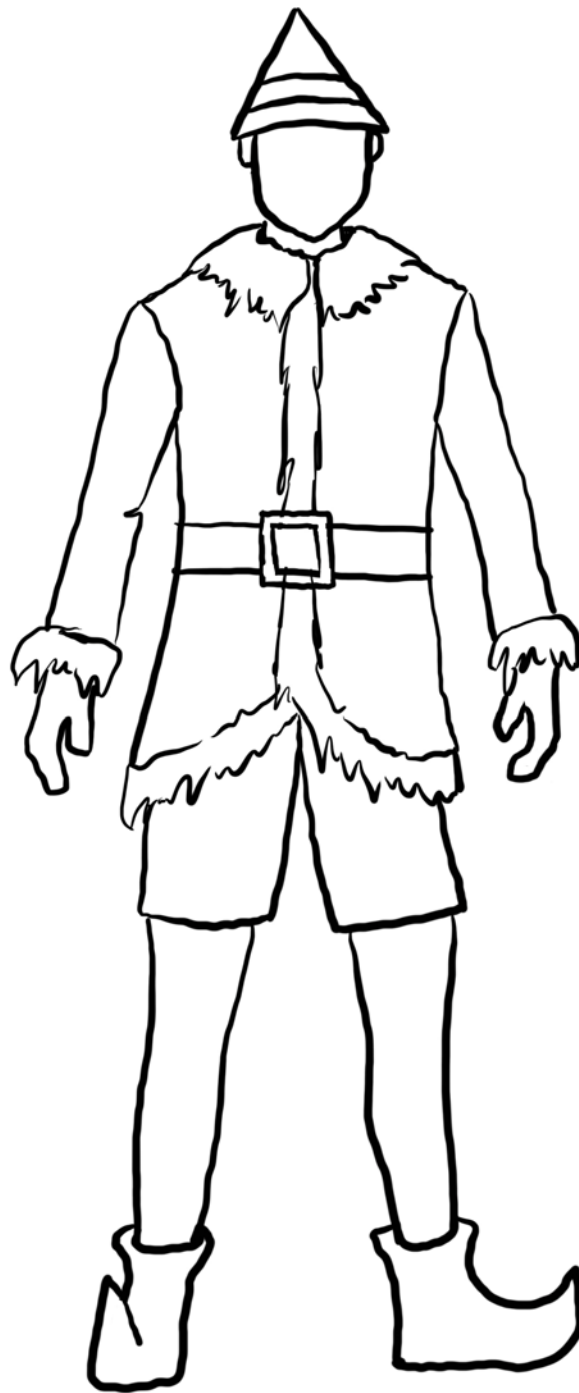


My inspiration for the North Pole elf costumes for Nashville Rep's production of Elf came from all of the Christmas specials I watched on TV as a child as well as some of my children's best loved Christmas books. Buddy is such an iconic character that I had to be careful to give a nod to his film character's design but make sure that he fit the world we are creating for the stage musical. I also worked closely with our scenic designer to make sure that our colors and textures of costumes and settings were compatible and complementary. It was also fun to research contemporary clothing for the New Yorkers in the show by looking at what people are wearing now! Research is one of my favorite parts of designing costumes.

Happy holidays,  
Lori Gann-Smith  
Costume Designer of Nashville Repertory Theatre's Production of Elf



It's me!  
BUDDY!



Activity 1:  
What color was Buddy  
wearing when he first  
arrived in NY?





SANTA !



Activity 2:  
What color are Santa's  
signature hat, coat  
and boots?



# Building Buddy's Map Through New York!

## Notes from the Scenic Designer

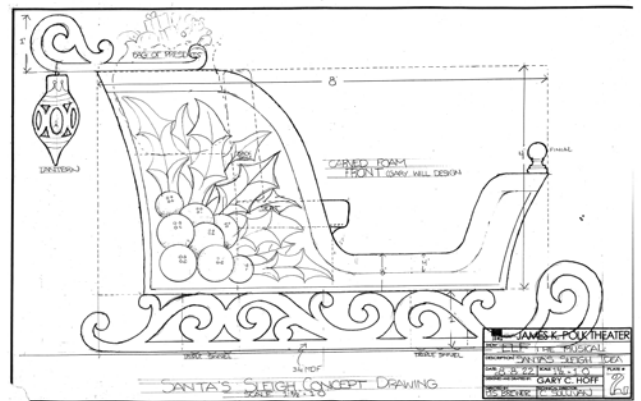


The wonderful thing about designing a show like *ELF THE MUSICAL* is that it can be as big and colorful as you want! I realized that many are familiar with the film version of *ELF*, but I didn't want our production to be a poor representation of the movie. I wanted our production to have its own look. The main idea behind the scenic design is a children's Christmas book come to life. We see Santa in the very beginning of the show reading from the book of the life of Buddy the Elf. I wanted to continue that idea of the audience seeing what Santa is reading (like when you



visualize books as you are reading them, but this time it is on a stage). So, the scenery has a children's book illustration feel to it.

To frame the action, I have designed four portals that frame the space. Behind the last portal will be a projection screen where all of the background images for each scene will be projected. Since it is such a large-scale production with many scenes, that was the best way to create a big look without a lot of scenery. That is not to say there are not many rolling and flown set pieces to create each scene. I tried to make each of those pieces as specific as possible and not unduly load down a scene with a lot of scenery. Since the actors would be moving much of the rolling scenery, keeping it to the essentials was key.



When you are watching the production, keep an eye out for the details. See how many you can spot. I will not tell you all of them, but here are a couple. In Santa's Study the bookshelves are filled with books of all the Nice or Naughty kids for each year going back to 1900 and additionally the books of the toys from each period. The Greenway Press Offices has a custom logo and paperwork with the company logo.

I hope you enjoy this magical production of *ELF THE MUSICAL*.

Sincerely,  
Gary C. Hoff  
Scenic Designer of Nashville Repertory Theatre's Production of *Elf*



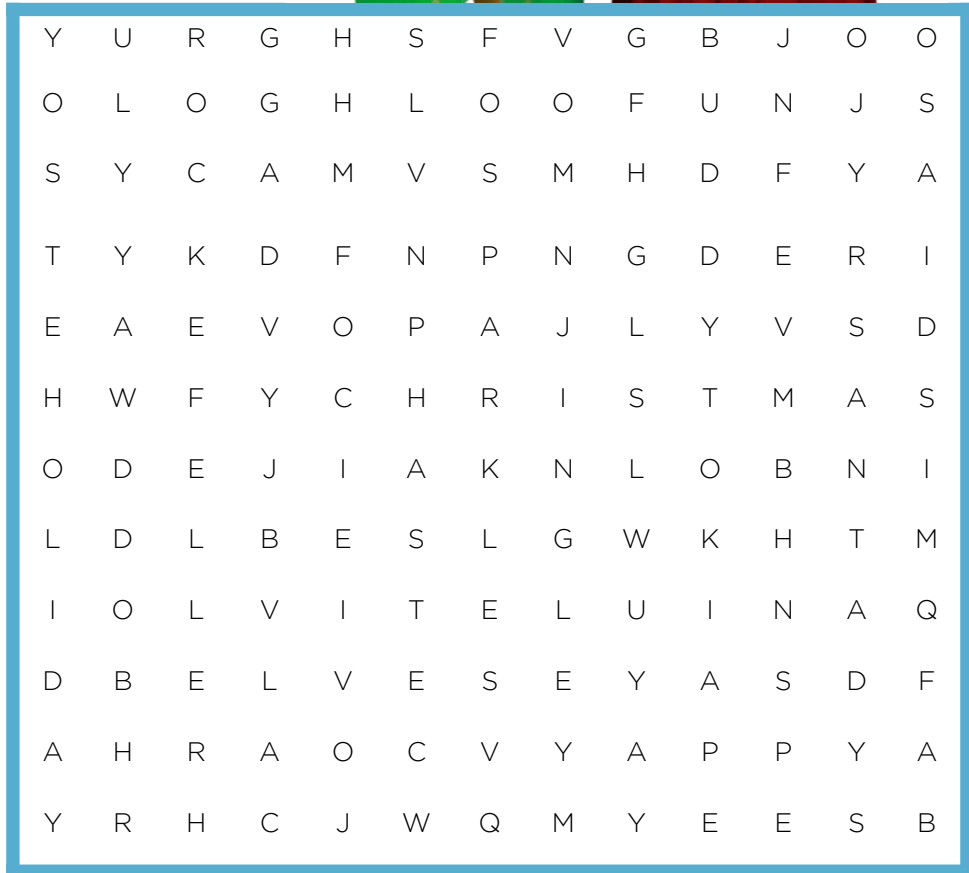
## ACTIVITY 3: WORD SEARCH

Buddy needs your help finding himself and everything else to get ready for the Best Christmas EVER!

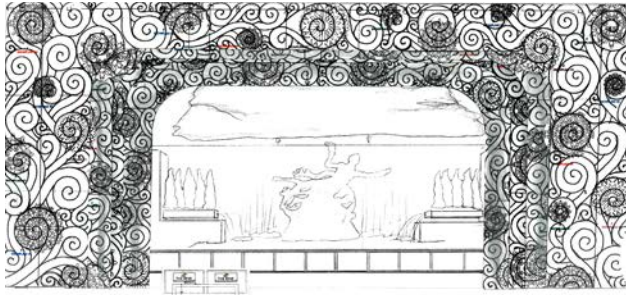


### WORD BANK

BUDDY  
SANTA  
JOVIE  
ELVES  
MACYS  
ROCKEFELLER  
CHRISTMAS  
SPARKLE  
JINGLEY  
HOLIDAY



# ROCKEFELLER CENTER ICE RINK



**elf**  
The Musical

ROCKEFELLER CENTER ICE RINK

An interesting point to note is that the Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree was, in fact, not the first public Christmas tree in New York City. That distinction goes to the Madison Square Park tree that was erected in 1912 as a social affair that brought the joy of a holiday tree to those without the means to have one in their home (this was an expensive endeavor at the time).

Nineteen years later, though, the first iteration of what is perhaps the world's most famous Christmas tree was erected. At the time, John D. Rockefeller Jr.'s 14-building Rockefeller Center complex (it was the largest private building project ever undertaken at the time) was one year into construction.

On Christmas Eve, 1931, at the height of the Great Depression, workers at the Rockefeller Center construction site decided to pool their money together to buy a Christmas tree to lift their spirits. It was a 20-foot balsam fir that they decorated with handmade garland and strings of cranberries from their families. The men lined up at the tree to receive their paychecks.

The tradition of this tree going up in front of 30 Rockefeller Plaza has continued ever since. When the tree has fulfilled its duties, it is taken down, milled, treated and made into lumber to be used for homebuilding. The lumber has been donated to Habitat for Humanity since 2007.



[CREDIT: Dana Schulz](#)



# TAVERN ON THE GREEN



**elf**  
The Musical

TAVERN ON THE GREEN

Originally designed by Calvert Vaux, Tavern on the Green was built as a sheep fold in the 1880's to house the 700 Southdown sheep that grazed in Central Park's Sheep Meadow. Robert Moses transformed the building in to a restaurant in 1934, as part of his park renovation. Through the next few decades, Tavern underwent several changes in management, but the iconic view of the park, and the addition of a dance floor, outdoor seating, and lavish menu, kept prominent actors, musicians, and public figures coming back to the restaurant to dine, drink, and celebrate.

After a hiatus starting in 2009, the city searched diligently for a new operator to reopen the iconic restaurant in 2013. The city selected current owners and restaurateurs Jim Caiola and David Salama, previously of Philadelphia, who would bring a fresh, welcoming approach to Tavern. The duo renovated the restaurant with inviting décor and wood paneling reminiscent of the original sheep fold, and, with a seasonal menu more reflective of Greater New York, reopened Tavern on the Green in April 2014.



CREDIT: <https://www.tavernonthegreen.com/>



# Dear Santa,

Tell us about your favorite holiday memory.

As a child, I received a letter from Santa Claus when I was about 7 or 8. I still have the letter - it was wrapped in a really nice red velvet ribbon, and the paper was an old-fashioned parchment type. It blew my mind. It's a tradition now for my family!



What's your favorite holiday movie and why?

I think my favorite holiday movie might be "The Polar Express," because it's a family favorite and it has great songs. However, I consider Disney's animated "Beauty and the Beast" to be a holiday movie, only because my sister and I received the movie as a gift one Christmas, and made a habit of watching it each Christmas, while drinking egg nog.

Are there any traditions that you do with your family for the holidays?

Aside from meeting together for a dinner celebration, on Christmas Eve, to exchange gifts amongst family members, we leave milk and homemade cookies for Santa on Christmas Eve, and we always buy a special ornament for the year.

What's your favorite scene from the film?

From "Elf?" I have not watched the whole movie (I know... Please don't hate me... I'll watch it as soon as the run of the show is over!!). But I have seen sections of it, and I think my favorite scene is the one where Santa tells Buddy his origin story.

What are you most looking forward to about taking on your role in "Elf"?

As challenging as it is to re-create a role that someone has made famous in a movie, I'm actually looking forward to that! It's exciting to be able to help tell this story in a different way, and to use my talents to make people laugh, or to help people feel happy.

If the best way is to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear, What's your go to Christmas Song?

"Oh, Holy Night!"

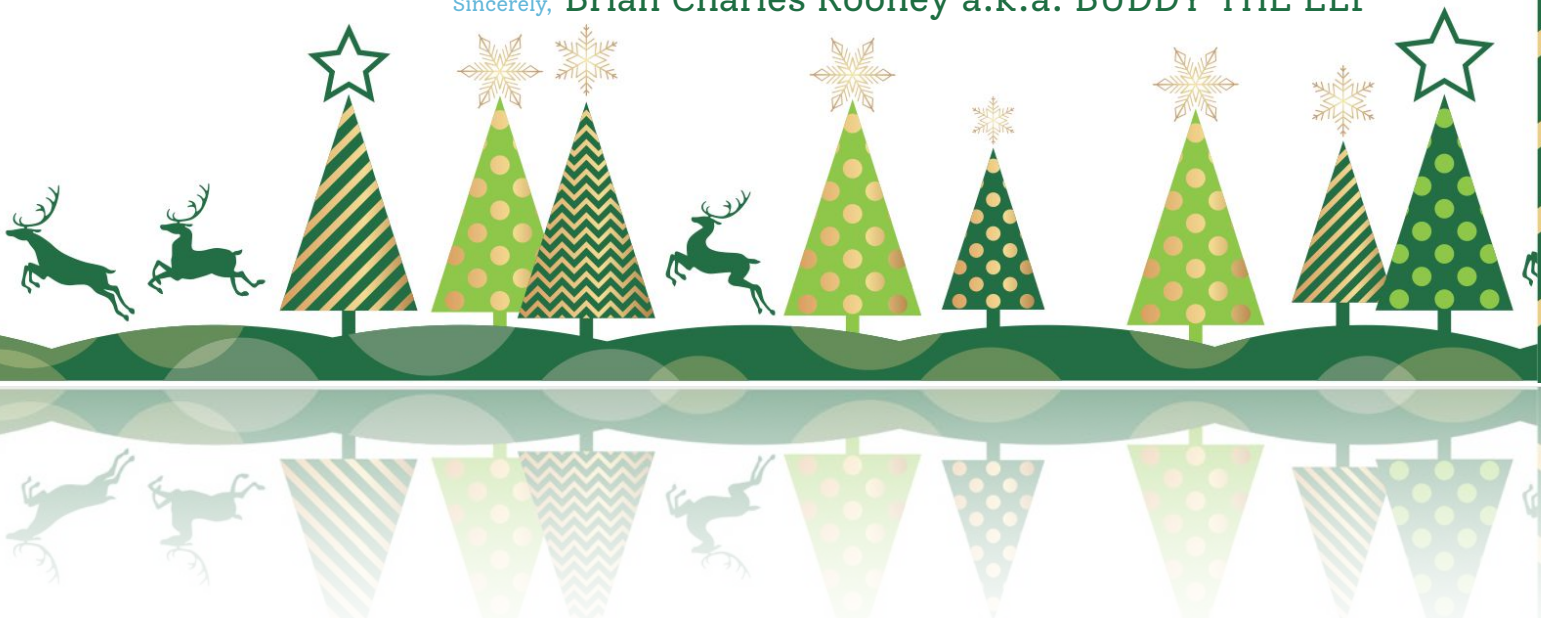
What are the four food groups of elves?

Technically there are five: cookies, candy, candy canes, candy corn, and syrup!

What does playing BUDDY mean to you?

It means the world to me because it's a chance for me to help tell a story that so many people love, in a town that is now home for me. I'll have a chance to perform for my extended family, and for the wonderful children and families, who might be in the audience, from Saint Bernard Academy and Nashville Theater School! I get to work with a cast of triple threats who inspire me every time we rehearse, and I get to work for a theater company I respect. I feel privileged in that respect, and I'm excited for Nashville to see even more of Nashville Repertory Theatre's wonderful work!

Sincerely, **Brian Charles Rooney a.k.a. BUDDY THE ELF**



# Dear Santa,

Tell us about your favorite holiday memory.

I love Christmas so there are so many to choose from! Last year I thought Christmas was over because on the 21st my boyfriend got COVID. But Christmas always finds a way to shine through. I got us a little tree and we holed up and watched Christmas movies and played cards and cooked and laughed. As much as I missed my family (which was very very much) we got to spend our first Christmas together and it was lovely.



What's your favorite holiday movie and why?

My favorite holiday movie is Nightmare Before Christmas. My mom brought it home one day when I was a little kid and my brother and I fell in love with it and watched it everyday. And if there's any holiday I like better than Christmas it's Halloween so that movie is made for me!

Are there any traditions that you do with your family for the holidays?

The Christmas tradition in my family comes from the fact that none of us feel like cooking on Christmas because we're too busy laughing and talking. So we spread a comforter out on the living room floor and everyone in the family orders their favorite food from our small town restaurants that my brother and sister and I only get when we're home. So usually we end up with a huge spread of pizza, Chinese, subs and cheese curds.

What's your favorite scene from the film?

I don't know about my favorite but I've never seen my mom laugh harder than when Buddy the Elf pours candy and syrup all over his spaghetti and eats it.

What are you most looking forward to about taking on your role in "Elf"?

I'm most looking forward to Ice Skating!

If the best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear, What's your go to Christmas Song?

My go to Christmas Song is The Christmas Song, the Nat King Cole version.

What are the four food groups of elves?

The four elf food groups are Candy, Candy Canes, Candy Corn and Syrup

What does playing JOVIE mean to you?

I am looking forward to playing Jovie because she may be crabby but deep down she just wants to have a magical Christmas and in the end she gets her wish!

Sincerely, **Meggan Utech a.k.a. JOVIE**



# Dear Santa,

Tell us about your favorite holiday memory.

My favorite holiday memory is the year we got my puppy Mollie! She is a delightful Morkie and loves to flop on her back whenever you look at her, shamelessly hoping for a belly rub!



What's your favorite holiday movie and why?

Obviously, my favorite holiday movie is "Elf"! I love it because of Buddy's hilarious innocent childlike antics!

Are there any traditions that you do with your family for the holidays?

We always go to church on Christmas Eve, wear matching pajamas at home, read The Night Before Christmas, have cinnamon rolls Christmas morning, and slowly take turns opening presents!

What's your favorite scene from the film?

My favorite scene is when Buddy fights the fake Santa and wrecks the store.

What are you most looking forward to about taking on your role in "Elf"?

I'm most looking forward to being on stage and spreading Christmas cheer!

If the best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear,  
What's your go to Christmas Song?

My go to Christmas song is Silent Night.

What are the four food groups of elves?

Candy, candy canes, candy corn and syrup

What does playing MICHAEL HOBBS mean to you?

Playing Michael gives me an opportunity to play in scenarios unlike anything I have experienced before. I'm thrilled to perform with this incredibly talented cast and artistic team! It is a blast to explore and find new hidden secrets within Michael's character.

Sincerely, **James Heinrichs a.k.a. MICHAEL HOBBS**





## ACTIVITY 4: CREATIVE WRITING

Buddy first heads to New York on brand new adventure to find his dad!

Tell us about your experience visiting a new place for the first time! Where'd you go? What feelings did you experience? What did you do?

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This is an exciting time of year for our dear friend Buddy and sometimes in all that excitement we may end up making a few mistakes. Always remember that it is okay to make mistakes because when we do, we learn something new! Tell us about a mistake that you've made and what you learned from it.

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# Who is Santa Claus?



The story behind Santa goes back to the third century during the time of St. Nicholas, a monk, even though some sources state that he was a bishop. Nicholas was born around 280 A.D. in Patara, in modern-day Turkey. Legend states that Nicholas had a giving spirit and traveled the countryside helping those less fortunate and the sick. Nicholas's parents were wealthy and left the bulk of their estate to Nicholas when they died. Nicholas, who always had the spirit of giving, took his inheritance and gave to those less fortunate and lived a life of humility. December 6 marks the anniversary of Nicholas's death. By the time of the Renaissance, St. Nicholas was the most popular saint in Europe. St. Nicholas was canonized by Pope Eugene IV on June 5, 1446 and became known as the patron saint for children and sailors.

Waves of European immigrants brought St. Nicholas's holiday tradition to America. By the end of the 18th century, St. Nicholas was recognized by American culture. In December of 1773 and December of 1774, it was reported that groups of Dutch families in New York gathered to honor the anniversary of Nicholas's death. The name, Santa Claus, was stated to evolve from Nick's Dutch nickname, Sinter Klaas, a shortened form of Sint Nikolaas, which is translated as the Dutch name for St. Nicholas.

Gift giving, a custom that was passed down from St. Nicholas's generosity in helping others has been a part of the Christmas tradition since the early 19th century. In the United States, stores advertised Christmas shopping in 1820, and by 1840, United States newspapers were carrying Christmas advertisements, featuring Santa Claus. In 1841, many children traveled to Philadelphia to see a life-size Santa model. The lure of Santa and Christmas giving were becoming popular in the United States. The Salvation Army in the early 1890's started sending unemployed men in Santa suits to solicit donations for needy families to provide them with Christmas meals. Salvation Army Santas have been ringing their bells on street corners and in front of stores to gather donations for the needy since the start of this tradition.

A noteworthy Christmas poem, "An Account of a Visit from St. Nicholas", was written by Clement Clark Moore, an Episcopal minister for his three daughters. This poem later became known as "Twas the Night Before Christmas." Moore was hesitant to publish the poem due to the subject of the poem. Publication of the poem led to the popular version of Santa as a "jolly old soul" with a portly figure and the ability to climb down into chimneys to leave presents under the trees for good boys and girls. After leaving presents at one house, he would dash away to another house on his sleigh being drawn by eight flying reindeer.

Santa's images went through many transitions during the years. Santa wasn't always illustrated as a jolly soul with a red coat, rosy cheeks, big white beard, portly belly, and black boots. Prior to 1931, Santa was illustrated as a tall gaunt man or a spooky-looking elf. During one point in history, Santa's clothes varied from a bishop's robe to a Norse huntsman's animal skin clothes. During the Civil War, Thomas Nast, a cartoonist, drew Santa for the Harper's Weekly as a small elf-like figure who supported the Union. In later years, Nast transitioned Santa's coat from a tan coat to a red coat, a color that is currently used for Santa's clothing.

Credit: [STPL Reference Covington](#)

