

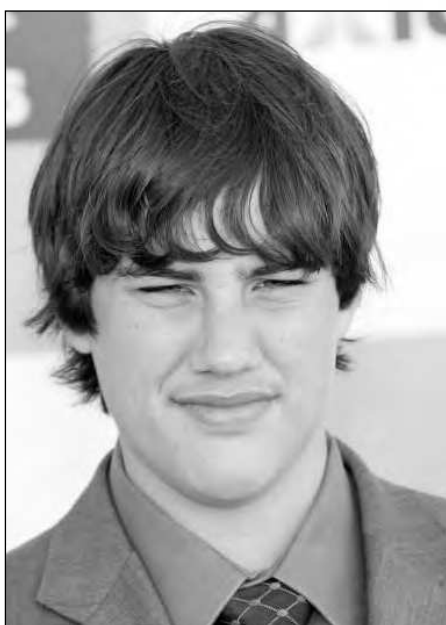
WHAT'S happening



The Nutcracker was Tchaikovsky's final ballet, and he wasn't thrilled to do it. But you can't walk into a grocery store this month without hearing it, such is its omnipresence. Hey, if you haven't already (What? Do you live under a rock? Are you buried in a book?), why not see the ballet this weekend, produced by our very own **Eugene Ballet Company**? And no, this is not the Nutcracker Suite; this is the whole dish, served up with rat kings, sugar plum fairies and leaping life-size Russian nutcrackers. The "recorded music" version on Thursday may be cheaper (and a better deal for large groups), but we recommend the live orchestra accompaniment Friday through Sunday. It would make Tchaikovsky oh-so-much happier. See Thursday, Dec. 20 Calendar.

If you passed on both Actors Cabaret of Eugene's and Willamette Rep's *A Christmas Carol* this year out of sheer exhaustion from the subject matter (you too!), we can assure you the one-night, one-man show **A Christmas Carol Solo**, showing at the Eugene Garden Club, will not stick to the script.

Englishman and amateur thespian Thomas Hutchinson (pictured below, as played by Al LePage) will usher you into a world where history, story and improv commingle in a refreshingly interactive evening, with proceeds benefitting the Lane County Historical Society & Museum. As Hutchinson plays all the roles (and may even wax historical on Eugene Skinner, among other things), come prepared for tangents and corners of Dickens' tale you may not be all too familiar with. See Thursday, Dec. 20 Calendar.



The Man Show invades Diablo's **Downtown Lounge**, and this is news? Well, it is if you're being weighed down by the pressure to perform this holiday season (with the gifts and cheer, you pervs!) and need to let off some hearty guffaws. With comedians **Andy Andrist**, **Richard Bain** and **Kristine Lavine** rocking the mic with their Christmas cheerleading and **Kevin Kimmel** (pictured left) following in his father's boxer shorts as host, this is one hilarious holiday salve for your funny bones. See Thursday, Dec. 20 Calendar.



DAVID KRAPES