



GEORGE VETTER PHOTO/CANNON-BEACH.NET  
The full cast of "A Christmas Carol: The Musical"

# 'A CHRISTMAS CAROL: THE MUSICAL'

The holiday classic, running Nov. 17 through Dec. 23, closes the Coaster Theatre Playhouse's 45th anniversary season

By **WILLIAM HAM**  
FOR COAST WEEKEND

**Y**ou know the story: the miserly skinflint visited by three ghosts who teach him the error of his ways and help him learn the true meaning of Christmas. It's added the term "Scrooge" to the lexicon, turned "Bah! Humbug" into an all-purpose grumble of anti-holiday disdain, and has been adapted, reimagined and parodied countless times. In the annals of timeless holiday tales, "A Christmas Carol" resides comfortably at the top of the list.

And now, to close its 45th anniversary season, Cannon Beach's Coaster Theatre Playhouse brings "A Christmas Carol: The Musical" to the stage. The show opens Friday, Nov. 17, and runs through Saturday, Dec. 23.

The Charles Dickens classic is part

of a tradition stretching back to the theater's beginnings.

A community-written and performed production, known as "The Dickens Play," was among the Cannon Beach playhouse's first offerings in 1972, and became their go-to winter attraction for many years thereafter. Further adaptations followed, most recently Leslie Bricusse's "Scrooge! The Musical" in 2012. And now the theater has brought things full-circle with its most ambitious "Carol" to date.

Originally produced at the Theater at Madison Square Garden, where it ran annually from 1994 to 2003, "A Christmas Carol: The Musical" is trickier and more challenging than most adaptations of Dickens' novella. With lyrics by Tony Award-winner Lynn Ahrens and music by eight-time Academy Award recipient Alan Menken, the production, as directed by Lisa Ferguson, has nearly

wall-to-wall music and very little spoken dialogue.

"It's more of an operetta than a standard musical," Jenni Tronier, the Coaster's marketing and operations director, said. "Almost everything in the show is sung rather than spoken, which is a challenge for our actors; it uses different muscles than they might be used to."

"As far as format goes, it's probably closest to something like 'Les Misérables,'" added David Sweeney, a Coaster regular — this is the fourth production he's appeared in this season — who is lending his talents (and his burgeoning muttonchops) to the role of Bob Cratchit, Ebenezer Scrooge's put-upon underling.

"Anyone should be able to follow along even if they're unfamiliar with the story — if such a person even exists!" he said

## IF YOU GO

**"A Christmas Carol: The Musical,"** based on the novella by Charles Dickens  
**Coaster Theatre Playhouse,**  
Cannon Beach

**Performances** Nov. 17 — Dec. 23, 2017

7:30 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays

3:00 p.m., Sundays, Nov. 26, Dec. 10 and 17

7:30 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 21

**Tickets:** \$20 or \$25, call 503-436-1242 or log on to [coastertheatre.com/box-office](http://coastertheatre.com/box-office)

**Box office** is open 1 to 5 p.m. Wednesday to Saturday; performance days, 1 p.m. to curtain time.