



Brigham Young University
BYU ScholarsArchive

Theses and Dissertations

2009-04-14

The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre: A Model Children's Theatre

Chareen Hardy Lauritzen
Brigham Young University - Provo

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd>



Part of the [Film and Media Studies Commons](#), and the [Theatre and Performance Studies Commons](#)

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Lauritzen, Chareen Hardy, "The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre: A Model Children's Theatre" (2009). *Theses and Dissertations*. 1734.

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd/1734>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

THE ROBERTA JONES JUNIOR THEATRE:
A MODEL CHILDREN'S THEATRE

by

Chareen Hardy Lauritzen

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Theatre and Media Arts

Brigham Young University

August 2009

Copyright © 2009 Chareen Hardy Lauritzen
All Rights Reserved

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

Chareen Hardy Lauritzen

This thesis has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

Date

Megan Sanborn Jones, Chair

Date

Rodger D. Sorenson

Date

George Nelson

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

As a chair of the candidate's graduate committee, I have read the thesis of Chareen Hardy Lauritzen in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographical style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university and department style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials include figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee and is ready for submission to the university library.

Date

Megan Sanborn Jones
Chair, Graduate Committee

Accepted for the Department

Rodger D. Sorenson
Department Chair

Accepted for the College

Rory R. Scanlon
Associate Dean, College of Fine Arts and
Communications

ABSTRACT

THE ROBERTA JONES JUNIOR THEATRE: A MODEL CHILDREN'S THEATRE

Chareen Hardy Lauritzen

Department of Theatre and Media Arts

Master of Arts

Since its beginning in 1968, the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre, a children's theatre, connected to the Parks and Recreation Department of Santa Clara, California, has been creating child-centered performances for young audiences. This thesis will explore the history of the Santa Clara/Roberta Jones Junior Theatre and discuss the components that have contributed to its forty-year success. For a children's theatre to be successful it needs to be first centered on the learning of the children, in tune with the need of its community, and have a staff focused on the same goals. By examining the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre, the intension is to give a picture of its organizational structure, an analysis of its guiding principles, and how the author proposes to use it as a model for a children's theatre in the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to the facilitators of children's theatre at Brigham Young University; to Megan Sanborn Jones for her endless assistance, thoughtful advice and supporting me through all my endeavors; to Rodger Sorenson for his tremendous help, knowledge and always being there to pick me up; to George Nelson for fueling my passion for children's theatre and his encouragement to help me succeed; to Janet Swenson for her friendship, support, and letting me teach my other love—theatrical makeup, and to the many other individuals involved in the Department of Theatre and Media Arts for giving me numerous opportunities to learn and grow.

My appreciation to Kevin Cornelius, Judy Thomas, Robin Cooley, Kathy Smith, Karen Altree Piemme, Craig Hedlund and the countless others who work with and love the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre and encouraged my affection for children's theatre.

Thanks to my parents, Mark and Karen Hardy, for making my education and especially my Masters and this thesis possible. To my sisters, Marnelle and Janalyn, for keeping life lighthearted. And immeasurable thanks to my husband, Bryce, for his love and unwavering support, even through the tough times.

Lastly and especially to Roberta Jones who instilled in me a love of theatre at a young age. She gave me the vision of what children's theatre could be and the necessity of putting the participants and their welfare first and foremost. She will always be behind everything I endeavor to do in life.

CONTENTS

Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
Chapter Two: History of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre.....	10
Chapter Three: Organization, Operations and Offerings	22
Chapter Four: Guiding Principles and Philosophies	48
Chapter Five: Creating a New Theatre on the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre Model.....	59
Appendix A: List of Performance from 1968 to Present	68
Appendix B: About the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre.....	74
Appendix C: Santa Clara Junior Theatre Participation Rules and Responsibilities	75
Appendix D: Roberta Jones Junior Theatre Participation Rules and Responsibilities	79
Appendix E: Rehearsal Schedule from <i>Seussical!</i> in April 2008	83
Appendix F: <i>Seussical!</i> Commitment and Parent Participation Form.....	97
Appendix G: <i>Seussical!</i> Schedule Conflict Form.....	98
Appendix H: <i>Seussical!</i> Parent Checklist.....	99
Appendix I: Discussions with Roberta Jones Junior Theatre Director Kevin Cornelius.....	101
Appendix J: Testimonials from Roberta Jones Junior Theatre Participants	112
Appendix K: Photos.....	128
Bibliography:.....	133

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In order to find the true value of children's theatre, one must look far beyond merely the price of a ticket. In an environment where children are constantly exposed to the troubles of the world, Theatre for Young Audiences offers appropriate entertainment for children and youth. It also provides them with many opportunities for learning about the world in a manner that is exciting and non-confrontational. Furthermore, children's theatre can promote social awareness and help to develop an appreciation of the performing arts for those involved. Although the specific plays presented may change over time, the reasons for performing them remain the same and will continue to do so for the next generation.¹

The history of Theatre for Young Audiences is not long in the United States. There is evidence of its presence as early as 1810,² but it emerged and became a distinct branch of theatre in the early 1900's. Many European countries have enjoyed a longer history of children's theatre. Nonetheless, through the endeavors of hard working individuals and the support of organizations, it has become a flourishing branch of theatre in this country as well. There are various forms of Theatre for Young Audiences including adults performing for children and children performing for children. These performers may be professional, amateur, or a combination of both. I plan to discuss quality amateur productions in which child performers present shows for children and families.

¹ McCaslin, Nellie. *Historical Guide to Children's Theatre in America*. New York: Greenwood P, 1987. (5)

² McCaslin, Nellie. *Historical Guide to Children's Theatre in America*. New York: Greenwood P, 1987. (6)

Quality community children's theatre should be judged on the basis of children's experiences not monetary gain. In order for theatre practitioners to find success their focus needs to be on creating an environment where children feel safe and can learn and grow. The children's well-being must be the main motivation behind a theatre program's existence.

Many may not see this type of children's theatre as successful because their productions may not be "professional quality" but that is not the focus. The goal of children's theatre should be to raise children in an encouraging and learning environment where they will grow to be mature and responsible adults, since this is where measurable success can be found. With the children at the center of the program they will return, show after show, and perpetuate the program and its ideals. If the children feel appreciated and needed they will perform well and know their efforts have added positively to the production.

An outstanding example of this style of children's theatre, working in an ever-changing 21st century can be seen in the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJTT). I plan to examine this theatre as an exceptional example of a children's theatre which can be used as a model for those starting a children's theatre, as I plan to, or for those who need to reenergize an existing children's theatre.

I participated in the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre for over ten years and can therefore examine the RJTT from the points of view of a scholar and a participant. The reason I learned so much from this theatre program was because of one lady, Roberta Jones, the Executive Producer of the RJTT. A native of South Dakota, Jones earned her Bachelor's Degree in Theatre Arts from Wesleyan University in Mitchell, South Dakota and her Master's Degree in Theatre Arts from the University of Denver. She understood the lessons children could learn from participating in theatre and from each other. She was always there to help the children learn and grow. For

example, after an entire week of rehearsals, Jones would spend her Saturday teaching children to build and paint sets, design lighting, and organize props. She invested her time and talents teaching the children who in turn enjoyed learning new skills and having a place they felt safe and were appreciated. To document how I am not alone in my experience and to show the personal impact of her work, I have included testimonials from other participants in the appendix.³

I have loved theatre since I was a small girl. It was the only thing that gave purpose and meaning to my young life. I remember my earliest beginnings at the age of four taking *Let's Pretend!* classes, which were run by the RJJT and taught by Roberta Jones. I greatly enjoyed learning to use my imagination to create worlds and characters. When I turned eight in 1991, I was excited to advance into the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre⁴ program in Santa Clara, California. I had watched the productions for five years and I finally had the chance to be in them. The first character I played was a small green fairy (of about 20 fairies) with one line in the production, *Sleeping Beauty*. Although, I don't remember the exact line, I recall how ecstatic I was every night to bestow my gift upon baby Aurora. As I looked down and saw the faces of the other children staring back at me, I knew that I was where I wanted to be.

I stayed in the program until I was eighteen. After that, I returned in the summers to teach, direct, and stage manage in order to be close to the program I believed in so much. To the unimaginative eye, this small theatre may simply look like a stage full of children performing musicals. But to me, it was a place to act, dance, sing, pound stubborn nails, paint magnificent

³ Appendix J.

⁴ When the theatre began it was called the Santa Clara Junior Theatre (SCJT) but was changed in honor of Roberta Jones to the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJJT) on November 30, 1999.

scenery, and let my cares fly away. It was the beginning of an exciting experience I plan to continue taking part in for the rest of my life.

Through my years of participation I learned from Roberta Jones and the older student participants to become involved in many aspects of the production process including makeup, stage managing, building and painting the sets, setting the lights, running the sound equipment, and helping the younger children learn their music and dances. They helped me to develop these skills that I, in turn, taught the younger children. Jones had an informal mentoring program that kept children involved and gave them a positive place to spend their time after school. A personal experience where this occurred was when I was eight years old at the end of my first show. I was at strike (voluntarily) and was given a hammer and asked to pull out roofing nails from a piece of cardboard. I had no idea what I was doing. Then the actor, who had played Prince Charming in the production of *Sleeping Beauty* we had just completed, came over to help me, without being asked. This was partly due to the fact he was a good guy, but also because of the sense of responsibility instilled in all of us by Jones. The teenagers felt a responsibility as mentors and role models to the younger children by teaching them the things they had learned over the years. The younger children, in turn, would grow up and perpetuate the program. It is through this model Jones was able to have such a successful theatre program that has withstood the test of time.

When I became one of the “older kids” it was then my responsibility to pass on the knowledge I had gained because that was what had been done for me. I remember wanting desperately to be involved with the theatre in other capacities besides acting. I joined the makeup crew at age ten and became head of the crew and responsible for makeup designs at the age of twelve. I also volunteered to act as a page by calling cast members to the stage before their cues

from the greenroom. When I was fifteen years old, for the summer productions, I volunteered my time as the stage manager and assistant musical director. I then began to stage manage shows and other city functions which utilized the auditorium and trained many others to write down blocking and take notes for the director. I also taught the beginning acting class for the four to eight year olds when I was sixteen years old. It was amazing to teach young children to expand their imagination and create worlds in an empty room.

Many of these mentors, myself included, moved on to “assistant” positions, such as assistant musical director or stage manager and were eventually paid for their contributions. The possibility of being hired by the theatre and paid for the work completed, was not an option until at least the age of sixteen because of city requirements. In order to even be considered, however, one must have spent time volunteering and putting the mentoring model to work. Jones sincerely believed in passing skills on to the young or less experienced without monetary compensation. I loved having the opportunity to share what I had learned with others, and it didn’t matter to me that I wasn’t getting paid because I enjoyed merely being involved and teaching others what I had learned.

I was given quite a bit of responsibility at the age of seventeen when the founder and producer, Roberta Jones, passed away. It was at this time that everyone involved in the RJTT truly realized how much time and energy she invested everyday to keep it running smoothly. Although it was impossible for anyone of us to actually fill her shoes, we all tried to honor her memory by continuing her work. I began to devote more of my time and talents in any way I could to maintain the standard of excellence Jones established. At the time I was the senior-most participant, so I approached the remaining staff, suggested a show, and offered to help in anyway possible.

As a result, I went to the theatre on Saturdays (just as Jones used to) to build and paint the sets, help with the shows and make certain things were in place for opening night. I wanted the participants to be able to have the same experience I had had from Jones. In the last show of my senior year, I oversaw the makeup design and crew, organized the painting of the sets, helped the new stage manager, coordinated with the technical director, taught the children's beginning theatre class (*Let's Pretend!* now called *Imagine Me!*), and had the female vocal lead. It was a busy time, but I knew it was worthwhile.

In recent years, I have become less interested in the performing aspect of theatre and more focused on helping children learn the joys of theatre and the life lessons it has to offer. I plan to open my own children's theatre and utilize what I have learned in college, my own experiences, and the model created by the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre to create a successful children's theatre. This thesis has given me the opportunity to critically look at the RJJT and decide what practices I would like to employ. I have been involved with children's theatre in many capacities (as a participant, director, stage manager, designer, student, cast pager, teacher, etc). This allows me to look at the numerous different ways theatre has affected my life and what was done or could have been done better to make it a positive experience for everyone involved.

Roberta Jones created an exceptionally successful children's theatre, which celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2008. I will discuss how the theatre is able to provide life-changing experiences to children by helping them learn to explore the world around them. I treasure the memories from community children's theatre and I want to bring this opportunity to more children so they can learn and grow, as I did. I believe, as did Jones, the most important element of any organization is the people involved, especially the participants. In this thesis, I explore why the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre is a great example of a successful children's theatre and

how I plan to use it as a basis for my own children's theatre. I discuss the major organizational and philosophical components of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre. I also focus primarily on the vision of the RJJT and why it is a strong foundation. Through continuing the hard work of those involved and using the resources provided by the Parks and Recreation Department, I argue it will continue to be successful and provide amazing experiences for all involved from the smallest fairy to the executive producer.

Roberta Jones passed away in December 1999. The city searched for a year before finding Kevin Cornelius, a former participant of the Santa Clara Junior Theatre, to take her place. His official title is the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre Director and he holds the same responsibilities as Jones did when she was the Executive Producer. Due to this change in leadership, throughout my thesis, I discuss the RJJT in two time periods: the first as under the supervision and management of Roberta Jones, and the second as under Kevin Cornelius. The RJJT, itself, is the same. However, within these two time periods, there are differences in the management style, season schedule, and participant responsibilities. I discuss what has been successful under the two styles, and what I plan to employ in my own children's theatre.

The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre is not a member of any children's theatre organizations, like TYA/USA (formally ASSITEJ/USA - The International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People/USA), so it is running under the radar. At this time, the RJJT has not won any awards, but it has received good reviews from the local newspapers and online theatre resources. One of the main reasons for writing this thesis is to convey to those outside of Santa Clara, California who are not aware of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre how it can be used as a model for other theatres. This study will highlight how a theatre based on child-centered learning through performance is the key to keeping participants and having a successful

theatre. A theatre designed to build students through drama can still do quality work because it is built on a strong foundation. The children and their well-being is put first and foremost, thus the children feel appreciated and will work harder and will live up to the expectations of a good performance.

When there were problems or Roberta Jones was telling new participants or parents about the RJJT, she would always say “We are here to raise children and in the process we put on a play.” Jones established this statement as her mission for the theatre and throughout her time as executive producer, she believed that it was the children and their lives that mattered most. Ultimately, if the participants are the main priority and their work is appreciated, it will show through in the performance. Every show will undeniably have a closing night, but the children who participate in them will continue to grow. Even if it was for one show or many productions, the children can be nourished by the lessons learned through being part of a performance.

The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre is personified by its mascot, the Pink Panther. He represented the theatre, for Jones, because he was a child icon which originated about the time the Junior Theatre opened. He embodies Roberta Jones due to the fact he never spoke but he was at the center of the cartoon. Along the same line, Jones was at the center of the theatre, making sure everything which needed to be done was completed. She was at the center of everything but it was never for fame or glory. Jones never drew attention to herself; her work was for the theatre, the children, and the production as a whole.

By analyzing the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre, I intend to paint a picture of its success and the overall importance of theatre in children’s lives. In Chapter Two, I examine the history of the RJJT then outline its structure and general organization as a model for other theatres in Chapter Three. In Chapter Four, I discuss the guiding principles and philosophies to help those

producing children's theatre to understand what drives the RJJT. Chapter Five discusses my recommendations to help the RJJT to have a successful future. In addition, I conclude my statements with a dialogue about the children's theatre I plan to open based on the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre. In the appendices, I include various forms and paperwork from the RJJT and present information from interviews with the current director, Kevin Cornelius to gain insight into his place in the RJJT and plans for the future. Lastly, I include testimonials from the participants about Roberta Jones and their experience with the RJJT to illustrate their importance in the lives of the participants. Putting on a theatrical production with children is not an easy task by any means; but if it is something a person enjoys doing, it can be well worth it.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORY OF THE ROBERTA JONES JUNIOR THEATRE

Community theatre in Santa Clara, California began when Roberta Jones and others including Jim Narveson and George Doeltz conceived the idea of a theatre group. Roberta Jones went to the Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department and petitioned for their support. The result was The Santa Clara Community Theatre formed in 1961 as a Parks and Recreation Department sponsored cultural group. They opened their first season in 1962, with *My Three Angels* by Samuel Spewack, which they performed at the Santa Clara University Performing Arts Center. The group did not have their own performance space, but performed in schools as a traveling show. In 1968, the group became The Santa Clara Players and they left the Parks and Recreation Department and became an independent, non-profit organization. The group eventually found its own theatrical space behind the Santa Clara Triton Museum of Art in the Hall Pavilion—a theatre in the round which seats eighty.⁵

Roberta Jones served as the initial president of the program and as producer of their productions. The Players produce theatre for adults with a primary focus on new plays. They are a financially stable and thriving company and many of those involved in its original conception are still actively participating. Currently, Jim Narveson serves as their vice president and George Doeltz serves as their president.⁶

The notable history of children's theatre in Santa Clara, California began in 1968 when Roberta Jones branched out to include children in her theatre ventures. She established and

⁵ "History." *Santa Clara Players*. 11 Mar 2008. <<http://www.scplayers.org/history/index.htm>>.

⁶ "Board of Directors." *Santa Clara Players*. 11 Mar 2008. <<http://www.scplayers.org/board/index.htm>>.

founded a children's theatre group known, in the beginning, as the Santa Clara Junior Theatre. *Playbill*, a magazine and online resource discussing theatrical performances in the United States, said, "Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (formerly Santa Clara Junior Theatre) offers a quality theatrical experience for youth ages 8-18 and for audiences of all ages."⁷ *The Resources for Culture* website, which lists theatrical performances and resources in the San Francisco Bay area, had this to say in 1999: "SCJT was founded thirty years ago by Roberta Jones to give children ages 8-18 the opportunity to develop poise, self-confidence, responsibility, and friendships through dramatic arts. The theatre and productions are sponsored by the City of Santa Clara."⁸

Santa Clara Junior Theatre (SCJT) began rehearsals for their first season in 1968 with *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*,⁹ performed in 1969. The SCJT performed and rehearsed for seven years, through 1975, at the Wilson Junior High School Auditorium. At this time, they had a workshop and storage area (more of a shed) to build and store the sets which were then moved to the performance space. In the early 1970's, the city built the Community Recreation Center, or the CRC, for the Parks and Recreation Department with a specific space for the Santa Clara Junior Theatre—the Mary Louise Mello Auditorium, which is the largest space in the Recreation Center.¹⁰ The building is used for other classes, but a large part of the space is dedicated to the RJJT. The majority of the funding for the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre also comes from the Parks and Recreation Department.¹¹

⁷ "Theatre Central: Sites" *Playbill*. 3 Mar 2008.

<http://www.playbill.com/theatrecentral/sites/category.asp?SITE_CATEGORY_ID=2054&F_PG=8>.

⁸ "Theatres and Production Companies for the San Francisco Bay Region." *Resources for Culture*. 10. Feb. 1999. 3 Mar. 2008. <<http://www.davidvl.org/262WebFilesSpring04/w9culture.html>>.

⁹ Appendix A.

¹⁰ The Mary Louise Mello Auditorium is named after one of the first participants in the Santa Clara Junior Theatre.

¹¹ "Roberta Jones Junior Theatre." *City of Santa Clara*. 3 Mar. 2008.

<http://santaclaraca.gov/park_recreation/pr-junior-theatre.html>.

The Santa Clara Junior Theatre began putting on four shows a year. Below is a chart outlining their first season:

Show	Date	Venue
<i>Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs</i>	March	Wilson Junior High School Auditorium
<i>Alice in Wonderland</i>	May	Wilson Junior High School Auditorium
<i>Hansel and Gretel</i>	July	Wilson Junior High School Auditorium
<i>Tom Sawyer</i>	November	Wilson Junior High School Auditorium

After the first year, the season was reduced to two shows. This might have been due to the fact that the SCJT was using a shared theatrical space. These two performances were usually musicals, but the early years included some straight plays as well. In 1979, the SCJT began to gain momentum with up to seven performances a year which often included a touring company performance. This increase seems connected to the fact that it was a few years after they had moved to their own space in the Recreation Center and had become established as an integral part of the programs offered by the Parks and Recreation Department. This expanded season continued until around 1995, when the schedule was reduced to a spring performance, a summer workshop known as The Creative, Artistic, Theatrical Showcase, or C.A.T.S,¹² a summer young adult production, and a fall performance. Below is the 1995 season as an example:

Show	Date	Venue
<i>Oliver!</i>	March/April	Mary Louise Mello Auditorium
<i>Creative Artistic Theatrical Showcase</i>	July	Mary Louise Mello Auditorium
<i>West Side Story</i> (young-adult production)	July/August	Mary Louise Mello Auditorium
<i>Tumbleweeds</i>	November/December	Mary Louise Mello Auditorium

In the early 1990s, the SCJT/RJTT began producing mainly musicals so as to draw the largest audiences and number of participants. A few years later, the summer young-adult production was dropped leaving the summer workshop and the fall and spring performances. A

¹² Roberta Jones' favorite animal.

summer Shakespeare in the Park production was added to the 2001 season and has continued since; their first show was *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The result was four shows a year: three musicals (fall, winter & summer workshop) and one Shakespeare play.¹³ Through 2006, the seasons consisted of shows similar to the 2001 season which was organized as follows:

Show	Date	Venue
<i>Oliver!</i>	March/April	Mary Louise Mello Auditorium
<i>Schoolhouse Rock, Live Jr.</i> (summer workshop)	July	Mary Louise Mello Auditorium
<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	July/August	Central Park Pavilion
<i>Annie</i>	November/December	Mary Louise Mello Auditorium

In 2007, a late spring show was added as the Springboard Theatre for younger participants; their first performance was *Disney's 101 Dalmatians*. A typical season at the present time, using the 2008 season as an example, follows:¹⁴

Show	Date	Venue
<i>Seussical!</i>	April	Mission City Center for Performing Arts
<i>Disney's Alice In Wonderland</i> (Springboard Theatre)	June	Mary Louise Mello Auditorium
<i>Disney's High School Musical</i> (summer workshop)	July	Mission City Center for Performing Arts
<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	July	Central Park Arboretum
<i>Oliver!</i>	November	Mary Louise Mello Auditorium

In 2005, the city built The Mission City Center for Performing Arts, which is owned jointly by the city and the school district. It is a top of the line facility used for city functions and high school theatre productions. Due to the fact the RJJT is connected to the city this facility is available for their use. The RJJT uses this facility for their summer and spring productions, and they continue to use the Mello Auditorium for their Springboard and fall performances. The Mission City Center is a larger space which gives the children a different space to work and learn

¹³ "Roberta Jones Junior Theatre." *City of Santa Clara*. 3 Mar. 2008. <http://santaclaraca.gov/park_recreation/pr-junior-theatre.html>.

¹⁴ A list of performances from the theatre's beginning can be found in Appendix A.

in. This is a positive addition to the program and the city because it gives the participants a chance to perform in a space with superior technology. The city has been supportive of the arts and has built several buildings which are maintained for the performing arts.¹⁵ In recent years, approximately 600-700 young people participate each year in the various programs or performances connected to the RJJT; some participate in several a year.

The funding for the Robert Jones Junior Theatre's staff and productions comes from the Parks and Recreation Department. There are minimal donations due to the fact it is a publicly funded organization and not an official 501(c)(3) registered non-profit organization. Therefore, donations are not tax deductible. The fact that RJJT is connected to the city means the budget is determined by the Department and then allocated to the different shows by the producer or director. The RJJT also makes money from ticket and concession sales. Additionally, the participants pay a fee to the Department, just as they would for any other program offered by the city, to participate in the productions or classes offered by the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre. The fee has increased over the years, but has always been kept at a minimum. The positive fact remains that the program fees are turned right back around and used to pay salaries for the RJJT staff and similar type expenses, but they are always used for the RJJT. The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre has always been dedicated to its participants. If a child wants to participate, there are ways of lessening the fee or gaining scholarships from the "Friends of the Santa Clara Parks and Recreation."¹⁶ This means financial concerns are not a reason a child cannot participate. The fee also means the RJJT is almost self-supporting; any additional needs are supplied by the city.

¹⁵ "Parks and Recreation." *City of Santa Clara*. 3 Mar. 2008 <http://santaclaraca.gov/park_recreation/pr_dept.html>.

¹⁶ "Scholarships." *City of Santa Clara*. 4 Sept. 2008. <http://santaclaraca.gov/park_recreation/pr_scholarships.html>.

The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre is fortunate to have access to many physical and financial resources because they are connected with the Parks and Recreation Department. They are also blessed with the freedom of not being forced by the Department to make decisions which would be disadvantageous. This seems to be due, in large part, to Jones' early establishment of a positive relationship with the city so that the city officials are more facilitators than governors. She ran the shows, and the city offered funding for staff as well as practice and performance spaces without extra charge. Some people see theatres becoming connected with a government agency as a negative venture since they might lose some of their autonomy. They feel that agencies may have stipulations which are unrealistic for a theatre to follow and it would make it difficult to function and stay in business, but this has not been the case with the RJJT. It has found a positive relationship with the Department.

Roberta Jones worked exceptionally hard to see that the RJJT was a success. According to the Community Recreation Center website, when she was alive, Jones "picked the shows, directed some, and served as executive producer of the entire program and also as 'Mom' for her young charges, working to instill a sense of responsibility and dedication in each child."¹⁷ Jones kept things going by coming in early every morning and staying late every night as well as giving up her weekends to build and paint sets. She was constantly there to lend a helping hand and do anything needed to see that the show was successful. She was officially recognized when, "On November 30, 1999, the City of Santa Clara honored her by issuing a proclamation, changing the name of the Children's Theatre (Santa Clara Junior Theatre) to the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre. Roberta Jones died [nine days later] on December 8, 1999, but her legacy

¹⁷ "Community Recreation Center." *City of Santa Clara*. 3 Mar. 2008. <http://santaclaraca.gov/park_recreation/pr_crc.html>.

continues”¹⁸ in the Santa Clara theatre scene. It was “her love and indomitable spirit that served her so well in 31 years of dedicated service to the youth of Santa Clara.”¹⁹

Roberta Jones set up her theatre as a haven for the children, a place where they could escape the troubles of the outside world. Rebecca Newsome illustrates this in an email regarding the RJJT saying, “My stepbrother, who tended to hang with the ‘wrong’ crowd, ended up at the theatre to help with set construction one Saturday. [Roberta Jones] did her best to keep him engaged and connected with the group. She cared for all the kids with her complete heart and soul, which she poured into the theatre 24/7.”²⁰ Jones worked hard to make sure everyone felt welcome and could have a safe place to learn and grow. She cared greatly for the welfare of the participants and she diligently labored to see them succeed. While learning and growing, the children practiced and performed a noteworthy performance, although the performance was not the main goal. Her focus was on the children and their well-being.

The city looked for about a year for someone who would be able to do all the things Jones had done over the years. Kevin Cornelius, who participated as a child, applied for the job, and was hired in 2001. He took over the many responsibilities of running the RJJT under the official title of Junior Theatre Director. He manages all facets of the RJJT, including, but not limited to, scheduling all rehearsal and performance spaces, hiring, training, and supervising all theatre staff, choosing the plays, developing the classes and programs and organizing the technical aspects of the productions. He also is in charge of the Mary Louise Mello Auditorium at the Santa Clara Community Recreation Center and the city sponsored activities at the Mission

¹⁸ “Roberta Jones Junior Theatre.” *City of Santa Clara*. 3 Mar. 2008. <http://santaclaraca.gov/park_recreation/pr-junior-theatre.html>.

¹⁹ “Roberta Jones Junior Theatre.” *City of Santa Clara*. 3 Mar. 2008. <http://santaclaraca.gov/park_recreation/pr-junior-theatre.html>.

²⁰ Newsome, Rebecca Jackson. *E-Mail*. 15 Mar. 2008.

City Center for the Performing Arts. He has, also, continued the same connection to the Parks and Recreation Department which has proven beneficial throughout the years. He has used his love for the RJJT and connections to other theatres and practitioners in the area to really bring the RJJT to those outside the Santa Clara community. He also has added programs when needed and requested by the community.

It is up to children's theatre practitioners to consider that theatre offers prime opportunities to teach children life lessons. Peter Slade said it best when he claimed that some people "want the sugar of Children's Theatre without the bother of baking the full cake of drama."²¹ It is a disservice to the participants, and the audiences to not produce the best theatre possible. It is critical for every group and individual which creates children's theatre to have clear and positive motives both for the audiences and the participants in order for everyone to operate on the same level, and be working toward the same goal.

Theatre for an audience of children has often been seen as a lesser form of theatre because it usually is comprised of performances of fairy tales and does not produce "worthwhile" theatre. This attitude, however, is limited and does not take into account the lessons learned by the children involved, despite the content of the performance. The belief has been further dismissed by practitioners such as Stanislavski, an innovator of realist acting. In her book *Theatre for Children and Young People: Images and Observations*, Shifra Schomann says. "When Stanislavski was asked to make a distinction between theatre for adults and theatre for children, he replied that the only important difference is that, for children, theatre should be better."²² It is up to theatre practitioners to use children's theatre to its fullest extent and to not

²¹ Slade, Peter. *An Introduction to Child Drama*. London: University of London, 1958. (8)

²² Schomann, Shifra. *Theatre as a Medium for Children and Young People: Images and Observations*. New York: Springer, 2006. (9)

write-off their education and experiences as unimportant.²³ Theatre can be an exceptional outlet for children to learn lessons and skills. It can fill social, spiritual, and educational needs.

Children's theatre offers unique opportunities for children to learn valuable lessons. One of the best lessons theatre teaches is team work; the children learn to work together toward a common goal. They all have specific parts of the puzzle of the performance. Only if they work together and all the pieces are arranged and everyone does their part can the performance come together.

The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre has always and will always, stand on the principle that there are no small parts in theatre productions. Everyone participating at the Junior Theatre has a role to fill and the production is successful only if everyone works together. Judith Hackbarth in her book, *Plays, Players and Playing: How to Start Your Own Children's Theatre Company*, sums up the need for children's theatre like the one established by Jones:

Drama helps children understand that they are individuals with special abilities. It also helps them gain skills in a variety of different areas from acting to play writing to designing costumes and constructing scenery. Drama can help children improve their concentration, creativity, and self-confidence. It will help them learn to understand and accept other people and other people's beliefs, thoughts, and dreams. In creative dramatics, children gain confidence in oral language and learn to express feelings and portray moods. The exciting experiences they have

²³ It is through the work of individuals such as Dorothy Heathcote, Stephani Etheridge Woodson, Roger Bedard, David Saar, Jack Zipes, Susan Zeder, Manon Van de Water, Nellie McCaslin, Agnes Haaga, Lowell Swartzell, Suzan Zeder, Lin Wright, Orlin Corey, John Somers, Linda Hartzel, etc. who have contributed both critically and academically to the reemergence of children's theatre.

on stage, complete with the approval and applause from an eager audience, help to boost their perception of themselves.²⁴

Many children's lives are less than perfect and theatre is a particularly good way for them to escape their troubles and enjoy themselves and find confidence while learning. The RJJT offers a safe place for the children to learn and grow without the pressures of the outside world.

Theatre becomes a haven for children whether their stay is long or short. It is a place of hope and, for some, there is sometimes more home-life at the theatre than at home. Peter Slade sums up nicely what participating in theatre can do for children: "Children become happy, confident, and obedient by using drama, and wise adults, by watching it, see how far a child has got in life. For it is life itself—the whole mental and physical growth of young beings—that this art form is really concerned with."²⁵ The children and their well being should be the focus of the theatre and the product should be secondary. This policy holds true with the RJJT. Lenka Peterson and Dan O'Conner in their book *Kids Take the Stage: Helping Young People Discover the Creative Outlet of Theatre* discuss how they saw the same kind of growth from children by fitting parts to their personalities and giving them a chance to grow:

Although we did fit the scripts to the talents and personalities of the cast members, sometimes we also turned the children's limitations into assets for the show. One little girl had previously worked very hard on props, and we wanted to give her a part of her own for a change. But she was very shy and seemed uncertain and vulnerable when she stood onstage. So we decided to create a part of a blind girl who was the best friend of one of the other girls. That way her

²⁴ Hackbarth, Judith A. *Plays, Players and Playing: How to Start Your Own Children's Theatre Company*. Studio City: Players P, 1992. (12-13)

²⁵ Slade, Peter. *An Introduction to Child Drama*. London: University of London, 1958. (10)

‘friend’ kept holding her hand to lead her around, and addressed many lines to her for affirmation. With that security, the shyness disappeared, and a gentle sensitivity and awareness of hearing, smell and touch made her character quite poignant.²⁶

Children respond positively when they feel loved and appreciated. They usually live up to the standards set for a good performance when they do not have to fear failure; they know they will still be appreciated, good performance or bad. Roberta Jones understood the importance of this policy and knew the children would respond to the positive atmosphere. Theatre is different from competitive sports in that there are no winners or losers; everyone is working toward the same goal of a good performance, resulting in only a team of winners.

The goal of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre is not to launch the children’s acting careers, but teaching the children valuable lessons and learning to work together. This is seen in another children’s theatre by Willie Reale, who in his book asserts the following belief about his children’s theatre: “The [52nd Street] Project is not about launching careers. A child may end up in the field as a result of his or her contact with the Project, but that is merely an occasional consequence of the work.”²⁷ The 52nd Street Project belief seems to be the same as the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre. Jones’s purpose was never to get people to be intrinsically linked to theatre for life, but to learn life lessons which can be applied to any life career.

In the forty years the RJJT has been running it has been an example of an extremely successful children’s theatre. Starting a theatre, like any business venture, is risky and difficult. Many theatres open only to have a short life because of lack of interest or funding. The Roberta

²⁶ Peterson, Lenka, and Dan O’Connor. *Kids Take the Stage: Helping Young People Discover the Creative Outlet of Theatre*. New York: Back Stage Books, 1997. (91)

²⁷ Reale, Willie, Daniel Sklar, and Kevin J. Roach, eds. *52 Pick-Up: a Practical Guide to Doing Theatre with Children Modeled After the 52nd Street Project*. New York: Dramatist's Play Service, 1995. (25)

Jones Junior Theatre is able to thrive primarily on the positive word of mouth of their dedicated participants to spark the interests of others and keep those already connected coming. Due to its connection with and continued support by the Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department, funding has not slowed it down. It will be up to the new leadership to guard the reputation of the RJJT and help it thrive so it may continue to have a positive influence on children's lives and offer a model to other children's theatres.

CHAPTER THREE

ORGANIZATION, OPERATIONS, AND OFFERINGS

Theatre organizations can be structured in many different ways. These differences can be for numerous reasons such as the needs of people involved, the amount of funding and/or the available venues. The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre has been firm in upholding the structure of the program begun forty years ago with the resources it gains through its connection to the Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department. In this chapter, I present and discuss the organizational elements of the RJJT including: structure, mission statement, venues, curriculum, community connection, budget, tickets, marketing, and Parks and Recreation Department connection. All of these essentials make this theatre a success and can be used as a model for other children's theatres.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

There are three common ways theatre management styles are driven: by the board of directors, artistically or by the business management. In the style which is driven by the board of directors, there is a committee which makes the decisions. In the artistically driven style, the artistic director makes decisions based on their artistic concept. Lastly, in the management driven style, the executive director or the business manager makes the decisions based on the theatre's finances. The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre is organized in an artistic driven style where the producer or artistic director makes the decisions. When Roberta Jones was alive, she was the one who made the decisions; the decision making has now passed to Kevin Cornelius.

However, theatres cannot be run completely by one person. There are many people who help to see that the productions run smoothly. The RJJT has an executive producer, assistant producers, a director, assistant directors, a choreographer, a musical director, a set designer, a costume designer, and a lighting assistant. In addition, some tasks are done by teenage staff, parents, and community volunteers. When Roberta Jones was the executive producer, she established rules and policies, oversaw all staff and participants, chose the season, and directed many of the shows. The executive producer of any theatre has many responsibilities and not just anyone should take on a large job such as this. In his book *Theatre Management in America*, Stephen Langley gives a good look at the need for positive leadership in the theatre, like what Jones was able to provide:

A successful community theatre depends no less on strong, imaginative leadership... Theatrical productions simply don't spring out of the ground, nor do they result merely from good intentions. They result from the hard work of many people under the guidance of a clear minded leader. Because an energetic, knowledgeable theatre director is not always available to a community, there may be frequent gaps in local leadership... To avoid the problem; every attempt should be made to groom directors before some crisis necessitates a changeover.²⁸

For a theatre to accomplish its goals it needs to have a powerful, passionate, and committed leader willing to make sometimes difficult but advantageous decisions. Jones worked hard, just as any one in charge of a children's theatre would need to, in order to make the productions successful.

²⁸ Langley, Stephen. *Theatre Management in America*. New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1974. (191)

Due to the fact Jones was such a large part of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre, when she passed away many things were left undone. When she was alive, the RJJT ran smoothly because she made sure she was aware of everything that was happening. It was difficult after she passed away because some of programs she had adopted to keep the RJJT running were never formally set in place. Therefore, it was difficult to implement them when Jones was gone. It is important to have an efficient, informed leader who is responsible for making decisions. However, difficulties arise when they are absent and others do not have a complete understanding of everything which must be done. When Roberta passed away, the assistant producers tried to take over everything, but it was difficult because they were not accustomed to being in charge. When Kevin Cornelius was hired, it was an appreciated change because there was someone to look to when decisions needed to be made. However, if steps are not taken to establish a successor the theatre may find itself in the same situation when Jones was gone.

The most important thing in any business organization is to surround it with the right people who are all reaching for the same goals. Jim Collins, in his book *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't*, states:

The...leaders begin the transformation [or the formation of a company] by first getting the right people on the bus (and the wrong people off the bus) and then figure out where to drive it. The key point...is *not* just the idea of getting the right people on the team. The key point is that 'who' questions come before 'what' decisions—before vision, before strategy, before organization structure, before tactics. *First* who, *then* what—[becomes] a rigorous discipline...²⁹

²⁹ Collins, Jim. *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't*. New York: HarperCollins, 2001. (63)

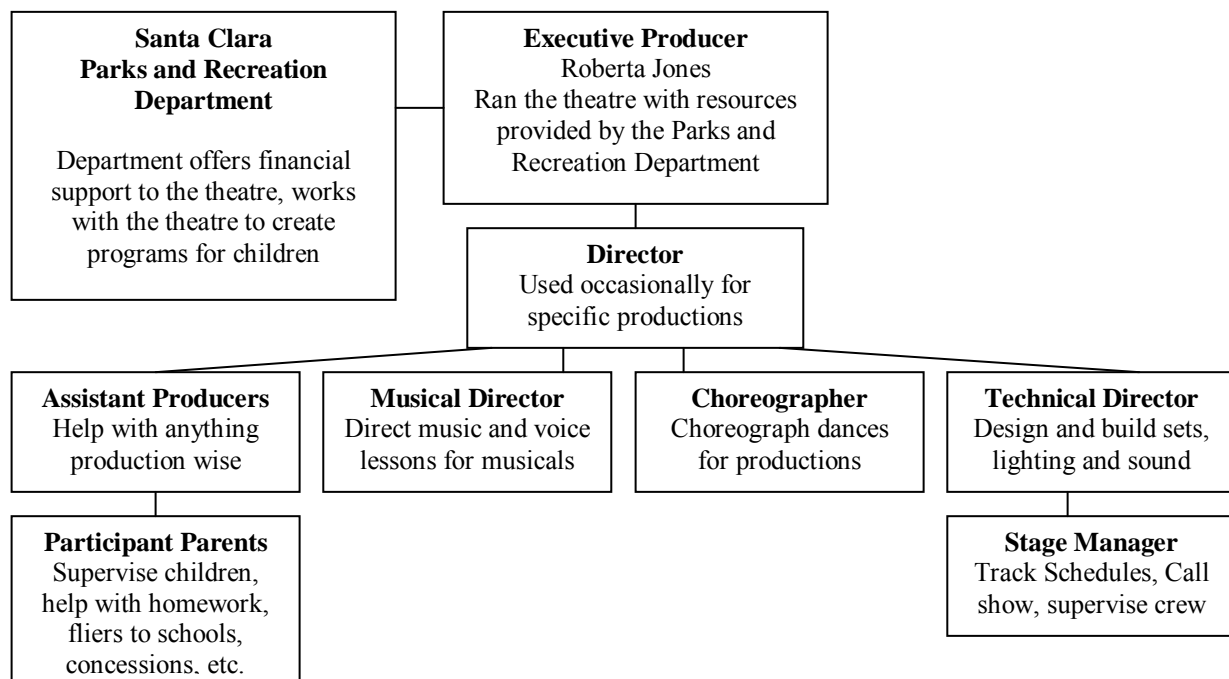
Although this book is not specifically about theatre management, the same principles apply. People with similar goals will ultimately make the best decisions for the company, regardless of their role. Otherwise, it will be difficult to get the organization to come together and remain successful. The RJJT is built on this principle—all the participants work together around the same goal under the organizing structure of the theatre.

When Roberta Jones started the Santa Clara Junior Theatre in 1968, she was the main “go-to” person for everything and that continued until she fell ill in 1998. She had skills in many aspects of theatre, and if she didn’t know how to do something, she learned. One reason the RJJT did not completely fall apart when she passed away, was because Jones surrounded herself with knowledgeable people, and she kept the Parks and Recreation Department involved in the process. Thus the program did not end with her passing.

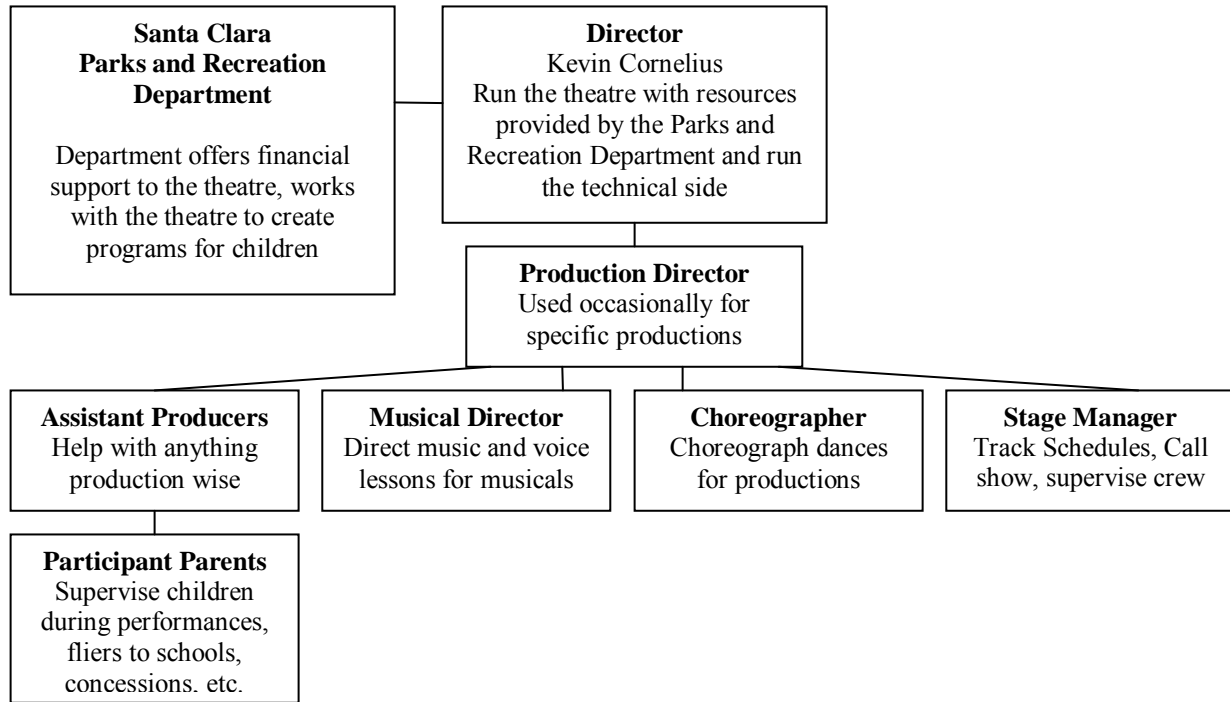
Another reason the RJJT survived was because they operate with a relatively small staff and they rely on the work of parent volunteers to do some minor work. Jones oversaw the employment of the people connected to the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre even though their salaries were paid by the Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department. When the RJJT was first established, it was part of the agreement that the city would help as much as possible. It was understood that the RJJT would not exclude any participants whose age was within the parameters of eight to eighteen, just as any other child-centered city program. The RJJT is fortunate to have the help, support, and resources of the department. It is committed to the programs offered by the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre.

Jones chose those who were hired to perform the other jobs connected to the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre such as the choreographer, technical director, outside directors and musicians for specific productions. Jones was the only year round full-time staff member;

everyone else was part-time staff hired by the show and she made sure they were all working toward the same goals she had in mind. Jones was adamant about keeping the program running the way she had set it up in the beginning with the children being the first priority and the theatre production the second. That is not to say that the performances suffered because the participants were the main focus. The performances may not have been up to “professional quality” but the children worked hard to have a quality show because they felt a sense of responsibility to the program. In addition, the performances were stronger because the children knew they were in an environment which valued them. Jones was known for finding children’s strengths and putting them to use. Children could learn anything they wanted to about the different parts of the theatre. She also relied on the children to facilitate the program by teaching each other such as the mentoring program mentioned earlier and discussed in detail later. The positions at the RJJT (when Jones was in charge) are organized as presented in the following chart:



Now with Cornelius in charge the flow chart is similar, but he is the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre Director and not the Executive Producer as was Jones. Thus Cornelius stands in the top spot and the other positions stay relatively the same as in the following chart.



There are few differences between the structures under Jones versus Cornelius. This did create a relatively smooth transition between the two periods. Under this structure, Cornelius is the year-round full-time staff member and others are part-time for specific shows.

The most strenuous time during the history of the RJJT was when Jones was no longer there and Cornelius had not been hired. No one really sat in the top spot so the assistant directors, musical director, choreographer, etc. tried to share the load. It was a welcome change to have a main “go-to” person again when Cornelius was hired. It is important for theatres to have a plan for the future when unexpected things happen such as a death or retirement. For the program to be successful, it needs to have well-trained assistants, written guidelines and expectations so things continue running smoothly when there are changes, unexpected or otherwise.

Working and running a community based children's theatre truly becomes an all encompassing position. This is illustrated by the quote by Stephen Langley regarding children's theatre management:

The community in which a theatre operates is the immediate family to which it belongs. Audiences may include tourists and distant relatives, but there is always a local nucleus of people drawn from the business, social, governmental, educational and political sectors of the community whose support of the organization is critical as audience or ancillary support or both. The theatrical producer or manager in a large city deals with complex and continuously evolving power structures and institutions that he must understand and learn to live with. In smaller communities the producer's business relationships and his grasp of audience tastes may be easier to establish and maintain. But whether located in a Times Square skyscraper or a Kansas barn, a theatre operator must comprehend the boundaries of that theatre's home community and the forces that make the community what it is.³⁰

A theatre becomes part of a community, just as the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre is in Santa Clara, California. One must be a strong leader and competent concerning anything which needs to be completed. There must be clear objectives they wish to gain in order for everyone to be on the same page striving toward the same goal. The RJJT has had and continues to have a staff who understands it is important for them to be focused toward the same desires for the RJJT to continue to be a success.

³⁰ Langley, Stephen. *Theatre Management in America*. New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1974. (316)

The success of an organization is based on those who make the decisions. This point is illustrated by Jed Davis and Mary Jane Evans in their book *Theatre, Children and Youth* where they say, “An effective production is the product of systematic preparation by a group of individuals possessed of artistic vision, technical skill and a willingness to submit to the disciplines of the theatre and who are prepared to dedicate themselves single-mindedly to bringing a finished performance to an audience.”³¹ The dedication of the staff and the structure set up by Roberta Jones, the community and the Parks and Recreation Department are some of the elements that has led to the forty year success of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre.

MISSION STATEMENT

Mission statements create and establish the vision and standards of an organization. A written mission statement for the Roberta Jones Junior theatre is not available; it is possible that such a statement was never formally adopted. However, the RJJT does have a general goal statement with information about the theatre and its vision. The full text is included in the appendix.³² The second paragraph begins, “Junior Theatre’s major goal is to provide a high quality theatrical experience for young people ages 8-18, and to instill a strong sense of responsibility and discipline. The policy is to accept every child who auditions, and to allow youth to be a part of the production staff.”³³ This statement does not follow the guidelines for an official mission statement; it mostly describes the history of the RJJT.

Paul Duerdon, an instructor and owner/manager of several theatres, suggests four crucial elements of a quality mission statement:

³¹ Davis, Jed H., and Mary Jane Evans. *Theatre, Children and Youth*. New Orleans: Anchorage Press, 1982. (43)

³² Appendix B.

³³ “Roberta Jones Junior Theatre.” *City of Santa Clara*. 3 Mar. 2008. <http://santaclaraca.gov/park_recreation/pr-junior-theatre.html> and <www.rjjt.org>.

- 1) It should establish the company's central philosophy, their thrust or goal in one concise sentence or brief paragraph
- 2) It must be unique and recognizable—making it not suitable for any other company
- 3) It should be exciting and inspiring—especially to company participants and to the target audience
- 4) Finally, it states the company's primary objectives—so that its progress and success may be measured according to its own terms.³⁴

These are essential elements to not only a theatre's mission statement but for any organization. It firmly sets the foundation for a company. If a foundation is weak in any way the company will not thrive.

Jones' statement, while it doesn't follow this model, has still been used it as a guide for her organization and direction of the RJJT. She strove to provide a sense of responsibility and discipline in the participants while putting on a performance. Jones was more concerned with the participants than with the "quality" of the performance. Without a clearly articulated mission statement, however, the priority seems to have been reversed under the new producer, perhaps unintentionally. Now, the greater emphasis is on the performance itself over the experience and growth of the theatre's participants. This has led to different objectives of the RJJT and different outcomes.

If the staff of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre was to work together to draft a mission utilizing Jones' goals and statements as a starting point, it would set in stone the objectives of the RJJT and give a way to measure its success. Nearly all of the people who would be involved in drafting this statement, including Kevin Cornelius himself, are very familiar with Roberta Jones,

³⁴ Duerdon, Paul. TMA 469: *Theatre Management*. Fall Semester 2006.

her methods and priorities, and are endeared to the memory of the theatre under her direction. Understandably, it would not be surprising that the effort to produce a mission statement for the RJJT would result in the incorporation of the essence and priorities of the theatre's namesake. The very experience of drafting a mission statement would help the staff recognize how the lack of such a mission statement has allowed the RJJT to diverge from Jones' goal statement. Having a more specific mission statement would also help define the relationship between the RJJT and the Parks and Recreation Department. This would also eliminate the worry that the government agency would take control of the program and require unreasonable things from the theatre.

VENUES

There are several different venues used by the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre for different productions and classes. The most used space is the Mary Louse Mello Auditorium in the Santa Clara Community Recreation Center (which is dedicated solely for the use by the RJJT). It seats 308 people when the collapsible stadium seating is employed. During rehearsals, the seats are pushed back and tables and chairs can be set up for homework or other projects when the participants are not on stage. There are also many other rooms which are part of the Recreation Center which are used as normal classrooms most of the time for other programs offered by the Parks and Recreation Department. During productions and rehearsals, the RJJT is granted use of other rooms for warm-ups and the green room during productions. Having this venue fully at their disposal is beneficial for the RJJT because their monetary resources are not put to use for rehearsal/performance spaces and can be used for other aspects of the productions.

The new Mission City Center for Performing Arts in Santa Clara is a state of the art theatre which holds 355 audience members. It is set aside for use by the different city sponsored

groups, without additional charge, and has given the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre participants a chance to experience a different performance space. This theatre is being used at this point for the spring and summer musical performances. Subsequently, the children perform two musicals at the Center for Performing Arts and two at the Mello Auditorium; meaning they learn how to perform in both spaces.

Lastly, in terms of venues available and used by the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre, the city outdoor Central Park Arboretum and outdoor Central Park Pavilion are used for the summer Shakespeare productions. These do not have a limit on seating. Working in an outdoor space is completely different from an indoor venue; this gives the participants another opportunity to experience utilizing alternate spaces. The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre is fortunate to have the opportunity of using these different venues to give the participants diverse settings in which to perform. It is beneficial for the RJJT to have access to these many performance spaces through being connected to the Parks and Recreation Department. The positive connection created by the RJJT and the Department can be used as a model by other community theatres.

CURRICULUM

There are many programs run by the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre through the Parks and Recreation Department. The participants for the programs vary based on the component in which they are involved. The program for the youngest participants is the *Let's Pretend!*, now currently called *Imagine Me!* and *Imagine Me, Too!* which is run through the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of Santa Clara and linked to the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre. There are two levels of these classes; one for the four to five year olds called *Imagine Me!* and one for six to eight year olds called *Imagine Me, Too!*. It was originally taught by Roberta Jones but is now

taught by her daughter Judy Thomas. There have been other short-term and substitute teachers over the years, but Jones and Thomas have been the main teachers.

Imagine Me! is a beginning acting class where children act out different characters and parts of a story as well as playing imagination games and learning simple dances. The purpose of the class is for the children to learn the basics of acting without the intimidation of an audience. At the end of the class, in the spring, the older class has a performance for the parents on the Mary Louise Mello Auditorium stage at the Community Recreation Center. This is designed to help the children learn what it is like to be on stage. It is an extremely successful class and one of the first programs, offered by the city, to fill all its spots. Over the years more classes have been added to accommodate the high demand. Many of these children, when they turn eight years old, join the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre and participate in full productions.

The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre also offers some acting classes during the summer in the evenings. There are two options: one for two days a week focusing on Shakespearean acting and another for two days a week on advanced acting techniques. These are offered for teens, ages fourteen to eighteen. These classes are a recent addition to the programs offered by the RJJT. They began in 2001 and have been a success with a large interest from the participants. These courses offer a chance for the older children to work on their acting skills in a low pressure environment without the stress of an up coming performance.

Another program overseen by the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre is the *Sing for Joy* class which meets three days a week in April and June (right after the spring show is completed). Children ages ten to eighteen can participate. This is a workshop class which teaches vocal technique and music expression and interpretations. Mostly contemporary songs are sung by the class or in small groups. The last class is a performance for family and friends and the class also

performs at city functions such as the Fourth of July Picnic. It is a chance to improve singing ability overall in an educational environment and to develop talent for future productions.

Additionally, there are several classes created and held on an as-wanted/as-needed basis. Topics include theatrical makeup, technical theatre, and dance such as ballet, jazz, tap, and hip hop. It gives those children already connected to the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre an opportunity to broaden their skills and a way for those who might not be interested in the performance aspect of the RJJT to participate in other ways.

Another program connected to the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre is the Creative, Artistic Theatrical Showcase or C.A.T.S.³⁵ It is a daytime program for ages eight to fifteen, conducted from June through August. When the program first began, CATS consisted of sessions in acting, music, dance and technical theatre intended to further the children's skills. The children were grouped by age, working on different projects throughout the day in a non-competitive environment. Grouping by age permitted the teachers to create appropriate curriculum for each age level allowing the older groups to do more advanced lessons. Then at the end of the summer participants performed a showcase of the different skills they have learned. Recently the program has shifted to be more performance based. In the newer format, the children work on producing a show such as *The Music Man*, *Once on this Island*, or *Disney's High School Musical*, learning the different skills through practicing for the show.

The first approach to the summer program was positive because the children could learn without the pressure of a full blown performance—just a showcase of the skills they were developing. There were no large or small parts; everyone was the same, thus removing any aspect of competitiveness, giving equal opportunity to show what they had learned. This echoes

³⁵ Roberta Jones' favorite animal.

the policy established by Jones to “accept every child that auditions.” The positive results of this approach included a greater sense of confidence among many participants and a stronger sense of teamwork. One negative aspect of this approach was that the children could not contextualize what they were learning by applying it towards a particular production.

The second approach, in which the children do a full production, gives some of the younger teens the opportunity to have a larger role with the developmental benefit of a more intensive rehearsal schedule. It is negative because the children with lesser roles do not have the same opportunity to further their skills. The focus is strictly on the performance instead of the advancement of individual goals, such as becoming a better singer or dancer. It is not clear which way is better; both have their consequences. Possibly, the best result could be obtained by finding a combination between the two approaches.

A desire in the community for a program which would allow participants younger than eight years old to have a chance to participate in a full production prompted the recent addition of the Springboard Theatre to the programs offered by the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre. Designed for children age six to twelve, the program provides the younger children the opportunity to have larger roles because they are not competing with the teenagers. In 2008, they produced *Disney’s Alice and Wonderland, Jr.* Kevin Cornelius said “These productions are typically one-act musicals of popular children’s stories, with a much lighter rehearsal schedule.”³⁶ It is a positive occurrence in a theatre’s history to be able to add programs to its curriculum in response to community interest. It shows they are in tune with the needs around then and have found a way to meet those needs.

³⁶ Cornelius, Kevin. *E-Mail interview*. 20 Mar. 2008.

Obviously, the largest program is the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre itself. It is for participants eight to eighteen. It produces primarily musicals since it has been found these have the largest draw for both the needed participants and audience. The performances are always appropriate productions for a community of young audiences and families. The shows chosen also have to be accommodating for large casts with a wide age span. These productions also have to be advanced and compelling enough for teenagers to want to participate. Cornelius had this to say regarding the way he plans each season's program, using the past year's schedule as an example:

I usually structure our season with a show based on a fairytale or well-known children's story for the fall, a Broadway style musical for the spring, and a musical that the actors will especially enjoy for the summer. I also choose a Shakespeare comedy for each summer. For example, in our current season [2008], our fall show was *A Year with Frog and Toad*, our spring show is *Seussical!*, our summer musical is *[Disney's] High School Musical* and our summer Shakespeare production is *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.³⁷

The RJJT has been able to produce a wide scope of productions and has extended their programs to attract a large number of participants each year with the addition of different programs. The variety of curriculum outlined above offered by the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre can be an excellent model for other children's theatres. The different programs offered by the RJJT are outlined below:

³⁷ Cornelius, Kevin. *E-Mail interview*. 14 Mar. 2008.

Program:	Details:	Ages:
Imagine Me! (formally Let's Pretend!)	Class with make-believe games and fairy-tale characters offered spring, summer & winter	Ages 4-5
Imagine Me, Too!	Class on characterization and theatre techniques offered spring, summer & winter	Ages 6-8
Shakespeare Acting Class	Class in the summer, two days a week in connection with the Shakespeare performance	Ages 14-18
Advanced Acting Class	Class in the summer, two days a week to learn advanced acting techniques	Ages 14-18
Sing for Joy	Class in the spring, two days a week working on singing techniques	Ages 10-18
Summer Creative Artistic Theatrical Showcase	Musical performance connected to classes during the day	Ages 8-15
RJTT Springboard Performance	Musical performance with less taxing rehearsal/performance schedule	Ages 6-12
RJTT Spring Performance	Musical performance at the Mission City Center for Performing Arts	Ages 8-18
Summer RJTT Shakespeare Performance	Free Shakespeare comedy performance at an outdoor venue	Ages 8-18
RJTT Fall Performance	Musical performance at the Mary Louise Mello Auditorium	Ages 8-18
Other classes, such as technical theatre classes, are offered on an as needed basis. This is the basic schedule offered each year.		

The RJTT offers a wide variety of programs and they work hard to present different options for various ages. It is positive to see the RJTT is growing and added the Springboard performance for the younger children. One proposal for the RJTT to expand would be to return to offering young adult productions. There are programs exclusively for the younger children like *Imagine Me!* and *CATS* but no programs for young adults which do not also include the younger participants. Having a young adult performance would give these performers an opportunity to learn and grow just as the programs for the younger performers have done. It would also allow for a more thematically difficult show, such as *West Side Story*, which may not be appropriate for the younger children. This would also help to keep the teenagers returning to the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre because it would be an occasion for more challenging experiences.

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Community theatre, and even more so community children's theatre, is unique in that it usually functions on a small budget and with the help of volunteers. Keith M. Engar in his article entitled *Our Obligation to the Community*, comments on this: "The point of all this is the opportunities need to be provided for students to perform under a variety of conditions; and one of the best ways to ensure that variety is to keep alert for ways to serve the total community in which we operate."³⁸ Having a working knowledge of the community in which a theatre is producing is crucial to having a successful theatre since they are the ones who will buy the tickets. Peter Chilver in his book, *Staging a School Play* explained the situation effecting children's theatre.

The staging of a...play involves an immense amount of time, effort, and thought. For many of the [participants] who take part it becomes the major event, not only of that particular...year, but often of their [young lives]. And in many subtle ways it may influence the way they think and work for the rest of their lives, for working on a...drama production develops test and judgment and provides the experience of working with a large number of other people toward a common purpose.³⁹

The Roberta Jones Junior theatre has done a remarkable job of having a working knowledge of the community and its needs as evidence by their adding successful programs. The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre relies heavily on the community to keep it running. Their audience

³⁸ Engar, Keith M. "Our Obligation to the Community." Davis, Jed H., and Mary Jane Evans. *Theatre, Children and Youth*. New Orleans: Anchorage P, 1982. (32)

³⁹ Chilver, Peter. *Staging a School Play*. New York: Harper & Row, 1967. (1)

is typically made up of family and friends of the participants as well as other interested members of the local community. In his influential article, *Children's Theatre-A Philosophy and a Method*, Goldberg claimed “children’s theatre is a term that can be defined as a: ‘a formal theatrical experience in which a play is presented for an audience of children. The goal of children’s theatre is to provide the best possible theatrical experience for the audience. To this end, children’s theatre employs all of the techniques and principles of the theatre.’”⁴⁰ Children's theatres in practice usually have to work harder than other theatres to secure a loyal following since they are for children and not adults, and children are neither the ones making the spending decisions nor are they experienced enough to make any judgment about it being good theatre or not.

Nellie McCaslin explained this well, in her book *Theatre for Young Audiences*, when she said:

Generally, one’s ability to make theatre successfully—and to make theatre for children—is not only dependent on one’s artistic resources. It depends on one’s audience in almost equal measure. But audiences—perhaps especially in the case of what we’re calling children’s theatre—can be developed and nurtured and embraced. We can assist them, through our work, to *complete* that community or communion that is our reason for existence.⁴¹

If the audience is not able to envision a fifteen year old girl as the Wicked Witch of the West in *The Wizard of Oz* then the performers will have a difficult time convincing the community to suspend their reality enough to believe their performance. It is up to the director to help the

⁴⁰ Goldberg, Moses. "Children's Theatre: a Philosophy and a Method." *The Johns Hopkins University Press*. 26 (1974): 411-412. JSTOR. Brigham Young University, Orem, UT. 18 Mar. 2008. <[http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0013-1989\(197410\)26%3A3%3C411%3ACTAPAA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-C](http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0013-1989(197410)26%3A3%3C411%3ACTAPAA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-C)>. (411)

⁴¹ McCaslin, Nellie. *Theatre for Young Audiences*. New York: Longman, 1978. (87)

audience suspend their disbelief enough to see children actors as able to perform a roll designed for an older actor.

In an email, Kevin Cornelius answered a question regarding the percentage of the audience who were members of the community and not family and friends. He had this to say:

A large portion of our audiences come from the community. We have great free advertising opportunities [like the flyers] right here in the Community Recreation Center, and other City facilities. Because our ticket prices are quite low, we've established a reputation over the years of providing great, low-cost entertainment that is appropriate for all ages. Over the last two years, our audiences have been very large. For instance, for *Seussical!*, with a cast of 30, we sold out 6 performances, with seats for 355 in each performance. That's 2,130 tickets sold. If our cast were the only ones selling those tickets, each person would have to have sold 71 tickets by themselves.⁴²

That is a substantial number of tickets and it is not probable for the children alone to have brought in around seventy people each. The RJJT is dependant on the community to fill their audience and support the performances.

Children's theatre and specifically the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre also requires the participation of volunteers for many necessities. The volunteers come from primarily three groups: first older participants returning to generally help out, second and probably the largest group are parents of the participants, and lastly other community members who are interested in helping the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre. To fill the variety of jobs which need to be done the RJJT solicits the parents of the participants to volunteer for an assignment of their choice to

⁴² Cornelius, Kevin. *E-Mail interview*. 10 Sept. 2008.

support their child's participation. These jobs include but are not limited to selling concessions and/or tickets, taking flyers to schools and businesses, supervising the participants, building sets, sewing costumes or other duties as needed for a specific performance. There are also people who are advocates of theatre who have come to offer their skills; many individuals over the years from the community who have consistently offered their skills to the RJJT. For example, when I participated, a retired architect would volunteer on Saturdays to design and build sets. The 52nd Street Project, a children's theatre in New York has found the same connection with their theatre and the community. "One reason we have been so successful in attracting great volunteers is that we offer an opportunity to employ their career skills in service of the community."⁴³ A community is nurtured and strengthened through its participation toward a common goal. The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre offers many opportunities for the community of Santa Clara to get involved by either sharing their valuable skills or leaning new ones.

BUDGET, TICKETS, AND MARKETING

The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre requires the participation of the community in yet other ways to keep it running successfully. The City of Santa Clara Parks and Recreations Department gives some funds to support the RJJT programs but the balance of the budget for each performance comes from the community through donations and ticket sales. The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre has a budget from the department of around \$60,000 a year to pay the as-needed staff, not including Kevin Cornelius.⁴⁴ These funds are divided between the different shows to insure there are enough staff members to produce each show. The city does help a tremendous

⁴³ Reale, Willie, Daniel Sklar, and Kevin J. Roach, eds. *52 Pick-Up: a Practical Guide to Doing Theatre with Children Modeled After the 52nd Street Project*. New York: Dramatist's Play Service, 1995. (41)

⁴⁴ Cornelius, Kevin. *E-Mail interview*. 14 Mar. 2008.

amount with salaries and facilities which could otherwise add a large cost to the running of the RJJT. However, all royalties, script rentals, sets, props, publicity materials, contracted musicians, etc. are paid for through the money made on tickets and concession sales.⁴⁵ The ticket prices have always been kept at a minimum. In the beginning the ticket prices were \$4 for adults and \$2 for children. In 2002 the tickets rose to \$5 for adults and \$2 for children. Since 2006 adult ticket prices have been \$6 and children's tickets are \$3. This is still dramatically below the average ticket price for a live theatrical performance or even the cinema, allowing the community to continue enjoying theatre even in difficult financial situations.

To estimate the amounts raised from ticket sales: if the audience were filled with half adults and half children, with 300 seats sold they would make around \$1,350 a night. For a run of six performances they would make around \$8,000 from tickets alone. In order to support the production of a more current and popular repertoire, Cornelius has chosen to raise the ticket prices to offset the higher costs in the royalties and script costs for the shows chosen.⁴⁶ He has also introduced the option to buy season tickets which offers a discount for those wishing to see all the performances. These are available on the RJJT's website.⁴⁷ It is important to keep the ticket prices reasonable so the majority of those who wish to see the production are able.

Another way the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre makes money is they participate in the city functions including the Fourth of July Picnic, Easter Egg Hunt and Art and Wine Festival, where cast members and others earn money painting faces and selling hamburgers and hotdogs at a stand. In addition to raising some extra funding, the volunteers promote their shows and let the community know about the programs offered. This practice, also, furthers the goals of the

⁴⁵ Cornelius, Kevin. *E-Mail interview*. 14 Mar. 2008.

⁴⁶ Cornelius, Kevin. *E-Mail interview*. 14 Mar 2008.

⁴⁷ www.rjjt.org.

theatre, by building a sense of community, teaching responsibility, and giving the children a sense of ownership over the success of the theatre.

Marketing for the RJJT is not as extensive as it could be due to the expense of traditional advertising media. The main source of advertising is fliers which are printed by the city and distributed by the thousands to the different public buildings and schools. These flyers are also produced for the cast members to distribute as desired to family, friends, and other community contacts. Fliers are also distributed at other city functions such as the Fourth of July Picnic and Art and Wine Festival. In addition, Kevin Cornelius maintains a large mailing list of those who wish to receive information and a website (www.rjjt.org) with information about the productions, auditions, and classes being offered. The Parks and Recreation Activity Guide is another resource listing the different opportunities offered by the RJJT throughout the year. This guide is mailed to all homes in Santa Clara and is available in all public buildings.⁴⁸

The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre also enjoys free publicity through the city's community newspaper, The Santa Clara Weekly. There is always an article written by a member of the newspaper staff about upcoming performances frequently followed by a review of the performance. This newspaper is mailed on a weekly basis to subscribing homes and delivered to all homes in the city every third week. It is also available for weekly free pickup at many public locations, thus providing almost universal coverage throughout the city.

When in charge of the RJJT, Jones maintained the same methods of advertising the theatre had always used, such as the Parks and Recreation Guide and the fliers. Cornelius added the use of the city's television channel, another of the free marketing strategies available to the RJJT by virtue of its association with the city. It is a simple channel with mostly scrolling pages

⁴⁸ "Parks and Recreation." *City of Santa Clara*. 3 Mar. 2008 <http://santaclaraca.gov/park_recreation/pr_dept.html>.

of information about public events, but in 2001 Cornelius arranged for a commercial to be produced featuring a cast member from the upcoming production, dressed in costume who provided details about the upcoming performance and general information about the RJJT itself. This has helped to reach even more people in the city. An improvement in the use of this resource would be to include information about the RJJT, audition dates and the various educational programs offered, permanently on the channel as part of the scrolling information in addition to the special commercial spot about performances.

By utilizing these various types of marketing available through the city, the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre is able to significantly reduce their expenses since the city absorbs the cost of printing the fliers, the Activity Guide, the TV channel, and the upkeep of the website. If other theatres are fortunate enough to have similar informational venues available it would be beneficial to use them in every way possible.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre is unique because of its connection to the Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department. The Department has been financially supportive of the RJJT, but has not taken liberties as to its involvement and does not force policies on the theatre. The collaboration between the city and the RJJT serves as a model for other community-based children's theatres who emphasize child-based learning through performance. Many of the city staff's own children have been participants, making others in the city offices where these parents work aware of the positive influence the RJJT has on children.

The connection with the Parks and Recreation Department allows the program to be conducted at a low cost to both the participants and community. In setting up this relationship,

Jones negotiated an agreement that provided financial support for the programs of the RJJT without any obligation in return, assuring organizational and creative liberties. Kevin Cornelius explained the help from the city by saying, “the City provides staff salaries, free use of rehearsal and performance spaces, low-cost advertising, and an incredibly valuable support staff at the Community Recreation Center.”⁴⁹ The Department understands the great benefit that the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre and its programs are to the city and sees the funding allocated to the RJJT as an investment in children’s futures.

Many individuals believe it is unwise for a theatre to become connected to a city organization, like the RJJT is to the Parks and Recreation Department, since it is possible to lose some authority since the organization may have different ideas on how a theatre should be run. City staff may not know much about theatre as a whole and have unrealistic expectations or requirements. Thankfully, the Parks and Recreation Department of Santa Clara, California seems to be there to help promote the RJJT but does not push anything on the theatre, staff or participants. The city is currently searching for a new director of Parks and Recreation but the recent retiree from the position, Larry Wolfe, was extremely supportive of the RJJT. His children were involved in the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre programs when they were young and he worked closely with Roberta Jones to see that the RJJT had what it needed to function and be successful. Wolfe was supportive of the program because he could see the positive influence it had on his own children’s lives and other children in the community.⁵⁰ It would be important for the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre’s future that the new director be as supportive as Larry Wolfe. It would be unfortunate for both the theatre and the community to lose the programs offered by the RJJT.

⁴⁹ Cornelius, Kevin. *E-Mail interview*. 14 Mar. 2008.

⁵⁰ From general discussions with Larry Wolfe during my time in the program.

A unique program the city offers is the Friends of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation, a non-profit organization offering an avenue for individual donations to support city programs, schools and other city sponsored groups. The donations received, however, are shared among the various programs of the Department. Individuals in need can qualify for a scholarship of up to \$200 a year for any of the Department's programs, including the RJJT. Prospective participants need only complete a grant application form which is available at the different Parks and Recreation buildings and on the city's website.⁵¹ This program strives to take away any financial obstacle to participation in the programs that some individuals may face. Kevin Cornelius states his relationship with the Parks and Recreations Department is a very positive one,⁵² which is evident through the great support they give to the RJJT. When Roberta Jones began the RJJT she understood the unique contributions the city was able to offer through its support of the theatre. It seems as long as the connection of a government institution with a theatre is clearly defined from the beginning they both will find it to be an advantageous relationship.

Support for such arrangements was evidenced at the National Recreation Congress at one of its first meetings in 1952; leaders believed "Community Theatre...for children should receive major emphasis in recreational programs."⁵³ This quote, from a national committee illustrates the potential importance that recreational programs catering to young people include dramatics in the classes they offer. Although these associations are not common, they need not be avoided, as excellent examples such as the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre and its relationship to the Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department illustrate that it can be done in a way that will insure positive results.

⁵¹ "Scholarships." *City of Santa Clara*. 4 Sept. 2008. <http://santaclaraca.gov/park_recreation/pr_scholarships.html>

⁵² Cornelius, Kevin. *E-Mail interview*. 14 Mar. 2008.

⁵³ Musselman, Virginia. "Creative Dramatics in Recreation Programs." Siks, Geraldine Brain, and Hazel Brain Dunnington, eds. *Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics*. Seattle: University of Washington, 1961. (192)

The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre offers some significant programs to the city in large part to the support of the Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department. It is also due to the many people involved in the process such as Roberta Jones and Kevin Cornelius who put in a great amount of time and effort into the different programs offered by the RJJT. Roberta Jones began many programs and oversaw many aspects, now it is up to Cornelius to continue those programs so the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre will continue being a thriving exceptional component of the city of Santa Clara.

CHAPTER FOUR

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND PHILOSOPHIES

A successful children's theatre needs to be first built on a strong foundation. Included in this foundation is the need for everyone to be on the same page and traveling toward the same goals, thereby avoiding conflict and mixed messages being sent to the participants and carried out by the staff. With the wide range of programs offered by the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre this need was even greater. While Jones was alive, she was at the center of all the programs, the goals of the RJJT were her goals and her dreams. Her central role thus provided the unity and focus that allowed the various programs to flourish on the foundation of her dreams. When beginning any theatre there are many things which need to be considered having an example such as the RJJT can reduce initial errors and increase success rate.

The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre modeled on the belief that children's theatre provides a place for necessary life lessons to be learned. There were certain principles and philosophies established by Roberta Jones in the beginning. As stated earlier Jones often said "We are here to raise children and in the process we put on a play." This was her guiding philosophy: to create an environment children felt safe and could learn and grow. The authors of the book *Theatre: Children and Youth* offer this idea for how children's theatres should be established:

"From the beginning the children's theatre has espoused a set of audience-related goals that includes providing the child (1) the joy of believing in an illusion as a story comes alive upon the stage; (2) standards of taste which improve with true art experience; (3) the understanding and appreciation of life values drawn from human experiences as

portrayed on the stage; and (4) the basis for becoming a discriminating adult audience of the future.”⁵⁴

The goals of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre seem to be the same based on the above statement by Jones; as well they should for any children’s theatre.

GUIDING PHILOSOPHIES

If children’s theatres strive to only produce professional quality theatre, this is not enough to meet the needs of the participants. The children and their growth need to be the first consideration. Norman Nadel, a proponent of children’s theatre had this to say regarding his work with children’s theatre:

We all want children’s theatre to be good; we are concerned when it isn’t. All of us are seeking for quality, hoping for honesty...What dismays me most is the lack of regard for the intelligence of even small children. It is a grievous mistake, for example, to limit the play to what a child knows—has experienced so far. If all childhood experience were limited to what was already familiar, he’d never learn. Life would be static...Let the play have a point of reference to his own experience—or several such—but let it progress from there to something new. Give the child something to discover. (Often) he is treated not as the quick, curious, experience-hungry creature he is, but as a small moron. There is a vast difference between a young mind and a stupid mind.⁵⁵

Children and the things they can do should never be underestimated. Many lessons can be learned through the participation in theatre, especially regarding their roles as part of community.

⁵⁴ Davis, Jed H., and Mary Jane Evans. *Theatre, Children and Youth*. New Orleans: Anchorage P, 1982. (41)

⁵⁵ Davis, Jed H., and Mary Jane Evans. *Theatre, Children and Youth*. New Orleans: Anchorage P, 1982. (44)

Due to the safe environment Jones created at the RJJT many children spent a great deal of time there. There are many things to be done to prepare for rehearsal and Jones would see that those who wanted to help were able to. It could be something as simple as setting up chairs, talking roll as people arrived or sweeping the stage, or as large as stage managing, supervising the makeup crew, organizing the props or paging the cast from the green room during performances. Jones would oversee the entire process but would make sure the children shouldered the responsibility. It also helped the participants feel they were part of the behind the scenes process and it connects to Jones' general goal statement when it says the theatre will "allow youth to be a part of the production staff"⁵⁶ Jones strove to teach the participants responsibility and she did this through trusting them with various tasks which needed to be completed around the RJJT.

The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre keeps children's imagination alive through the many different programs it offers for the ages four to eighteen. Theatre creates a land of imagination and emotion. The adults running the theatre must create a learning environment for children. The children must be allowed to let their own personalities, talents and imaginations shine through.⁵⁷ The RJJT and those in charge strive hard to not stifle the creativity of the children but let them explore within the structure created by the play or classes in which the children are participating.

CASTING PHILOSOPHIES

One factor setting the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre apart from many other children's theatres is the fact they cast everyone who auditions, between the ages of eight and eighteen

⁵⁶ "Roberta Jones Junior Theatre." *City of Santa Clara*. 3 Mar. 2008. <http://santaclaraca.gov/park_recreation/pr-junior-theatre.html> and <www.rjtt.org>.

⁵⁷ Slade, Peter. *Child Drama*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1955. (268)

“who can meet the schedule requirement, make a total commitment, and who agrees to follow the rules.”⁵⁸ This is and always has been the number one rule of casting. The RJJT makes it possible for anyone who wants the opportunity to participate to be able to, despite their level of talent; this is the major philosophy of the program.

It is really the team work which is learned from working together toward the common goal of a good performance which matters in this model. Children can learn great lessons from learning to work collectively as a group in a non-competitive environment. Jan Helling Croteau who runs the Encore Young People’s Stage Company in Wolfeboro, New Hampshire, had this to say about her beginning with children’s theatre:

When I first started working with young people in theatre arts, I had no clue as to how powerful an impact the experience would have on them. I have witnessed total transformations in children as they go from shyly being onstage during a crowd scene, to playing a major part in our productions...Enthusiasm is contagious. There is nothing quite like working with the vitality of young people.⁵⁹

It is truly humbling to see the transformation theatre has on young people. They learn team work and the importance of their work to the product as a whole. Roberta Jones worked hard to provide a non-competitive environment for children to learn and grow. In sports there are winners and losers, but in theatre everyone is on the same team and they are all working toward the same goal. In theatre all participants must help, work with, and teach each other for the

⁵⁸ Jones, Roberta. *Santa Clara Junior Theatre Participation Rules and Responsibilities*. 1990. (1)

⁵⁹ Croteau, Jan Helling. *Perform It! a Complete Guide to Young People’s Theatre*. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2000. (81)

performance to be a success. Through Jones's work the child participants learned to work together and rely on one another.

Another casting philosophy of Jones specifically, was to make sure every participant had a line. For example, the RJJT produced *Winnie the Pooh* in 1996 and there were about a hundred children cast but only a dozen or so main speaking parts. So Jones first double-cast the main parts in the show, adding performances to allow more participants to have a main speaking role. Second, she provided additional speaking parts by writing an entirely new scene in which every single bird, squirrel, and frog in the Hundred Acre Wood had a line to say about why they were scared of Tigger, who did nothing but bounce. It was a long scene but it gave everyone a chance to "talk to the clock" (the target at the back of the auditorium used to help the newer students train their voices to reach the audience).

Jones always put the children and their development first. The children received the opportunity to learn the basic acting principles so they had a firm foundation on which to build their skills. For example, the children had to overcome their nervousness and say their line, loud enough for the audience to hear them. The practice of every participant having at least one line was ended under Cornelius, partially because of the tremendous amount of work it takes to write and have everyone learn a line, and partially because it tended to slow down the flow of the show. Presently, everyone is still able to be a part of the production but not everyone receives a line. It does shorten the show but children don't usually receive a role with lines until they are older and don't have a chance to practice "talking to the clock."

Jan Helling Croteau holds the same philosophy Roberta Jones did: "Give everyone a chance to be onstage. About halfway through every production, a few students who were too shy to audition will say that they wish they could have a line or two in the play. My philosophy is:

anyone who wants a part will have a part; even if I have to write one.”⁶⁰ It is important for everyone to have a chance to be a part of the performance not just as a cast member but to have a line and contribute just a little extra to the performance. Giving everyone a line is a special characteristic for a theatre to possess. Children’s theatre holds important lessons for children, if they are never given a chance to have a line, how can they ever really learn how to act and project in front of an audience. It does shorten the performance to not have every child speak, but the audience, especially the parents, would probably tolerate a few more minutes to be able to see every child have the opportunity.

RESPONSIBILITY LESSONS

Another of the major components of the RJJT is the importance placed on the children learning responsibility. Jones was strict about the responsibility and commitment children need to learn at a young age and she believed the best way for them to learn these lessons was to give them responsibilities. This practice is still being upheld under Cornelius, as shown in the description of the RJJT’s purpose found on its website: “Junior Theatre’s major goal is to provide a high quality theatrical experience for young people ages 8-18, and to instill a strong sense of responsibility and discipline.”⁶¹

The participants are required to commit to being at rehearsals on time and responsible for bringing the necessary materials. Responsibility and commitment are simple lessons but crucial ones. From its beginning and throughout the RJJT history, when a new show begins, participants are given informational packets after they have accepted their part in the production.

⁶⁰ Croteau, Jan Helling. *Perform It! a Complete Guide to Young People's Theatre*. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2000. (83)

⁶¹ Appendix B.

At the top of these sheets is a list known as the “golden rules” which are always printed on golden paper. The official name is the *Participation Rules and Responsibilities* which delineates the policies of being in a production. The first paragraph set up the perspective of the staff on the responsibilities of the participants:

Since its inception in 1968, the Santa Clara Junior Theatre has maintained high standards of performance in producing quality musicals, dramas, touring company programs, creative dramatics, and technical classes. You are joining a heritage of outstanding theatre for young people. By becoming a cast or crew member of SCJT you are agreeing to adhere to the following standards as a requirement for continued participation. We welcome you to this wonderfully fun, yet professional, environment.⁶²

Following this paragraph are four pages of participant responsibilities, including attendance, as well as the consequences for not adhering to these policies. Once the participation fee is paid and paperwork signed (parents do not sign for the participant) it is the children’s responsibility to be there when required with what is needed. Of course this does require help from the parents. The first show a child participates in, with the RJJT, the parents are required to go to a “parent’s meeting” so they can receive the same paperwork and understand the commitment to the program. It is important for the participants to follow through with their commitment to the program for the show to be successful.

The last paragraph of the rules just reinforces the importance the RJJT puts on learning responsibility and being committed to the promise to follow the rules established the first day:

⁶² Jones, Roberta. *Santa Clara Junior Theatre Participation Rules and Responsibilities*. 1990. (1)

These rules have been put in place to endure a fair, safe, and fun environment for everyone involved. Should any problem not specifically covered by these rules arise, it will be handled in a matter deemed appropriate by the entire staff. The SCJT has a long history of producing quality shows and outstanding young adults. The primary goal of the SCJT has always been to develop in each member a sense of responsibility and respect for others. We sincerely hope that the lessons learned here will benefit each member in their future and serve as a reminder of how much fun it can be working as a team toward a common goal.⁶³

If these rules are not upheld a participant could be cut from the production and not allowed to return to the program.⁶⁴ Today, these rules have been updated to reflect current trends and issues for young people. For example, not only Walkmans but all musical players are prohibited at rehearsals, and there is a new rule about no smoking on the grounds of the Recreation Center. The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre sets down in clear and concise language what is expected of the children and generally, they live up to those expectations.

MENTORING

Another great program established by Jones was her informal mentoring program. She would have the older children who had been involved in the program for a while help the younger children with different tasks which needed to be done around the theatre. She did not assign mentors and mentees; it was just something the participants knew to do. On occasion she would ask for specific help, but it was never a requirement. The older children felt a sense of

⁶³ Jones, Roberta. *Santa Clara Junior Theatre Participation Rules and Responsibilities*. 1990. (4)

⁶⁴ Included in Appendices C and D are the copies of the rules from the Santa Clara Junior Theatre from when I began and the same paperwork from the current productions of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre.

responsibility to the program and worked to keep things running smoothly. This mentoring was the crux of the RJJT. If it had been made a requirement to help it may have been met with resistance but by keeping it on a volunteer basis, Jones sidestepped resentment of the tasks needing to be completed. The drawback to this is that people had the option of saying no, but most did not refuse Jones since she had instilled such a great sense of responsibility the participants didn't want to let her down.

The older children were given the normal responsibilities as well as the responsibility of looking after and teaching the younger children. The teenagers behaved better because the young children were watching them closely and mimicking everything they did and said, also it seems to take care of any discipline issues which might have arisen. Teenagers stayed with the program because of their satisfaction of being part of the production, gaining more responsibility, being given larger or more intense parts, and loyalty to the RJJT. Jones helped the children gain respect for hard work. Even though there were theatre programs at the high schools in town, the participants usually stayed with the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre until graduation. The mentoring program established a reason for the older children to stay with the program because they saw how important their role was.

Unfortunately, Cornelius has not been as dedicated to this program and perhaps as a result, the retention of the older participants has not been as successful. The older participants are not as actively involved in the production process because the goal is a professional performance. Under this model a twelve year old who is unable to paint bricks perfectly is not given the opportunity to learn the skill because the teaching model has been lost. Thus losing the sense of accomplishment a child can find in gaining a new ability and making them less

likely stay and desire to help others find success. Giving teenagers appropriate responsibilities is critical to help them mature and to have a stake in the outcome of the production.

THEATRE AS A TEACHING TOOL

Sara Shawkow expressed the need for children's theatre to move away from being for entertainment purposes only in her address to the National Progressive Education Associate:

A children's theatre... if it hopes to justify its right to existence, cannot confine its aims to merely furnishing amusement. A children's theatre... if it expects to exercise its rightful function as a developmental agency and serve effectively as an instrument of education and culture, must offer more than sheer diversion and clean entertainment."⁶⁵

The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre philosophy aligns with this statement. The RJJT works to ensure the participants have a good, clean time while accomplishing the many things required as they learned to live up to "professional" expectations. Students are taught lessons of responsibility and discipline through all parts of the theatre experience.

The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre established early its foundation and purpose. It was to be a place for children to learn and grow while putting on a performance. Desmond Davis in his book *Theatre for Young People* had this to say in regards to the teaching of children in a theatre setting:

A child may have a deep sense of inadequacy built through incident after incident of apparent failure; but in the theatre he becomes through his imagination the youthful hero who is not only adequate but unquestionably victorious. The

⁶⁵ McCaslin, Nellie. *Creative Drama in the Classroom*. 5th ed. New York: Longman, 1990. (23)

achievements of the hero become his achievements. A lonely child who wants companionship experiences through the leading characters a very real sense of belonging and being needed. For a time, at least, he is not ostracized but taking part in the action with others.⁶⁶

Children can learn great life lessons from theatre because it is a noncompetitive way to explore human nature, seek truth, and strive for excellence. Children are constantly being bombarded with a negative world and theatre allows them to escape it for a while and at the same time learn the skills they need to handle life through the story and characters they are creating on stage. No other children's activity can offer the same sense of belonging in a child's life.

The philosophies and guidelines of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre help the children involved to feel they are a major part of the production as a whole, to learn responsibility, and to pass that knowledge on to the other children. In this way children feel a connection to a theatre and wanted to spend their time there. It is crucial for a theatre to stay firmly rooted in these philosophies for it to flourish. Theatre offers great learning opportunities for children; I plan on using the philosophies pioneered by Roberta Jones such as the mentoring program, casting all who can make a commitment, and focusing on the responsibility of the children in my own children's theatre.

⁶⁶ Davis, Desmond. *Theatre for Young People*. New York: Beaufort Books, Inc., 1981. (36)

CHAPTER FIVE:
CREATING A NEW THEATRE
ON THE ROBERTA JONES JUNIOR THEATRE MODEL

Theatre is able to fill some of the educational and emotional needs of growing children more effectively than the competitive nature of school will allow. I know I was able to learn to not be so shy and insecure about myself because of my experiences with the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre. As a result, in addition to overcoming my shyness, I was taught respect, responsibility and discipline from Roberta Jones and her theatre and those lessons have provided a great service to me now that I am older. Through looking at the history of the RJJT it is easy to see the innumerable children who have benefited from participation in its programs.⁶⁷ I plan on using the lessons I learned from Roberta Jones to open my own children's theatre, building it on the same solid foundation of the well-being and growth of the children first and the quality of the production second, so that children want to return because of the positive atmosphere and experiences they gain through their participation in a theatre program.

Through this analysis of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre there are four recommendations that I believe could further the success of the RJJT and would help me establish my own children's theatre. First, would be the formal establishment of a guiding mission statement, to return the RJJT to its original values, placing the children's development as the main priority and a successful performance the happy aftermath. Although no formal mission statements were developed under Jones' direction, she clearly documented this with her

⁶⁷ Appendix J.

statement of “We are here to raise children and in the process we put on a play;” as well as her practice of this principle throughout her career. I believe that a return to this philosophy will result in a more positive environment of the participants under Cornelius’ leadership. It might increase the number of those who return.

Many businesses fail because they lose the vision created by their mission statement, meaning they lose sight of where they are going and why. A mission statement must be specific enough to detail these goals so the intent is clear to those who will make decisions in the future. In her thesis, *Not Just Playing Around: a Practical Model for a Professional Theatre for Young Audiences*, Allison Belnap states, “After reviewing the mission statements...it seems clear that in order to serve as an effective guide for administrators and trustees, the mission statement must be specific and clearly stated. Generalities such as “quality theatre” leave room for various interpretations... [The company] must have an unambiguous mission statement leaving little room for elaboration on the purpose of the company.”⁶⁸ Belnap is correct with this declaration. Mission statements need to include the purpose and intent of the organization and include goals and terms.

Nellie McCaslin, in her book *Historical Guide to Children’s Theatre in America*, gives an example of a quality statement of purpose for a children’s theatre:

To educate the parents and the community in general to the need for wholesome entertainment being provided at regular intervals, for every child, at low ticket prices in community supervised auditorium, and to make them realize that such entertainment can be educationally and morally valuable as well as keeping the

⁶⁸ Belnap, Allison G. *Not Just Playing Around: a Practical Model for a Professional Theatre for Young Audiences*. Thesis. Brigham Young Univ., 2001. (42)

child off the city streets and away from harmful occupations, such a gang activities and motion pictures of the more lurid variety.⁶⁹

This sets up the basic goals and purpose of this theatre. It tells anyone who is interested the form and intent of this organization. A mission statement would set in stone the governing principles of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre and provide a gauge to measure its success. The why, what, and how of an organization should be included in the statement. The best thing for the RJJT would be to create a mission statement to firmly establish the philosophies and structure, as set up by Jones, to ensure they continue to be a part of the program.

In order to begin on my journey of opening a children's theatre my first step would be to establish a mission statement, and then organize the theatre based on it. For the theatre I am planning to start I have created the following mission statement:

As a theatrical organization we will strive to enrich, educate, and entertain our community by providing youth with the opportunity of participating in musical and dramatic performances for the purposes of:

- Creating opportunities for youth to develop talents in the theatre arts to help them gain self-esteem and learn responsibility.
- Involving youth in a positive creative outlet.
- Providing hands-on learning experiences in all aspects of theatre production and management
- Presenting quality family entertainment.
- Enhancing the development of youth in the theatre arts through cooperative ventures with local schools through workshops.

⁶⁹ McCaslin, Nellie. *Historical Guide to Children's Theatre in America*. New York: Greenwood P, 1987. (25)

Setting up this mission statement would establish from the beginning the goals of the theatre to be able to measure its success. I would want the well-being of the participants and their growth to be put first and foremost in my children's theatre. If this is set up firmly I believe the quality of the theatre will come, just as it did with the RJJT.

Secondly, it would be smart for the RJJT to formally organize itself as a non-profit organization or create a non-profit organization connected to it, so that they could accept tax deductible donations from community supporters and past participants who still treasure its influence on their lives. The donations and grants thus received could allow the RJJT to increase its outreach and influence to an even broader scale.

For the purposes of my own project, I have decided that the structure of my theatre would follow the pattern used by Roberta Jones, with myself as the producer and the main decision maker. However, I do not want things to fall apart if I was no longer there so, I would also create a non-profit organization run by a board, with myself as a member, which would be connected to the theatre. Having a board of members connected to the theatre would ensure there would be others to continue the program. Also as a non-profit, the organization would be able to accept tax deductible donations and would be eligible for grant money which would then be invested solely in the theatre. Basing my theatre on this structure would ensure that I would not lose control over the focus and goals for the theatre but there would be others to help achieve those goals. I would hope to find people who want to join this board who would be committed toward the same goals established in the mission statement.

The individuals I would want on my board are a lawyer to help with the non-profit paperwork, a businessperson to help make good business decisions, an accountant to keep track of the money and keep the budget in line, and also a person or two to be over marketing and

fundraising. The board could also include various directors and designers to keep the decisions realistic on the management and technical side. I would have to ask at the beginning, at least, for people to donate their time, but getting the community involved would be beneficial for the theatre. In large part I would want the parents of the participants to be involved in the board and keep everything on the best track for the children. Having a board would help also to spread around the work load and if something unforeseen was to happen there would be others ready to carry on the torch.

My third recommendation to the RJJT is the participants need to be given more responsibility as Jones employed through her mentoring program. Jones tried hard to see that the children felt important and crucial to the performance; knowing how much more valuable the experience would be to them if the children felt invested in the production and connected with the end result. This enables them to learn the greater lessons theatre can offer them. The mentoring program gives children a sense of responsibility for the performance as well as those around them, creating a safe and success environment for children to learn and grow.

Just as Roberta Jones had done, I would want the children and their well-being to be the main focus of my theatre. I would employ some of her same techniques such as the connection to the community, casting everyone who can make the commitment and the mentoring program. Having a positive connection to the community would help the theatre find the needed participants and audience members. Having positive word of mouth publicity in the community for my theatre is the best way for it to find success. Creating family oriented theatre can be a great addition to any community and will have the largest draw for the participants. The casting philosophy for the performances would include the demographics of children eight to eighteen years of age. I would also cast all the children who could make a commitment to the rehearsal

and performance schedule. When a child auditions and they know they are guaranteed to be part of the performance, just do not know which piece of the puzzle is going to be specifically theirs, the result it they are less nerves and competitive. As Roberta Jones used to do I would want to include the mentoring program in the plans for my theatre. Jones understood the positive influence children can have on each other. The mentoring program keeps children involved and looking out for one another. This would, I would hope inspire the children just as I did to continue in the theatre realm and keep programs in full force.

Lastly, the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre needs to branch out and take advantage of some of the other resources available to it such as becoming a member of one of the many children's theatre organizations. Some examples are TYA/USA (formally ASSITEJ/USA-The International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People/USA), The American Association of Community Theatre (AACT), The American Education Theatre Association (AETA), The Children's Theatre Foundation of America, The American Alliance for Theatre and Education (AATE), and/or The American Theatre Association. The best choice would be to join TYA/USA since its programs are the most in line with those of the RJJT. The goal of ASSITEJ/USA when it first began and as it continues today as TYA/USA is to "support the best in children's theatre, to create a cultural understanding through the arts, and to promote international good will by sharing work and ideas."⁷⁰ It would be a positive thing for the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre to become involved in one of these programs and to use their resources. It would allow them to be able to share their performances and let other children's theatres around the world see the work they are doing. Even if they were just to be on the list of good children's theatres, it could boost the number of participants involved and increase the audience.

⁷⁰ McCaslin, Nellie. *Historical Guide to Children's Theatre in America*. New York: Greenwood P, 1987. (40)

The most critical issue a new theatre organization needs to do is get their name out to the community. By joining a theatre organization such as TYA/USA it would increase the resources available to the RJJT. Being a member would connect it with other theatrical minded individuals in the area, and be a source to find funding. One of the purposes of these organizations is to share good ideas with others. Even if a theatre was just to use the organization for this purpose it could increase success. Starting a theatre is never an easy or fool proof venture even with proper planning. By basing the theatre I plan to open on the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre it will have a greater chance of success since it is based on an already thriving model.

Finding a venue for a theatre can be a difficult task. Also like the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre, I would like to be connected to a Parks and Recreation Program so that having a space would not be as big of an issue. If this is unavailable the program would most likely need to rent a facility or create a theatre in an existing building. The easiest space to create would be a black box theatre which would allow for the tailoring of the space for the needs of each production. I would also want to do workshops in the schools to show what theatre can offer to the lives of children and make others aware of types of programs available.

As far as the programming for my theatre I would want to start simple, with classes and a few performances a year. I would have classes to teach the children the basics of acting so they can learn to use their imagination to create worlds and characters. I would want the season to be structured similarly as the schedule under Kevin Cornelius. The season, at least in the beginning, would consist of a musical in the fall, a drama/comedy in the spring, and a summer workshop with a performance at the end. This would allow for the children to have a variety in the types of theatre training they would receive and keep them interested. After the theatre was firmly

established I would hope to be able to eventually add more performances, with specifics for the younger and older participants, including a touring production.

CONCLUSION

The vision, goals, and strong foundation established by Roberta Jones for the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre have made it successful, because the children feel safe in the environment and return to continue learning and growing. Jones made a wise decision in gaining the support of the city for her endeavor in children's theatre without incurring any interference in her program. The positive connection with the Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department and its continuing dedication to the RJJT, means it will not have to worry about a lack of funding to produce shows or pay staff as long as the youth of the community and their parents continue to appreciate the effect theatre has on lives. These simple changes could positively influence the future of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre and keep it in full force for years to come.

Mark Twain, one of the great American novelists, had this to say regarding children's theatre:

It is my conviction that the children's theatre is one of the very, very great inventions of the twentieth century, and that its vast educational value—now but dimly perceived and but vaguely understood—will presently come to be recognized...It is the most effective teacher of morals and promoter of good conduct that the ingenuity of man has yet devised, for the reasons that its lessons are not taught wearily by book and dreary homily, but by visible and enthusing action; and they go straight to the heart, which is the rightist of the right places for them. Book-morals often get no further than the intellect, if they even get that far

on their spectral and shadowy pilgrimage; but when they travel from a children's theatre they do not stop permanently at that half-way house, but go on home.⁷¹

A man, who made his living and reputation by writing, believed that words alone did only half the job needed to teach children life's lessons. He believed theatre was able to do the other half and children would greatly benefit from being involved. The testimonies of those who enjoyed this rich experience under Roberta Jones' hand further support this belief.

I have been involved in theatre for most of my life and have experienced both positive and negative situations. My most positive experience by far has been with the Santa Clara/Roberta Jones Junior Theatre. This was what made me love theatre and pursue it as a career. I want to pass on the torch of exceptional children's theatre to other children. I want to be able to bring to children the same experience I had in the theatre growing up. Starting children at a young age by being involved in a children's theatre is the way for young people to learn valuable life lessons. And it helps to get participants captivated so when they grow up, they can share their knowledge and experiences with others, especially children to get them involved in the joy of theatre and perpetuate its benefits. The organization and practices of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre can be applied to other children's theatres to have like success. I plan on opening my own theatre and using the lessons I have learned from this model children's theatre to build more children's centered theatrical programs.

⁷¹ Ward, Winifred. *Theatre for Children*. Anchorage: The Children's Theatre Press, 1958. (76-77)

APPENDIX A

LIST OF PRODUCTIONS OF THE SANTA CLARA/ROBERTA JONES JUNIOR THEATRE

1968

Formation
Rehearsals Begin

1969

Mar Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs
May Alice in Wonderland
July Hansel and Gretel
Nov Tom Sawyer

1970

Mar Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp
Nov Once Upon a Clothesline

1971

Mar Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves
Nov The Wizard of Oz

1972

Mar The Clown Prince of Wanderlust
Nov The Land of Oz

1973

Mar/Apr The Fisherman and His Wife
Nov Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

1974

Mar Sleeping Beauty
May One Act Touring: Wizard of Oz
Nov The Pale Pink Dragon

1975

Mar The Prince and the Pauper
Nov Alice in Wonderland

1976

Mar/Apr The Rainbow Fantasy
Apr/May Yankee Doodle Comes to Town

1977

Apr/May The Invisible People
Oct/Nov Ali Baba
June/July The Plight of the Retired Villain—Touring Company

1978

Mar The Wizard of Oz
July The Lion Who Wouldn't
Nov Winnie the Pooh

1979

Mar Cinderella
Apr/June The Singing Pot—Touring Company
July Oliver
Nov Winnie the Pooh
Nov Pinocchio

1980

Apr/May Tom Sawyer
July The Boy Friend
Nov Being Free, Being Me
Tour Co Little Stories

1981

Apr The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe
July Carousel
Jul/Aug The Fantasy Forest
Nov Jack and the Beanstalk
Tour Co As We Go along Our Way

1982

Mar The Pale Pink Dragon
Apr/May The Tinder Box
July Guys and Dolls
July Paradise Planet
Oct Sleeping Beauty
Nov The Invisible People
Tour Co The Great American Melodrama Machine

1983

March Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs
Apr/May The Emperor's New Clothes
July Bye, Bye Birdie
Aug The Ballad of Bobby and Bonnie
Oct Alice in Wonderland
Nov Rumpelstiltskin

1984

Mar	Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp
Apr/May	Raggedy Ann and Andy
July	Fiddler on the Roof
Aug	Fine Arts Camp "Who is This I See?"
Oct	You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown
Nov	The Rainbow Fantasy
Tour Co	The Adventure of the Time Machine

1985

Apr/May	The Wizard of Oz
July	Music Man
Aug	How Happiness came to Hickenbocker
Nov	Winnie the Pooh

1986

Mar	You Can't Take It with You
Apr	The Magical Pied Piper
July	Summer Performance Showcase
Jul/Aug	Little Mary Sunshine
Nov	Oliver!
Tour Co	Great American Pastimes

1987

Apr	Tom Sawyer
May	Aesop's Fables
July	Oklahoma
Aug	The Fantasy Forest
Nov	Free To Be You and Me

1988

Apr	Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory
May	Once Upon a Shoe
July	Brigadoon
Aug	The Wild Swans
Nov	Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

1989

Apr	Raggedy Ann and Andy
July	Barnum
Nov	Cinderella
Dec	Musical Comedy Revue-Our Time

1990

Apr Pinocchio
July/Aug Hello, Dolly
Oct Musical Comedy Revue-Fast Forward
Nov Winnie the Pooh
Dec Steppin' Out On Broadway

1991

Mar Environmental Show at State—Parks and Rec. Convention
May Peter Pan
Nov Jack and the Beanstalk

1992

Mar You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown
May Sleeping Beauty
Nov Tom Sawyer

1993

May Wizard of Oz
July ACT-Grease
Nov Babes in Toyland

1994

Apr Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory
July ACT-Small World
Nov Raggedy Ann and Andy

1995

Mar Oliver!
July Summer Workshop
July West Side Story (young-adult production)
Nov Tumbleweeds

1996

Mar Winnie the Pooh
July Summer Workshop
July Bye, Bye Birdie (young-adult production)
Nov Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

1997

Mar Jack and the Beanstalk
July Summer Workshop
July You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown (young-adult production)
Nov Cinderella

1998

Mar Tom Sawyer
July Free To Be You and Me (Summer Workshop)
Nov Wizard of Oz

1999

Mar Rumpelstiltskin
July Summer Workshop
Nov Pinocchio

SCJT becomes Roberta Jones Junior Theatre**2000**

Mar Once Upon a Mattress
July Summer Workshop
Nov Raggedy Ann and Andy

2001

Mar Oliver!
July Schoolhouse Rock, Live Jr. (Summer Workshop)
July/Aug A Midsummer Night's Dream
Dec Annie

2002

Apr Honk
July The Music Man, Jr. (Summer Workshop)
July As You Like It
Nov The Little Mermaid

2003

Apr Stuart Little
July Once On This Island, Jr. (Summer Workshop)
Aug Much Ado About Nothing
Nov Jack and the Beanstalk

2004

Apr Singin' in the Rain
July Dear Edwina, Jr.
Aug The Comedy of Errors
Nov Pied Piper—The Musical

2005

Apr Disney's Beauty and the Beast
July Grease
July Twelfth Night
Nov Cinderella

2006

Apr Oklahoma
July The Sound of Music
July The Taming of the Shrew
Nov Sleeping Beauty

2007

Apr Fiddler on the Roof
May Disney's 101 Dalmatians
July The Adventures of Tom Sawyer
July Snow White, The Jungle Book, Alice In Wonderland, The Wizard of Oz
Nov A Year with Frog and Toad

2008

Apr Seussical!
June Disney's Alice In Wonderland
July Disney's High School Musical
July A Midsummer Night's Dream
Nov Oliver!

2009

Mar Wizard of Oz
June Disney's Aladdin, Jr.
July Schoolhouse Rock Live, Jr.

APPENDIX B:
ABOUT THE ROBERTA JONES JUNIOR THEATRE

Roberta Jones Junior Theatre, sponsored by the City of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department, has been a source of enjoyment to participants and audiences alike since 1968. The program was originally called Santa Clara Junior Theatre, and was founded and directed for 32 years by Roberta Jones. The Santa Clara City Council renamed the group “Roberta Jones Junior Theatre” in recognition of Roberta’s enormous contribution to young people and families in the City of Santa Clara. From the start, the program was a huge success. The Junior Theatre performed for seven years at Wilson Junior High School before moving to new quarters in the Community Recreation Center. The auditorium was dedicated by the Santa Clara City Council to the memory of Mary Louise Mello, an active Junior Theatre participant. Since 2005, RJJT also performs in the Mission City Center for Performing Arts.

Junior Theatre’s major goal is to provide a high quality theatrical experience for young people ages 8-18, and to instill a strong sense of responsibility and discipline. The policy is to accept every child who auditions, and to allow youth to be a part of the production staff. Between 600-700 young people participate each year. An average 97% of cast members are residents of the City of Santa Clara.

Junior Theatre participants volunteer their talents in the technical aspects of many performances in the City of Santa Clara. The group also offers training workshops, creative dramatics classes for 4-8 year olds, technical workshops, singing, and acting classes.

Santa Clara Junior Theatre Participation Rules and Responsibilities



Since its inception in 1968, the Santa Clara Jr. Theatre has maintained high standards of performance in producing quality musicals, dramas, touring company programs, creative dramatics, and technical classes. You are joining a heritage of outstanding theatre for young people. By becoming a cast or crew member of SCJT you are agreeing to adhere to the following standards as a requirement for continued participation. We welcome you to this wonderfully fun, yet professional, environment.

A parent, guardian, or representative (over 18 if possible) must attend one of the informational meetings for new parents in order for their child to be a member of SCJT. This is a one time only parent meeting. If the times listed on the “*Commitment and Parent Participation*” form are not convenient we will schedule a special meeting for you.

CASTING

1. The staff will cast the show using those young people who can meet the schedule, make a total commitment, and who agree to follow our rules.
2. We will consider your past dedication and record of attendance and behavior.
3. New participants will be encouraged and considered the same as prior participants.
4. Casting will be done by all staff members. Potential cast members are not involved in this process.
5. The SCJT is not required to cast everybody who auditions. The staff reserves the right to remove any participant from the show at any time for rule violation.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to treat all cast members equally and to achieve the best production possible the SCJT stresses responsibility and total commitment. (Webster defines commitment as: "A pledge or promise; an obligation"). The staff expects the participants to follow all of the attendance and participant responsibilities. If you cannot follow these rules there will be certain consequences for your actions. These consequences are listed at the end of this form.

1. All participants and staff members are entitled to proper respect from each other.
2. Show respect for all public and private property.
3. Please refrain from running, pushing, and engaging in horse play in the Community Rec. Center. Fighting will not be tolerated at any time.
4. No profanity, suggestive gestures, or talking back to any staff member.
5. Hands and feet are to be kept to yourself.
6. It is important during rehearsals to be quiet and attentive. Do not bring noisy toys such as Gameboy, or Walkman tape players, etc. Participants not directly involved in a rehearsal should bring books or something quiet to do. (Homework is OK).
7. For safety reasons, there will be no gum chewing at any time.
8. You must remain in the auditorium or rehearsal room during rehearsals. If you need to leave to use the restroom you must sign out with a staff member in charge.
9. No food or drink will be allowed in the auditorium, dressing rooms, backstage, lightbooth, etc. during rehearsals or performances. Appropriate eating areas will be provided when necessary.
10. Always bring a pencil and your script to each rehearsal.
11. Wear dance shoes to ALL rehearsals after the specified date. See costume sheet for details. Bare feet or sandals are not permitted on stage at any time due to the possibilities of injury.
12. If you are assigned to wear a skirt, cape, etc. as part of your costume, you must wear a "practice" skirt, cape, etc. to ALL rehearsals after the specified date. See costume sheet for details.
13. Your hairstyle or haircut should not be changed after casting. Parts often require specific hairstyles. Please check with the costumer if considering any changes. You may be required to wear a wig chosen for you by the costumer as part of your costume.
14. Though we try to make Jr. Theatre a safe and friendly environment, we recommend that you do not bring anything of value to rehearsal.

ATTENDANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

It is imperative that you attend ALL rehearsals for which you are scheduled! The only absences which can be allowed are those which have been pre-approved on the "Schedule Conflict" form. If you miss a rehearsal without pre-approval the staff and/or cast will decide on a consequence depending on the severity of the disruption. If the absence is too disruptive to the rehearsal you may be dropped from the scene, dance, or show as necessary. If you are absent when a dance is being taught you will be dropped from that section.

Please realize that every part is vital to a scene or dance. There are no "small" parts. Any absence affects spacing, timing, and group team feelings.

So, clear your calendars so that you can be at ALL of your rehearsals. This especially applies to medical and dental appointments and vacations. Should you be extremely ill and unable to attend rehearsal you must call 244-SCJT (7258) before rehearsal (please leave a message). DO NOT CALL THE CRC!

You must be on time and stay until the end of rehearsal. You must arrive and check in between 4:00 and 4:15. Rehearsals begin promptly at 4:15. You will be considered tardy if you arrive between 4:15 and 4:45. After 4:45 you will be absent. The staff will allow two tardies before a parent is notified. After two times, tardies will be considered as absences. No more than two absences will be allowed. If there is an attendance problem we will communicate with the parent and then the staff will make the decision about your continued participation in the production. We will also call you if you fail to come to rehearsal when scheduled. This is to find out why there is an absence and to make sure that you are safe.

IF YOU FAIL TO ATTEND A PERFORMANCE, A DRESS REHEARSAL IN FULL COSTUME (INCLUDING ALL PIECES), OR THE PICK-UP REHEARSAL YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PERFORM IN THE SHOW. The staff may make exception to this general rule under VERY unusual circumstances (e.g.: a death in the family). If an exception is made and a substitute is used, the staff will decide which of the participants will perform in subsequent performances. It is possible that the original cast member may not be allowed to perform in all subsequent performances.

CONSEQUENCES

The consequences for talking, interrupting, or engaging in any disruptive behavior during a rehearsal will be as follows:

First occurrence:

You will be issued a verbal warning.

Second occurrence:

You will sit in a separate assigned area for an amount of time to be determined by the staff.

Consequences for other infractions will include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

1. You will sit in a separate assigned area for an amount of time to be determined by the staff.
2. You may be assigned special work projects to be done as scheduled.
3. Your parents will be called and made aware of the problem.
4. You will be suspended from a rehearsal and removed from a portion of the show.
5. You can be dropped from the program.

These rules have been put in place to ensure a fair, safe and fun environment for everyone involved. Should any problem not specifically covered by these rules arise, it will be handled in a matter deemed appropriate by the entire staff. The SCJT has a long history of producing quality shows and outstanding young adults. The primary goal of the SCJT has always been to develop in each member a sense of responsibility and respect for others. We sincerely hope that the lessons learned here will benefit each member in their future and serve as a reminder of how much fun it can be working as a team toward a common goal.

APPENDIX D:

Seussical **Participation Rules and Responsibilities**

Since its inception in 1968, Roberta Jones Jr. Theatre has maintained high standards of performance in producing high quality musicals, dramas, touring company programs, creative dramatics, and technical classes. You are joining a heritage of outstanding theatre for young people. By becoming a cast or crewmember of RJJT you are agreeing to adhere to the following standards as a requirement for continued participation. We welcome you to this wonderfully fun and educational environment.

A parent, guardian, or representative (over 18 if possible) must attend one of the informational meetings for new parents in order for their child to be a member of RJJT. This is a one time only parent meeting. If the times listed on the “*Commitment and Parent Participation*” form are not convenient we will schedule a special meeting for you.

Casting

1. The staff will cast the show using those young people who can meet the schedule, make a total commitment, and who agree to follow our rules.
2. We will consider your past dedication, your record of attendance, and your behavior when selecting a role for you.
3. New participants will be encouraged and considered the same as prior participants for all roles.
4. Only staff members will do casting. Potential cast members are not involved in this process.
5. The RJJT is not required to cast everybody who auditions. The staff reserves the right to remove any participant from the show at any time for rule violation.

Participant Responsibilities

In order to treat all cast members equally and to achieve the best production possible, RJJT stresses the importance of personal responsibility and total commitment. The staff expects the participants to follow all of the attendance and participation rules. If you cannot follow these rules there will be certain consequences for your actions. These consequences are listed at the end of this form.

1. All participants and staff members are entitled to proper respect from each other.

2. RJJT is a drug-free environment. Alcohol, cigarettes and other non-prescription drugs are not permitted anywhere in the Community Center or Central Park grounds.
3. Participants must show respect for all public and private property.
4. Please refrain from running, pushing, and engaging in horseplay in the Community Recreation Center. Fighting will not be tolerated at any time.
5. No profanity or inappropriate language/gestures are allowed.
6. Hands and feet are to be kept to yourself.
7. It is important during rehearsals to be quiet and attentive. Do not bring noisy toys such as a video game or music player, etc. Participants not directly involved in a rehearsal should bring books or something quiet to do. (Homework is encouraged).
8. Chewing gum is not allowed in the auditorium, backstage areas, dressing rooms, or scene shop.
9. You must remain in the auditorium or rehearsal room during rehearsals. If you need to leave to use the restroom, you must sign out with a staff member in charge.
10. No food or drink (except bottled water) will be allowed in the auditorium, dressing rooms, backstage, light booth, etc. during rehearsals or performances. Appropriate eating areas will be provided when necessary.
11. Always bring a pencil and your script to each rehearsal.
12. Wear dance shoes to all rehearsals after the specified date. See costume sheet for details. Bare feet or sandals are not permitted on stage at any time due to the possibilities of injury.
13. If you are assigned to wear a skirt, cape, etc. as part of your costume, you must wear a “practice” skirt, cape, etc. to all rehearsals after the specified date. See costume sheet for details.
14. Your hairstyle, haircut, or hair color should not be changed after auditions. Parts often require specific hairstyles. Please check with the director if you are considering any changes. You may be required to wear a wig chosen for you by the costumer as part of your costume.
15. Please do not bring valuables, expensive electronic equipment, or large amounts of cash to any rehearsal or performance. We are not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal belongings.

Attendance Responsibilities

It is imperative that you attend all rehearsals for which you are scheduled! The only absences that can be allowed are those that have been pre-approved on the “Schedule Conflict” form. If you miss a rehearsal without pre-approval, the staff will decide on a consequence depending on the severity of the disruption. If the absence is too disruptive to the rehearsal you may be dropped from the scene, dance, or show as necessary. If you are absent when a dance is being taught you may be dropped from that section.

Please realize that every part is vital to a scene or dance. There are no “small” parts. Any absence affects spacing, timing, and group morale. You will need to clear your calendars so that you can be at ALL of your rehearsals. This also applies to medical or dental appointments, school-sponsored extracurricular activities, and vacations. Should you be extremely ill and unable to attend rehearsal you must call (408) 615-3161 at least 30 minutes before rehearsal (please leave a message).

You must be on time and stay until the end of rehearsal. Please arrive early so rehearsal can start on time. For example, on weekdays, you should arrive and check in between 3:30 and 4:15. Rehearsal begins promptly at 4:15. You will be considered tardy if you arrive between 4:15 and 4:30. After 4:30 you will be marked absent. The staff will allow two tardies before a parent is notified. Two tardies equals one absence. No more than two absences will be allowed. If there is an attendance problem we will communicate with the parent and then the staff will make the decision about your continued participation in the production. We will also call you if you fail to come to rehearsal when scheduled. This is to find out why there is an absence and to make sure that you are safe.

IF YOU FAIL TO ATTEND A PERFORMANCE OR A DRESS REHEARSAL IN FULL COSTUME (INCLUDING ALL PIECES), YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PERFORM IN THE SHOW. The staff may make an exception to this general rule under very unusual circumstances. If an exception is made and a substitute is used, the staff will decide which of the participants will perform in subsequent performances. It is possible that the cast member may not be allowed to perform in all subsequent performances.

Consequences

The consequences for disrupting a rehearsal with inappropriate behavior will be as follows:

- **First Occurrence:** You will be issued a verbal warning
- **Second Occurrence:** You will sit in a separate assigned area for an amount of time to be determined by the staff.
- **Consequences for other infractions** will include, but not necessarily be limited to the following:
 1. You will sit in a separate assigned area for an amount of time to be determined by the staff.
 2. You may be assigned special work projects to be done as scheduled.
 3. Your parents will be called and made aware of the problem.
 4. You will be suspended from a rehearsal and removed from a portion of the show.
 5. You can be dropped from the production.

These rules have been put in place to ensure a fair, safe, and fun environment for everyone involved. Should any problem not specifically covered by these rules arise, it will be handled in a matter deemed appropriate by the staff. RJJT has a long history of producing high quality shows and outstanding young adults. The primary goal of the RJJT has always been to develop in each member a sense of responsibility and respect for others. We sincerely hope that the lessons learned here will benefit each member in his/her future and serve as a reminder of how much fun it can be to work as a team toward a common goal.

APPENDIX E:

Seussical Rehearsal Schedule

- 1) You are required to be on time and present at all rehearsals, unless it has been pre-approved by Staff for you to be absent.
- 2) Please arrive at all rehearsals 15 minutes early and be ready to start at scheduled time.
- 3) Please bring dance shoes to all Dance and Acting Rehearsals, and be prepared to sing at all Acting Rehearsals. Bring your script and a pencil to ALL rehearsals.
- 4) All Cast Members must wear rehearsal shoes at all rehearsals starting no later than **1/21** and rehearsal skirts (as needed) starting **1/28**. After these dates, those without proper rehearsal attire will not be allowed to participate in the rehearsal.
- 5) All Scenes, Songs, and Dances are taught and then reviewed. After the first rehearsal you are required to be off book on the Scene, Song, or Dance by the next time the Scene, Song, or Dance is rehearsed. If you are not prepared we may need to remove you from the Scene, Song, or Dance.
- 6) **YOU MUST BE OFF BOOK FOR THE ENTIRE SHOW BY 3/31.**

If you are going to be late or absent due to illness or emergency, please call Kevin at 615-3161 no later than 30 minutes before rehearsal is scheduled to start.

Tuesday, January 15 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	Full Cast Meeting	ALL STAFF

Thursday, January 17 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Oh the Thinks You Can Think, Horton Hears a Who, The Biggest Blame Fool in the Jungle of Nool</i> ALL	Music/Kathy

Friday, January 18 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Oh, The Thinks You Can Think</i> All	Dance/Judi

Saturday, January 19 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
9:00 am-12:00	<i>Horton Hears a Who, The Biggest Blame Fool in the Jungle of Nool, Her on Who, Of the Thinks You Can Think (Reprise), Notice Me Horton, Alone in the Universe</i> CAT, JOJO, HORTON, BIRD GIRLS, SOUR KANGAROO, WICHERSHAM BROTHERS, GERTRUDE, MAYZIE, MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR	Music/Kathy
12:30-2:30	<i>Oh, The Thinks You Can Think</i> All	Dance/Judi

****NO REHEARSAL Monday, January 21****

Tuesday, January 22 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	pp 15-19 including <i>Horton Hears A Who</i> CAT, JOJO, JUNGLE CITIZENS, BIRD GIRLS Here on Who, Message From the Front MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, HORTON, GRINCH, JOJO, CAT, SCHMITZ	Kevin/Kathy

Wednesday, January 23 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Oh, The Thinks You Can Think</i> All	Dance/Judi

Thursday, January 24 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Message From the Front, Military, Chasing the Whos, Green Eggs and Ham II</i> MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, SCHMITZ, CADETS, SOUR KANGAROO, BIRD GIRLS, JUNGLE CITIZENS, WICKERSHAM BROTHERS, CAT, HORTON, VLAD, WHO CITIZENS	Music/Kathy

Friday, January 25 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Biggest Blame Fool</i> CAT, SOUR KANGAROO, WICKERSHAMS, HORTON, GERTRUDE, MAYZIE, BIRD GIRLS, BOY, YERTLE, CITIZENS OF THE JUNGLE	Dance/Judi

Saturday, January 26 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
9:00 am-12:00	<i>One Feather Tail, Amazing Mayzie, Amazing Gertrude, Monkey Around, How Lucky You Are, Our Story Resumes</i> GERTRUDE, MAYZIE, BIRD GIRLS, CAT, WICKERSHAM BROTHERS, HORTON, JOJO	Music/Kathy
12:30-2:30	<i>Biggest Blame Fool</i> CAT, SOUR KANGAROO, WICKERSHAMS, HORTON, GERTRUDE, MAYZIE, BIRD GIRLS, BOY, YERTLE, CITIZENS OF THE JUNGLE	Dance/Judi

Monday, January 28 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	pp 25-30 including <i>Here On Who</i> GERTRUDE, MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, CAT, HORTON, WHO CITIZENS, GRINCH How To Raise a Child MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, BIRD GIRLS	Acting/Music Kevin/Kathy

Tuesday, January 29 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	pp 30-33, 36-37 including <i>Oh, The Thinks You Can Think (Reprise), and How To Raise A Child Military</i> CAT, JOJO, MR. MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR MAYOR, MRS MAYOR, SCHMITZ, JOJO, WICKERSHAM BROTHERS	Acting/Music Kevin/Kathy

Wednesday, January 30 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	Review: <i>Oh, The Thinks You Can Think, Biggest Blame Fool</i> ALL	Dance/Judi

Thursday, January 31 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	Finale Act 1, Egg, Nest & Tree, Circus McGurkus, It's Possible ALL	Music/Kathy

Friday, February 1 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>It's Possible</i> JOJO, CAT, FISH	Dance/Judi

Saturday, February 2 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
10:00-12:00	<i>It's Possible</i> JOJO, CAT, FISH	Dance/Judi
12:30-3:30	<i>Mayzie in Palm Beach, Mayzie at the Circus, Amayzing Horton, Alone in the Universe, Solla Sollew, Havin' a Hunch</i> MAYZIE, CAT, HORTON, JOJO, MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, CIRCUS ANIMALS	Music/Kathy

Monday, February 4 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	p 40-44 including <i>Alone In The Universe and The One Feather Tail of Miss Gertrude McFuzz</i> HORTON, JOJO, CAT, GERTRUDE Jojo Alone in the Universe, All for You JOJO, MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, HORTON, GERTRUDE, CAT, BIRD GIRLS	Kevin/Kathy Acting/Music

Tuesday, February 5 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	Review pp 15-19, 25-30, 30-33, 36-37 and 40-44 CAT, JOJO, JUNGLE CITIZENS, BIRD GIRLS, GERTRUDE, MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, HORTON, WHO CITIZENS, GRINCH Havin' a Hunch, Whos Return CAT, JOJO, HUNCHES, HORTON, MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, GERTRUDE	Kevin/Kathy Acting/Music

Wednesday, February 6 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>The Military</i> SCHMITZ, CADETS	Dance/Judi

Thursday, February 7 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>People vs. Horton, Yopp/Alone in the Universe, Finale Act 2, Finale Bows</i> ALL	Music/Kathy

Friday, February 8 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Amazing Mayzie</i> MAYZIE, GERTRUDE, BIRD GIRLS	Dance/Judi

Saturday, February 9 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
10:00-12:00	<i>Amazing Mayzie, Amazing Gertrude</i> MAYZIE, GERTRUDE, BIRD GIRLS, CAT	Dance/Judi
12:30-3:30	<i>Horton Hears a Who, The Biggest Blame Fool in the Jungle of Nool, Her on Who, Of the Thinks You Can Think (Reprise), Notice Me Horton, Alone in the Universe</i> CAT, JOJO, HORTON, BIRD GIRLS, SOUR KANGAROO, WICHERSHAM BROTHERS, GERTRUDE, MAYZIE, MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR	Music/Kathy

Monday, February 11 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	pp 49-54 including <i>Monkey Around and Chasing The Who Citizens</i> WICKERSHAMS, HORTON, JUNGLE CITIZENS, SOUR KANGAROO, CAT, VLAD VLADIKOFF, BIRD GIRLS, JOJO	Kevin/Kathy Acting/Music

Tuesday, February 12 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	pp 56-59 including <i>Notice Me, Horton and How Lucky You Are (Reprise)</i> HORTON, GERTRUDE, MAYZIE, CAT, BIRD GIRLS, HUNTERS	Kevin/Kathy Acting/Music

Wednesday, February 13 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Amazing Gertrude, Amazing Mayzie</i> MAYZIE, GERTRUDE, BIRD GIRLS, CAT	Dance/Judi

Thursday, February 14 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Oh the Thinks You Can Think, Horton Hears a Who, The Biggest Blame Fool in the Jungle of Nool</i> ALL	Music/Kathy

Friday, February 15 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Review: Oh, The Thinks You Can Think, Biggest Blame Fool, The Military</i> ALL	Dance/Judi

Saturday, February 16 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
10:00-12:00	<i>Review: It's Possible, Amazing Mayzie, Amazing Gertrude</i> JOJO, CAT, FISH, MAYZIE, GERTRUDE, BIRD GIRLS, CAT	Dance/Judi
12:30-3:30	<i>Mayzie in Palm Beach, Mayzie at the Circus, Amayzing Horton, Alone in the Universe, Solla Sollew, Havin' a Hunch</i> MAYZIE, CAT, HORTON, JOJO, MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, CIRCUS ANIMALS	Music/Kathy

****NO REHEARSAL FEBRUARY 18-23******Monday, February 25 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER**

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Review Act I</i> ALL	Acting/Kevin

Tuesday, February 26 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	p 65-68 including <i>Egg Nest and Tree</i> CAT, JOJO, HORTON, HUNTERS, GERTRUDE, BIRD GIRLS, SCHMITZ, SOUR KANGAROO, BIRD GIRLS, WICKERSHAMS Here on Who, Message From the Front MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, HORTON, GRINCH, JOJO, CAT, SCHMITZ	Kevin/Kathy Acting/Music

Wednesday, February 27 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Review: Oh, The Thinks You Can Think, Biggest Blame Fool, The Military, It's Possible, Amazing Mayzie, Amazing Gertrude</i> ALL	Dance/Judi

Thursday, February 28 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Message From the Front, Military, Chasing the Whos, Green Eggs and Ham II</i> MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, SCHMITZ, CADETS, SOUR KANGAROO, BIRD GIRLS, JUNGLE CITIZENS, WICKERSHAM BROTHERS, CAT, HORTON, VLAD, WHO CITIZENS	Music/Kathy

Friday, February 29 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Finale Act I</i> ALL	Dance/Judi

Saturday, March 1 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
10:00am-12:00pm	<i>Finale Act I</i> ALL	Dance/Judi
12:30-3:30-pm	<i>One Feather Tail, Amayzing Mayzie, Amayzing Gertrude, Monkey Around, How Lucky You Are, Our Story Resumes</i> GERTRUDE, MAYZIE, BIRD GIRLS, CAT, WICKERSHAM BROTHERS, HORTON, JOJO	Music/Kathy

Monday, March 3 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>pp 69-71 including The Circus McGurkus and The Circus On Tour/How Lucky You Are (Reprise)</i> CAT, CIRCUS ANIMALS, CIRCUS FOLK, HORTON <i>How To Raise a Child, Military</i> MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, SCHMITZ, JOJO	Kevin/Kathy Acting/Music

Tuesday, March 4 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Review Act I</i> ALL	Acting/Kevin

Wednesday, March 5 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>People Versus Horton</i> ALL EXCEPT CITIZENS OF WHO	Dance/Judi

Thursday, March 6 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Finale Act 1, Egg, Nest & Tree, Circus McGurkus, It's Possible</i> ALL	Music/Kathy

****NO REHEARSAL FRIDAY, MARCH 7—SHOWTIME****

Saturday, March 8 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
10:00-12:00	<i>How Lucky You Are</i> CAT	Dance/Judi
12:30-3:30	<i>Mayzie in Palm Beach, Mayzie at the Circus, Amazing Horton, Alone in the Universe, Solla Sollew, Havin' a Hunch</i> MAYZIE, CAT, HORTON, JOJO, MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, CIRCUS ANIMALS	Music/Kathy

Monday, March 10 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	pp 71- 73 including <i>How Lucky You Are- Reprise (Mayzie In Palm Beach)</i> and <i>Amazing Horton</i> MAYZIE, CAT, HORTON Jojo Alone in the Universe, All for You JOJO, MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, HORTON, GERTRUDE, CAT, BIRD GIRLS	Kevin/Kathy Acting/Music

Tuesday, March 11 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	pp 73-76 including <i>Alone In The Universe and Solla Sollew</i> HORTON, CIRCUS ANIMALS, JOJO, MR. MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR Havin' a Hunch, Whos Return CAT, JOJO, HUNCHES, HORTON, MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, GERTRUDE	Kevin/Kathy Acting/Music

Wednesday, March 12 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>People Versus Horton</i> ALL	Dance/Judi

Thursday, March 13 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>People vs. Horton, Yopp/Alone in the Universe, Finale Act 2, Finale Bows</i> ALL	Music/Kathy

Friday, March 14 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Finale Act II-Oh The Thinks You Can Think</i> ALL	Dance/Judi

Saturday, March 15 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
10:00-12:00	<i>Finale Act II, Green Eggs and Ham</i> ALL	Dance/Judi
12:30-3:30	<i>Oh the Thinks You Can Think, How to Raise a Child, Alone in the Universe, One Feather Tail, Amazing Mayzie, Amazing Gertrude, Amazing Horton, Monkey Around</i> CAT, JOJO, MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, HORTON, GERTRUDE, MAYZIE, WICKERSHAM BROTHERS, BIRD GIRLS	Kathy/Music

Monday, March 17 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	pp 76-81 including <i>Green Eggs and Ham II, Grinch Scene and A Message From the Front/Solla Sollew (Reprise)</i> SCHMITZ, CADETS, JOJO, GRINCH, YOUNG WHOS, MAX, MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, CAT	Acting/Kevin

Tuesday, March 18 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	Review pp 65-81 CAT, JOJO, HORTON, HUNTERS, GERTRUDE, BIRD GIRLS, SCHMITZ, SOUR KANGAROO, WICKERSHAMS, CIRCUS ANIMALS, CIRCUS FOLK, MAYZIE, MR. MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, CADETS, GRINCH, YOUNG WHOS, MAX	Acting/Kevin

Wednesday, March 19 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Green Eggs and Ham</i> ALL	Dance/Judi

Thursday, March 20 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Notice Me Horton, How Lucky You Are, Our Story Resumes, Mayzie in Palm Beach, Jopp!/Alone in the Universe, All for You, Jojo/Alone in the Universe</i> GERTRUDE, CAT, MAYZIE, BIRD GIRLS, HORTON, JOJO	Music/Kathy

****NO REHEARSAL March 21-22****

Monday, March 24 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	pp 81-85 including <i>Alone In The Universe (Reprise) and Havin' A Hunch</i> JOJO, CAT, HUNCHES	Acting/Kevin

Tuesday, March 25 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	pp 85-91, 97-100 including <i>All For You and Yopp!/Alone In The Universe (Reprise)</i> GERTRUDE, HORTON, CAT, BIRD GIRLS, MR. MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR, JOJO, WICKERSHAMS, SOUR KANGAROO, WHO CITIZENS, JUNGLE CITIZENS, YERTLE	Acting/Kevin

Wednesday, March 26 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Review: Oh, The Thinks You Can Think, Finale Act I, Finale Act II, People Versus Horton, Green Eggs and Ham</i> ALL	Dance/Judi

Thursday, March 27 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Oh the Thinks You Can Think, Horton Hears a Who, Biggest Blame Fool in the Jungle of Nool, Here on Who, Military, Chasing Whos, How Lucky You Are, Finale Act I, Egg Nest and Tree</i> ALL	Music/Kathy

Friday, March 28 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Review: The Military, Amazing Mayzie, Amazing Gertrude, How Lucky You Are, Biggest Blame Fool, It's Possible</i> SCHMITZ, CADETS, MAYZIE, GERTRUDE, BIRD GIRLS, CAT, SOUR KANGAROO, WICKERSHAMS, HORTON, YERTLE, CITIZENS OF THE JUNGLE, JOJO, FISH	Dance/Judi

****MOVE-IN TO MCCPA SATURDAY, MARCH 29****

Monday, March 31 Location: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	<i>Review pp 81-100</i> ALL	Acting/Kevin

Tuesday, April 1 Location: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	Review Act I ALL	Acting/Kevin

Wednesday, April 2 Location: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	Review All Dances ALL	Dance/Judi

Thursday, April 3 LOCATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	Circus McGurkus, Solla Sollew, Green Eggs& Ham II, Christmas Pageant, Grinch Carved the Roast Beast, Message From the Front, Havin' a Hunch, People vs. Horton, Finale Act 2, Bows ALL	Music/Kathy

Friday, April 4 LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	Review All Dances ALL	Dance/Judi

Monday, April 7 LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	Review Act II ALL	Acting/Kevin

Tuesday, April 8 LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	Review ALL	Acting/Kevin

Wednesday, April 9 LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	Review: Dances and Songs ALL	Music/Dancing Kathy/Judi

Thursday, April 10 LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	Review: Dances and Songs ALL	Music/Dancing Kathy/Judi

Friday, April 11 LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:30	Run Act I and II ALL	Acting/Kevin

Saturday, April 12—DRESS REHEARSAL LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
12:00PM-5:00PM	FULL CAST IN COSTUME	ALL

Monday, April 14—DRESS REHEARSAL LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:45	FULL CAST IN COSTUME	ALL STAFF

Tuesday, April 15—DRESS REHEARSAL LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:45	FULL CAST IN COSTUME	ALL STAFF

Wednesday, April 16—DRESS REHEARSAL LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:45	FULL CAST IN COSTUME	ALL STAFF

Thursday, April 17—DRESS REHEARSAL LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:45	FULL CAST IN COSTUME	ALL STAFF

Friday, April 18—PERFORMANCE LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
5:00PM-TBA	FULL CAST IN COSTUME	ALL STAFF

Saturday, April 19—PERFORMANCE LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
5:00PM-TBA	FULL CAST IN COSTUME	ALL STAFF

Sunday, April 20—PERFORMANCE LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
12:00PM-TBA	FULL CAST IN COSTUME	ALL STAFF

Thursday, April 24—DRESS REHEARSAL LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
4:15-6:45	FULL CAST IN COSTUME	ALL STAFF

Friday, April 25—PERFORMANCE LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
5:00PM-TBA	FULL CAST IN COSTUME	ALL STAFF

Saturday, April 26—PERFORMANCE LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
5:00PM-TBA	FULL CAST IN COSTUME	ALL STAFF

Sunday, April 27—PERFORMANCE LOCATION: MISSION CITY CPA

Time	Scene or Song/Cast	Activity/Teacher
12:00-TBA	FULL CAST IN COSTUME Closing Party will immediately follow the performance. Ending time is to be announced.	ALL STAFF

APPENDIX F:

Commitment and Parent Participation Form

Participant’s Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

City, Zip: _____

Parent’s Home Phone (if different): _____

Parent’s Work Phone: _____

Emergency Contact Name and Phone: _____

There is a \$51.00 fee for Residents of the City of Santa Clara or students in the Santa Clara Unified School District. Fees for Non-Residents are \$66.00. **Your class fee must be paid no later than January 16.**

I understand and agree that:

- Participants must be at all scheduled rehearsals and performances;
- I, or a guardian or representative over 18, must attend a meeting for new parents at the Community Recreation Center on Saturday, January 12, 2:30pm-3:30pm;
- I must provide a costume for my child, made to the specifications of a design to be provided by RJJT. The costume must be complete by Dress Rehearsal, Saturday, April 12;
- I must provide some help during the show (see below);
- I must fill out a schedule conflict form and return it by Thursday, January 10 at 3:30pm;
- I must complete and return the Liability Release Form before the first rehearsal, Tuesday, January 15, or my child cannot attend the rehearsal;
- I have read and agree to support the Participant Rules and Responsibilities;
- My child and I understand this commitment.

Parent or Guardian’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

Participant’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

PARENT PARTICIPATION: Every family is required to have at least one parent participate on a volunteer committee if their child is to be a member of the cast. Your family must complete 5 hours of volunteer work per child from your family in the production. Every effort will be made to give you a chance to serve on the committees of your choice. Therefore, please check your choice(s) on the following list. If you do not indicate a choice we will assign you to the committee where you are most needed.

✓	Volunteer Committee	✓	
	Delivering and posting posters around town.		Decorating the theatre lobby.
	Scenery Construction (if you have carpentry skills).		Organizing the cast/crew party.
	Making costumes for cast-members who don’t sew.		Delivering posters to schools.
	Selling cookies at intermission.		Being an Usher at a performance.

Please note: We may occasionally ask you to volunteer for other tasks that come up from time to time instead of those listed here.



APPENDIX G:

Seussical
Schedule Conflict Form

Your request for an absence due to schedule conflicts (subject to Junior Theatre Staff approval) must be submitted by Thursday, January 10 at 3:30pm, due to casting requirements. You may drop this form off at the Community Center front desk, or fax it to Kevin Cornelius at (408) 261-9146.

Participant's Name: _____

Address: _____

City, Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Please list any schedule conflicts below. Only pre-approved absences will be allowed (please see *Participation Rules and Responsibilities*). Schedule conflicts cannot be accepted for any rehearsals on or after April 12, or for any performances.

Date: _____

Event _____

I understand that the Junior Theatre Staff will try to accommodate my schedule conflict(s), but approval depends on the rehearsal schedule and the role my child is playing in the production.

Parent or Guardian Signature: _____

Accepted: _____ Rejected: _____

This form cannot be accepted after January 10.

APPENDIX H:

Roberta Jones Junior Theatre
Presents Seussical!

An informational checklist for parents of Junior Theatre participants.

1. It is mandatory that you return the liability release form and register in the Winter/Spring Youth Production Course before the first rehearsal (Tuesday, January 15) or your child cannot participate in any rehearsal!
2. There is a mandatory meeting for all parents of new participants on Saturday, January 12, 2:30pm-3:30pm at the Community Recreation Center. Please note that you need to be present for the entire meeting.
3. The *Schedule Conflict Form* is attached. Please fill out this form if you have conflicts with our potential rehearsal days/times—Monday-Friday, 4:15-6:30pm, and Saturdays, 9:00am-4:00pm—January 15-April 17. This form needs to be submitted for staff approval by 3:30pm on Thursday, January 10. If approved by the staff, these will be the only excused absences we will be able to allow (except for medical or other extreme emergencies). **Schedule conflict forms cannot be accepted after Thursday, January 10.**
4. The pink *Commitment and Parent Participation* form is also attached. This form must be completed and returned by Wednesday, January 16th at 3:30pm. For your convenience, this form may be faxed to Kevin Cornelius at (408) 261-9146.
5. The gold *Participation Rules and Responsibilities* form is also attached. Your signature on the *Commitment and Parent Participation* form indicates your understanding and your pledge to support these rules. Please review them with your child.
6. Fees must be paid at the CRC front desk before or on the second day of rehearsal (September 12). Checks may be made payable to “City of Santa Clara.” Fees are \$51 for Santa Clara Residents, \$66 for Non-Residents of Santa Clara.
7. Rehearsals are 4:15-6:30pm, Monday-Friday, and Saturdays 9:00am-4:00pm beginning January 15. A detailed rehearsal schedule will be sent home at the first rehearsal. **It is important that you check the schedule thoroughly before accepting your part and making the commitment to attend all of your rehearsals.**
8. Performances are April 18, 19, 25 and 26 at 7:00pm, April 20 and 27 at 2:00pm.
9. Parents and guardians—please pick up your children as soon as rehearsals are over. If they must wait for you, please instruct your children to wait inside the CRC lobby. Please be aware that it is illegal and unsafe to stop or park your car anywhere in front of the

building. Please park in designated parking lot stalls and come into the building to get your child. It is dangerous for the children to run across the parking lot/driveway. We are concerned for their safety.

10. There have occasionally been after-performance parties at local restaurants, which have been arranged by individual cast members. Please note that these parties are not organized or supervised by Roberta Jones Junior Theatre staff members. They are strictly private, and as such, we think you need to be aware that Junior Theatre staff cannot be responsible for the safety of your child when he or she attends one of these gatherings. Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend these gatherings with their children.
11. There are a limited number of scholarships available to help pay for class fees and costumes. Please pick up a “Friends of Parks and Recreation” scholarship application from the CRC registration desk. **The grant application must be submitted, with all required additional paperwork, no later than January 16.**
12. If you have any questions, please call Kevin Cornelius, Junior Theatre Director, at 408-615-3161. You may also ask questions via email by writing to Kevin at kcornelius@santaclara.gov.

APPENDIX I:
DISCUSSIONS WITH ROBERTA JONES JUNIOR THEATRE
DIRECTOR KEVIN CORNELIUS

Following is the interview with Kevin Cornelius regarding his involvement and feelings toward the Santa Clara/Roberta Jones Junior Theatre conducted on March 14th and 20th. This interview was conducted to help establish his connection to the theatre as a young child, why he wanted to be involved in the theatre when it was in search of a new director, and what his plans are for the future of the theatre.

Chareen Lauritzen (CL): How old were you when you joined SCJT? Why did you decided to join the program?

Kevin Cornelius (KC): I joined Santa Clara Junior Theatre when I was 10 years old. I had always been interested in singing and acting. When my family moved to Santa Clara, my mom saw information about SCJT in the Parks and Recreation Activity Guide, and asked my brother and me if we were interested in being in “Pinocchio.” We both enjoyed being dancing puppets, and I was hooked ever since.

CL: What was your experience like when you were young?

KC: In general, my experience as a participant at Junior Theatre was extremely positive. Roberta was a wonderful teacher, and was a huge influence on my development. I enjoyed the productions I was in, and made life-long friendships. I know that the self-discipline that I learned

as Junior Theatre participant helped me do well in school, and prepared me for work life when I was old enough to get a job. As I grew older, I took on more responsibilities at Junior Theatre. Roberta encouraged me to learn about the technical aspects of theatre. My first job was as a Recreation Leader for the SCJT summer camp program called FACE (Fine Arts Camp Extraordinaire).

CL: What was your experience with Roberta?

KC: Roberta was a very warm and encouraging teacher. She made me feel very welcome in the program, and also taught from early on to respect the theatre and the rules we needed to follow. She created a place for us where all of us felt welcome and valuable. She was my most influential teacher from my childhood.

CL: What was the most memorable about the program?

KC: The personal relationship I had with Roberta. We had so many hands-on experiences—helping with sets, lighting, costumes, make-up, and it gave us wonderful opportunities to interact one-on-one with Roberta. She was always willing to listen to us and had a kind and nurturing spirit that was felt in all aspects of the Junior Theatre.

CL: Why did you decide to return and apply for the producer position when it became available?

KC: I had spent my adult life working in theatre and also working with children and families. I had just completed my Masters Degree in marital and Family Therapy, and was considering moving back to my home town (I was living in Los Angeles at the time). When I found out that the City of Santa Clara was looking for someone to fill the position of Junior Theatre Director, I

felt that this was a perfect fit for me. I was excited by the possibility of having a job where I could be helping young people and teaching Theatre Arts.

CL: Did you feel a connection with the program? Why?

KC: Yes, I have felt a very strong connection to this program. When I was in junior High and High School, Junior Theatre was a like a second home for me. I loved the program and the people in it. I had such positive experiences at Junior Theatre, that I decided to study Theatre Arts in college, and went on to become a professional actor, director and playwright. I always remembered the valuable lessons I learned from Roberta. Roberta always stressed the importance of making a total commitment, and had high expectations of all of us to stay true to the huge time commitment we had made by joining a production. She also taught us to be punctual, have a good work ethic and a positive attitude at rehearsals. I carried those lessons with me throughout my education and professional experiences.

CL: What is your specific job title and responsibilities associated?

KC: My Job Title is Junior Theatre Director. I am a Supervisor in the Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department. I am responsible for managing all aspects of the Junior Theatre program. I produce 6 productions a year, design lighting and sound for all productions, and direct 4-6 of those productions. I schedule all rehearsal and performance spaces. I am responsible for the hiring, training and supervising of all Junior Theatre staff. I develop classes and programs, select our season of plays and musicals, and coordinate all of the technical elements for each production. I am also in charge of all publicity for our productions and classes. I recruit volunteers for our technical crews, and supervise all crews. I am also responsible for managing

all of the parent volunteers for our program. I often teach classes on acting, stage make-up, theatrical design and technical theatre. I am responsible for our budget, and for organizing fund-raising activities. In addition to my Junior Theatre responsibilities, I am responsible for the scheduling and staffing of all City of Santa Clara sponsored productions in the Mission City Center for performing Arts. I also schedule and supervise technical staff for all events in the Mary Louise Mello Auditorium at the Santa Clara Community Recreation Center.

CL: Who is on your staff and what are their titles and responsibilities?

KC: I have two Assistant Producers, who help supervise our participants during rehearsals, assist me with some administrative details (filing, typing) and help manage the parent volunteers for each production. There is also a Choreographer, Musical/Vocal Director, Set Designer, Costume Designer and Lighting Assistant. There are also several assistants who assist the above staff. All staff members (other than me) work part-time, and are hired from show to show on an as-needed basis.

CL: What is your definition of a successful theatre? Do you believe RJJT falls in that category?

KC: I believe any successful theatre is a vibrant part of its local community. RJJT falls into this category very well! We succeed because of the opportunities and education we provide our participants, and because of the high quality, family-friendly theatre we provide our large and enthusiastic audiences.

CL: Why do you think that RJJT can be a model for a successful children's theatre?

KC: RJJT is successful on two levels. First, the program is successful because we produce high quality theatre. We have a reputation for creating excellent productions. Our staff is made up of highly qualified professionals who have very valuable skills to teach our participants. Secondly, we succeed at teaching our participants highly valuable life lessons. The rules that we have developed over the years aid us in successfully producing wonderful plays and musicals, and they help teach our participants excellent work skills.

CL: What would you say is the transcending philosophy for the theatre? Do you believe Roberta's was the same?

KC: Every participant is equally valuable to our program, and shares an equal level of responsibility. There is room for every child who wants to be here, regardless of their ability to pay participation fees. We are here to teach—we just happen to use theatre as the means for teaching. We teach young people to make commitments of their time and effort, and to stay true to their commitments. Our participants learn the value of working well with others towards a common goal that is bigger than themselves, as well as the value of community service. Our purpose is to teach these lessons in a fun, nurturing environment, where every child feels like he or she is a welcome and valuable member of our community of friends. This philosophy was developed by Roberta Jones, and is the backbone of our program. Our staff is passionate about continuing Roberta's vision for the Junior Theatre.

CL: Why do you think SCJT/RJJT has had such a positive 40 year history?

KC: Over the past 40 years, we have earned a great reputation in our community for providing high-quality entertainment for the whole family. Also, we have earned a reputation as being an

excellent activity for young people. We help our participants learn about all aspects of theatre, we encourage them to express their creativity and we teach them the self-discipline and interpersonal skills they need to succeed in many aspects of their lives. We treat all of our participants as equals, invite anyone who wants to be in our productions to participate, and strive to make each individual feel like they are an essential, valuable member of our group.

CL: Do you think theatre should be a large part of children's life? Why?

KC: Yes, I do. I think that within theatre, there is room for so many different skills and interests. There is a place for people who love to perform, and also for those who like to work behind the scenes. For those interested in the arts, theatre combines visual art, music and literature. For those who are more technically inclined, there is work in woodworking, painting, electricity, sound recording, and more. Also, I think plays and musicals give us a unique opportunity to explore and appreciate relationships and storytelling.

CL: How is the season chosen?

KC: We have a wide age range of participants (ages 8-18) so we have unique requirements for our productions. We usually do musicals, because they appeal to most of our participants, and we get more kids involved when we produce musicals. Our productions must be appropriate for young audiences and families, yet be sophisticated and entertaining enough for teens to want to participate. Also, the shows we choose to do must have room for large casts. I usually structure our season with a show based on a fairytale or well-known children's story for the fall, a Broadway style musical for the spring, and a musical that the actors will especially enjoy for the summer. I also choose a Shakespeare comedy for each summer. For example, in our current

season, our fall show was “A Year with Frog and Toad,” our spring show is “Seussical” our summer musical is “High School musical” and our summer Shakespeare production is “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.”

CL: How many audience members do the performance spaces hold?

KC: The Mary Louise Mello Auditorium holds 308 people. The Mission City CPA holds 355. We typically sell-out the majority of our shows.

CL: What is the price of the tickets? On an average night how full is the house? How do the different types of shows vary on audience attendance?

KC: Our tickets are \$3 for children and \$6 for adults. On average, we sell a minimum of 90% of our seats. A show with a popular title, such as “Beauty and The Beast” or “The Wizard of Oz,” will have 100% sales. Something newer and less known, such as “Honk” or “Dear Edwina” will sell 10-15% less.

CL: What percentage of the audience is family and friends of the cast as opposed to just members of the community?

KC: That's a good question. I know that a large portion of our audiences come from the community. We have great free advertising opportunities right here in the Community Recreation Center, and other City facilities. Because our ticket prices are quite low, we've established a reputation over the years of providing great, low-cost entertainment that is appropriate for all ages. Over the last two years, our audiences have been very large. For instance, for Seussical!, with a cast of 30, we sold out 6 performances, with seats for 355 in each

performance. That's 2,130 tickets sold. If our cast were the only ones selling those tickets, each person would have to have sold 71 tickets by themselves—which is not very likely. I wish I had an actual percentage I could tell you.

CL: How do you think technology has impacted the theatre?

KC: On stage, technology is a huge part of our productions. We have very technically advanced lighting and sound systems at the Mission City CPA, and are soon to get a new lighting system at the Mello Auditorium. We have an excellent set designer, who works with our participants on set construction and painting. The technical aspects of our productions allow us to bring in students who have an interest in theatre, but would prefer to be “behind the scenes.” Administratively, computer technology enables me to produce professional quality publicity materials, which helps us, maintain and build our large audience base.

CL: Where does the funding for the shows come from?

KC: We are sponsored and fully funded by the City of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department.

CL: What is the budget (for the year and each show)?

KC: We have a budget of around \$60,000 to pay our as-needed staff. It is divided pretty evenly between the six productions we do each year. For royalties, script rental, sets, props, publicity materials and contracted musicians, we have to earn enough through ticket and concession sales to break even.

CL: What is the major marketing strategy for the theatre?

KC: Our main source of advertising is our flyers, which are distributed to thousands of people at all of the City of Santa Clara public buildings—the Community Recreation Center, Youth Activity Center, Teen Center, Libraries, City Hall, etc. We also distribute flyers to all of the local public schools. We maintain a large mailing list that receives notices about all of our performances, classes and auditions. We announce all of our opportunities for participants, such as auditions, classes, crew sign-ups, in the Parks and Recreation Activity Guide, which is mailed to all homes in Santa Clara, and available for pick-up at all public buildings. We also have a website, www.rjtt.org, which advertises our auditions, classes and performances, and allows patrons to purchase tickets and season subscriptions.

CL: How does the connection with the Parks and Recreation Department work? Do you feel like it is a positive relationship?

KC: The Parks and Recreation Department makes it possible for us to provide our program at very low cost to the public. Participation fees and ticket prices are exceptionally low when compared with similar programs in our area. The City provides us with staff salaries, free use of rehearsal and performance spaces, low-cost advertising and an incredibly valuable support staff at the Community Recreation Center. The Parks and Recreation Department has supported RJJT for 40 years, and helped us thrive. I would say that it is a very positive relationship!

CL: Do you believe the program has kept the legacy of Roberta alive?

KC: I do. I am very grateful that I am able to be a part of the staff that keeps Roberta's vision and work alive.

CL: What is your vision for the theatre in the future?

KC: I strive to constantly evaluate how we are doing and improve our program in any way I can.

We have recently added advanced ticket sales and season subscription plans, which our audiences love. Also, we have developed a new program that allows children as young as six years old to participate in a show. This has been well-received. My plan is to get more young people involved in our program.

CL: What is the program which gets 6-year olds involved?

KC: Last year, we began a program called Springboard Theatre, for ages 6-12. This was due to constant requests from the public for productions for participants under 8 years old. These productions are typically one-act musicals of popular children's stories, with a much lighter rehearsal schedule.

CL: What was the biggest obstacle you have come across and how did you handle and overcome it?

KC: I think my biggest challenge was when I was first hired as the Junior Theatre Director. It took a long time for me to establish a positive relationship with the participants and parents. Many people were skeptical of my ability to run the program in the same manner Roberta had. I think this was inevitable, because of Roberta's many years of service to the community, her excellent reputation and the close personal relationship she had with the participants and their parents. While I occasionally stumbled, I eventually succeeded by staying true to Roberta's philosophy and vision for Junior Theatre.

CL: Do you have any changes planned for the theatre? If so, how do you think they will help the theatre have another 40 strong years?

KC: I am planning an outreach strategy to get more young people involved in our programs. Even after 40 years of success, there are still many people in Santa Clara who don't know we exist. I think that in order for our program to continue to succeed in the future, we need to reach out to new families who don't know this wonderful program exists.

APPENDIX J:

TESTIMONIALS FROM ROBERTA JONES JUNIOR THEATRE PARTICIPANTS

When I chose to write my master's thesis on the Santa Clara Junior Theatre (SCJT) on the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJJT), I wanted to make sure others who participated in the theatre were given the opportunity to say a little bit about their experiences with the theatre and Roberta, if they were participants when she was working there. I have received several responses back which further confirms to me the importance of the theatre in people's lives, both young and old. Following are the comments I have received:

Andrea Mitchell:

For those of us who grew up under Roberta's wing, we know just how great an experience it was, don't we! As for my experience, the theatre, and Roberta specifically, gave me the skills and attributes that got me where I am today. Some of these include: responsibility, tenacity, punctuality, the ability to give presentations and improvise when necessary, the ability to accept praise and criticism, and the ability to express myself clearly. The show must go on! These are all things some kids (and adults) have to learn the hard way, and we were so lucky to be fortunate enough to have Roberta show us the importance of these life lessons so early on! Oh, and I must give thanks to Roberta for bringing out the creative side in me, and fostering the love of singing and dancing in my life. :) Without Roberta and the theatre, I wouldn't have been able to complete education up to my Master's, complete a thesis, or keep going when the going

got rough. Growing up under Roberta's rule was the best thing that could've happened to me, and I consider myself very lucky to have been a part of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre!⁷²

Emily Holtzclaw:

RJJT was my life. It's where I grew up and it made me into the person I am today. I considered it my second home if not my home. I have so many memories I don't even know where I could start! I made so many great friends and learned so much. I don't remember Roberta very much since I was little, but I always remember her walking around in that apron always with a smile on her face. I also remember her always making me feel welcome and making sure everyone was happy and having a great time. I actually went over to the theatre the other day. No one was there, but, I wondered around anyways walking backstage and so forth. It was so strange to be there. Thinking how much everything has changed and how much it is still all the same. I miss it all so very, very much. I can't believe I spent 10 years of my life there. Sometimes I wish I was still 16, 17 or 18 years old, just so I can be there putting on my dance shoes, waiting for Kathy, Judi or whoever the director was at the time to get there so I could go up on stage and start practice. Or to even be backstage sitting there in shorts or my bloomers, tights and a tee shirt going threw the makeup with my hair all done, listening or singing Disney songs and talking with all my friends, waiting for warm-ups and then feeling those butterfly's in the dark wings waiting to go on stage and leap into a whole different world.⁷³

Robin Bright:

I did "Santa Clara Junior Theatre" from 1979-1987. I think the thing that is so great about that place is that EVERYONE got to participate. It wasn't like auditions meant you may not be able to participate in theatre if you weren't good enough, you just got the part that was right for

⁷² Mitchell, Andrea. E-Mail. 9 Mar 2008.

⁷³ Holtzclaw, Emily. E-Mail. 14 Mar 2008. Spelling corrected.

you. Whether you were the lead or the townspeople with one line, you got to do it—and Roberta never made anyone feel better than others or “less than” based on their part. EVERYONE was just as important, because the show would not be the same or even work without even the smallest of roles. I have other memories, too, but that is the strongest.⁷⁴

Marnelle Hardy

From the day I stepped onto the stage in the fall of 1992, until my senior year of high school and last production in 2003, the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre has continually influenced my life. Looking back, I realize how much of who I have become I truly owe to that program and the people who have dedicated their lives to it. Even today, I utilize lessons that were taught to me during my time at RJJT including: how to properly project your voice, to harmonize, to memorize information, to stand and sit properly, to be respectful, to be on time, etc. I can remember my first dress rehearsal and how the bright costumes and exaggerated hair and makeup fascinated me. In truth, I owe my very career path to this program and the opportunities it afforded me. I am currently a costume, hair, and makeup designer for theatre and media arts. I feel so fortunate that I was able to find my niche at such a young age in an environment that allowed me to explore my talents and expand them. I wholeheartedly recommend this program. It wasn't always easy to juggle school, theatre, and everything else thrown at you as a child and young adult, but it was definitely worth it.⁷⁵

Andrew Ragone:

I was in Santa Clara Junior Theatre from 1985-1991 under Roberta Jones. I think it's GREAT what you are doing and she certainly needs to be recognized for her life achievement and what she contributed to those that came through SCJT.

⁷⁴ Bright, Robin. E-Mail. 17 Mar 2008.

⁷⁵ Hardy, Marnelle. E-Mail. 22 Mar 2008.

I cannot thank Roberta enough for giving me the chance to grow as a teenager and performer. I think that was a main function of the group...how not only did you get serious theatrical training...it also was a training ground for life. She believed in giving everyone a chance that came through SCJT and that inclusion really helped us out as individuals develop a good self esteem. Everyone got the chance to shine.

She really inspired my love for theatre and I am currently playing Raoul in *Phantom of the Opera*....so she really helped me find a career I love.⁷⁶

Rebecca (Jackson) Newsom:

I participated in SCJT from 1982-1991. I could go on and on with stories about the theatre, Roberta, and why it was so influential in my life! I think it's awesome that you're writing a master's thesis about it.

I'm a teacher now myself, so in thinking about what makes the children's theatre model successful, specifically, I'm taken back to Roberta's goals for kids. What always stuck out to me was that she always made Responsibility such a focus. Attendance was taken strictly. If you missed more than 2 rehearsals without an excuse you were dropped from the show. You needed to have your lines memorized on time. Parents were required to volunteer for one aspect of the production. Kids were expected to be QUIET during rehearsals (and if you didn't you got "stooled" which meant sitting on a stool by yourself against the side of the auditorium. I only got stooled once. It was really hard to stay quiet when so many fun friends were around!) She always encouraged kids to work on their homework while they were waiting to go on. Her heart was there for anyone. My stepbrother, who tended to hang with the "wrong" crowd, ended up at the theatre to help with set construction one Saturday. She did her best to keep him engaged and

⁷⁶ Ragone, Andrew. E-Mail. 20 Mar 2008.

connected with the group. She cared for all the kids with her complete heart and soul, which she poured into the theatre 24/7.

I have so many fun stories from that time period. Suffice it to say, I entered the theatre a shy, quiet girl and throughout my years there I discovered my wacky, showy, musical, storyteller, actress, fun-loving self. I would NOT be who I am today without that amazing experience, surrounded by other kids who wanted to do good in the world and have fun doing it. We were each others' family and I still consider them to be my family today. My oldest friends come from the theatre, not from school. They were always my deepest friends.

It's so hard to choose stories from Parade of Champions, Touring Company, Summer Conservatories, being the “young one,” being the “oldest,” face painting at the park, working crew, the memories go on and on...⁷⁷

Kathy Lipps:

For me, the social aspect of Junior Theatre was the most important thing. Having gone to a small Catholic school where I didn't really have friends for 7 years before starting SCJT, I never really had strong friends. JT did a great job of bringing people together.

I think Roberta played a huge role in building my confidence. Robin too. They noticed it from my first year to my 2nd year of JT—I went from a shy, rather uncomfortable middle-schooler to a confident outgoing young adult. Roberta had the confidence in me that I didn't have in myself. She pushed me to go beyond what I expected of myself.

I think my most memorable moment was when I auditioned for Tumbleweeds - Robin came up to me and said "where did that come from?" because I'd just become so much more confident that I blew her away.

⁷⁷ Newson, Rebecca Jackson. E-Mail. 15 Mar 2008.

I think the only negatives for me were the political aspects that were often irritating, especially as someone who came in a little later. There was a lot of nepotism and I often felt like an outsider—like I wasn't one of the special ones who could do no wrong. This wasn't so much on a social level, but on a hierarchical level.⁷⁸

Eric Dobbins:

It helps kids create close friendships along with learning the responsibilities of theatre. Also I know for me it helped me open up and become more out going.⁷⁹

Nathaniel Otten:

I just wanted to tell a little story about Roberta and my first show. My first show was *Jack and the Beanstalk* back in '96 I think, and I remember Roberta teaching me my first line ever in a show. She was the most patient and kind woman who could somehow control an entire group while still showing us each special love and attention. I will always remember Roberta's amazing compassion and love for people and children. That was the first of many beautiful memories with Roberta.⁸⁰

Marsha Aguas:

I have done theatre from ages eight to fifteen at Roberta Jones Jr. Theatre. I always had really fun participating in the plays. It gave me the opportunity to do a variety of activities such as singing, dancing, and making new friends. I never got the main part in the plays, but that never mattered. Jr. Theatre always made everyone, including me, feel special and needed for the play. Doing plays taught me the value of hard work and teamwork. Putting on plays was fun but never easy and in order to have a successful play, everyone had to pitch in together to help. I

⁷⁸ Lipps, Kathy. E-Mail 14 Mar 2008.

⁷⁹ Dobbins, Eric. E-Mail. 25 Mar 2008.

⁸⁰ Otten, Nathaniel. E-Mail. 20 Mar 2008.

may not do theatre anymore, but I still look back to those days and remember how much fun it was. One of my best friends was someone who did the program with me.⁸¹

Eric Narveson:

As you probably know, I was in the Junior Theatre from 1971-1979. I participated in every play put on during those years. Initially we were at the Wilson Jr. High School on Benton, next to the monastery. I think the school has a new name.

We moved to the Central Park location in the CRC in 1975. I was there at the naming ceremony for the Mary Lou Mello Auditorium. I was one of the kids on stage to present the plaque to the city. I knew Miss Mello, and performed in several plays with her.

I was in the SCJT when Mackie McClelland directed and Roberta Jones produced. They made a great pair, and I could tell you many stories of their personalities, philosophy on theatre, organization, relationship with the City of Santa Clara, etc.

I continued to stay associated with the Theatre into the early to mid 1980s, and remained in contact with Roberta until her death.⁸²

Renee Perry:

Roberta made sure everyone believed their role to be important, regardless of the number of lines they had or what scenes or dance numbers they were in. Everyone always got a part, and no one was ever ignored.

I think that was really important. Even when I was 1 out of 30 orphans she stressed that if all the orphans are up there doing other junk and not reacting or being part of the scene it looked awful... so you engaged and you felt like part of the scene even if you didn't have a line.

⁸¹ Aguas, Marsha. E-Mail. 26 Mar 2008. Spelling corrected.

⁸² Narveson, Eric. E-Mail. 2 April 2008.

I think she usually tried to give everyone at least 1 line and make them make up names for their characters besides townsperson # 10.⁸³

Craig Hedlund:

I think what always made SCJT special to me was the freedom and responsibility we were given to make the shows our own. Looking back I'm amazed at how much trust was put into a bunch of teenagers. There were always adults around but most of the work was done by us, the kids. I'm also amazed at how much input we were given to the artistic process, at least on the technical side. I think the adults involved with the group were people who really liked kids and enjoyed working with them. I think the way Roberta was able to give so much responsibility to the kids and still manage it so things didn't get out of hand was wonderful. Let's face it, you put a bunch of teenagers in charge and it's easy to imagine what could happen.⁸⁴

Betty Watje:

I am Beth and William Watje's mom...Beth was involved in productions from Junior High through High School, and also as a paid assistant for about 5 summers. William was in one production, and assisted with the sound for several productions.

I noticed the RJJT is open to all in the community who want to participate; I can't imagine how they pull together the wonderful shows, with so many students, in such limited time! But they do it, time after time! The talented teachers also provided dancing, acting and singing lessons, in an atmosphere of supporting and felling of community, for a diversified, large age groups of students. Since Beth is going into teaching, the experience of helping out with the 3-5 year olds in *Let's Pretend*, and the 8-18 year olds in the Junior Theatre programs provided

⁸³ Perry, Renee. E-Mail. 27 Mar 2008.

⁸⁴ Hedland, Craig. E-Mail 4 Apr 2008.

her with valuable (and enjoyable) experiences in her chosen field. She also learned to work with a team of teachers—and a lot of talent.

One of the great things about the program is the people—dedicated and talented teachers and leaders, devoted to helping the students achieve. The aura must've been something too, because the student leaders came back, year after year, to participate—Not only to be with their friends, but to wholeheartedly contribute their talents and devotion to the success of other and the shows.

Our son William first became involved in the musical, *Grease*, performing in the band and having a few lines. In the summer, he helped do the sound for the Shakespeare in the Park. Besides making lots of friends, he made contacts that enabled him to volunteer and gain experience on the technical sides, doing lights and sound. He took off in that direction and is now studying that field in college.

I think it is wonderful that the students are also able to learn the technical side—hands on—and be responsible for orchestrating the productions. My husband and I attended *Showtime*, the fundraiser for the Senior Citizen Health Center, there in the tech booth were the Junior Theatre students, volunteering their time and talents, for a worthy community cause. They also regularly participate in the fundraiser face painting or food booth, to raise money for the program. In these ways they are helping the community, even after they have been in their last show.

As a parent, I sewed costumes, passed flyers out to the schools, helped decorate the lobby and sold tickets. Other parents helped supervise during performances, provided and sold refreshments or helped with the fundraisers. Bringing the parents into the program makes it a

family activity. I enjoyed meeting the other parents and working together with them, to encourage and support the students. It was great fun!

I remember Karen Hardy organized group singing lessons for the budding stars of *Oliver!*, at her house, to provide extra singing expertise and training. This was also a wonderful experience—a community outreach of Junior Theatre.

Overall, I remember our involvement with Junior Theatre with Joy and Pride, not only for our own children, but for all the participants and the community as a whole. Because of the multi-generations involved, the organization is able to carry on and provide the same valuable experiences for the next generations. And because of the strong community involvement, it creates a city where we feel like we belong to a team. It generates responsible citizens, who take pride in their city and its programs.⁸⁵

Glade Bauman:

SCJT/RJTT was one of my first opportunities to get involved in a production bigger than myself. The Junior Theatre was a great way for kids to gain self-confidence and learn about accountability and team-work. There was a sense of responsibility that came with auditioning for a part and then being chosen for that part. I quickly learned that if I didn't have my lines memorized or my choreography just right, I wasn't just letting myself down, but a whole group of my peers and the directors of the play who had chosen me. I had a desire to do a good job, and a job well done always paid off. There is nothing more affirming for an eleven year old kid than having a real life adoring crowd waiting for you at the end of a show.⁸⁶

Shaun Penrod:

⁸⁵ Watje, Betty. Letter. 11 Apr 2008.

⁸⁶ Bauman, Glade. E-Mail 5 Apr 2008.

RJTT really meant a lot for me. Being home schooled it provided me some of the social interaction with kids my age that I didn't get for not being in the system. I am still in contact and very good friends with several of the other actors I met there. I feel RJTT helped me grow in that they pushed me to achieve goals that I wouldn't have attained on my own. For example, I remember rehearsing for a solo in my first play and thinking that the tenor note was definitely too high. Kathy would have none of that and had me practice over and over until my voice range could hit that note (and many others). This is just one example of the growth experiences I had at RJTT. I loved it. I wouldn't trade my time there nor the friends I've made for anything.⁸⁷

Melody Fairchild:

Roberta Jones Junior Theatre provided me with a means of increasing my social skills and problem-solving abilities. The amount of drama that was involved in choosing an audition song, trying out, getting cast, rehearsing and finally performing was incredible. While RJTT was full of fun memories (performing, learning new songs, making friends, etc) as well as some less fun memories (being yelled at/talked down to by instructors/getting lesser parts/being overlooked, etc), I feel that being involved with theatre, and even with the drama that RJTT brought, helped me grow and helped me discover what kind of a person I wanted to be. And while I am not currently involved in any productions, the skills I learned at RJTT and the person it helped me become made the experience incredibly valuable for me.⁸⁸

Alisha Patterson:

RJTT gave me a solid foundation in my childhood, and has shaped who I am and the morals I pass on.

⁸⁷ Penrod, Shaun. E-Mail. 4 Apr 2008.

⁸⁸ Fairchild, Melody. E-Mail. 4 Apr 2008.

I had been seeing shows at SCJT since a very young age and watching my friends perform with SCJT since I was 8. I wanted desperately to be involved in the shows and after each performance came home dancing and singing the songs. When I was 10 I was finally allowed to be a part of the SCJT shows. I loved it. It gave me a strong community to be a part of, and I loved performing and being onstage as well. For 5 years, RJJT/Cats/SCJT was a HUGE part of my life. It was where I spent my entire summer, where all my friends and relationships were, and it was where I went every day after school. I loved the people I was around, the building, the shows, everything. I performed approximately 10 shows with SCJT/RJJT with favorite roles including Marian (Music Man) and TiMoune (Once on this Island). When I was 15 I decided on a whim to audition for an "adult" show, and to my huge surprise I got in. This marked the most important moment of my life to date. I chose to quit softball—which I'd been playing for 8 years and had thus far considered to be my "future" - and leave Junior Theatre to become a part of this bigger production. It was so hard for me to leave my safe place and all of my friends, but it was the best decision I could have made. I had essentially learned everything I could from RJJT, and took that knowledge on with me. After this I performed in 3-5 shows a year at various high schools and community theatres. When I was a junior and senior in high school I began directing and choreographing my own children's musicals. I am currently working on choreographing my 5th show with some titles including *Free to Be You and Me*, *Into the Woods Jr.*, and *Schoolhouse Rock Live! Jr.* I am also a dance and drama teacher for Creative Learning through Arts Program at different community centers and schools throughout the bay area. Furthermore I am a musical theatre major, transferring to The University of the Arts in Philadelphia in the fall of 2008 where only 16 students are selected for this major per year. I honestly believe I would be a different person without RJJT. RJJT taught me what theatre was all

about. It taught me about community, stage etiquette, stage presence, the logistics of putting on a play, how to work with others, and about self confidence. These are values and lessons I strive to pass on to the students I teach. I am lucky that I started out in RJJT because it was supportive, while still being strict and structured enough to get the job done. They put on quality productions while still keeping the performers in mind. If I were to go back with the knowledge I have now of other quality theatres in the area (such as PYT, CMTSJ, Los Altos Youth Theatre, etc.) I would not choose to begin my education at any theatre other than RJJT.⁸⁹

Catherine Dietrich:

RJJT is the reason I first became involved in theatre. Almost by accident, in fact, as a friend had been trying to persuade me to try a show when I was in 5th grade, and I said, "I guess...Why not?" It turned out to be one of the best things that has ever happened to me. It teaches the value of teamwork and responsibility derived from if only one person fails to complete his or her part, the entire production is altered and incomplete. Also, friendship, spontaneity, leadership skills, and creativity are fostered. I'm now studying voice and dance (along with psychology) in college at Cal State Fullerton, and pursuing acting in what free time I can manage. I have just procured my first principal role in a non "cast everyone who auditions" theatre, a palmist by the name of Miss Faye...Tality, and am having the time of my life!!!

In my first show with Roberta, it so happened that I had to show up late for the final rehearsal of hell week (an act taboo at best) because of an admittance test into middle school. Coming from a grade school that focused on improvement and growth as opposed to strict bookwork and graded testing, I was rightfully nervous!! As it ended up, the stress compounded from the show added to the test left me thoroughly unable to complete problems that I wouldn't have glanced twice at

⁸⁹ Patterson, Alisha. E-Mail 4 Apr 2008.

any other day. I sat in the testing room as one by one; all of the other students got up and left. Feeling more and more miserable, I finally broke down into tears, unable to finish. Graciously, the teacher allowed me to schedule an alternative test day, but I was still in a right state by the time I arrived at rehearsal, over an hour late, right before my scene. I gathered myself together and said my single, "But we SHOULD practice!" to my fellow school girls, only to find myself in tears again upon leaving the stage. I felt I had botched everything, the scene, the test, but most of all, the respect of Roberta for not only arriving late at her precious rehearsal, but by not being my usual self, ready to work, ready to function regardless of what life had thrown at me. I was quietly talking with a couple of friends who were worried, when Roberta appeared knowing exactly what was wrong. She gave me a big hug and assured me that I was indeed responsible and hardworking and that she loved having me in the show, and that it wasn't such a big deal if life sometimes got in the way. Soothed, I suddenly regained control of my mind and emotions, and went about the routine of the rest of the show. I have never forgotten that day, though, and how much that simple comment affected me. And I got into the middle school of my choice with flying colors.⁹⁰

Allyson Bertaut

I vividly remember this one time during Wizard of OZ, we were in rehearsal and practicing the scene when the house had just spun into OZ and Dorothy and Toto (Katie and I) were walking out the door. We apparently weren't being very successful at having a surprised look on our faces. So the next day at rehearsal, Roberta had dressed up in or just put a prop of this scary/strange looking tree and when we opened the door to walk out our faces were exactly

⁹⁰ Dietrich, Catherine. E-Mail. 4 Apr 2008.

how she wanted them....very shocked!!! She was very affective at teaching us to act and put on our character faces.

All the times when Roberta was there directing, were amazing...and after she was gone a lot of things changed. Personally, knowing how it was with her there made it hard when she wasn't and everything changed. But I loved every minute of it and how it shaped my childhood.⁹¹

George Doeltz

Roberta was one of those people you don't meet very often. Unfortunately.

She loved working with the kids more than anything, except, maybe, her old paint stained overalls. She did love to paint.

Until just before she got sick, it was always Roberta and the kids, not parents, just the kids, putting together every part of a show, from building and painting to hanging the lights and running tech during the show.

She always knew everything that was happening, even in other rooms. She paid attention to everything.

There were times when she was rough on the kids, but, usually, it was because they needed to hear and learn something.

Her whole philosophy was 'we're raising kids here.' It wasn't a theatre program except as a tool to help the kids grow and become self-sufficient, learn to believe in themselves, become confident in the 'outside' world, and indeed, in the classroom. It was the JT kids who would volunteer to stand in front of their class with a report on 'last summer' or whatever. These kids became fearless.

⁹¹ Bertaut, Allyson. E-Mail. 21 Apr 2008. Spelling corrected.

Roberta ran the Junior Theatre on a shoestring. In the 80's she formed the Auxiliary to help with fund-raising so she could afford some of the essentials that the City could never buy.

She was very skilled at encouraging other adults to help out. All her 'parent committees' were quite helpful at sewing and finding props, selling cookies at intermission, etc.

She was extremely gracious; she was very grateful for anything anyone did for her and never neglected to thank them.

She was a very nurturing person. Not only to the kids, but it was not uncommon for her to take the time to sit and listen to problems that adults and parents had. She was the mother or grandmother that many kids didn't have or couldn't be close to. She was a pivotal person in many lives.

She was extremely knowledgeable about the theatre. I don't think there was any aspect of it she was not very capable of handling. And she taught that well, not only to the kids, but to any of the rest of us who wanted to learn. Had it not been for Roberta I very much doubt I would be as involved with theatre as I am today.⁹²

⁹² Doeltz, George. E-Mail. 18 Apr 2008.

APPENDIX K



Roberta Jones, Producer of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre for 32 years.



Jones received this Pink Panther at a party in 1979 when the theatre moved into the Mello Auditorium. He has been in the lighting booth since.

At the same time, Jones received a t-shirt commemorating her hard work with the theatre as the “World’s Greatest Producer.”



Roberta Jones with her daughter, Judi Thomas, in 1980, preparing for an after performance celebration at the Mello Auditorium.



Chareen Hardy Lauritzen in her first show with RJJT as a Green Fairy in *Sleeping Beauty* in 1992.

Lauritzen as Glinda the Good Witch in *The Wizard of Oz* in 1998, with Roberta Jones in the background in her famous blue apron.



The Santa Clara City Parks and Recreation Department Community Recreation Center, which holds the Mary Louise Mello Auditorium.



The stage of the Mary Louise Mello Auditorium in Santa Clara, California.

The newly constructed Mission City Center for Performing Arts.





The cast of *Cinderella* performing in the Mary Louise Mello Auditorium in 2005.

Mobile stage set up outdoors in the Santa Clara Central Park Arboretum for *Much Ado about Nothing* in 2003.



Grease, one of the first productions performed in the Mission City Center for Performing Arts in 2008.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Articles:

Engar, Keith M. "Our Obligation to the Community." Davis, Jed H., and Mary Jane Evans. *Theatre, Children and Youth*. New Orleans: Anchorage P, 1982.

Goldberg, Moses. "Children's Theatre: a Philosophy and a Method." *The Johns Hopkins University Press*. 26 (1974): 411-412. *JSTOR*. Brigham Young University, Orem, UT. 18 Mar. 2008 <[http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0013-1989\(197410\)26%3A3%3C411%3ACTAPAA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-C](http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0013-1989(197410)26%3A3%3C411%3ACTAPAA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-C)>.

Musselman, Virginia. "Creative Dramatics in Recreation Programs." Siks, Geraldine Brain, and Hazel Brain Dunnington, eds. *Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics*. Seattle: University of Washington, 1961.

Books:

Chilver, Peter. *Staging a School Play*. New York: Harper & Row, 1967.

Clifford, John E. *Educational Theatre Management*. Skokie: National Textbook Company, 1972.

Collins, Jim. *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't*. New York: HarperCollins, 2001.

Croteau, Jan Helling. *Perform It! a Complete Guide to Young People's Theatre*. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2000.

Davis, Desmond. *Theatre for Young People*. New York: Beaufort Books, Inc., 1981.

Davis, Jed H., ed. *Theatre Education: Mandate for Tomorrow*. New Orleans: Anchorage Press, 1985.

Davis, Jed H., and Mary Jane Evans. *Theatre, Children and Youth*. New Orleans: Anchorage Press, 1982.

Davis, Jed H., Mary Jane Larson Watkins, and Busfield M. Busfield Jr. *Children's Theatre: Play Production for the Child Audience*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960.

Hackbarth, Judith A. *Plays, Players and Playing: How to Start Your Own Children's Theatre Company*. Studio City: Players P, 1992.

Klein, Jeanne, comp. *Theatre for Young Audiences: Principles and Strategies for the Future*. Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1988.

Bauman, Glade. E-Mail. 5 April 2008.

Bertaut, Allyson, E-Mail. 21 April 2008.

Bright, Robin. E-Mail. 17 Mar 2008.

Cornelius, Kevin. E-Mail interview. 14 Mar. 2008.

Cornelius, Kevin. E-Mail interview. 20 Mar. 2008.

Cornelius, Kevin, E-Mail interview. 10 Sept. 2008.

Dietrich, Catherine. E-Mail. 4 April 2008.

Dobbins, Eric. E-Mail. 25 Mar 2008.

Doeltz, George. E-Mail. 18 April 2008.

Fairchild, Melody. E-Mail. 4 April 2008.

Hardy, Marnelle. E-Mail. 22 Mar 2008.

Hedlund, Craig. E-Mail. 4 April 2008.

Holtzclaw, Emily. E-Mail. 14 Mar 2008.

Lipps, Kathy. E-Mail. 14 Mar 2008.

Mitchell, Andrea. E-Mail. 9 Mar 2008.

Narveson, Eric. E-Mail. 2 April 2008.

Newson, Rebecca Jackson. E-Mail. 15 Mar 2008.

Otten, Nathaniel. E-Mail. 20 Mar 2008.

Patterson, Alisha. E-Mail. 4 April 2008.

Penrod, Shaun. E-Mail. 4 April 2008.

Perry, Renee. E-Mail. 27 Mar 2008.

Ragone, Andrew. E-Mail. 20 Mar 2008.

Watje, Betty. Letter. 11 April 2008.

Paperwork:

Jones, Roberta. *Santa Clara Junior Theatre Participation Rules and Responsibilities*. 1990

Theses:

Belnap, Allison G. *Not Just Playing Around: a Practical Model for a Professional Theatre for Young Audiences*. Thesis. Brigham Young Univ., 2001.

Websites:

“Community Recreation Center.” *City of Santa Clara*. 3 Mar. 2008.
<http://santaclaraca.gov/park_recreation/pr_crc.html>.

“Board of Directors: *Santa Clara Players*.” 11 Mar 2008.
<<http://www.scplayers.org/board/index.htm>>.

“History.” *Santa Clara Players*. 11 Mar 2008. <<http://www.scplayers.org/history/index.htm>>.

“Parks and Recreation.” *City of Santa Clara*. 3 Mar. 2008
<http://santaclaraca.gov/park_recreation/pr_dept.html>.

“Roberta Jones Junior Theatre.” *City of Santa Clara*. 3 Mar. 2008.
<http://santaclaraca.gov/park_recreation/pr-junior-theatre.html> and <www.rjtt.org>.

“Scholarships.” *City of Santa Clara*. 4 Sept. 2008.
<http://santaclaraca.gov/park_recreation/pr_scholarships.html>.

“Theatre Central: Sites” *Playbill*. 3 Mar 2008.
<http://www.playbill.com/theatrecentral/sites/category.asp?SITE_CATEGORY_ID=2054&F_PG=8>.

“Theatres and Production Companies for the San Francisco Bay Region.” *Resources for Culture*. 10. Feb. 1999. 3 Mar. 2008.
<<http://www.davidvl.org/262WebFilesSpring04/w9culture.html>>.