

Teens wanted to dance, sing and act

By Diane Weber, copresident, Clarkstown Summer Theatre Festival. Photos: Lou Allyne.

Now in its 37th year, the Clarkstown Summer Theatre Festival (CSTF) will continue its tradition of great theatre entertainment this summer with *All Shook Up*, a jukebox musical featuring the songs of the classic rock star Elvis Presley, with a book by Joe DiPietro.

The story is based on Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. CSTF welcomes teenagers entering 9th grade through graduating high school seniors to come join the fun!

There is a place in Summer Theatre for all interested Rockland vicinity teens—and family members—even if you have never been in theatre before.

Come learn—be a part of our team and learn props, costuming, dance, be a part of the stage crew, the orchestra or the cast... things you may have wondered about, you can help with and learn yourself.

Andrea Schwartz, a CSTF alumna who is now a math teacher in Bergen County, fondly remembers her Summer Theatre days. "My favorite part of CSTF was being a part of a group, and putting on something that we were proud of. Spending time with friends, and doing something with a purpose." Andrea participated in five CSTF summers in the 1990's, including *Bye Bye Birdie*, *The Pajama Game* and *Barnum*.

Summer Theatre is a great way to enjoy your summer vacation, having fun, meeting like-minded young adults from all over the county, and learning about theatre. Our program last year drew students from area high schools including Suffern, Nanuet, North Rockland,



Spring Valley, Nyack, Clarkstown North and South and Green Meadow Waldorf School. CSTF meets Monday through Friday, from 6:30 to 10:30 in the evening, so participants are still able to take summer jobs during the day, or to attend day camp.

In addition, CSTF is dedicated to giving back to our community through programs such as our July People to People Food Drive, our year-long support of St Paul's Food Cupboard through food and monetary collections from the CSTF Board, and our August Benefit Performance of our show. This year, our benefit performance will support both Nyack and Good Samaritan Hospitals.

Brittany and Michael Meshberg, currently students at Clarkstown South High School, represent the third generation in their family who has participated in CSTF. Their mother, Alanna Meshberg, acted in several summers of CSTF including *West Side Story* and *Pippin* in 1979 and 1980; their grandmother, Carol Mansdorf, remains an active member of our Board today. Last summer, Brittany portrayed Julie Jordan in *Carousel*, and Michael performed mallet percussion in our pit orchestra.

Brittany feels that CSTF has given her a lot of opportunities to perform, as well as to learn and improve her craft.

"Working with Joe (Egan, last summer's director as well as the director of this coming summer's *All Shook Up*) changed everything for me. I feel I got to be a better actor. He's the best director I ever worked with."

For the summer of 2009, CSTF will be presenting *All Shook Up*, August 7th through 16th. Our Board has worked tirelessly all winter to plan for the 2009 season, our professional staff (which includes Joe Egan as director) is in place, and all area high school students interested in theatre are welcome to join us.

Registration is underway! Orientation is Thursday, May 21st, at Clarkstown South High School, and auditions will begin in late June. Visit our website at www.summertheatrefestival.com for further information about our program and for registration information. Be a part of a great summer theatre experience!

We can be reached via mail at PO box 223, New City, NY 10956, via email at register@cstfny.org and at our website at www.summertheatrefestival.com