

# ANOTHER HAPPY ON STAGE CHRISTMAS STORY IT IS NOT!

A review by Bob Rubin  
For TSP News



While all the productions Citadel Theatre puts on are terrific, I really hesitated to review this one.

Another happy on-stage holiday story...ho hum! And it has nothing to do with the fact that I am Jewish!

But...it is my job, so I reluctantly attended the preopening. And... am I glad I did!

This story revolves around the Nowak family and their deep Catholic upbringing. They are the talk of the neighborhood because it is believed that the Blessed Mother appeared in their grand father's barber shop where they have and display, in an adjacent space, a 20' shrine to her. Things become unraveled when daughter Ruth divulges her plan to go public creating a one woman play about this sacred event. A deathbed confession, however, causes the family legend, and Ruth's play, to unravel.

If I was to tell you why everything unravels, it would be like explaining a magician's tricks. Just trust me, I am telling you to go see this and you can expect the unexpected. The story is executed perfectly with this talented cast. Scott Shallenbarger, Director, paces this production just right as it unfolds into chaos, anger, uncontrolled feelings, and finally into resolution. The moral is wonderful as it places family and understanding above everything. Naomi Herman as Clara, the mother, sparkles as she deals with her

feelings as circumstances change. Robert Wood Frank, as Jimmy, adds a lot of fun and humor to the ironic situation as he has a hard time explaining to his devout family, he is serious about a certain Jewish young lady. While the usual perennials like "Annie", "It's A Wonderful Life", "A Christmas Carol", etc are part of your choices, go see this one and be prepared for a very different holiday experience.

"Miracle on South Division Street" plays at Citadel Theatre on Waukegan Rd., Lake Forest, until Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>. Go to [Citadeltheatre.org](http://Citadeltheatre.org) for more details on this and future shows and tickets.