

BACKSTAGE

Dr. An Wang Middle School Theatre

LIL' ABNER



an original musical comedy

www.actorsincorporated.com

ACTORS inc

presents



an original musical comedy by:

Norman Panama and Melvin Frank

lyrics and music by:

Johnny Mercer and Gene de Paul

based on characters created by:

Al Capp

Produced in association with:

Tams-Witmark Music Library, Inc.

560 Lexington Avenue

New York, NY 10022

(212) 688-2525

Book - © 1957 Triad Productions Inc.

Music and Lyrics - © 1956 Commander Publications

Director and Choreographer
CORINNE HICKEY

Music Director
JASEN WHEATLEY

May 2nd, 3rd and 4th (2008)

From the Director, Corinne Hickey



On behalf of ACTORS inc, I want to say welcome as you join along with our ever ambitious little theatre troupe in venturing forth onto yet another stage - this time here at the Dr. An Wang Middle School. Our thanks go out to the Lowell School Committee, Central Administration, Principal Ms. Gayle D. Feeny as well as her most helpful staff for accommodating us.

We are thrilled to be presenting Li'l Abner, the two-time Tony Award winning 1956 Broadway smash hit based on legendary cartoonist Al Capp's historic comic-strip which ran in newspapers across the country from 1934-1977. In addition, the strip, with its down on the farm humor, spoofing the "hillbilly way of life" while at the same time satirically skewering the politics (and politicians) of the day, also became a popular radio program in the 1940's and a major motion picture in 1959. An exuberant musical score by Gene DePaul (music) and the incomparable Johnny Mercer (lyrics) combine with Capp's cast of delightful characters to provide audiences with plenty of exhilarating musical-comedy enjoyment.

My special thanks to not only our regular cast and crew, but also to all our newcomers. As the director and choreographer of Li'l Abner, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to this incredibly talented "team" for all their hard work and dedication. It's been an enjoyable experience.

Now, y'all git yo'selves right comfy and enjoy some good ol' fashion foot-stompin' fun!

Corinne Hickey
Director
Executive Producer

About the Show

The 1956 Broadway musical *Li'l Abner* was inspired by the satirical comic strip by Al Capp. Li'l Abner Yokum is the handsome, muscle-bound, muscle-brained leading hillbilly of Dogpatch, USA. The citizens of Dogpatch are in an uproar because their ramshackle community has been designated the "most useless" town in America, and therefore a prime candidate for an atomic bomb testing site. At first, the Dogpatchers consider their least-desirable status a great honor, but then they despair upon realizing that they'll have to vacate the town before the annual girl-chases-boy Sadie Hawkins Day race. Together with his Mammy and Pappy, Abner is dispatched to Washington DC, to argue that Dogpatch has some vital significance: after all, only in Dogpatch can one partake of the Yokumberry Tonic, the source of Abner's super strength. Shifty billionaire General Bullmoose wants that Yokumberry Tonic for his own devices, and to that end dispatches his lady friend Appasionatta von Climax to Dogpatch to catch Abner during the Sadie Hawkins race and thus secure the mountain boy's cooperation via marriage. Abner's erstwhile girlfriend Daisy Mae Scragg would likewise like to snare Abner in the race, but Appasionata wins, thanks to the squirrely Evil Eye Fleegle, whose "triple whammy" paralyzes Abner just inches before the finish line.

If you think all this is unbelievable, wait till you see how the story resolves itself.

About the Artist

Al Capp was born Alfred Gerald Caplin in New Haven, Connecticut, on September 28, 1909. Twelve years later he lost most of his right leg in a streetcar accident, an event which did not interrupt his progress as a student of drawing - self-taught in his early days. Capp married Catherine Wingate Cameron in 1929 while he was wending his way through a chain of art schools. After working for other cartoonists, Capp launched his own strip in 1934, succeeding on his first try. "Li'l Abner" was carried by only eight newspapers at the outset but soon became wildly popular. Before long it was giving Capp a yearly income of 150,000 solid gold depression-era dollars.

Cast of Characters

(in alphabetical order of by characters first name)

<i>Abner Yokum</i>	JASEN WHEATLEY
<i>Alfie Scragg</i>	LISA PANAGOPOULOS
<i>Appassionata Von Climax</i>	REBECCA SHANAHAN
<i>Available Jones</i>	STEPHEN NELSON
<i>Cam</i>	CAM MURPHY
<i>Clementine Scragg</i>	LISA COSSEBOOM
<i>Creighton</i>	MARY WILLIAMS
<i>Daisy Mae</i>	SARAH BIRD
<i>Doctor Finsdale</i>	RENA MENDEL
<i>Doctor Krogmeyer</i>	RALENE CLARK
<i>Doctor Smithborn</i>	LISA COSSEBOOM
<i>Earthquake McGoon</i>	MATT THOMAS
<i>Evil Eye Fleagle</i>	CAM MURPHY
<i>General Bullmoose</i>	ROB CLARK
<i>Government Official</i>	JOANIE RUZZO
<i>Hairless Jane</i>	RALENE CLARK
<i>Jack S. Phogbound</i>	TOM HICKEY
<i>Juliet Scragg</i>	MARY WILLIAMS
<i>Lonesome Polecat</i>	ROB CLARK
<i>Mammy Yokum</i>	SUE SIMONE
<i>Marryin' Sam</i>	MICHAEL GIBLIN
<i>Mayor Dawgmeat</i>	FATHER JOHN HANLEY
<i>Moonbeam McSwine</i>	LYN AGUIAR
<i>Mother</i>	CAROL AGUIAR
<i>Pappy Yokum</i>	TOM HICKEY
<i>Police Officer</i>	JOANIE RUZZO
<i>Softwicke</i>	JOANIE RUZZO
<i>Speedy McRabbit</i>	MEL THOMAS
<i>Stupefyin' Jones</i>	KATHY ZANOR

Ensemble

CAROL AGUIAR, LYN AGUIAR, MELISSA AGUIAR, RALENE CLARK, ROB CLARK,
LISA COSSEBOOM, MICHAEL GIBLIN, TOM HICKEY, ALEXANDREA JOHNSON,
CAM MURPHY, JUDY MURPHY, KAREN NELSON, STEPHEN NELSON,
MARIANNE NORMANDIN, LISA PANAGOPOULOS, MELANIE THOMAS,
MARY WILLIAMS, KATHY ZANOR

Orchestra

LAURA CARPENTER (Trumpet), ROBIN CHO (Piano), DANIEL HEATH JR. (Trombone),
JEREMY INDICK (Bass), MATTHEW MEYER (Drums)

Musical Synopsis

Dogpatch, USA and Washington DC, sometime in the middle of the last century

ACT I

"A Typical Day"	<i>Dogpatchers</i>
"If I Had My Druthers"	<i>Abner & Cronies</i>
"If I Had My Druthers (Reprise)"	<i>Daisy</i>
"Jubilation T. Cornpone"	<i>Marryin' Sam & Dogpatchers</i>
"Rag Off'n the Bush"	<i>Dogpatchers</i>
"Namely You"	<i>Abner & Daisy</i>
"Unnecessary Town"	<i>Abner, Daisy & Dogpatchers</i>
"What's Good for General Bullmoose"	<i>Secretaries</i>
"There's Room Enough For Us"	<i>Dogpatchers</i>
"The Country's in the Very Best of Hands"	<i>Abner, Marryin' Sam & Dogpatchers</i>
"Sadie Hawkin's Day Ballet"	<i>Abner & Full Company</i>

ACT II

"Oh Happy Day"	<i>Dr. Finsdale & Scientists</i>
"I'm Past My Prime"	<i>Daisy & Marryin' Sam</i>
"Love in a Home"	<i>Abner & Daisy</i>
"Progress is the Root of All Evil"	<i>Bullmoose & Secretaries</i>
"Progress is the Root of All Evil (Reprise)"	<i>Bullmoose & Police Officer</i>
"Put 'Em Back the Way They Wuz"	<i>Dogpatch Wives</i>
"Namely You (Reprise)"	<i>Daisy</i>
"The Matrimonial Stomp"	<i>Marryin' Sam & Dogpatchers</i>
"Finale: Jubilation T. Cornpone"	<i>Marryin' Sam & Full Company</i>

~THERE WILL BE ONE FIFTEEN-MINUTE INTERMISSION~

The use of recording devices, either audio or video, and the taking of any photographs, either with or without flash, is strictly prohibited. Please turn off your cell phones and pagers prior to the beginning of the performance.



No food or drinks are allowed in the theatre.



Production Staff

Director/Choreographer
Music Director
Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Manager
Technical Director
Set Design
Set Construction

Corinne Hickey
Jasen Wheatley
Mel Thomas
Karen Nelson
Rebecca Shanahan
Steven Galligani
Lisa Cosseboom
Ralene Clark
Steven Galligani
Alexandrea Johnson
Erin Noonan-Descoteaux
Ralene Clark
Lisa Cosseboom
Mary Cooney
Marie DiCiaccio
Sue Simone
Joanie Ruzzo
Ann Elfert
Sophia Thomas
Steven Galligani
Matt Thomas
Laura Rocha
Tony Rocha
Mel Thomas

Statue Design and Construction
Costumes

Seamstresses

Properties Manager
House Managers

Tickets
Playbill/Graphic Design
Playbill Ad Advisors

Website

ACTORS inc would like to take this opportunity to thank Father John Hanley and St. Williams Church for providing a rehearsal space for the cast and crew of Li'l Abner.



Who's Who in the Cast

LYN AGUIAR (Moonbeam McSwine) is not new to the stage but new to ACTORS inc and is thrilled to be performing on stage with her mother, Carol and sister, Melissa. Lyn performed in several productions in high school including *A Midsummer Nights Dream*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *An Ugly Duckling*, and the musical *A New World* where she was a soloist. Lyn plays several musical instruments including the violin, flute and piano and takes voice lessons along with being involved with gymnastics and cheerleading. She is very excited to be part of Dogpatch USA!

SARAH BIRD (Daisy Mae) is a 14-year-old who sings in the teen choir and sometimes cantors at St. Williams Church. She played one of the lead roles in *Life with Mother Superior* last year at St. Louis School in Lowell and performed in *A Christmas Carol* (Fan) for New Life Fine Arts in Concord, MA. Sarah studies voice and composes music on her keyboard. She is very grateful for the opportunity to play the part of Daisy Mae, and for the support of her loving family and friends.

ROB CLARK (General Bullmoose/Lonesome Polecat) is a life long resident of Lowell. Rob was cast as Jeffrey in ACTORS inc's production of *Godspell*, as Barry the Bailiff in *Sandbag*, *Stage Left* and Manolo in *Female Odd Couple*. Rob also performed in several shows for the Play by Players theater group, which included *The Foreigner*, *Night of the Bully*, *You Can't Take it with You*, and *Lend Me a Tenor*. Rob is a 19 year member of the Standing Room Only Players and is extremely pleased to be part of the cast of *Li'l Abner*. Along with all of the SRO Players, Rob was a recent recipient of the Thomas G. Kelakos Community Service Award. A special thanks to Ralene for all she does to make him smile and a big hug to his rehearsal partner Molly Malone. Dogpatch will never be the same after we're done!!

MICHAEL GIBLIN (Marryin' Sam) is performing with ACTORS inc for the first time and is very excited about it. Mike has spent the last 20 years performing with the SRO Players and would like to thank them for corrupting him and shaping him into the man he is today. Along with all of the SRO Players, Mike was a recent recipient of the Thomas G. Kelakos Community Service Award. Aside from the SRO Players, Mike has had roles in, "The Drowsy Dad." He loves this role and continues it every Saturday morning, in its long run of seven years. You may have seen him in "The Line at the Bank", "The Car Next to You in Traffic" or "That Guy Has No Idea Anyone's Watching Him". Thanks to my wife and kids for allowing me to continue performing. Hi James!

FATHER JOHN HANLEY, OMI (Mayor Dawgmeat), Pastor of Saint Williams Parish in Tewksbury, has been active in musical and stage presentations ever since he started screaming for attention as an infant. His first official stage appearance was in the first grade when he sang in the Christmas Cantata. His last role with ACTORS inc was Salvatore Soo in *Sandbag*, *Stage Left*. He is delighted to be in this production of *Li'l Abner*.

Who's Who in the Cast

TOM HICKEY (PappyYokum/Senator Phogbound) is a versatile stage performer with a 20-year resume in venues from professional summer stock, to dinner theatre, to community theatres from Lowell to Boston. His credits include: *Harvey* (Elwood P. Dowd), *Our Town* (Dr. Frank Gibbs), *Death of a Salesman* (Howard Wagner), *Love Letters* (Andrew Makepeace Ladd III), *Gosforth's Fete* (Gordon Gosforth), *The Butler Did It* (Peter Flimsay), *Dearly Departed* (Ray-Bud Turpin), *Nutshells I & II*, *The Fifth Gospel* (Sherlock Stillpickle) and *Sandbag, Stage Left* (Judge Roy L. Bean). Tom has been featured in the musicals *Sugar Babies*, *Cole Porter*, *Sweet Charity*, *Perfectly Frank* and *42nd Street*. Most recently for ACTORS inc, Tom was seen as Defense Attorney Static and Gus Swenson "the loveable doorman" in *Sandbag, Stage Left*. In this production, Tom's versatility is put into play again, he only asks that a jug of Kickapoo Joy Juice be nearby "cuz he's gonna be a-needin' it to pull this'n offen the bush!"

RENA MENDEL (Dr. Finsdale) is making her ACTORS inc debut. She is thrilled to be performing in *Li'l Abner* with such a talented cast and director! Her recent stage credits include *The Dinner Party* (Gabrielle), *The Reunion* (Georgia May), and *There Goes the Old Ball Game* (Baby Ruth), all with the Nashoba Players in Westford. Off stage, Rena lives in Pepperell with her husband Scott and is an editor at Delta Education, a publishing company in Nashua, NH. She would like to thank her family, friends and co-workers for supporting her love of theater!

CAM MURPHY (Evil Eye Fleagle) is new to ACTORS inc. He is 13 years old and just this year became interested in acting after joining the drama club at school. He takes hip-hop lessons at J & D Dance Academy of Reading as well as being a talented baseball and basketball player. He enjoys making people laugh and is happy to be sharing this experience with his mother, Judy.

STEPHEN NELSON (Available Jones) has been an avid follower of ACTORS inc and is thrilled to be making his first stage appearance after some (but not too much) prodding from his friends and family! Although Stephen is new to the stage, he has a musical background. He's been singing and playing the keyboard for many years. In his real life, Stephen and his wife, Karen own Lowell Overhead Door Company. Steve is a fabulous cook as well as a Pampered Chef consultant. He is looking forward to moving the acting he does in the 'real world' to the stage!

REBECCA SHANAHAN (Appassionata Von Climax) has been in theater for most of her life, and wouldn't have it any other way. Becca is one of the founding members of Actors inc and has performed with them as Reverend Mother in *Nunsense*, Cling in *Sandbag, Stage Left*, as well as their production of *Godspell*. In 2007 she directed Actors inc's production *The Odd Couple – Female Version*. Before Actors inc, Becca worked as a production assistant for the Wheelock Family Theater for 7 seasons, directed for the Colleges of the Fenway and performed with the Merrimack Valley

Who's Who in the Cast

Players and Play By Players. When she is not on stage, Becca is the proud mother of Kevin and Angelina, and works at Keller Williams Realty in Andover, MA.

SUE SIMONE (Mammy Yokum) is very excited to be part of the cast of *Li'l Abner*. This is her 3rd performance with ACTORS inc. She played Gilmer in *Godspell* and Olive Madison in the *Female Odd Couple*. Sue is a 7-year member of the Standing Room Only Players. Along with all of the SRO Players, Sue was a recent recipient of the Thomas G. Kelakos Community Service Award. She has been performing since she was in high school, has sung with the LHS Alumni Chorus and is a former member of the Merrimack Valley Sweet Adelines. Sue would like to thank Bob for his love and support as well as to the great cast and crew. A special thanks goes out to Corinne for bringing out talents Sue never knew existed... ACTING, DANCING????

MATT THOMAS (Earthquake McGoon) wanted to tell you that though he will never make it to Broadway (unless he buys a ticket), he wanted to model this bio after all of those who have come before him, and been more successful than he. So here goes... Broadway: none. International Tours: none. Off-Broadway: none. Workshops: none. ACTORS inc: *Sandbag*, *Stage Left* (Prison Guard and Judge Been), *Godspell* (Herb). Image Theater: *It Is What It Is* (himself). Play By Players: *Cole Porter* (Stage Manager). NYU BFA: didn't go there. Matt would like to thank his family, friends and of course, the super-pooch, for their never-ending love and support. Arr... ooo, arr... ooo.

JASEN WHEATLEY (Li'l Abner) is making his stage acting debut and is very happy to be playing the title role in *Li'l Abner*. Recently, Jasen was seen on stage with his keyboard as Sister Mary Melody, the musical director, in ACTORS inc's performance of *Nunsense*. He has also been seen as a singing member of the Standing Room Only Players for the past 12 years, 9 of which were spent as their rehearsal pianist. Along with all of the SRO Players, Jasen was a recent recipient of the Thomas G. Kelakos Community Service Award. Jasen has also sung with the Actor Singers and the First United Baptist Church Choir.

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FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF CAST BIOGRAPHIES**

Friends of ACTORS inc

ACTORS inc would like to thank its many friends whose contributions have helped with its growing success.

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Wally Bagdonas	In Memory of Francis & Anita McGinness
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