

Starkville Community Theatre  
presents

The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Putnam County  
**SPELLING BEE**

Music and Lyrics by William Finn  
Book by Rachel Sheinkin  
Conceived by Rebecca Feldman

**WARNING**  
This show contains ADULT  
humor and language.

Life is pandemonium!

February 10-13 and February 15-19, 2011  
The Playhouse on Main



S A A C  
STARKVILLE AREA ARTS COUNCIL

This production is sponsored by the  
Starkville Area Arts Council.





Music and Lyrics by William Finn  
Book by Rachel Sheinkin

Directed by Paul Ruff

## T-H-E C-A-S-T

### The Spellers

Chip Tolentino ..... Matt Crane  
Logainne Schwartzandgrubenniere ..... Krista Vowell  
Leaf Coneybear ..... Lyle Tate  
William Barfée ..... Marcus Vowell  
Marcy Park ..... Jessica Taylor \*  
Olive Ostrovsky ..... Cindy Ruff

### The Adults

Rona Lisa Perretti ..... Madeline Golden  
Vice Principal Douglas Panch ..... Kris Lee  
Mitch Mahoney ..... John Brocato

\* SCT Debut

## T-H-E B-A-N-D

Carole Sorenson, keyboard  
Eric Abbott, percussion  
Robbie Spears, bass guitar

*This event is being held in the gymnasium of the  
Putnam County High School, home of the Piranhas*

There will be a 10-minute intermissions between acts.

# P-R-O-D-U-C-T-I-O-N T-E-A-M

Director..... Paul Ruff  
Assistant Director & Stage Manager .....Lee Dempsey  
Musical Director..... Carole Sorenson  
Backstage Assistant..... Wade Cosby  
Set Design ..... Paul Ruff  
Costumes ..... Sue Snow and Sue Helms  
Light & Sound Design.....Thomas La Foe  
Lighting Operator.....Abigail Voller  
Sound Operator ..... Angel Ray Baker  
Wig Wrangler .....Jansen Fair  
Stunt Double.....Daniel Ruff  
Program Design.....Patty Archer  
Box Office .....Bob Anderson  
and Marsha Williams  
Opening Night Party.....Starkville Area Arts Council

# S-E-T C-O-N-S-T-R-U-C-T-I-O-N

John Brocato  
Matt Crane  
Lee Dempsey  
Laquanda Eccles  
Madeline Golden  
Jakie Kitchens  
Kris Lee

Cindy Ruff  
Craig Ruff  
Paul Ruff  
Lyle Tate  
Jessica Taylor  
Krista Vowell  
Marcus Vowell

# R-E-H-E-A-R-S-A-L V-O-L-U-N-T-E-E-R-S

Kay Brocato  
Kathryn Davis  
Debbie Dunaway  
MJ Etua  
Paige Fondren  
Haley Hawkins  
Tasha Hill  
Olivia Hogue

Derek Irby  
Nicole Medeiros  
Terry McDowell  
Kathy Parker  
Amanda Clay Powers  
Charlotte Reed  
Harriet Rooks  
Craig Ruff

Reagan Ruff  
Mary Kathryn Sanford  
Alison Stamps  
Marianne Ulmer  
Abigail Voller  
Carol Winton  
Meghan Wolf  
Peyton Wolf

# A-B-O-U-T T-H-E C-A-S-T

## **Eric Abbott**

This is Eric Abbott's second performance at SCT, and he is thrilled to be a part of this production! While he does have a musical background, he has very limited theatre experience. But this hasn't been a difficult adjustment due to a very kind-hearted and patient cast and crew. Eric says that everyone in this production works so well together, and it is clearly seen. "I feel I have been welcomed into a family with open arms," he says, "and I'm so happy to work with this talented group. This is truly a great show! ...oh, I'm the drummer, by the way."

## **John Brocato**

Fun fact: John won 3<sup>rd</sup> place (top 5!) in his third-grade spelling bee, which, of course, eminently qualifies him to appear in this musical. You may have seen him recently in *Ug – the Caveman Musical* and SCT's summer revue *The ABCs of Broadway* (or you may not have seen him, if, for example, you didn't attend these shows). John is an MSU alum who teaches in the Bagley College of Engineering and is also a longtime singer, guitarist, and songwriter. He's married to the wonderful Kay and is dad to the fantastic Bailey, Vinny, and Sicily, all of whom he loves very much and thanks for putting up with such a paternal showboat. John also thanks the *Spelling Bee* cast and crew for being so kind, nurturing, and endlessly talented. Next up: time to make that Charles Nelson Reilly musical a reality!

## **Matt Crane**

Matt Crane is excited to be back on stage at SCT! Matt will be graduating at the end of April with a communication/theatre degree from Mississippi State University. Matt gives big thanks to the entire cast for making this such a fun experience; to Paul and Lee for their guidance through this pandemonium; to Carole, Eric, and Robbie for bringing such wonderful talent to the score; and, of course, to all of his friends and family for continuing to support him.



# A-B-O-U-T T-H-E C-A-S-T

## **Madeline Golden**

Madeline Golden is happy to return to the SCT stage and is grateful to Paul Ruff for giving her the opportunity to do so. She has loved working with *Bee's* wonderful cast, musicians, and crew. Madeline just returned from the Mississippi Theatre Association's annual festival in Meridian where she received the award for Best Actress for her performance in SCT's *The Dixie Swim Club*. "Performing on the MSU Riley Center's historical stage was thrilling," said Madeline, "and I'm always proud to represent SCT." Madeline is excited to advance to regional competition with her fellow *Dixie Swim Club* peeps, where they will perform in Atlanta the first week in March. When she can't get on stage, Madeline happily resides at home with Max, Thumper, Wally, and Moogene, her much-loved kitties, and Rowdy, her big ol' goofy yard dog and protector. Madeline works in the Office of Agricultural Communications at MSU.

## **Kris Lee**

Kris Lee is an award-winning member of the Dramatists Guild of America and the Society for Stage Directors and Choreographers. He is also a published fiction writer and spends his time outside the classroom pursuing this passion.

## **Cindy Ruff**

Cindy is thrilled once again to take the SCT stage with great friends, old and new. Cindy says, "Thanks Lyle, Krista, Marcus, Kris, Maddy, Matt, John, Carole, Jessica, Robbie, and Eric – you are amazing!" Cindy also thanks Paul for his vision and incredible commitment to this show and sends a special thanks to Lee and Carole for keeping Paul sane throughout this process. Although not a great speller herself, Cindy has loved every minute playing the dictionary-adoring "Olive" but would like to set the record straight by saying – "Any rumors you may have heard going around about and me and the director are... completely and totally true!"

## **Robbie Spears**

Meridian native Robbie Spears loves "The Golden Girls," s'mores without marshmallows, crocheting, and heavy metal. He hates yawning too much at one sitting and the traffic light timers on all of Starkville's streets (especially North Jackson). He's a student and owns his own business building guitar stuff.

# A-B-O-U-T T-H-E C-A-S-T

## **Carole Sorenson**

Carole Sorenson is employed with the law firm of Brunini, Grantham, Grower & Hewes, PLLC, in Columbus. She is an active member of the Starkville Community Theatre family, having appeared on the SCT stage in productions of *25; I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change; Inspecting Carol; A...My Name Will Always Be Alice; Forever Plaid; The Power of One; Let Freedom Sing; Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings* and as musical director for the most recent summer hit *The ABCs of Broadway*. Carole also served as accompanist for First United Methodist Church's production of *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* as well as accompanist for the Mississippi State University Music Education's production of *The Fantasticks* and the Mississippi State University Women's Chorus production of Puccini's *Suor Angelica*. Carole says, "Audience, you are about to experience an amazing production!! With every SCT show, I always consider it a tremendous honor to be chosen to serve as accompanist, and *Bee* has been icing on the cake. Thank you, Paul, many times over, for entrusting the score to me to experiment with and to share with this incredible group of performers and musicians. Spellers, Rona, VP Panch and Mitch, please spell 'A-M-A-Z-I-N-G.' It truly has been an amazing journey from that first rehearsal upstairs until tonight, and it has been my great privilege to have been able to share my love of music with a cast who shares that same passion. A huge 'thank you' to Eric and Robbie for sharing your talents. We make a pretty good team, and I look forward to the three of us being a band again very soon. And a final 'thank you' to my biggest fan, David, who supports me 110% in this crazy thing we call theatre. I love you, and I'll be home soon, and I promise not to make you spell 'sandwich' for a very long time."

## **Lyle Tate**

Lyle Tate is h-a-p-p-y to be back on the SCT stage, having last appeared in 2009 as "Jinx" in *Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings*. In the meantime, however, he sang with the cast of *Sorta Love Songs*, played the role of "Adam" in Theatre MSU's *The Apple Tree*, and directed the outstanding ladies in SCT's 2011 MTA-award-winning (and SETC-bound) production of *The Dixie Swim Club*. Lyle's only real-life spelling bee experience ended poorly in junior high when he misspelled "receive" his first time at the mic during the county bee (stupid i-before-e-except-after-c rule). Playing "Leaf Coneybear" in *The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Putnum County Spelling Bee* with these actors, this production team, these musicians, and this director is truly a bucket list dream come true. Lyle thanks his parents for sharing his love of theatre; Carole for her laughs, commitment, and talent; Paul for his encouragement, enthusiasm, and years of friendship; and Lee for his love and constant support.

# A-B-O-U-T T-H-E C-A-S-T

## **Jessica Taylor**

Jessica Taylor is a native of Gulfport, Mississippi, and a current graduate student at MSU. She received her bachelor's degree in theatre last year and is making *The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* her debut into the SCT family! "*Spelling Bee* has been one of the B-E-S-T shows to be a part of!" she says. "After being a fan of this show for many years, I am extremely honored to be cast in it and to help one of my favorite characters come to life." Jessica thanks Paul for giving her the chance to be involved and everyone else for being so welcoming to the "newbie" of the group. She has no doubt that the audience will love the show as much as she does, and hopefully they will wake up singing the catchy songs like she knows the company has! Jessica also sends a big thank-you to her #1 fan, Madison, who helped work with her on her part and also had to listen to her talk (and sing) about the show constantly. "I couldn't have done it without him," Jessica says. "Watch out SCT! This won't be the last you see of me. This is only the beginning of the PANDEMONIUM!"

## **Krista Vowell**

Krista Vowell is happy to be sharing the stage with some of her favorite people. She especially loves being on stage with her husband, currently playing the weird kid named "Barf." Krista says this role has been so much fun to play and thanks her friends and directors – Paul, Lee, and Carole – for their hard work in making these characters come to life. She also thanks her awesome kids, Peyton and Meghan, for their never-ending support. Finally, she sends a big thank you to all of you in the audience for your applause, kind words, and backing of wonderful theatre in our town. It's because of you that we get to have so much fun playing on the stage!

## **Marcus Vowell**

Marcus has lost count of how many SCT productions of which he's been a part, but you may have seen him as "Henry II" in *The Lion in Winter*, "Stanley Sanders" in *Smoke on the Mountain* and *A Sanders Family Christmas*, and as "Frog" in *Catfish Moon*, a role for which he merited a Best Supporting Actor nomination at the American Association of Community Theaters national festival in Tacoma, Washington, where, while he didn't win (he was robbed, of course), the play did win three other national awards: Best Ensemble Acting, Outstanding Backstage Achievement, and Best Supporting Actress (his lovely wife, Krista, who you may notice is sitting next to him on the bleachers). Besides acting, Marcus has a secondary career as a database administrator for East Mississippi Community College. "This has been an amazing experience with extremely talented performers, awesome direction, and a great crew backstage!"

# F-R-O-M T-H-E D-I-R-E-C-T-O-R

This experience has been more trying than I thought it would be, but it's been much more rewarding than I expected as well. I absolutely cannot adequately describe the level of talent that I've been blessed to work with during this process. I told them on the first day of rehearsal that I valued dedication more than anything, and every one of them has been devoted to making this production the best it could possibly be. We had incredibly difficult music to learn, two major holidays, illness, winter storms, a ruptured water heater (complete with flooded basement), ancient sound equipment, and an unplanned noxious gas release. Despite these challenges, we plowed ahead and created a production that we are extremely proud of – and one that I personally believe will knock your socks off.

Community theatre means a great deal to me, and I believe that ours is superb. In fact, this theatre was a major factor in our decision to move back to Starkville almost eleven years ago. It still amazes me to see the continual support and unending effort that our volunteers pour into the program. The privileges we have now are built upon the sacrifices of the last few decades. I could never credit all those that contributed, in some way, to what we've accomplished.

Lee, you were my rock. You helped keep us focused and organized through all the chaos. I can't count the times I asked you to do something and it was already being done. And thank you for always knowing what to say when I was about to fall apart.

Carole, you are just amazing. You've put more hours into this than anyone and you were rehearsing months before you even knew who you'd be teaching it all to. Thank you for your spirit and determination to make the music perfect in every possible respect. (And thanks for "holding the horns" when it was my turn.) Eric and Robbie, you guys are amazing and your talent is matched only by kindness. Thanks for being such wonderful additions to our production.

To my cast – Cindy, Jessica, John, Kris, Krista, Lyle, Madeline, Marcus, and Matt - I love you all SO much. Thank you for being perpetually positive and for always matching your talent with passion. I could not have asked for more, and I never needed to.

# F-R-O-M T-H-E D-I-R-E-C-T-O-R

And to my crew – Lee, Abigail, Angel, and Wade – thank you for being so reliable and patient as I reluctantly turned the show over to you. You may have heard that I have a slight control problem – well, it’s true.

Very special thanks as well to Pattye, Thomas, and “The Sues”. Each of you had to deal with me making endless revisions and changes and you never once made me feel like a pest. Thank you for your enthusiasm and generosity in loaning me your talents.

Finally, I’d like to thank my family for their selflessness during this process. My kids have always supported their parents’ interest in theatre, even when it’s meant that they don’t see us much for weeks at a time. Cindy, I will never deserve you. It’s absolutely wonderful to get to share this with my best friend. In our twentieth year of marriage, I still don’t know why it works – but maybe having the same enthusiasms has something to do with it. I love you, babe.

I hope you enjoy our show!!!!!!!

# S-P-E-C-I-A-L T-H-A-N-K-S

Pattye Archer  
Sue Helms

Thomas La Foe  
Sue Snow

Carolyn Adams-Price, Bob Anderson, Biker Depot,  
Brian Michael’s Meat Market and Deli,  
Eye and Laser Center of Starkville,  
John and Dawn Herring, Bruce Lesley,  
MSU Libraries and the MSU Instructional Media Center,  
Paula Mabry, Ellen McGuffey and Lisa McReynolds,  
Beth Sewell and the Greensboro Center,  
Jenna Shook and the MSU Hunter Henry Center,  
Starkville Pediatric Clinic,  
Shawn Sullivan and the Starkville High School Band,  
Dennis Tedford, Marianne Ulmer and Marsha Williams

# R-I-S-I-N-G S-T-A-R-S

Rising Stars is coming back to Starkville Community Theatre in the Fall of 2011 for ages 8-18! Sign up to be on the Rising Stars e-mail list, so you and your young artist can be “in the know” of all the exciting events and workshops leading up to Fall 2011 and beyond! Does your child fall below the age of 8? You can still receive e-mails about our All Ages Events. Think your child may be too old for Rising Stars? We’re looking for apprentice members (16-18) to assist with our classes and productions! Please e-mail Simone Cottrell at **[sdcottrell@gmail.com](mailto:sdcottrell@gmail.com)** to be included on the e-mailing list.

Coming soon...Rising Stars Presents Beware the Ides of March for ages 13-18 at Starkville Community Theatre on March 12, 2011, from 9 AM – Noon, Performance Sharing at 12:30. Brush up on the Bard and find your best bed spread to be “schooled” in the art of Shakespearean insult, performance of Julius Caesar scenes, and even a toga contest! We might even indulge in a Caesar salad. It’s the perfect event to introduce your high schooler to the language of Shakespeare. Space is limited! To register, please e-mail Simone Cottrell at **[sdcottrell@gmail.com](mailto:sdcottrell@gmail.com)**.

# U-P-C-O-M-I-N-G E-V-E-N-T-S

- Friday, Feb. 25 at 7:30 p.m. - Fourth Fridays: Short Stories
- Monday, Mar. 7 at 6 p.m. - March General Meeting
- Friday, March 25 at 7:30 p.m. - Fourth Fridays: Plays



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## SCT's *Dixie Swim Club* is Moving On

Public Performance set for Thursday, March 24

Starkville Community Theatre will compete in the Southeastern Theatre Association Festival for the fourth time in five years after its production of *The Dixie Swim Club* earned runner-up honors at the 2011 Mississippi Theatre Association Festival last month! SETC will be held in Atlanta the first week of March.

The cast will perform a on Thursday, March 24 in conjunction with Starkville High School's *The Purple Fan*, which took top honors in the Secondary Division at MTA and is also moving on to SETC next Month. The two performances will be held at the Greensboro Center with SHS starting at 7 p.m. and SCT following just after.

In addition to winning runner-up for best production, SCT was honored with several other awards including:

- Best Actress - Madeline Golden
- Best Supporting Actress - Terry McDowell
- Best Costume Design - Sue Snow, Sue Helms and Jansen Fair

Long-time SCT member Paula Mabry was also honored during the annual Festival. Paula received Mississippi Theatre Association's first award for Outstanding Contributions to Mississippi.

Congratulations Paula, and to the entire cast and crew of *The Dixie Swim Club*!



Please Join Us for

## Fourth Fridays

Friday, February 25th at 7:30 p.m.

Short Stories

**Writers?** Do you have something you'd like to have read at Fourth Fridays?

Email us at [fourthfridays@yahoo.com](mailto:fourthfridays@yahoo.com).



SCT presents its 2010-2011 Season



Unnecessary  
FARCE

By Paul Slade Smith

Directed by Thomas La Foe

September 9-12 and 14-18, 2010

By Stephen Metcalfe  
Directed by Paula Mabry



STRANGE  
SNOW

November 4-7 and November 9-13, 2010



Music by William Finn,  
Book by Rachel Sheinkin

Directed by Paul Ruff

February 10-13 and 15-19, 2011

By Lucinda McDermott  
Directed by Mary-Kay Belant



Feeding on  
Mulberry Leaves

April 7-10, and 12-16, 2011