

Beloit Civic Theatre
Now in its 93rd Year
Presents



The 25th Annual Putnam County
Spelling Bee

Music & Lyrics by
William Finn

Book by
Rachel Sheinkin

Conceived by
Rebecca Feldman

Additional Material by
Jay Reiss

Originally Directed on Broadway by James Lapine

September 25, 26, 27 and October 2, 3, 4 2025

@7:30 p.m.

September 27, 28 & October 4 @ 3:00 p.m.

Elizabeth Reinholz Theatre
Beloit Memorial High School
1225 Fourth Street, Beloit WI

Director's Notes

Putnam County is a show I have wanted to do for several years for many reasons. On the surface, it is a fun, silly at times show about a bunch of slightly odd and nerdy kids. But underneath the fun and catchy songs there are truths that we can all identify with as children, teens and adults. From handling neurodivergence while trying to perform in front of an audience to tackling difficult relationships with family and friends, Putnam County offers us all the opportunity to revisit and learn from these sometimes funny and sometimes painful situations.

This wonderfully talented cast has brought life and humor to this show in a way I could only hope for as a director. They have bravely taken on these fun but difficult roles to bring you this fabulous ensemble show. We hope you can find something here that resonates and remind you of what it was like to be child.

Stacy McNall,
Director

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

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THE CAST

Chip Tolentino.....Lo Villarreal-Black
Logainne Schwartzandgrubenierre.....Jessi Garvin
Leaf Coneybear.....Robbie Strader
William Barfee Declan Boran-Ragotzy
Marcy ParkCharlotte Walstead
Olive OstrovskyNatalie Wooden
Rona Lisa PerettiJen Shanin
Mr. Panch.....Rob Connor
Mitch Mahoney.....Alex McNall
Ensemble.....Autumn Jones
Ensemble.....Emily Meyer
Ensemble.....Noah Ceniseros

THE SETTING

Today in the gymnasium of a middle school in Putnam
County, USA

Act I

1. The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee
- 1A. The Rules (Rona)
2. My Friend the Dictionary
3. Pandemonium
4. I'm Not That Smart
5. Magic Foot
- 5A. Magic Foot Playoff
6. Pandemonium (Reprise)
- 6A. Chip Goodbye
- 6B. Rona Moment #2
7. Prayer of the Comfort Counselor

There will be a twelve-minute intermission between the two acts. Please enjoy refreshments in the lobby. All donations from refreshments go to the Helen Hayes Teed Memorial Scholarship fund, which is awarded to local graduating seniors entering college programs for the performing arts.

Act II

8. Chip's Lament Intro
9. Chip's Lament
10. Woe Is Me
11. Spelling Montage
- 11A. I'm Not That Smart (Reprise)
- 11B. Coneybear Goodbye
12. I Speak Six Languages
13. Jesus (Pandemonium Reprise)
- 13A. Three Spellers Remain! Sluice!
14. The I Love You Song

- 14A. Crepuscule
- 15. Woe Is Me Reprise
- 15A. How Exciting!
- 15B. Rona Moment #3
- 16. Second (Part I)
- 17. Weltanschauung
- 17A. Olive & Barfee Pas de Deux (Fantasy Ballet)
- 17B. Second (Part II)
- 18. The Champion
- 19. Epilogues
- 20. Finale
- 21. Bows
- 22. Exit

Originally produced on Broadway by
 David Stone, James L. Nederlander, Barbara Whitman,
 Patrick Catullo, Barrington Stage Company, Second
 Stage Theatre

THE PRODUCTION TEAM

DirectorStacy McNall
 Music Director.....Riley Rohrer
 Stage ManagersLes Blumreich, Mary Easland
 Choreographer.....Alexyn Cervantes
 Set Design.....Les Blumreich
 Set Construction.....Dawn Kabor, Donna Balsley, Doris
 Tropp, Peter Tropp, Deb Burns, Les Blumreich, Doug
 Lownik, Tom Lepinski, Harold Pann, Mike Fallon, Steven
 Engberg, Bob Strecker, Jackie Johnson, James Wolfe
 CostumesElizabeth Armstrong
 Properties...Donna Balsley, Les Blumreich, Lisa Scholten,
 Mary Easland, Beth Armstrong, Deb Burns, Mary Mowers
 Lights and Sound.....Peter & Doris Tropp, Rod Mc Fall
 Running Crew..... Donna Balsley, Elizabeth Armstrong
 Makeup and Hair.....Sydney Winchester

Based upon C-R-E-P-U-S-C-U-L-E, an original play by The Farm.

The Barrington Stage Company workshop of THE 25TH ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE was originally co-directed by Michael Barakiva and Rebecca Feldman.

WHO'S WHO



Noah Ceniseros (Ensemble) Noah brings extensive musical theatre experience to Beloit Civic Theatre. He appeared in *The Lion King*, *SpongeBob Square-Pants: The Broadway Musical*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Honk*, *The Wizard of Oz* and *Willy Wonka* all for the Christian Youth Theatre, Chicago. At Starlight Theatre, he appeared in *Beauty and the Beast*, and *Newsies*. Noah's family, which he thanks for their love and support, consists of his mother, father and 2 sisters. In addition to theatre, he is interested in art and film; he adds to his skills-list, the ability to "cartwheel"!



Declan Boran-Ragotzy (William Morris Barfee) Boran previously appeared in *The Cost of Living* at Renaissance Theatreworks in Milwaukee, *The Wedding Singer* at Theatre Unlimited, and *Peter and the Starcatcher* at Janesville Performing Arts Center. Declan works as a Special Education Teacher in the School District of Milton and as the Program Director for No Limits LDA. He likes to travel, speaks Spanish, and of hobbies and recreation, he says that he doesn't have time for either!



Rob Connor (Mr. Panch) Rob has appeared in and directed several shows for Beloit Civic Theatre since first appearing on our stage in 1992 as Captain Andy in *Showboat*. He directed *Kitchen Witches*, *The Kids Left*, *The Dog Died*, *Now What?*, and

last season's production of *Lucky Stiff*. In addition, Rob performed for BCT in *The Outsider*, *Sylvia*, *Greater Tuna*, *She Loves Me*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Baby*, and *Laura*. In addition, he appeared in *The Wizard of Oz* and *Mary Poppins* for Spotlight on Kids. Rob loves playing Scrabble, doing CrossFit, and spending time with his two dogs.



Jessi Garvin

(Logainne Schwartzandgrubenierre) Jessi appeared in *Young Frankenstein* at Theatre Unlimited, Inc., *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)* at U-Rock, *It's a Wonderful Life* and *Annie* at Stage One Theatre

Company, and *When I Go* at Janesville Performing Arts Center. Jessi is a member of The Communication Team and a Sunday School teacher at The First Lutheran Church in Janesville. Her family consists of parents, Kelly Sullivan & Dennis Garvin, grandmother, Cathy and Jessi's life partner, Ace Williams. Jessi's interests include drawing, reading, gaming and gardening. And...she was in an ACTUAL spelling bee as a kid, but, sadly, she got knocked out of the competition at the end. The word was "doubt", but she misspoke when asked to repeat her spelling: D-O-U-T-B!



Autumn Jones (Ensemble) Autumn is a newcomer to Beloit Civic Theatre, but appeared often on the stage next door at Beloit Memorial High School. She performed in *Government Inspector*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Metamorphosis* and *The Pajama*

Game at BMHS. Autumn works as a makeup artist, and her family consists of Kim and Maris Linsey, Tristain and Brad Richards, and Brad Ledger. In her free time, Autumn enjoys reading, book collecting and special effects makeup.



Alex McNall (Mitch Mahoney) Alex appeared in *Young Frankenstein* and *Beauty and the Beast* for Spotlight on Kids, and *In Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at Starlight Theatre. He works as a P.E. teacher and wrestling coach for the Janesville School District. Alex enjoys Jiu-Jitsu, reading,

exercise and hanging with his cats.



Emily Meyer (Ensemble) Emily makes her theatre debut in this production! She grew up in the midwest and started singing when she was about 6 months old. As a kid, she always wanted to be part of a theatre production, and, at this time in her life, is

very happy to be part of *The 25th Annual Putnum County Spelling Bee*. Emily works as a receptionist, and she has an overabundance of nieces and nephews, the children of her 4 siblings. She loves to draw, paint, read and sing, and says she is “prime hermit material.”



Jen Shanin (Rona Lisa Peretti) Jen is thrilled to make her Beloit Civic Theatre debut! Normally on the production side of theatre, Jen is also a founding executive team member for Pride Theatre Productions. Jen previously served as vocal director for *Rent*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Cabaret: Our Chosen Family*, all at Pride Theatre Productions, and *Rock of Ages* at Theatre Unlimited, Inc. In a previous life, Jen sang opera professionally and has performed on stages across the country including singing backup for The Rolling Stones and as an Advanced Artist for OperaWorks in Los Angeles. Jen is proudly the Founder and Lead Vocal Coach for Janesville Academy of Music, and she also works as a Professor of Voice at University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.



Robbie Strader (Leaf Coneybear) Robbie appeared in the 2025 season of Starlight Theatre in *Grease* and *Ragtime*, and he works as a director/choreographer in children's theatre. In his free time, Robbie enjoys movie-going and spending time in nature. He gives a "shout out" to his siblings, his mom and his dog Olive.



Lo Villarreal-Black (Chip Tolentino)

Lo is making his debut with Beloit Civic Theatre, however is not a newcomer to the stage. Lo has performed in stages across Wisconsin and Illinois. A few of their works include *The Wedding Singer* (RVC Starlight), *Bat Boy* (Outskirts), and *Little Shop of Horrors* (Pride Theatre). In addition to being on stage, Lo has recently choreographed *Cinderella* (BDACT) and directed

Hairspray (Pride Theatre) and *Frozen Jr* (Milton Middle School). Lo loves spending time with his loving husband, Aidan, his furry babies Nari, Franklin, and Dill, and being an advocate for the LGBTQ+ and BIPOC Communities. “Kindness is free, so spread it like glitter!” -Bob the Drag Queen



Charlotte Walstead (Marcy Park) Charlotte Walstead (Marcy Park) Previous to this production, Charlotte appeared in *The Wedding Singer* at Starlight Theatre. She works as an educator at Rockford’s Discovery Center Museum. In her spare time, Charlotte enjoys baking, dance and being outdoors. AND...she is from Texas!!



Natalie Wooden (Olive Ostrovsky) A newcomer to Beloit Civic Theatre, Natalie appeared at Starlight Theatre in *Oliver*, *Legally Blonde*, *Newsies*, *Grease* and *The Wedding Singer*, at Janesville Performing Arts Center in *Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, at Janesville’s Stageworks in *Dracula*, and at Byron Civic Theater in *Matilda*. Natalie works as an Education Coordinator at Janesville Performing Arts Center, and she is a private voice, piano and ukulele instructor while also serving as choreographer at Harvard High School. She is married to her “lovely husband Logan”, and they have 2 golden retrievers, Rose and Lily. Natalie is also an aspiring writer and author.



Stacy McNall (Director) Stacy recently appeared in Beloit Civic Theatre's productions of *Lucky Stiff* and *The Kids Left. The Dog Died. What's Next?* Her other credits for Beloit Civic Theatre include *Baby, Working, Company* and *Tally's Folly*. Stacy also worked as Director for Spotlight on Kids for 17 years in over 35 productions, where she also appeared in *Oliver, Annie* and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Stacy works as a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner at Reema Health Center, a Minneapolis-based company that partners with insurance companies to provide mental health services for Medicaid patients in need. She also teaches Nurse Practitioner students along with 3 other "part time" jobs. Her family consists of her husband, Grant, and their 4 kids, Alex, Aidan, Ainsleigh and August along with their dogs, Winnie and Petey. Stacy enjoys painting, reading and baking.



Riley Rohrer (Music Director) This is Riley's first time being a theatrical music director. She works as an Emergency Department Tech at Beloit Memorial Hospital. Her husband, Eric, is a police officer with Beloit PD. She has two sons, Brysen (12) and Camden (9) and one adorable puppy named Radar. She loves listening to and making music, reading, fishing and camping, and has a degree in Music Therapy. Welcome to BCT!



Alexyn Cervantes (Choreographer) Alexyn appeared in *Legally Blonde* and *Hair* for Carthage College, *Beauty and the Beast* for Spotlight on Kids, and *Once Upon a Mattress* at Starlight Theatre. She works as an elementary special education

paraprofessional. Alexyn's family consists of 3 cats, and she enjoys spending time singing, painting, crafting and playing video games. This is her second production serving as choreographer. And...Alexyn received a very special honor while at Carthage College: she was nominated for a Kennedy Center Irene Ryan Award* for her performance as Elle Woods in *Legally Blonde*.

**The Irene Acting Scholarships provide recognition, honor and financial assistance to student performers wishing to pursue further education. Sixteen regional and two national scholarships are awarded annually.*



William Finn - Mr. Finn was the writer and composer of *Falsettos*, for which he received two Tony Awards, Best Book of a Musical (with James Lapine) and Best Original Score. He also wrote and composed *In Trousers*, *March of the Falsettos* and *Falsettoland* (Outer Critics Circle

Award for Best Musical, two Los Angeles Drama Critic's Awards, two Drama Desk Awards, the Lucille Lortel Award, and Guggenheim Fellowship in Musical Composition). Mr. Finn wrote the lyrics to Graciela Daniele's *Tango Apasionado* (music by the great Astor Piazzolla) and, with Michael Starobin, the music to Lapine's version of *The Winter's Tale*. His musical, *Romance in Hard Times*, was presented at the Public Theater. He wrote *Painting You for Love's Fire*, a piece commissioned and performed by the Acting Company, based on Shakespeare's sonnets. For television, Mr. Finn provided the music and lyrics for the Ace Award-

winning HBO cartoon "Ira Sleeps Over," "Tom Thumb and Thumbelina," "Pokey Little Puppy's First Christmas," and, with Ellen Fitzhugh, two "Brave little Toaster" cartoons. Mr. Finn wrote for *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *The New Yorker*. A graduate of Williams College where he was awarded the Hutchinson Fellowship for Musical Composition, Finn taught a weekly master class at the NYU Tisch Graduate Program in Musical Theatre Writing. Other projects include *Elegies, A Song Cycle* (Lincoln Center) and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* which ran on Broadway and has been produced nationally and internationally, as well. Mr. Finn passed away on April 7th, 2025.



Rebecca Feldman is the conceiver of *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* for which she won a Lucille Lortel Award, Drama Desk and Tony Nomination for Best Musical. She directed its world premiere at Barrington Stage Company in the summer of 2004. Rebecca is Associate Producer on *TRANSPARENT*, the *MUSICAL FINALE* and served as Staff Writer on the finale as well. She is currently developing an episodic drama with Big Kid Pictures, called *LA COYOTE*, which has been selected to the WeForShe's 2019 Writeher List. She is an alumna of the Lincoln Center Director's Lab as well as the AFI Directing Workshop for Women where she won the Jean Firstenberg Award for Best Short. Her short films include, *MY FIRST TIME DRIVING* (AFI Jean Firstenberg Award, Best Short at Lake Arrowhead Film Fest, Best of Shorts at Outfest), *A/V CLUB* (TV Pilot, NYTVF), *UBER ALICE* (Woodstock Film Fest), *DEAD CAT* (Producer, Tribeca Film Fest) and *IRVING* (Official Selection Rhode Island Film Fest, Official Selection USA Film Fest, Ft. Lauderdale Film Fest, Atlanta Jewish Film Fest).



Book by Rachel Sheinkin
Broadway: The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (Tony, Drama Desk awards); Off Broadway: Striking 12 (Lucille Lortel nomination), Off-Off: Serenade. Regional: Guthrie, Little House on the Prairie; Center Theater Group, Sleeping Beauty Wakes (Los Angeles Ovation Award); London: Blood Drive. Residencies, fellowships, commissions include: Eugene O'Neill National Theater Center, Baryshnikov Dance Foundation, MacDowell Colony, Manhattan Theatre Club, Deaf West, McCarter Theatre, Playwrights Horizons. Rachel is a volunteer mentor for TDF's Open Doors program, a visiting instructor at Yale School of Drama, and adjunct faculty member of NYU's Graduate Musical Theater Writing Program.

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Please be aware that Beloit Memorial High School is a NON-SMOKING facility. Please respect the school policy and state law and refrain from smoking on school grounds.

No photography is allowed during performance.

Please set your cell phone to silent mode during the performance.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please leave your name, address, and phone number with one of the volunteers at the ticket tables in the lobby. Address changes may also be given to one of our lobby personnel.

Gift certificates are available for the entire season or for individual shows. They make wonderful gifts for all occasions. If interested, contact our box office at (608) 362-1595.

You may request to be added to our actor database, if interested. Postcards announcing auditions are mailed before each show's auditions. Just give your name, phone number and postal mailing address to anyone working in the lobby or email us at beloitcivictheatre@gmail.com

Beloit Civic Theatre Angels

Beloit Civic Theatre wishes to thank the following members for their additional financial contributions to the theatre. If there are any errors or omissions in this list of supporters, please call Beloit Civic Theatre at

608-201-3084. This list was compiled on September 6th, so if your name is not listed, we may have received your donation after that date. Thanks again to all of you for your generous support! The following donors have contributed over \$10,000 towards our operating budget this year.

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Thank you to Kathy Vogel, Marlene Skinkle, and Pat Hall for donating cookies for our spring show, *The Charitable Sisterhood of the Second Trinity Victory Church*.

Please check out the Beloit Civic Theatre website at www.beloitcivictheatre.org

Beloit Civic Theatre is an all-volunteer non-profit organization dedicated to keeping the Dramatic Arts alive and well in our community. All of our proceeds are reinvested in furthering this mission. You can help by becoming a BCT Volunteer. Call the BCT Box Office at (608) 362-1595 to see how you can help!

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