



AUDITION NOTICE

A JUKEBOX FOR THE ALGONQUIN

by Paul Stroili

WHEN: **Sunday, June 25, 2023**
Registration opens at 12:30pm
Auditions begin at 1:00pm

Callbacks (if needed): Monday, June 26 at 7:00pm

WHERE: The Farmington Players Barn Theater
32332 W. 12 Mile Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48334

Audition forms and sides will be available in early May at: <http://farmingtonplayers.org/auditions/>

PRODUCTION INFORMATION:

Director: Barbara A. Bruno Assistant Director: Jason Wilhoite Producer: Donna Pelon

Performance Dates:

Friday, September 29 @ 8:00pm; Saturday, September 30 @ 8:00pm; Sunday, October 1 @ 2:00pm
Friday, October 6 @ 8:00pm; Saturday, October 7 @ 8:00pm; Sunday, October 8 @ 2:00pm
Thursday, October 12 @ 8:00pm, Friday, October 13 @ 8:00pm; Saturday, October 14 @ 8:00pm

Note: If performances are cancelled for any reason, a make-up performance could be added on **Sunday, October 15 @ 2:00pm**, so please reserve this date as well.

Mandatory Rehearsal Dates:

Table work with the playwright: Monday, August 14 (evening; time TBD)

Tech Rehearsal: Saturday, September 23 (please reserve the entire day)

Dress Rehearsals (evenings):

Monday, September 25; Tuesday, September 26; Wednesday, September 27 (Invited dress)

All company members are expected to attend strike on Sunday, October 15 if no performance is scheduled.

Rehearsal Schedule:

Rehearsals will start in the first week of August. The final rehearsal schedule will be planned after casting, but will generally be 2-3 evenings per week. Because this is a largely ensemble play, actors with excessive conflicts will not be cast, and all actors will be expected to be off book by the end of August.

First read through: Tentatively planned for the evening of Monday, July 17 or Tuesday, July 18

**ABOUT THE PLAY:**

Setting: The Algonquin Room, a community recreation room at the Placid Pines Senior Care Center in the Adirondack region of Upstate New York.

Time: Summer, 2003

Synopsis: In the peaceful setting of the Placid Pines Senior Care Center, seventy-year-old Johnny just wants to buy a jukebox so he can listen to music that's complete with the "stems and seeds". When the residents discover that someone has left behind seven marijuana plants, they hatch a plan to raise the money that will lead them all to just the other side of the law. While these former city dwellers will not "go gentle into that good night", the question remains: Will they succeed before it's game over?

To read the play: Actors are strongly encouraged to read the play prior to auditioning. Because this is, as yet, an unpublished work, auditionees will be given online access to it by contacting the director at FarmingtonJFTA@gmail.com. You may also use this email to reach out with any questions.

DIRECTOR NOTES:

The Algonquin refers to the Algonquin Round Table, a group of writers, critics, actors, and wits that gathered in the Algonquin Hotel in NYC during the 1920's for games, witty exchanges, and practical jokes. One of its most famous members was Dorothy Parker, whose quotes appear periodically throughout the play. The spirit and liveliness of the Algonquin Round Table permeates the play and its characters.

As a comedy, the tone of the play is light, except for those few moments when it is not. The relationships between the characters are paramount: they care about each other, so we care about them, but all of that is generally sensed rather than said. Ultimately, the play is a celebration of life, how we choose to keep living, and how we continue to live on even after we're gone.

Since this is a new work, there are no "predefined" ways to play these roles and only the most crucial aspects of the characters are included in the descriptions. The rehearsal process will be collaborative - actors will be expected to do their homework and bring their character development ideas into auditions and rehearsals. Because the playwright will have some involvement, it is imperative that actors memorize their lines accurately.

A note about diversity:

This play directly challenges what are often preconceived notions about aging. People don't stop being who they are simply because their bodies are experiencing the effects of time. This is a primary theme of the play. Age is acknowledged as a salient aspect of identity, not a definition of it. Along those same lines, the cultural diversity present in the play represents aspects of each character's identity, but acknowledges those aspects as a part of their full personhood, not as definitions of it. Diversity is neither ignored nor underscored, but simply is, and representation will be approached with respect and humility.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS:

The ages listed are approximations. The playwright specifies that these ages are flexible depending on the actors cast, but for this production, the ages of Johnny, Dennis, Annie and Peg, relative to each other, should be largely maintained.

In addition, the playwright specifies that the term, *any ethnicity* "does not by default indicate whiteness, but rather that a character can be of any race or ethnicity".

Johnny Taylor (194 speeches):

Male, 70+, African American

A working-class widower from the Bronx, resides in the long-term care facility, uses a quad cane, has a touch of the romantic about him, likes a little side gambling action, buddies around with Dennis. Note: the character smokes a cigarette on stage.

Dennis Haberman (234 speeches):

Male, 65+, any ethnicity

From Brooklyn, no family to speak of, resides in the long-term care facility, wheelchair bound, homosexual, educated and urbane, buddies around with Johnny, must be able to carry a tune. Come to auditions prepared to sing 16 bars of *Danny Boy* in any key (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I2Cyxb63mK8> at time markers 1m 30s -2m).

Annie Murphy (140 speeches):

Female, 65+, White

Widower from Yonkers, legally blind, resides in the assisted living facility, a good Irish Catholic girl, outgoing, a bit of a bleeding heart, and a tad quirky and excitable.

Peg Connolly (158 speeches):

Female, mid- to late-50's, any ethnicity

Recently divorced housewife from Montclair, NJ, just moved into the neighboring 55+ living community, competent but looking for her place as the newcomer, should be able to carry a tune. Actors will be asked to sing *Happy Birthday* at auditions.

Mrs. Angela McDarren (11 speeches – dual role/same actor who plays Peg):

Appears in the opening scene – touring the facility for her mother, a bit full of herself. Must be a contrast to Peg.

Josefina Alvarez (60 speeches):

Female, 40's-50's, of Hispanic and Italian descent

Originally from the Bronx, the administrator – caring but overworked, from the same neighborhood as Johnny so they have a special bond.

Chuck (102 speeches):

Male, 40's-50s, any ethnicity

Maintenance worker, a former English professor, recently released from prison, new to Placid Pines, somewhat reserved to begin with, we should be unsure whether or not he could be dangerous until later in the play.

Tyler (60 speeches):

Male, early 20's, any ethnicity

Maintenance worker, a good kid, the bumper stickers on his car read "Stop Global Warming", "John Kerry for President", and "My Other Car is a Kayak".