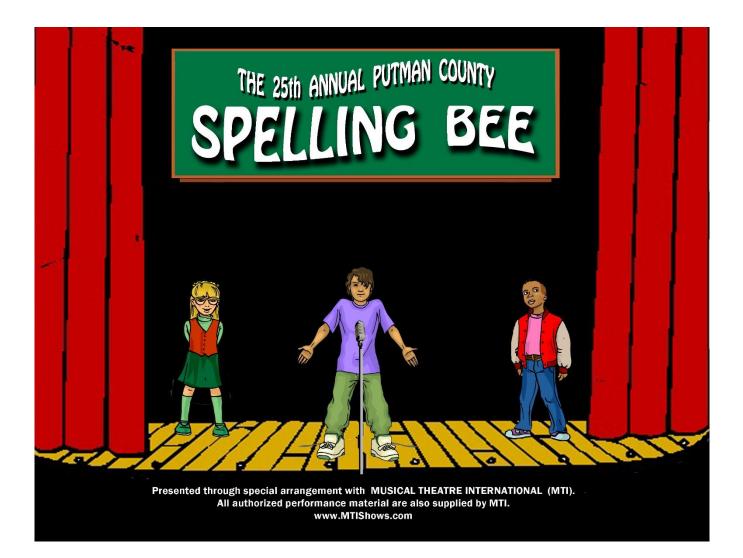
# **PENINSULA COMMUNITY THEATRE** presents the fourth show of its 2021-2022 season:



# February 25, 26, March 4, 5, 11, 12 at 8:00 p.m. February 27, March 6, 13 at 2:30 p.m.

## www.pctlive.org

10251 Warwick Blvd., Newport News, VA 23601 757-595-5PCT

# The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

Music & Lyrics by William Finn, Book by Rachael Sheinkin,

Conceived by Rebecca Feldman Presented by special arrangement with MUSICAL THEATRE INTERNATIONAL (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. (www.MTIShows.com)

# CAST

## LEAF CONEYBEAR, CARL SCHWARTZ Zack Burgess

RONA LISA PERETTI, MRS. OSTROWSKY Sarah Faber

MARCY PARK, BROOK CONEYBEAR

## Julia Hoyes

DOUGLAS PANCH, MR. OSTROWSKY Kris Karns

OLIVE OSTROWSKY, MARIGOLD CONEYBEAR Chelsea Mayer

WILLIAM BARFÉE, MR. CONEYBEAR Mike Mazzocca

## MITCH MAHONEY, DAN GRUBENNIERE Rico Robinson

CHIP TOLENTINO, JESUS, PINECONE CONEYBEAR

### **Kameron Peters**

LOGIANNE SCHWARTZANDGRUBENNIERE, MRS. CONEYBEAR Allison Stover

## **CREATIVE TEAM**

DIRECTOR	Justin Giroux
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	Carla Mutone
STAGE MANAGER	Deb Kelley
PRODUCTION MANAGER	Katy Feldl
MUSIC DIRECTOR / PIANIST.	Shannon Lynch Walker
CHOREOGRAPHER	Dana Margulies Cauthen
COSTUMER	Mary Ann Machie
LIGHT/SOUND DESIGN	Tom McIlvain
SOUND/LIGHT BOOTH	Brenda Epling
STAGE CREW	Daneene Kelley, Kim Voska
PROPS / SET BUILDING	Jason Kriner, Scott Hayes
SET BUILDING	Cassie Hept

## Director's Note – Justin Giroux

My first introduction to competitive spelling was *A Boy Named Charlie Brown*. In this movie, the lovable loser from *Peanuts*—the kid who can't ever fly a kite, win a baseball game, or kick a football—implausibly advances to the final round of the National Spelling Bee. Spewing forth perspiration, Charlie Brown correctly spells several difficult words—UNCONFIDENT, DISASTROUS, INCOMPETENT, and FUSSBUDGET—that seem to comment on his personality. With only one boy standing between him and glory, Chuck then reverts to form by misspelling BEAGLE, the very breed of his own dog Snoopy.

The movie made a lasting impression on me. I resolved to enter a spelling bee as soon as I could and to study as diligently as Charlie Brown did—and I followed through on both resolutions. Unsurprisingly, I grew up to be an English teacher with an uncannily accurate impersonation of the *Peanuts* gang's trombone-voiced teacher. And although I was soon old enough to understand that bad spellers don't vanish into the ether with a pop, I never lost my fascination with the wholly child-centered *Peanuts* universe—a universe in which even a weekend in New York City was free from adult voices and faces.

The *Putnam County* universe we enact for you onstage today is not adult-free: all six spellers discuss their parents, some of whom even appear and sing. The other three characters are adults, and (so reminiscent of 1967's *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*!) adult actors play all roles, even the six young characters. Nevertheless, *The Twenty-Fifth Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* still explores the same inner world of children that *Peanuts* depicted.

With adult eyes, we relive our own childhood trials: overconfidence, overcomplication, and overcompensation on one hand; and surviving abuse and neglect on the other. We laugh at the absurdity of the boy asked to spell only South American rodent names, and we flinch at the cruelty of offering only words packed with S sounds to the girl with the lisp. In the end, we adults understand that, like these spellers, the hard lessons of childhood made us who we are. Like Charlie Brown, we know that the persistence needed to place second in the National Spelling Bee is the same virtue that sustains us as we try finally to kick that elusive football.

## About the Cast...

**Zach Burgess** (Leaf Coneybear, Carl Schwartz) is excited to return to the Peninsula Community Theatre stage as Leaf Coneybear! Zach works for Starbucks where he utilizes their College Achievement Program to go to Arizona State to pursue a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies. Some past shows he's been involved with were assistant directing *The Laramie Project* here at PCT as well as being in the cast of both Cupid's Cabarets. He too likes cats, and his favorite word in the show is **CREPUSCULE** (*noun; twilight*).

**Sarah Faber** (Rona Lisa Peretti, Mrs. Ostrowsky) is a graduate of the Theatre Department of the Governor's School for the Arts in Norfolk, and she is thrilled to play Rona in this production. She has most recently performed in *A Christmas Carol* with the Williamsburg Players and *Mamma Mia* with Peninsula Community Theatre. Sarah works in Newport News as a psychiatric nurse practitioner, which affords her regular opportunities to use spelling bee words like **PSYCHOTROPIC** (*adjective; affecting a person's mental state*) and **PHARMACOKINETICS** (*noun; the movement of drugs within the body*). She would like to thank her boyfriend, David, for his love and support.

**Julia Hoyes** (Marcy Park, Brook Coneybear) is very excited to be making her debut with Peninsula Community Theatre. She has previously worked with Grafton High School's theatre department, playing the Witch in *Big Fish* and Joanne in *Godspell*. Julia recently graduated from Liberty University, studying Instrumental Music Education with French horn as her primary instrument and a minor in piano. Although she did not study musical theatre, she had various opportunities to play French horn as part of the pit orchestra in several performances throughout her education. She is a native of Yorktown, Virginia, but has plans to pursue teaching in Alabama. Julia would like to thank her family and friends for always being so encouraging and supportive of her passions. Above all, she is thankful to God for the talents He has given her and for the opportunity to bring joy and entertainment to the community. Unlike Marcy Park, Julia is not **SEXILINGUAL** (*adjective; able to speak six languages, or something like that*), but she takes great interest in languages and hopes to explore these more in her free time!

**Kris Karns** (Douglas Panch, Mr. Ostrowsky) is from Orem, Utah. He has a Bachelor's of Fine Arts in Musical Theater from Colorado Mesa University. Recent credits include Macbeth in *Macbeth*, Editor Webb in *Our Town*, and most recently Pastor Bobby in PCT's *Harmony Baptist Church Ladies Auxiliary Christmas Jubilee*. Woe stranger to nerdplay and stunning wit on cage, Kris is a fig ban of reasoning his secular speech with **SPOONERISMS** (*noun; transpositions of initial sounds or letters of two or more words, often to humorous effect*).

**Chelsea Mayer** (Olive Ostrowsky, Marigold Coneybear) earned her BFA in Musical Theater in 2014 and returns to the stage after a long hiatus for her second show at PCT. Chelsea was last seen as Velma Kelly in TNCC's *Chicago*, but her most beloved role was Eliza Doolittle in PCT's *My Fair Lady*. Her favorite word from the show is **FABACEAE** (*noun; the legume, pea, or bean family*). Chelsea competed in her county's spelling bee in the fifth grade, winning second place after misspelling **AMBIGUOUS**--she has not spelled it incorrectly since. Big thanks to Jeff and Bri for entertaining frequent Broadway Solo living room concerts during almost two years of quarantine.

**Mike Mazzocca** (William Barfée, Mr. Coneybear) is hopping with excitement to be in his very first production at Peninsula Community Theater. Mike is a 2009 graduate of The Conservatory of Performing Arts at Point Park University in Pittsburgh, PA with a concentration in acting. Mike just recently moved to the area from Chicago, so the Virginia climate brings him a definite sense of **THALPOSIS** (*noun: sensation of warmth*). In Chicago, he spent the better part of twelve years working as an actor, director, producer, musician, and composer for the stage within the robust storefront theater community. Mike has been a company member with Trap Door Theater since 2014. In 2017, Mike received a Jeff Award Nomination for Best Composition for the Stage for his work on *Into the Open Sky*, an adapted work exploring the works of Polish poet Wisława Szymborska. Mike is also a company member with Underscore Theater Company, focusing on the development and production of new musicals. Mike spent five years (2014-2019) developing two productions and operating as actor/musician, music director and managing producer of the original cast recording for *Haymarket: A New Folk Musical*.

**Rico Robinson** (Mitch Mahoney, Dan Grubenniere) is thrilled to be back on the PCT stage as Mitch in this production of *The Twenty-Fifth Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. He's reprising this role as he did it seven years ago with Poquoson Island Players (R.I.P.). Having worked with kids for over ten years, Rico sees his role of Mitch as special as he gets to continue his tough love philosophy. Notable Roles: Jim, *Big River* (PCT); Cory, *Fences* (PCT); Jack, *Reefer Madness* (DDT); and one of his favorites, Agwe, *Once On This Island* (PCT). He thanks his beautiful and loving wife, Charity; his two lively boys, Cruz and Corbin; and his family and friends for their love and constant support. Rico's castmates have long admired his wide variety of footwear and his characteristic **CONCINNITY** (*noun; neatness and elegance in style*).

**Kameron Peters** (Chip Tolentino, Jesus, Pinecone Coneybear) is very excited to be part of *The Twenty-Fifth Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. His previous productions include *The Harmony Baptist Church Ladies Auxiliary Christmas Jubilee* (PCT), *Dog Sees God* (Generic Theatre), *Mamma Mia* (PCT), and *Hair* (WP). He recently took a break from theatre to work in film. He acted in the Apple TV show *Swagger* and in Hulu's show *Dopesick*. He recently finished filming a movie called *Baby Momma*, which comes out in a few months. Kameron is excited and thrilled–not a bit **LUGUBRIOUS** (*adjective; extremely sad and droopy*)–to be back on stage once again. He would like to thank our director, Justin, for making this vision come to life, as well as the production team, family, and friends. LET'S GO!!!!

Allison Stover (Logainne Schwartzandgrubenniere, Mrs. Coneybear) is so excited to have been selected as a member of the cast of *The Twenty-Fifth Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. She has been seen on stage at several theaters in the area to include *Mamma Mia* (PCT), *Hair* (WP), and *Chicago* (TNCC). Allison is currently completing her Bachelor's Degree at Strayer University in Human Resource Management. She would like to take this opportunity to thank her husband, Thomas, for his continual support in all her endeavors. She is also grateful for the cast and crew, for helping make this dream show of hers come to life. Most of all, she thanks our sensational director, Justin Giroux, who edited this section such that Allison's bio would **SEGUE** (*verb: to make an uninterrupted transition*) directly into his.

## About the Creative Team...

**Justin Giroux** (Director) teaches literary arts at the York County School of the Arts in Williamsburg. *The Twenty-Fifth Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* is his twenty-second show at Peninsula Community Theatre since 2009. Last summer, PCT audiences saw Justin perform fourteen characters, all with different Scottish and English accents, in *The Thirty-Nine Steps*. Recent directorial efforts include *The Children* (PCT) and *Shakespeare in Love* (Williamsburg Players). As an obnoxiously precocious child, Justin won the Virginia Beach City Spelling Bee, but was disallowed from advancing to the national bee, which required all entrants to be sponsored by their local newspaper. (He continues to plot his icy revenge against *The Virginian-Pilot*.) As a child, Justin aspired to be an **AFREET** or evil genius, a goal that—so his students tell him—remains only half achieved.

**Carla Mutone** (Assistant Director) is very excited to once again be working with director Justin Giroux. In 2021, she appeared in PCT's online presentation of *The Children*. Working with this talented cast and production crew is a dream. Much like Rona, Carla is an award winning Realtor with Howard Hanna specializing on the Peninsula. Please remember at intermission to grab a snack and some **WOODER** (*noun; a liquid with chemical formula*  $H_2O$  found in the immediate vicinity of Philadelphia).

**Deb Kelley** (Stage Manager) is excited to be participating in another PCT show! Thank you, Justin, for inviting me to join the creative team! This is Deb's second time working on *The Twenty-Fifth Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. The first was with the former Poquoson Island Players (PIPS) in 2014. She is normally behind the scenes, but was seen on stage as The Ghost of Christmas Past in *The Trial of Ebenezer Scrooge* (Dec. 2019). Deb was also seen on stage in Smithfield Little Theatre's *It's a Wonderful Life* as Mrs. Hatch (Dec. 2018). She has served as stage manager (SM), assistant stage manager (ASM), props mistress, dresser, stage crew, and set construction crew member in so many shows she's lost count! Shows include *Taking Leave* (SM), *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (ASM), *My Fair Lady* (SM), and *Ragtime* (SM) at PCT and *Squabbles* (SM) *Forum* (SM) and *You Can't Take it With You* (SM) at Williamsburg Players. Deb is retired from civil service with the Department of Army. She and Ken own their own business as a firearms dealer, are active in church, love to take cruises, and enjoy singing karaoke. Deb loves to play word games (e.g. Scrabble), and in one of those games she recently used the word **VUG** (*noun; a small cavity in a rock*).

**Katy Feldi** (Production Manager) is happy to be working alongside some of her favorite people and excited that live musical theatre is back onstage at PCT! Katy was last seen on stage at Williamsburg Players in *A Christmas Carol* and prior to that was assistant director of PCT's *The Thirty-Nine Steps*. Favorite PCT roles include Mrs. Van Daan in *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Cookie in *Rumors*, Lana Sherwood in *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* and Hazel in *The Children*. Katy is a proud Board member at PCT and wants to thank you all for your continued support of live community theatre. She hopes that the show will warm your heart and maybe even bring a tear to your eye, unless you suffer from **XEROPHTHALMIA** (*noun; abnormal dryness of the eyes*).

**Shannon Lynch Walker** (Music Director and Pianist) started playing piano when she was 3, accompanying vocalists/instrumentalists in elementary through high school. She became a church pianist at the age of 10. She performed in Christian and secular bands, private parties, and weddings. She has accompanied two Poquoson Island Players musicals and one Smithfield Little Theatre

Christmas cabaret, but this is her ninth show here at PCT. Previous PCT productions include *The Sound* of *Music, Forbidden Broadway*, one Halloween cabaret, two Cupid cabarets, an anniversary cabaret, the USO cabaret, and *Broadway Celebration*). She is honored to be playing and enjoys working with talented people. She has a 34-year career at NASA and works at the NASA Engineering and Safety Center. She is happily married to Michael Lynn Walker and has four children and seven grandchildren. Her favorite spelling bee word is **APPOGGIATURA** (*noun; a grace note performed before a note of the melody and falling on the beat*).

**Dana Margulies Cauthen** (Choreographer) won her elementary school spelling bee and went on to suffer a crushing defeat at the Hampton Spelling Bee after panicking and neglecting to ask for a definition for the word **INSEAM** (*noun; the seam running down the inside of a pant leg*). The speller in front of her received the word **BONBON**. Dana feels the pain of the spellers in the song "Pandemonium" acutely.

**Mary Ann Machie** (Costumer) ended up in theatre after being convinced to help out at Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center; she became Nun #5 in *Sister Act* (2017) and then an Oompa Loompa in *Willie Wonka* (2018). Her desire for backstage work put her in the role of Stage Manager for *Dreamgirls* (2019) and stage crew at PCT for *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (2021). Mary Ann's skills lie in sewing and her first venture was assisting with costuming for the Williamsburg Players' *A Christmas Carol* (2021). *Spelling Bee* is her first production as costume lead. Her favorite word is **ONOMATOPOEIA** (*noun; the formation of a word from a sound associated with what is named*): it has a nice ring to it.

**Brenda Epling** (Sound and Light Booth) is thrilled to be returning to the Peninsula Community Theatre crew. Brenda has been involved in shows at PCT and Williamsburg Players since 2010 in a variety of roles onstage, backstage, and during set builds. Indeed, she has done everything a theatre person here could do with the exception of **BUNRAKU** (*noun; Japanese puppet theatre*).

**Daneene Kelley** (Stage Crew) hails from the snowy tundra of Syracuse, New York. She moved to Virginia to teach fifth grade. Because life is unpredictable, she now finds herself working in the History Department of the College of William and Mary. She lives in Newport News with her husband, two impish cats and a venerable dachshund. Daneene is an abhorrent speller who often relies on Spell Check and Autocorrect. Those results range from hilarious to **SALACIOUS** (*adjective; having undue or inappropriate interest in sexual matters*)!

**Kim Voska** (Stage Crew) is grateful for the opportunity to help out behind the scenes for this wonderfully fun production! She most recently performed at PCT as Carol in *The Harmony Baptist Church Ladies' Auxiliary Christmas Jubilee* and as Sarah/Belle in *The Trial of Ebenezer Scrooge*. An **AVID** (*adjective; keenly interested in or enthusiastic about*) crafter and hobbyist, she is considered a **HABILE** (adjective; skillful) basket weaver. Thanks to Justin and Deb for this chance to be a part of the team!

Jason Kriner and Scott Hayes (Props and Set Building) are typically known as the lighting designer and stage manager duo, but for this show they put their skills to use in a new and different way, thus adding to their "Jack of all trades" of behind-the-scenes list! Using the designs and visions created by Justin Giroux (director), Scott & Jason put their Cameo to good use and created the banners you see on stage! It was a fun project and a diversion from their normal show roles. Recent PCT credits: *The 39 Steps* 

(Jason, stage manager & Scott, lighting designer); *Mamma Mia* (Jason, stage manager & Scott, lighting designer), *The Laramie Project* (Jason, stage manager & Scott, light and sound board operator); *Ragtime* (Jason, assistant music director & Scott, lighting designer), *Once On This Island* (Scott, lighting designer). Do you see a theme? Scott is on the board of directors at Williamsburg Players as the vice president and technical director and has lit up the stage for more than 40 shows all over the Peninsula. At Williamsburg Players, Jason has directed *A Christmas Carol* the past 5 seasons, and has stage managed about a dozen shows there. In addition, Jason is the scholarship coordinator at Williamsburg Players. By day, Scott is a computer programmer at William & Mary and Jason is a school teacher! Scott & Jason are thankful for Justin (director) and Katy (producer) for inviting them back to PCT to contribute to and be a "groupie" of this very fun show! Scott & Jason's spelling bee word is MULTIPOTENTIALITE (*noun; the ability of a person, particularly one of strong intellectual or artistic curiosity, to excel in two or more different fields; a person whose interests span multiple fields or areas, rather than being strong in just one.)* 

**Cassie Hept** (Set Building) is a bit of a Jack of All Trades when it comes to theatre. She may be a master of None but that doesn't stop her from helping out with anything and everything she can and what she can't do she tries to learn. Cassandra has stage managed *A Christmas Carol* every year it has been performed at The Williamsburg Players. She has performed in *The Tempest* with Yorktown Shakespeare Company and in *Antigone* at TNCC. She has been found lurking backstage, stage managing Princess Ida, throwing spears and tossing luggage in *Man of la Mancha* and *H.M.S. Pinafore*, pumping blood for the Scottish Play, sorting money for *Cabaret*, and getting covered in sawdust and paint whilst building the great wall of Thebes. Cassandra has a great passion for such things and hopes for a long future of the insanity that is theatre performance (*noun; staging a play*).





### As of Sept. 23, 2021

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