

YE-HA!

★ THE WILDEST MUSICAL IN THE WEST! ★

A Musical Comedy In One Act

Book, music & lyrics by
Craig Hawes

Libretto

PRODUCTION NOTES

Welcome to *Ye-Ha!* I am sure you will enjoy rehearsing and performing this musical comedy, but to aid you in your production it may be helpful to consider the following production notes.

CASTING

The script is written for 44 speaking characters, as listed overleaf. These range from principal parts to small supporting roles. For productions with fewer cast members, condensing and doubling of characters is possible. This can be done in numerous ways, but the following example reduces the cast number to 26:

- Remove Bud, Brad & Bret (reallocating lines) to leave just 3 outlaws
- Combine the Saloon Girls, The Barbers and The Vandergelders into just 1 part each
- Combine The Children into just 2 parts
- Double up 5 Townsfolk as The Two Stroke Indians.

To expand the cast, unlimited chorus parts may be used as additional Townsfolk, Saloon Girls, Children and an off-stage choir for backing on other songs. All characters work better if they can attempt American accents, apart from the Indians. Chief Walking Weasel is written as a highly eloquent Englishman to contrast with the traditionally low, abrupt speech of his tribe (who should be cast in height order from medium to tall, with the exception of Towering Wild Bear who is tiny!) The outlaws sound rough and tough apart from Butch, who has a squeaky, high voice.

COSTUMES

This show is quite easy to costume as it is full of traditional Wild West characters, and there are countless films and cartoons to draw upon. One idea to keep in mind is that the baddies work well all in black, allowing the audience to easily identify them and differentiate between them and the other townsfolk. This will also help when they reveal their bright, contrasting underwear. Lightnin' (the horse) is traditionally played by two performers in a pantomime horse costume which can be hired or made as appropriate. These performers may wish to also play townsfolk when they are not saddled up! Billie Jo requires a brown "Calamity Jane" style costume as well as a traditional white "Lone Ranger" costume. Remember, plenty of gingham, Stetsons and neckerchiefs and you can't go far wrong!

STAGING

This production can be staged effectively with just simple scenery to suggest a Wild West Town. Saloon doors, tables and chairs can be brought on for the Saloon Scene, and Chip can bring on his own "portable" bar on wheels, with wood effect front and different bottles and glasses on top. Some small flats with rocks and a cactus or two can be brought on for Critter Creek and a small flat of a cell door with barred window for Wilbur to look through could be used in the Jail scene. Effective use of lighting can also help to differentiate between other scenes. In the town, a large sign with "Splodge City" is required, with a population count beneath it that can be changed. This is usually done with hole-punched squares of paper, printed with descending numbers, suspended from the sign and ripped off as required at the beginning of the show. The use of a small blackboard and chalk might work just as effectively.

MUSIC

All the music required to stage this production, including sound effects, is found on the Backing Track CD. A vocal recording is provided as a guide and to enable the swift learning of songs. The backing tracks without vocals are ideal to use in rehearsals and performances. Directors may, if they wish, allow a choir or separate character to accompany or replace a soloist in a song or section intended for a soloist. This is sometimes necessary if certain cast members are unable to perform the solo themselves fully or if a larger chorus or choir is required to be employed more fully throughout the show.

AND FINALLY...

This is a fun show to rehearse and perform, so remember to enjoy yourselves and your audience will, too! My best wishes for a successful and enjoyable production.

Craig Hawes

CHARACTERS***Principal Characters***

Billie-Jo Brisket*
Lightnin' The Horse
Wilbur Hubbard*
Ma Annie Hubbard
Chip Checker
Mayor Tex Truman
Dwayne Dimples
Dr. Cornelius Spooner*
Rooster

The No-Good Outlaws

Howling Mad Dog McNut
Bronco Bill
Buzz
Buck
Bud
Brad
Bret
Butch

The Saloon Girls

Bonnie
Casey
Dixie
Ellie
Frankie

The Townsfolk

Philius Snuffitt
Festus Rott
Old Seth
Old Amos
Smith Ironside
Levi Vandergelder
Dolly Vandegelder
Claude the Barber
Clyde the Barber
Clifford the Barber
Clint the Barber
Miss Bracegirdle

The Children

Sonny Ironside
Chad Checker
Verity Vandergelder
Virginia Vandergelder

The Two Stroke Indians

Chief Walking Weasel
Squatting Poodle
Leaping Leopard
Jumping Jaguar
Towering Wild Bear

** denotes characters with singing solos*

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Music 1: Overture

As the House Lights dim, the music begins and eventually swells as the curtain rises.

SCENE 1

Mainstreet, Splodge City - a traditional Wild West town. To one side is the town sign, with a population count below it. Lights are dim and a spotlight fades up on Wilbur as he enters and begins to sing.

Music 2: In The Wild Wild West!

WILBUR: IN A WESTERN TOWN LIFE CAN BE GRAND
WE'RE THE LUCKIEST FOLK IN THE LAND
AND WITH EVERY NEW DAY
WE SHOULD STAND UP AND SAY
WE'VE BEEN BLESSED ...
IN THE WILD, WILD WEST!

As the music changes, the lights brighten and the townsfolk begin to enter.

WILBUR: THERE'S A LAND WHERE WE ALL WANT TO BE
WHERE THE RIVER AND CATTLE RUN FREE
WHERE THE THRILLS AND THE SPILLS
PUT YOUR RODEO SKILLS TO THE TEST ...

CHORUS: IN THE WILD, WILD WEST!
IN THE WILD, WILD WEST!
IN THE WILD, WILD WEST!
IN THE WILD, WILD WEST!

IF YOU WANDER THE WESTERN FRONTIER
THERE'S A WELCOME IN STORE FOR YOU HERE
IF YOU'RE GOOD, IF YOU'RE BAD
IF YOU'RE UGLY OR MAD, BE OUR GUEST

CHORUS: IN THE WILD, WILD WEST!
IN THE WILD, WILD WEST!
IN THE WILD, WILD WEST!
IN THE WILD, WILD WEST!

An exciting instrumental follows, accompanied by cowboy claps, yelps and shouts as some of the townsfolk perform some agile dancing, cartwheels and cowboy tricks.

CHORUS: IF YOU WANDER THE WESTERN FRONTIER
THERE'S A WELCOME IN STORE FOR YOU HERE
IF YOU'RE GOOD, IF YOU'RE BAD
IF YOU'RE UGLY OR MAD, BE OUR GUEST

IN THE WILD, WILD WEST!
IN THE WILD, WILD WEST!
IN THE WILD, WILD WEST!
IN THE WILD, WILD WEST!

At the end of the song, the townsfolk get on with their daily routine, and slowly exit. Chip steps forward to address the audience.

CHIP: Welcome to the wild, wild west, folks, and to our little ol' town - Splodge City!

Chip's the name - bartender at The Fordoor Saloon! It sure is mighty fine to see strangers around these parts, but I'm bettin' you won't want to stay long. You see, something stinks in Splodge City, and it ain't the drains!

Music 3: SFX Pop-Gun #1

We hear a popgun shot and a scream. In the background, townsfolk run across the stage. As the undertakers drag a body across the stage, a townsfolk comes up to the sign and changes the population count, minus one!

CHIP: There's a no-good gang running wild, a-stealin' and a-shootin'! Townsfolk are sellin' up and leavin'. And where's the sheriff? Good question - no one seems to want the job!

Behind Chip, a worried looking man is pushed on by some townsfolk, who stick a sheriff badge on his chest and walk off. The new sheriff convinces himself to be brave and strides across the stage and exits.

CHIP: I mean the pay's good, you get a shiny badge and every Wednesday off. Trouble is, none of 'em survive past Tuesday!

Music 4: SFX Pop-Gun #2

We hear another popgun shot & scream. The undertakers drag the old sheriff across the stage whilst another townsfolk reduces the population sign by one again.

CHIP: There goes another one! Thankfully, Mayor Truman - our glorious leader - has come up with a clever solution to the sheriff problem!

Dwayne Dimples enters, ringing a bell and holding a bag of balls. He calls the townsfolk to order.

DIMPLES: Gather round, folks, and show your appreciation for your Mayor, Mr. Tex Truman!

The crowd gather around and clap as Mayor Tex Truman enters, looking grand and important.

TEX: Thank you, kind citizens of Splodge City. As you know, we're facing a crisis. Mad Dog McNut and his posse have been terrorising us for far too long. *(The crowd shout in agreement)* It's time we took a stand. *(the crowd cheer)* We need a sheriff who'll sort them out once and for all! *(the crowd cheer again)* So who's it gonna be? *(the crowd give half a cheer, realise their mistake and quickly look away trying not to be noticed)* Well get your tickets ready, folks, 'cos it's time to release those sheriff lottery balls!

The crowd pull out their lottery tickets and look nervously between them and Dwayne Dimples. Dimples vigorously shakes his bag of balls and pulls out three balls with numbers on. There is much dramatic reaction as he pulls out each ball and reads the number

DIMPLES: Number three! Number eight! And the bonus ball is ... number six!

Everyone releases a loud gasp of relief, except Wilbur who seems in shock.

LEVI: *(looking over Wilbur's shoulder)* It's Wilbur!

CROWD: It's Wilbur!

MA HUBBARD: *(shocked)* It's Wilbur?

WILBUR: *(sounding terrified and upset)* Its me!

The crowd chatter as Ma Hubbard consoles her son. Tex and Dimples walk up to Wilbur and as Dimples pins the sheriff badge on Wilbur's chest, Tex shakes his hand vigorously.

TEX: Congratulations, Wilbur. I'm sure you'll make us proud and put up a good fight.

WILBUR: But Mayor Truman, I can't fight! I don't know how to fight! I'm just a cook!

DIMPLES: Only girls cook, sonny. It's time you stood up and acted like a man!

TEX: Come on folks, let's hear it for our new sheriff - Wilbur Hubbard!

The crowd cheers as the opening song reprises.

Music 5: In The Wild Wild West (Reprise)

CHORUS: IF YOU WANDER THE WESTERN FRONTIER
THERE'S A WELCOME IN STORE FOR YOU HERE
IF YOU'RE GOOD, IF YOU'RE BAD
IF YOU'RE UGLY OR MAD, BE OUR GUEST
IN THE WILD, WILD WEST!

During the final music of this song, the actors change the scene. The townsfolk exit and Chip wheels on his bar whilst the saloon girls bring on chairs and tables. Other scenery is changed to allow a smooth and seamless transition into Scene 2.

SCENE 2

The Fordoor Saloon. Chip is behind the bar, cleaning glasses. A few tables are dotted around the stage. Seth and Amos are sat drinking at one table, a group of townsfolk are at another. The saloon girls are dotted around serving and chatting.

CHIP: The Fordoor Saloon! Liveliest joint in town! Well, it used to be - until Mad Dog McNut and his posse turned up. Customers are a bit thin on the ground, now! Old Ma Hubbard's doing her best to keep the place going, but it sure ain't looking good.

Ma Hubbard and Wilbur enter through the saloon's swing doors. Ma is looking worried and upset.

MA HUBBARD: Oh, Wilbur, this is all we need! As if things weren't bad enough already. Up to our eyes in debt, customers leaving every day and now this - a sheriff's badge. You might as well wear a sign saying "shoot me now please!" Oh, if only your father was still with us, God rest his soul! *(she begins to cry)*

WILBUR: Now don't get all tearful, Ma. I ain't planning on getting into no fights. I reckon we can sort it all out with a chat and a few nibbles, nice and peaceful like. I mean, what's the worst that could happen?

Philius Snuffitt and Festus Rott, the undertakers, enter.

FESTUS: Ah, Sir, Madam! Philius Snuffitt and Festus Rott at your service!

They both bow solemnly, then Festus examines Wilbur and gets out his notebook and tape measure. Philius gives Ma Hubbard his business card.

PHILIUS: We're the undertakers from the local funeral parlour—Snuffit and Rott!

- MA HUBBARD:** Undertakers? But ...
- FESTUS:** When we heard the news about you becoming the new sheriff, Sir, we had to come and congratulate you! And your weight is, sir?
- WILBUR:** About a hundred and fifty pounds.
- FESTUS:** *(making a note in his notebook)* A hundred and fifty pounds, excellent.
- MA HUBBARD:** But I don't quite ...
- PHILIUS:** Yes, you must be very proud of your - er - shall we say "Dear devoted son, greatly missed?" That would look very good in granite, don't you think?
- MA HUBBARD:** Greatly missed?
- PHILIUS:** The wording's very important, madam! Not many undertakers pay as much attention to the job as us - in fact, it's a dying art!
- FESTUS:** *(laughing)* A dying art! Oh, very good, Mr. Snuffit!
- PHILIUS:** Thank you, Mr. Rott! Just a little joke madam. We find it helps to lighten what can otherwise be a rather grave situation! *(he laughs at his own joke)*
- FESTUS:** *(moving Wilbur's head)* Looking straight ahead, please Sir. *(He measures him with his tape)*
- WILBUR:** *(to Festus)* Stop it! What are you doing? *(to Philius)* What's he doing?
- PHILIUS:** He's just getting accurate measurements, Sir. When it comes to funeral arrangements, Mr. Rott is dead keen!
- MA HUBBARD:** Funeral arrangements? But my Wilbur's alive and well!
- FESTUS:** Of course he is, madam at the moment! But when you're the sheriff of Splodge City, Sir, you'll find it's not just six feet of paperwork you'll be buried under!
- PHILIUS:** We just want to be prepared for every eventuality. Now, will you be wanting oak or mahogany?
- MA HUBBARD:** What?
- PHILIUS:** Or pine's very popular.
- WILBUR:** Out!
- FESTUS:** We do a lovely line in chipboard!
- WILBUR:** *(extremely cross as he pushes them through the doors)* Out!
- PHILIUS:** Well, be like that, then.
- FESTUS:** It's your funeral!

The undertakers exit.

- SETH:** They've got a point, there, young Wilbur! That there badge is a curse!

AMOS: Sure is, Seth! The boy's a goner, and that's a fact!

MA HUBBARD: Are you saying my boy can't stand up to gang of no good hoodlums?

SETH: He's just a cook, Annie! What's he gonna do? Give 'em a roasting?

AMOS: Make mincemeat out of 'em? *(they both laugh)*

BONNIE: Look who's coming this way, girls!

CASEY: Oh no, it's Mayor Truman!

MA HUBBARD: Mayor Truman? Oh no, just look at the state of me.

WILBUR: You don't need to dress up for Tex Truman, Ma.

MA HUBBARD: But he's the Mayor, Wilbur. And the wealthiest man in Splodge. He owns most of it.

WILBUR: And if he marries you, he'll own this bit, too. Just 'cos he's got money, he thinks he can do what he wants.

MA HUBBARD: Beggars can't be choosers, Wilbur. And Tex Truman's money might just save this saloon. Now stop your whittling and fetch us some food. Girls?

DIXIE: Yes, Ma Hubbard?

MA HUBBARD: Tidy up this place and cover up anything unsightly.

ELLIE: Yes, Ma Hubbard!

Two girls cover Seth and Amos with tablecloths as Wilbur exits. Mayor Tex Truman and Dwayne Dimples enter the saloon.

DIMPLES: Make way for the mayor! Make way for the mayor! *(To Seth and Amos)* Hey, you two - this ain't no fancy dress parade. Now beat it, this is the Mayor's favourite table.

Seth and Amos take off their tablecloths and reluctantly go and sit at another table.

TEX: Stop fussing, Dimples. Ah, Annie, my dear!

MA HUBBARD: Mr. Mayor, won't you take a seat. Frankie, get Mayor Truman a drink.

FRANKIE: Yes, Ma Hubbard, straight away!

TEX: Well, Annie - have you thought on my proposal?

MA HUBBARD: *(with false bashfulness)* Oh, Mr Truman, a young girl can't be rushed, you know!

DIMPLES: A young girl?

TEX: Oh, Annie. Don't go teasing me so. You know how I feel about you! Why, your eyes are like pools!

DIMPLES: Yep, cess pools.