

# Annie People



Member



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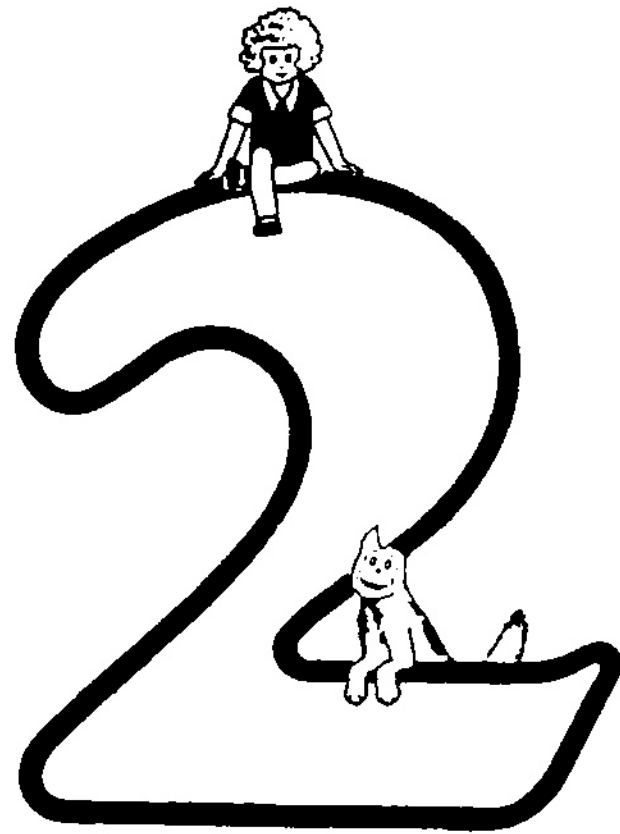
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**Annie 2**  
**Miss Hannigan's Revenge**

## THE SEARCH IS ON . . .



The first open call in New York for Annie 2: Miss Hannigan's Revenge took place on Monday through Wednesday, September 11th-13th. Although the first Annie hopefuls in line at Broadway's Golden Theatre on 45th Street had been there since 5:30 a.m. Monday morning ready for the door to open at 10, by that hour there were only 29 girls lined up. Probably the fact that it was the first day of school for some--plus the fact that the fairly stringent age and height requirements were publicized beforehand--made the turnout considerably smaller than had been expected. One thing was for certain, however; that was that the press was well represented. All the networks and local papers were there, and there was a lot of coverage that night on TV and next day in the newspapers.

As the girls filed up onto the stage they were lined up in front of the "dreaded rope"--the long yellow rope that stretched the full length of the stage at precisely 4 feet 4 inches off the floor. A few were beneath it; a greater number were anywhere from a little bit to a considerable distance above it. But that's what an open call is all about--everyone gets to try out, and everyone received equal attention from Martin Charnin as he led them thorough "Tomorrow" and "Happy Birthday" in groups of four. Girls big and small, old and young, did their stuff. Then Annie 2 choreographer Danny Daniels taught all of them a few simple tap steps to see if they could pick them up. There will reportedly be a lot of tap in Annie 2--for the adult performers as well.

Of course the first cut eliminated a great many at the extreme ends of the age and height spectrum, and there were some tears of course, but at least there were several dozen girls who could go home that day saying that they had sung "Tomorrow" on a Broadway stage in front of the creators of Annie and Annie 2. Mr. Charnin told AP that in the dozen years or so since he first auditioned girls for Annie, he had no idea that even in that short length of time that 10- and 11-year-olds are bigger now than they were then. Indeed, it seemed as if there were not a whole lot of kids up there who fit both the age (10-11 or possibly 12) and the height (3'10" to 4'4") requirements for this musical.

Over the next two days and a half, a steady stream of girls came through, although numbering maybe only about 120 total; again, a lot fewer than was expected. Maybe the fewer number allowed a lot of talent to show through, though, and we saw a lot of wonderful auditions. Even with the small number of candidates, we know that Mr. Charnin's task in picking Annie will be a formidable one. Another interesting thing we heard was that in 1977 "2 kids out of 100" knew how to do this type of stage singing; now, thanks to the popularity of Annie "a whole generation" can do it.

On Wednesday afternoon a hopeful group of 22 callbacks were again on stage standing in front of the yellow rope ready for the next step in the process. This time "Tomorrow" was sung right on key by every single one, the tap routines well done by every single one, and then Mr. Daniels took them in groups through some even more complicated tap steps. Then each one had to face Mr. Charnin and say "You wanna make somethin' of it?" in her toughest and spunkiest voice. (A line from the script, perhaps??)

Soon after that all of the girls gathered around the piano while musical director Peter Howard taught them a few bars of a song none of us had ever heard before, and then the first of the girls sang those few bars by herself using a big cue card with the words on them. When the words "Miss Hannigan" and "1934" reached our ears, we suddenly realized that we were hearing for the very first time an actual piece of the never-before-heard score of Annie 2! This was a special treat for everyone, since the plot and the script have been very much

kept under wraps in order that we will all be surprised when it opens.

So now the search is on. From NYC the creators went to Washington, D.C. for another open call down there, and Mr. Charnin hopes to have his Annie and her understudy chosen by the 1st of October. As for Orphans in Annie 2, he was very evasive about the number of Orphans or even their very existence in the new play, but our feeling is that he wants to see who his Annie is going to be before he even thinks about casting Orphans, so that Annie's looks, voice, personality, etc. will determine what kinds of Orphan characters he will consider.

OK--here's just about all we know about the plot: Annie 2: Miss Hannigan's Revenge will begin in February 1934, about six weeks after Annie ended, and continue through June 1934. Miss Hannigan "seeks revenge" on Annie for getting her thrown in the slammer; we don't know whether she will escape or what, but she will definitely be out of jail and after poor little Annie's hide. We also believe that the romance between Oliver Warbucks and Grace Farrell will play a significant part in this play. FDR will be in Annie 2, but no Rooster or Lily, and the Orphans are still a question mark. There are several new characters: Mrs. Christmas, Lionel McCoy, and Spit, a 13-year-old boy in the Mickey Rooney tradition. Perhaps he will be a sidekick for Annie, much the same as Joe Cornstassel was in the old radio show of the 1930s. Again, that is strictly speculation on the part of the AP staff; we'll find out along with everyone else about Spit's role come December. One surprise we do know is that Punjab and the Asp will be in this play; they will be Annie's bodyguards (as in the comic strip) and will dance but not have speaking roles.

As for casting so far: Dorothy Loudon, the original Miss Hannigan at Goodspeed and on Broadway, will reprise the role that won her a Tony in 1977. Harve Presnell will be back as "Daddy" Warbucks, having played it in the 3rd National and later on Broadway. FDR will again be Ray Thorne, who did the role the entire way from Goodspeed to "2,377" on Broadway. And Lionel McCoy will be played by Ronny Graham, whom we assume was the same person who was the co-writer with Thomas Meehan for the Mel Brooks movie Spaceballs. The roles of Grace and the other adults were still to be cast when this issue of AP went to press; the same is true for a new, younger Sandy.

Annie 2: Miss Hannigan's Revenge will open at the Kennedy Center in Washington on December 28th and run through January 20th, and then the Broadway opening is now scheduled for March 1st at a theater still to be determined.

The AP staff had a lot of fun at the auditions, and we want to send special thanks to Martin Charnin, Thomas Meehan, Charles Strouse, Danny Daniels, Peter Howard, Pat McCorkle, David Powers, Lewis Allen, Peter Neufeld, Randy Charnin--and anyone else we forgot--for having us there watching the beginnings of the exciting search for the newest Annie!



Martin Charnin clowning around with one of the tallest auditionees



"How much longer, Mommy?"



Thomas Meehan holds the script of Annie 2 (closed, unfortunately)

# ★ Annie Stars Since Annie ... ★

ROBERT FITCH, EDWIN BORDO, and RAYMOND THORNE did their original Broadway roles of Rooster, Drake, and FDR, respectively, in Detroit (see separate story). TANI TAYLOR POWERS and MOOSE were there too with JO ANNE WORLEY and BILL HAYES as Oliver Warbucks. In 1955 Bill had the #1 record in the country for 5 weeks with his "Ballad of Davy Crockett"....ANDREA McARDLE performed in Nymph Errant, a Cole Porter show, in London this summer. She has also completed several songs for her solo album and will perform in Oliver! in Akron, Ohio from November thru January....HARVE PRESNELL starred with Debbie Reynolds in The Unsinkable Molly Brown in Pittsburgh in early August. It was a reunion for both of them in their roles; they performed the same ones together 25 years ago in the 1964 movie.... Each week in September CARYN LYN JONES continues to win on Star Search (see separate story)....The 3rd National's MONICA MILLER recently filmed an upcoming TV movie called Bloodknot for NBC with Jaclyn Smith; she plays Jaclyn's character as a teenager. Monica performed in Much Ado About Nothing in Princeton, NJ, and soon she will be doing a six-week teen talk show called Wrap Around in Philadelphia....DEBBIE GIBSON will star in the movie Skirts next year. She will be writing the songs for the soundtrack--in 1960s style, since the setting for the story will be the 1964 New York World's Fair. Meanwhile, she will be writing and producing several songs on the next album by dance artist Ana. Debbie will also be featured on the upcoming soundtrack of ABC-TV's The Wonder Years with her version of the 1956 classic "In The Still Of The Night." She has sung the song in concert many times, but this will be the first time a recording will be available. Also on the album will be a brand-new song by Debbie called "Come Home," inspired by the TV show. The fourth single from Electric Youth has been released; it is "We Could Be Together." Many AP readers report they have seen Debbie's "Electric Youth" tour this summer....This summer ALYSON KIRK was featured on The Equalizer again; she first did the show a couple of years ago.... The 4th National's KIMBERLEE DAVIS played Cynthia in Big with Tom Hanks, which recently aired on cable in late August for the first time....Michigan's SARAH ELIZABETH BARKOFF was named "North America's Tiny Miss Talent 1989" in Nashville, TN on July 8th at the North American Youth Festival. Sarah is currently playing the part of Gretl in The Sound Of Music tour in several cities in August and September. JESSICA SMITH from New Jersey is Brigitta in that production, which stars JEANNE LEHMAN as Maria. Jessica's sister ALIE SMITH continues on Don't Just Sit There on Nickelodeon and will soon be going to Hollywood to tape Star Search in the Teen Vocalist division....For the second year in a row RENEE SHIELDS performed in Kansas City over the Fourth of July; this year she opened for the Charlie Daniels Band....DAVID BARRON will soon be in the Broadway revival of Sweeney Todd....BARBARA ERWIN is in the Gypsy tour which stars Tyne Daly ....DUFFY, owned and trained by PAUL GOLDIE, played Sandy in Auburn, NY with AISLING MULHERN; he will play him again this fall in NJ and PA....MARTHA BYRNE will soon be leaving As The World Turns when the plot line involves the murder of her character Lily....RICHARD SABELLICO is in The Odd Couple (feminine version) in Montclair, NJ....Birthdays: MOLLIE HALL, 19 on September 8; MELISSA KALFA, 18 on September 9; HARVE PRESNELL, 56 on September 14; DOROTHY ANDRES, 14 on October 13; MONICA MILLER, 16 on October 29.

Among the 30 or so dancing Orphan extras in the movie, along with MEREDITH SALENGER, AMANDA PETERSON, SHAWNEE SMITH, and others, was Marta Marrero, who as of this summer is better known as MARTIKA. Her first hit, "Toy Soldiers," which she co-wrote, spent two weeks at #1 in the country in July of this year.

After Annie, Martika appeared on Silver Spoons, Diff'rent Strokes, and Kids Incorporated. This past August she opened for Rick Astley at Radio City Music Hall in New York, and now the 20-year-old singer is now climbing the charts with her follow-up, "I Feel The Earth Move," a Carole King song.

ROBERT FITCH'S ANNIE CLOSES OUT THE SUMMER WITH STYLE

by Tricia Trozzi

Jon and I spent a pleasant Labor Day weekend seeing the last three performances of this show at the Meadow Brook Music Festival in Rochester Hills, Michigan. This package had already played the Muny in St. Louis before coming to this outdoor theater, where it was warmly received by audiences, which should come as no surprise since this was a superlative production all the way around. Sets, lights, and costumes were excellent, and there was a terrific 22-piece orchestra; one certainly doesn't see that many musicians at many community productions of Annie. Robert Fitch directed and choreographed, as well as playing Rooster Hannigan, and did a super job in all three capacities. His direction showed a great respect and affection for the material, and it was a very Broadway-style, straightforward presentation, although he was not afraid to add a few bits new to us, such as an extended dance for Annie and Warbucks in "I Don't Need Anything But You." His choreography was exciting, especially on "Easy Street"--it was a real showstopper due in part to Robert's loose-limbed, energetic dancing. And, of course no one could be better as Rooster than the man who created the role on Broadway. using sleight-of-hand to make the switchblade vanish on the line, "When I want something to disappear, it disappears!" (Where does it go??)

The cast was outstanding. Fresh from her Pittsburgh run as Miss Hannigan, Jo Anne Worley kept the audience laughing with her comedy and added some lines and bits that we found particularly funny (when you've seen the show over 60 times as we have, it's those new things that tend to make us laugh). Former pop singer and soap opera star Bill Hayes played our favorite billionaire, and he did a fine version of "Something Was Missing." More excellent singing was by Danielle Findley as Annie, who had just played the role in Kansas City. Danielle displayed exceptional dancing quality as well. Lisby Larson was an excellent Grace Farrell, Karen Needle a fine Lily, and the Orphans were good too, led by Tani Taylor Powers, who started her Annie career as Molly six years ago and has now grown to play Pepper.

Three long-time Annie favorites added special excitement to this show for us. Edwin Bordo had played Drake for the entire Broadway run, and his extremely dignified stage presence and perfect enunciation are perfect for the character. Raymond Thorne played from Goodspeed to "2,377," and his characterization of Franklin Roosevelt is both human and humorous, and his singing of "Tomorrow" was a highlight of the Cabinet scene. Last but not least, Moose, handled by Lane Haverly, played Sandy with his usual brand of canine style. His first appearance was greeted with much audience delight. All in all, it was a great presentation of our favorite musical.



EDWIN BORDO



ROBERT FITCH



RAYMOND THORNE

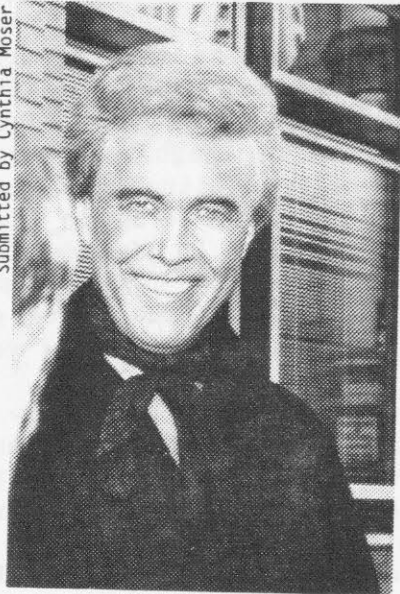


AUBURN, NY - Center, Kelly Lattimore; clockwise from lower left, Emily Reutlinger, Margaret Johengen, Haley Anne Zabriskie, Christie Wilbur, Amanda Lynch, Aisling Mulhern (Annie), Duffy

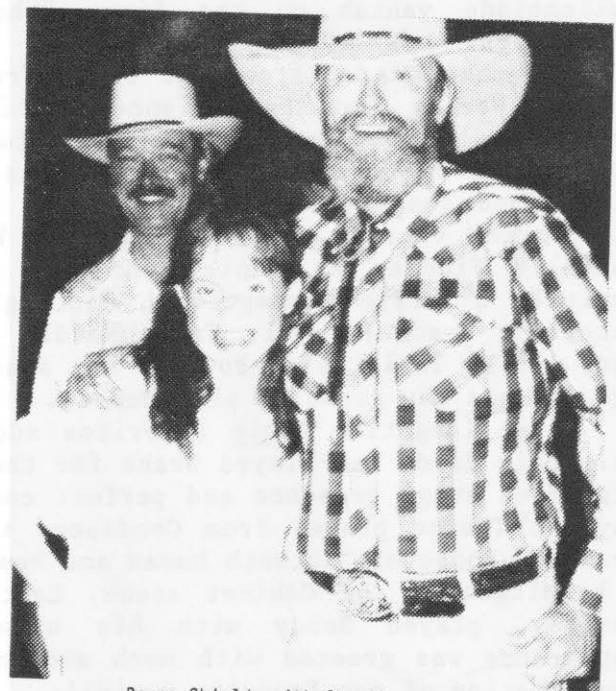


Aisling Mulhern and Duffy

Submitted by Cynthia Moser



Harve Presnell  
The Unsinkable Molly Brown  
Pittsburgh, PA



Renee Shields with Charlie Daniels  
Kansas City, MO



ROCHESTER HILLS, MI - Jon with, top row, Elise LaBarge, Kara Driscoll, Tani Taylor Powers; middle row, Lynn Morski, Tamara Spiewak, Angela Payne; bottom, Danielle Findley (Annie)



Danielle Findley and Moose

## PITTSBURGH'S VERSATILE ANNIE

12 noon, August 12th; Monica Lee Gradischek leaves home for Idlewild Park in Ligonier, PA, along with her mom and me. I have come to western Pennsylvania to see Monica's shows which take place six days a week at the Park during the summer.

2:00; Monica is in her Western outfit as Ernestine McCoy, a six-shooter strapped to her hip, about to stage the day's first of two gunfights between the Hatfields and McCoys, played by the six-person group, The Wild Bunch. Where in the world did Monica get that twangy accent all of a sudden? The audience around the Western set, called Hootin' Holler, loves every minute of it.

2:30; Now Monica is just beginning her country show at the outdoor Gazebo with The Wild Bunch. As they run through country classics like "Daddy Sang Bass" and "Mama Don't Allow," I notice that Monica keeps on moving and dancing the whole time. I whisper to her mom, "What does she do when it's a hundred degrees out?" "Same thing," she says, "She never stops." The audience is clapping their hands, stomping their feet, and yelling "YeeeeEEE-HAAHH!" Such fun.

Lunch break. Then, another gunfight at Hootin' Holler. This time they pull a couple of people out of the audience to stage a duel. I am one of the people. I'll get you for this, Monica. Just kidding; it was lots of fun!

5:30; Back to the Gazebo for another country show. Monica, still AKA Ernestine, moves all the more during "Rocky Top" and "Tennessee River."

Great, marvelous harmony. Suddenly all becomes quiet as she takes center stage and gives a beautiful, emotional performance of the classic country tear-jerker, "Daddy's Hands." My eyes mist. I was with Monica on the day two years ago when my father died. I'm sure glad Mrs. Gradischek is getting all of this on tape on a nearby boom box. This show is even better than the earlier one. The set ends with a rollicking, hand-clapping version of "Good Old Mountain Dew."

7:15; Ernestine McCoy is gone. Monica is Monica again, and the group (twice as big now, 12 singers and dancers) is doing their "Flashback" show, saluting old TV themes of the past. Gee, what's that one? Oh, yes, The Waltons. Haven't heard that in a while. Great nostalgia! Monica is the featured soloist on the old theme that begins, "Schlemiel, Schlimazel, Hasenpfeffer, Incorporated...." Remember that one? That's right, Laverne And Shirley.

9:00; the big show, "Night Moves." Yet another costume change--and mood change--as the group does a dance routine while Monica gives her finest vocal performance of the day on "Self Control," the hit made famous by Laura Branigan. The ghost set is outstanding, as is the routine around Michael Jackson's "Thriller." And of course I am especially moved by the dance they all do during "Aquarius." I guess some of us will never put away our pasts.

I am especially impressed with the fact that just a few hours ago Monica was doing down-home country and now she is doing modern (and some not so modern) pop songs--and, she goes through this abrupt character change every single day here except Mondays. Monica, at 17, is the youngest in the Idlewild Park troupe--all the rest are college students--but it is easy to see that her amazing versatility is what makes her a standout. In 1987 she played Annie in Pittsburgh for the third time, being the oldest Annie I have ever seen, as well as being one of the most talented. Monica's acting ability is such that she can portray a much younger character or a much older character equally well, and this was certainly true when she did Annie at age 15. Monica says that Annie will always be her favorite role of all time, but her dream now is to play the title role in Peter Pan, something she has always wanted to do.

10:00; we are on our way home. Monica seems understandably a little weary. I am thinking about how she'll be right back here tomorrow, doing another great bunch of shows. I wish I could stay another day and see them all over again.

Monica has always been one of AP's and Annie's most faithful followers, even though she sadly admits she has finally outgrown the title role. "But there are other roles in the show..." says Monica, optimistically. She has one more year till graduation, and then she's on to college along with, it is hoped, a lot more acting. Meanwhile, the multi-talented former Annie is enjoying her summer job doing exactly what she loves most.



## YOUNG NEW JERSEY SINGER WINS ON STAR SEARCH 90

When Caryn Lyn Jones of Nutley, New Jersey was six years old, she tried to get onto the Star Search show; at nine she tried it again. But this year, the 11-year-old sixth grader finally made it onto the show as a Junior Vocalist.

Caryn's first show was aired on the weekend of September 9-10, and when she challenged another singer with her rendition of the 1961 Connie Francis hit "Where The Boys Are" she scored her first win with a 4,4,4,4 score, the highest possible on Star Search. As September has gone on, Caryn has continued singing other oldie classics each week and has continued to fight off challengers and keep winning on her way to the semifinals, which will be taped and aired soon.

Caryn played Molly in the Englewood, New Jersey production of Annie in early 1986 when she was 7; that was the production that was seen by all five of the Broadway Annies, Andrea McArdle, Shelly Bruce, Sarah Jessica Parker, Allison Smith, and Alyson Kirk at their reunion on March 1, 1986. Later on she played the role of Bessie in The House In The Woods in New York and at the Goodspeed Opera House in Connecticut. Since then the talented singer has made numerous appearances in various New York showcases, including Peter Sklar's showcase where she was a featured regular vocalist. Back some years ago she sang often in the Youngstars showcase at the "Something Different" club where she met a fellow performer there, then-unknown Debbie Gibson. The two singers have been good friends ever since, and Caryn's dream is to become a famous hit song maker like Debbie. In fact, Debbie has already been working in her garage recording studio on some demos of original material for Caryn. And many of us saw Caryn in Debbie's "Electric Youth" video.

Congratulations, Caryn, on your Star Search 90 wins, and lots of luck on your singing career!



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