

Ian McCabe brings star talent to Raton

By **TIM KELLER**
The Chronicle-News

It began with the Two of Hearts.

Six-year-old Ian McCabe was hauled along by his mom to an audition for his two high school-aged sisters in a community theater production of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, in their hometown of Nashville, Ind. To his surprise, "My mom forced me up on the little church stage. I didn't know any better and I read the stage directions aloud. They gave me the part of a card. There were two talking cards. I was the Two of Hearts - I had seven lines."

Now 22, McCabe says, "It was a defining moment in my life. Ever since that

experience, theater has played a major role in my life." Staying in Raton for his third summer season with the Kaleidoscope Players professional repertory theater, McCabe demonstrates the versatile talents he's developed by taking starring roles in four dissimilar plays at the Shuler Theater. Each play gets several performances, but there is one three-night stretch in which McCabe gets to play three very different characters back-to-back across three consecutive nights.

Local audiences have the opportunity this week to participate in the trifecta as McCabe stars Thursday night in *God's Man in Texas*, Friday night in *The 25th Annual Putnam*



Photos by Tim Keller

The many faces of Ian McCabe, from left, in "God's Man in Texas," in "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," in "Fools"...and, below, as himself.

County Spelling Bee, and Saturday night in Neil Simon's *Fools*. McCabe's characterizations are so thorough that it's sometimes difficult to recognize the same actor in the three roles.

"Doing summer stock is by far the most taxing thing an actor can do," he says. "It's a true test, but it's so much fun, and it just gets better every night." In addition to being cast to type as a young leading man in the romantic comedy, *Fools*, McCabe also gets to play Dr. Jeremiah Mears, a serious pastor in his 40s in the drama, *God's Man in Texas*, and a goofy middle-school student who sings and dances in the musical comedy, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling*

Bee. McCabe will also play the title character in *The Adventures of Dr. Doolittle*, *The Musical*, later this summer.

"Learning the technical aspects of singing and dancing in Putnam is just as difficult as learning the emotional arc of someone like Jeremiah Mears," he says. He's learned to commit fully to each role he takes.

"There's a total stranger you're going to portray. All you're given is a book, with words. You have to find a way to communicate that person and their life experience through those words." Though the summer season is demanding and exhausting, he clearly loves it.

"There's nothing more powerful than a connection with an audience. The first time I worked here at the Shuler, four years ago, they paid me - but I was getting all this applause! I felt like a thief taking the money, too."

The path to acting wasn't a straight line from the *Two of Hearts*. He got some acting experience in elementary school, but entered Brown County High School as a football player. In his sophomore year he helped build some sets for a drama production and soon found



himself pulled in. He acted in a pair of plays each year as a junior and senior.

McCabe took acting classes in high school and college, studying theater at Hanover College and Indiana University. "I knew I had to go from high school to college," he says, "but I really wanted to pursue professional theater." His rapidly-emerging talents brought him increasing opportunities, including 2009 stints with the Bloomington Playwrights Project ("Where Theatre Is Born") and the South Carolina Repertory Company. "I would have graduated last month," McCabe notes, "but college

has kind of drifted away in favor of doing more theatre."

He'll leave Raton for Chicago in August, carrying ambitious plans to work as a stand-up comic while pursuing sketch comedy, improvisation, and other acting opportunities. He'll audition in January for the conservatory at The Second City, Chicago's legendary comedy company.

"My goal is to support myself as an actor. To quote my character in *Fools*, 'That would make me the happiest man on the happiest planet in the universe.'" McCabe's biggest dream - and this is a man who pursues his dreams - is to join the cast of *Saturday Night Live*.

Watch him play three contrasting roles in three plays this Thursday, Friday, and Saturday night - or in any of this summer's Shuler performances - and you'll find yourself watching Saturday Night Live, waiting, sooner or later, to see Ian McCabe. Raton is fortunate to have him now, while he's on his way.

Details of the Shuler Theater's 2010 professional summer repertory theater season can be found at www.shulertheater.com, or (575) 445-4746.

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Salazar heralds launch of health care website

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ance plans across the country. Even better, HealthCare.gov's insurance options finder automatically sorts through this huge catalog of options to identify the ones that may be right for small businesses. In addition, the website provides extensive information about consumer rights in the health insurance market, tips for how to navigate the market's complexities, and how the Affordable Care Act can help citizens. The website also connects consumers to quality rankings for local hospitals as well as the latest tips for how to stay healthy.

"This website is unlike any government website you have ever seen or used before," said U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Chief

Technology Officer Todd Park. "It was developed with significant consumer input and is remarkably easy to navigate. This is despite the sheer volume of content it offers consumers: more than 500 pages of new content, thousands upon thousands of coverage choices, and literally billions of potential personal scenarios supported by our insurance options finder. And it's a site that will continue to grow with ongoing consumer feedback and as our health care system improves."

As the health care market transforms, so will www.HealthCare.gov. In October, 2010, price estimates for health insurance plans will be available online. In the months ahead, new information on preventing disease and illness and improving the

quality of healthcare for all Americans will also be posted. The website also includes a series of opportunities where users can indicate whether pages were helpful to them and how the site can be improved.

"People need to see what choices are offered, what options cost, and how coverage works in practice," said Karen Pollitz, Deputy Director for Consumer Support, Office of Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight. "Today HealthCare.gov takes an important first step in that direction. In the coming months and years, we will add pricing and plan performance information so that consumers can see and understand and make meaningful choices about their health coverage."

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Las Animas County Courthouse
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Or have forms mailed by calling:
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