

LIFESTYLES

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Craig Sailor/For The Dispatch

Tom Harris as Li'l Abner and Linda Hetzel as Marryin' Sam sing a duet during a rehearsal of the Young Performers' musical.

'Li'l Abner' brings cartoon to life Friday

By Kathy McKenzie
Dispatch Lifestyles Editor

GILROY — This Friday, the little town of Dogpatch — pop. 54 — will dance and sing its way out of some improbable dilemmas.

That's when *Li'l Abner*, a musical based on Al Capp's famed comic strip, will open at Gilroy High School theater. It's this season's offering as the Young Performers presentation, co-sponsored by South Valley Civic Theater and Gilroy School District.

Show dates are Friday and Saturday, plus March 6 and 7. Curtain time is 7 p.m.

The 54-member cast is all young people, from elementary to high school age. In addition, they represent every part of SVCT's service area — Morgan Hill, San Martin, Gilroy, Hollister and San Juan Bautista.

Producer Jan Espinosa praised the efforts of

volunteers, particularly parents, in putting the show together. "It's been great — everything has gone so smoothly," she said.

The show is being directed by San Jose resident Bob Fairless, with musical direction by Morgan Hill resident Carol Harris and choreography by Trish Murphy of Gilroy.

Morgan Hill resident Tom Harris will take the part of Li'l Abner, Dogpatch's most handsome hunk — but one who just isn't interested in women.

Daisy Mae (played by Monique Vasquez of Gilroy) is determined to catch Abner at an upcoming Sadie Hawkins Day, the one day of the year that women can propose to potential mates.

The government manages to get in the way of true romance when it decides that Dogpatch would be a perfect site for nuclear tests, and wants to move everyone out — prior to Sadie

Hawkins Day. The citizens of the hillbilly town must find a way to prove Dogpatch is important enough to be saved.

Also figuring in the plot is a sly politician, Gen. Bullmoose, played by Darin Carter of Gilroy; his secretary, Appassionata, played by Whitney Pintello of Hollister; another government crony, Evil Eye Fleagle, played by Sidney Espinosa of Gilroy; and Sen. Jack S. Phogbound, played by Craig Rubio of Gilroy.

Gilroy residents Sabrina Lloyd and Joel Gregor play Mammy and Pappy Yokum, the parents of Li'l Abner.

Songs from the musical include *If I Had My Druthers*, *Namely You*, *Jubilation T. Cornpone*, *Progress is the Root of All Evil* and *The Country's in the Very Best of Hands*.

Tickets are \$5 for adults and \$3 for students and seniors. Reservations are suggested, and may be made by calling 842-SHOW.