

RIVERSIDE THEATRE

iowa city's resident professional theatre

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A DOG'S LIFE OPENS SEPT. 11 AT RIVERSIDE THEATRE

August 28, 2009 – Iowa City, IA –

Meet a sweet-tempered pooch named Jack, the guy who adopts him, and his four-footed pals. Riverside Theatre is proud to open its 29th season as Iowa City's resident professional company with *A Dog's Life*, a musical comedy with a cast of four actors—three of whom play dog characters. Sean Grennan wrote the book and lyrics, Leah Okimoto wrote the music. John Kaufmann directs, with Jennifer McVay Phelan as music director. The show runs from September 11 – October 4. Tickets are available at the Riverside Theatre Box Office at (319) 338-7672 or online at www.riversidetheatre.org.

Originally produced by the American Heartland Theatre, this funny yet moving musical chronicles the friendship of Joel, played by Jim Van Valen, and Jack, played by David Tull. The story opens with Jack at the pound alongside two other mutts, the worldly-wise Big Dog, played by Steven Perkins, and excitable Little Dog, played by Mary Bryant. Perkins and Bryant also play an assortment of human roles, from a vet to the voice of an in-car assistance system.

When Jack and Joel meet, something clicks. The music and scenes that follow depict their life together, including all of its ups and downs. With Big Dog and Little Dog along for the ride, the dogs' perspectives are given generous—and hilarious—attention. Director John Kaufmann said he worked with the actors “to create a world where the human and dog worlds intersect. Though the dogs talk and sing in the play, it's not so far from reality—while we think we're training them, they're also training us: to relax, to play, to listen.”

A Dog's Life offers several “breeds” of music including hip-hop, traditional musical theatre, soul, Western, disco—there's even a canine torch song. “Each piece has an important function in the storytelling and many of the songs feature some fun word play,” said music director and musician Jenifer McVay Phelan. “The concept of singing dogs might seem strange, but anyone who's had a pet will relate to the communication and unconditional love that is celebrated in this story.”

A Dog's Life also features scenography by Scott Olinger, costumes by Renee M. Bell and sound design by Don Schneider. The play is sponsored in part by New Pioneer Food Co-Op.

Tickets range from \$12-\$28 with a \$12 student rush 20 minutes before the performance. Tickets can be ordered through the Riverside Theatre Box Office at 213 N. Gilbert St., (319) 338-7672 or online at www.riversidetheatre.org.

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Performance calendar:

Friday, September 11 at 7:30 pm

Saturday, September 12 at 7:30 pm

Sunday, September 13 at 2:00 pm—Special event post performance: Talkback Sunday

Thursday, September 17 at 7:30 pm

Friday, September 18 at 7:30 pm

Saturday, September 19 at 7:30 pm

Sunday, September 20 at 2:00 pm

Thursday, September 24 at 7:30 pm

Friday, September 25 at 7:30 pm

Saturday, September 26 at 7:30 pm

Sunday, September 27 at 2:00 pm

Thursday, October 1 at 7:30 pm

Friday, October 2 at 7:30 pm

Saturday, October 3 at 7:30 pm

Sunday, October 4 at 2:00 pm