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PECOS BILL, SLUE FOOT SUE AND THE WING-DANG-DOO!

Pecos Bill, Slue Foot Sue and the Wing-Dang-Doo!

A musical comedy about equal rights
book by Art Zapel
music and lyrics
by Bill Francoeur



Meriwether Publishing Ltd.

Contemporary Drama Service

PO Box 7710 • Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7710

CAST OF CHARACTERS

COWBOY NARRATORS 1, 3, 4

All wear customary cowboy garb —
Levis, plaid shirts, bandannas and Stetson hats.

COWGIRL NARRATORS 2, 4, 3

Customary cowgirl garb — fringed skirts and boots.
These performers might also double as the Saloon Girls.

SALOON DANCING GIRLS

Four, if available. They wear typical flouncy short skirts and colorful midriff tops. Ribbons in their hair and on their dancing shoes. They may also double as Cowgirl Narrators.

PECOS BILL

A folklore hero. Dresses in Levis, with big red bandanna around his neck and wears a leather vest and cowboy boots. He's honest, direct and very smitten with Slue Foot Sue. He's everyone's choice to run for Senate, a position he did not seek.

SLUE FOOT SUE

A folklore heroine associated with Pecos Bill.
Dressed in a cowgirl skirt with a blue bandanna. She's a no-nonsense cowgirl afraid of no one, not even Pecos Bill, who she loves to keep dangling as long as she can.

LEMUEL P. GILLYNAPPER

A greedy, power-hungry, no good politician.
Dressed in dark business clothes with a string tie.
He's the town mayor, state marshal, county commissioner and the Indian Agent. Now he wants to run for the Senate, and he will do almost anything to get there.

SISTER CRAWFISH

The very huge acting chairman of the Sisters of the Suffering Suffragettes. Brash, outspoken and loud. Any wild outfit will do.

SISTER NELLIE UPRIGHT

She's the true chairman of the Sisters and the brains of the organization. She's educated, ingenious, and keeps Sister Crawfish under control. Well dressed in period outfit.

SISTER POLLY FINK

Second cousin of folklore hero Mike. Short. Not educated. Tough and dedicated to the cause. Dressed in Levis and vest.

SISTER REALITY MCCOY

A housewife in Round Bend Corners
but very committed to the work of equal rights for women.
Dressed proper for a housewife role.

SISTER SLAPPY

A sign painter. Wears a paint-covered apron.

BARTENDER

In shirtsleeves with garters on arms.
A long handlebar moustache. Loyal to his boss.

SHERIFF

Cowboy gear, but he wears a coat with his sheriff's badge and gun belt. Big voice and a big moustache, bushy brows.
He's as "sleazy" as Gillynapper.

NELLIE CORNSTARCH

An attractive but helpless dancing girl in her dancing costume.

SALOON COWBOY 1

Same character as the Cowboy Narrator #1 — double role.

SALOON COWBOY 2

Same character as the Cowboy Narrator #2 — double role.

SALOON COWBOY 3

Same character as the Cowboy Narrator #3 — double role.

FARMER

Overalls and checkered shirt. Wears straw hat.

INDIAN BRAVE 1

Breechclout, belt with scalping knife,
long black hair (wig) with feathers.

INDIAN BRAVE 2

(Non-speaking role) Same type of Indian dress as above.

INDIAN CHIEF

Full headdress if possible. Fringed buckskin jacket.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The Cast

The storyline of the show allows for a large cast of performers, allowing many people with a variety of talents to participate. There are roles for leading characters, short walk-on parts, singers, dancers, and crowd extras. Many parts can be doubled if necessary. The dance group should be no more than six dancers to keep rehearsals manageable. With proper makeup and costuming, all roles could be performed by teens. Pecos Bill and Slue Foot Sue need to be capable of singing solos. There are some solo lines from the Saloon Girls, but they are short. Gillynapper has a few solos, but they too are relatively short. Sisters Upright and Crawfish both have key solos in the song “It’s Simply a Matter of Politics.” Sister Fink’s solo is short. All singing Sisters need to be capable soloists.

Music and Sound Effects

A CD or cassette tape of the show’s music is available from the publisher. The instrumental portion of this rehearsal performance recording may be used “as is” or you may choose to “sweeten” the sound with the addition of live instruments using the music from the Piano/Conductor score.

The recorded professional performers may be used in rehearsals by the student performers to learn the timing and style needed when they perform with the instrumental track. Because the music at the end of the show is mostly continuous, it is important that the student performers learn the timing to minimize any cuing problems. Cap guns may be used when Gillynapper and Pecos Bill shoot their guns.

Comedy Style

The humor of this script comes largely from the situations and the characterization. This is not a show of funny one-liners but a comedy of action. Everything must move briskly along with everyone picking up their cues and stopping only briefly for laughs. Speak into laughs before they die. If you must repeat the line to be heard, OK, but don’t wait too long after the laugh. Keep the audience on edge, don’t give them a moment’s respite or the show will lose momentum.

Costumes

Individual costumes are suggested in the cast of characters list. The style of the costumes for all players should suggest Texas in the 1870s.

Rehearsals

The singers and dancers can rehearse their parts separately to save time and confusion until the time for blocking and the tech rehearsals.

Music Cues

All musical selections are numbered in the script, the Piano/Conductor score, and the Vocal score. These numbers correspond to cue numbers listed on the cassette recording and the CD labels. The cassette recording has the demonstration professional performers' presentation of the songs on one side of the cassette tape and the identical instrumental version on the opposite side. The performers may rehearse with the professional singers to determine pace and style then sing to the instrumental version.

The CD contains only the instrumental version for convenient cuing by number. The professional singers' version is not on the CD for want of space.

Lighting

Standard stage lighting will suffice but two spotlights are needed in several scenes as indicated in the script.

Stage Settings

After the opening prologue, the curtain opens on Scene One. The Saloon Girls ensemble enters Stage Right and melds with the Cowboy and Cowgirl Narrators who also become singers. They may perform Center Stage in front of the two or more self-supporting flats suggesting a Texas outdoor scene (cactus, mountains, and rocks).

Slue Foot Sue, after her entrance from the back of the theater, also performs Center Stage in front of the flats.

Scene Two is a barroom with a small bar, tables with cowboys, and two door frames: one Stage Right and the other Stage Left

could be a swinging barroom door. The bar, tables, chairs, and simple props can be put in place quickly when the self-supporting flats are removed at the end of Scene One.

Scene Three may be performed in front of a generic Texas scene backdrop with the school desks, tables, and chairs in front of it. When Gillynapper and Pecos Bill step forward to sing “The Good, the Bad, and the Dead,” the curtain closes behind them long enough to remove the school desks and tables. It reopens when Pecos Bill sings about the great land of Texas. The setting for this is the same Texas scene backdrop with extra flats or rocks as needed to create an outdoor feeling.

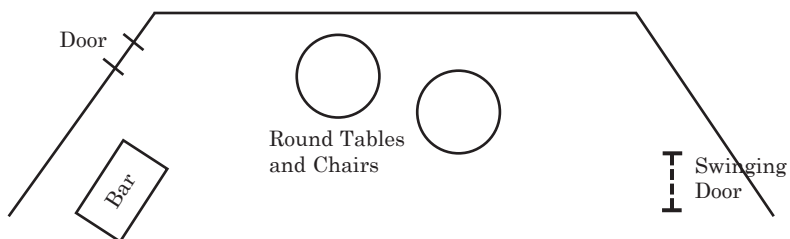
Act Two, Scene One opens with the schoolroom setting used before in Act One.

Act Two, Scene Two is the same general outdoor scene used before, but a platform rise for the campaigners is added along with campaign signs, free food, and drinks as props.

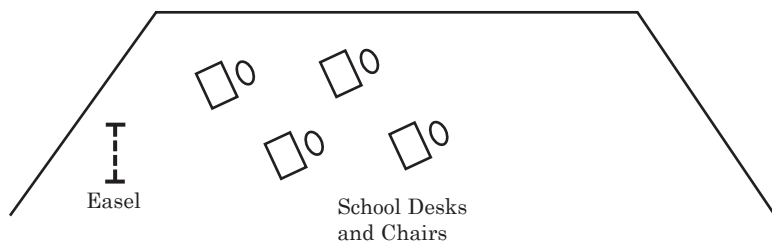
Act Two, Scene Three is the barroom again with the same bar, tables, and crowd. This setting remains until the end of the show.

STAGE SETTINGS
Three settings used in both acts

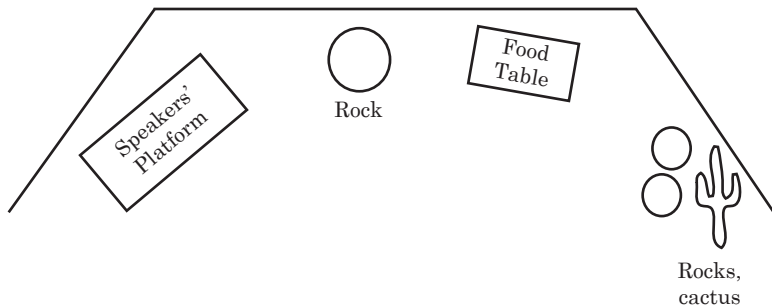
Setting #1 — Barroom



Setting #2 — School



Setting #3 — Outdoor



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1 **PROLOGUE:** (*MUSIC CUE #1*)

2
3 **ACT ONE**

4
5 (*A spotlight comes on directing attention to COWBOY and*
6 *COWGIRL NARRATORS as they enter from Stage Right and*
7 *Stage Left in front of the curtain.*)

8 **COWBOY NARRATOR 1:** A few things you should know about
9 Pecos Bill. He warn't born here in Texas. Nope. He was
10 just dropped off here, you could say. It happened like
11 this. When he was only a year old he fell out of the family
12 Conestoga wagon as it was crossin' the Pecos River.

13 **COWGIRL NARRATOR 2:** He had sixteen brothers and sisters,
14 so it wasn't until four or five weeks later that his maw and
15 paw noticed he was missing. They were sorry, o'course,
16 but they figured it was too late to go back.

17 **COWBOY NARRATOR 3:** Fortunately a momma coyote
18 found the baby critter. She thought Bill was one of the
19 pups of her new litter an' she took care of him.

20 **COWGIRL NARRATOR 4:** So it was that li'l Bill grewed up
21 with the coyotes, larned their language and sat on
22 hilltops an' howled at night. (*PECOS BILL howls from Off-*
23 *Stage.*)

24 **COWBOY NARRATOR 1:** When he was ten years old a
25 cowboy found him.

26 **COWGIRL NARRATOR 3:** The cowboy asked him, "Whatcha'
27 doin' running around naked, sonny boy?"

28 **COWBOY NARRATOR 4:** "Because I'm a coyote. I got fleas
29 and I howl at night."

30 **COWBOY NARRATOR 1:** "That don't mean nothin'," the
31 cowboy said. "All Texans got fleas and howl at night.
32 Tell me, sonny, if you're a coyote where's your tail?"

33 **COWGIRL NARRATOR 2:** Li'l Bill turned around and
34 looked. First time he noticed he had no tail. "Glory be!"
35 he said. Well, he knowed right then he warn't no varmit.

1 *(A shout)* It's Pecos Bill!
 2 **PECOS BILL:** *(He enters from Stage Left, shouts.)* Ya-hoo!
 3 *(Sings.)*
 4 I'm Pecos Bill, a legendary cowboy,
 5 The great state of Texas is my home.
 6 I'm Pecos Bill a cowboy's cowboy,
 7 Blazin' a trail wherever do I roam.
 8
 9 I've hung pickers an' brambles all over the trees,
 10 Mixed up the dust with a-jiggers 'n' fleas,
 11 Scattered tarantulas all over the roads,
 12 Put thorns on the cactus an' horns on the toads!
 13
 14 **ENSEMBLE:** Pecos Bill was the meanest brand of cowboy,
 15 On'ry as a prairie rattlesnake!
 16 **PECOS BILL:** *(Proud; a shout)* That's me!
 17 **ENSEMBLE:** Pecos Bill was a bronc bustin' cowboy,
 18 There weren't no horse that Pecos couldn't break!
 19
 20 **PECOS BILL:** *(A shout)* Yesiree! *(Sings.)*
 21 I lengthened the horns of the Texas steer,
 22 Added an inch to the jack rabbit's ear,
 23 Quickened the buck of the bronco steed,
 24 An' poisoned the feet of the centipede!
 25
 26 *(The following two stanzas are sung as a duet.)*
 27 **ENSEMBLE ONE:** Oh, Pecos! Oh, Pecos!
 28 Was the toughest hombre in the west!
 29 Oh, Pecos! Oh, Pecos!
 30 Pecos Bill, he was the best!
 31 **ENSEMBLE TWO:** Pecos Bill was a rough 'n' rowdy cowboy,
 32 The roughest, toughest hombre in the west.
 33 Oh, Pecos Bill was a straight shootin' cowboy.
 34 Texans would say he was the best!
 35 **PECOS BILL:** *(A shout)* That's me!

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