



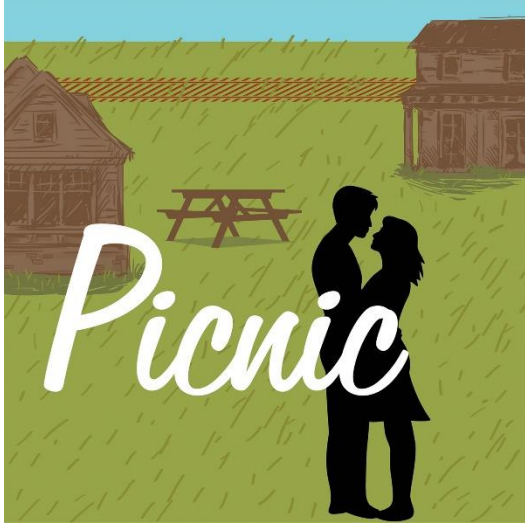
Providence Players
OF FAIRFAX

Providence Players of Fairfax Audition information

Picnic

By William Inge

Directed by Michael Donahue



On a sweltering Labor Day morning in a small Kansas town, the women of a quiet neighborhood on the wrong side of the tracks are preparing for the annual picnic. Their lives are disrupted when Hal Carter, a muscular and charming young drifter, hops off the freight train, and heads straight for Mrs. Potts' hospitable home. Hearts are broken and lives are changed, as Hal's lively, dangerous, masculine energy wakes up the sleepy community. William Inge's Pulitzer Prize winning drama explores themes of sexuality, repression, restlessness, and rites of passage. *Picnic* won the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award for Best Play in 1953.

Providence Players of Fairfax is:

- A non-profit community theater troupe. All participation is on a volunteer basis. No members of the cast or crew are compensated.
- A membership organization. Membership is not required to audition. If cast, all actors (and in fact, all volunteers), are required to become members of Providence Players of Fairfax (\$25 per individual or \$60 per family – three or more) for the season (if not already a member).

Casting Announcement

Providence Players is casting 11 roles (7 Women and 4 Men). No roles are precast, and all roles are open. All backgrounds, ages, ethnicities welcome and encouraged to audition! All welcome!

Audition Dates

6:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 9

6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 10

Callbacks, if needed: 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 17

PLEASE RSVP to info@providenceplayers.org with the date you plan to attend.

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Actors who audition one night may be asked to come back a second night, if available. You are not required to be available multiple evenings to be considered. The Director reserves the right to extend the audition period pending initial audition response.

Audition Location

**The James Lee Community Center
2855 Annandale Road
Falls Church, VA 22042**

Auditions will be held in two locations at the Center. Please come into the front entrance of the community center and sign in at counter. Staff can point you in the right direction and signs will be posted.

Performance Dates and Times

Preview: March 19, 2020; 7:00 pm Curtain
Evening Performances: Thurs. Fri. Sat.; March 20 – April 4, 7:30 pm Curtain
Matinees: Sundays, March 22 & 29, 2:00 pm

About the Director: Michael Donahue

Michael Donahue (Director) is a current PPF board member and has been actively directing and acting with PPF since 2009. An award-winning director, Michael directed *August: Osage County* in last year's season as well as productions of *Front Page*, *Calendar Girls* and *House of Blue Leaves*. Michael has an MFA in Theater Directing and was Artistic Director for Playhouse on the Square's Professional Theatre for Youth in Memphis, TN and Associate Artistic Director for HITT Productions.

From the Director, Michael Donahue

The action of *Picnic* on the page appears to show characters going about their everyday small town lives, but underneath is a restless longing to experience life outside of the everyday. However, it is also happy world with lots of humor and playfulness. The play is charged by the fact that the characters' predictable lives are disrupted by the arrival of Hal who in spite of his forced stories of athletic prowess suffers from a similar restless longing to find himself and a place to belong. Hal's arrival disrupts all of the characters' exterior walls and opens up their hidden vulnerabilities that then drives the actions within the 24 hours of Labor Day.

For Inge, Labor Day signifies the end of youth and the angst transition into maturity.

REHEARSALS: Download a copy of the Theater Access Schedule for this show. This is NOT the specific rehearsal schedule (which will be supplied by Mike), but it will give you an idea for the commitment you are making – rehearsal space and performance – and how to identify conflicts.

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A copy of the preliminary stage rehearsal schedule is included with this announcement and will be available online and at auditions. In addition to the stage rehearsal schedule, additional full cast readings of the play and some selected scene study and character work will be scheduled based on actor availability prior to or in addition to the stage schedule. The schedule for these will be finalized a week or two after auditions. Unless indicated otherwise, all rehearsals will happen at the James Lee Community Center. Rehearsals will be held in the evenings roughly from 6:30/6:45 to 9:45pm. and on Saturdays and Sundays as indicated.

Please come to auditions prepared to list any availability conflicts with rehearsal or the performance schedule. Space is provided on the audition form for this purpose.

Female Characters (7)

Notes on character ages: While the ages of characters are described in the script the director may cast outside of those ages if it works for the overall casting.

Flo Owens (age 40 – 50) - Flo is a single mother raising two daughters, Madge and Millie. She rents out one of her rooms to make ends meet. As a young woman she fell in love with a boy similar to Hal, good looking with a charming wild side. She is very protective of her girls based upon each of her girls' strengths and weaknesses. Flo is keen on encouraging Madge and Alan's relationship as Madge is beautiful but not smart enough to make it on her own. Flo has encouraged Millie's desire to move away to study and see the world. In a way for Flo, Madge is Flo in the past and wants to make sure that Madge does not repeat her mistakes and Millie represents the youth and opportunities that she gave up in her youth.

Madge Owens (age 18) - Madge and Hal share many similarities that inform much of their actions. Madge is recognized only for her extreme beauty. Men either put her on a pedestal (such as Alan) or look at her as a trophy to be captured. Hal is the only one that actually matches her in both their shared loneliness and longing as well as mutual attraction. Though Madge is barely out of high school her mother Flo already is having her do many of the household duties to teach her while allowing Millie to still be a youth.

Millie Owens (age 16) - Sixteen-year-old younger sister of beautiful Madge. All Millie has ever heard was "Madge, Madge, Madge." Millie hides behind her books, studies and fantasizes about traveling and writing novels that would shock all those around her. Millie is treated by the town boys more like a boy to be bullied. The arrival of Hal and the fact that she will be going with him to the picnic, awakens the fact that she is a woman and can find a man attractive and all of the emotions and nervous activities that go along with those feelings.

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Rosemary Sydney (age 39 - 45) - Rosemary is one of the local school teachers. She teaches typing and short hand. She is the boarder at the Owens' house. Rosemary has constructed a strong veneer of haughty propriety, is always the best dressed, and portrays a feigned annoyance of the masculine sex. She is the voice of a world in which men are not needed. With the arrival of Hal that façade falls away as we come to understand that Rosemary longs for both physical and emotional companionship. When she realizes that she has let the façade falls she strikes out to protect her emotional self.

Helen Potts (age 50 - 60) - Helen, much like Flo and Rosemary, had a young love and married but her authoritarian mother had the marriage annulled. As part of her protection from the town's pity or judgement on being such a mature and single woman, Helen kept her young husband's name and thus she is Mrs. Potts. She now is the care taker of her mother who spends much of her time disrupting Helen's day through shouted demands. Helen misses the presence of a man in her life and also embraces any type of change to her everyday life vs trying to protect it. Helen loves to live vicariously through Flo's young daughters, reveling in each of their accomplishments and potential adventures, be it love for Madge or travel for Millie.

Irma Kronkite (age 30s) - Fellow school teacher friend of Rosemary's, spent the summer in New York City at the Teacher's College. Made a bet with a male colleague and though she lost, he wound up having to take her to the famous Stork Club.

Christine Schoenwalder (age 20s – 30s) - New to town, befriended by Irma and will be a new teacher. She loves to hear about Irma's adventures. She is the younger of the three teachers.

Male Characters (4)

Hal Carter (age 20s) - Hal, similar to Madge, has only been identified by his good looks and athletic ability. He comes from poverty and a broken, abusive home. He gets an athletic scholarship to the same school as Alan. He is given token acceptance to a fraternity as they like to have star athletes to boost their stature. Hal was basically never taught how to engage in society, he never had to bother about school since he was a small-town hero and never experienced anything beyond his small, rough town. Hal's defense mechanism when he is insecure is to show off or brag about his athletic prowess. He and Alan wound up room mates for awhile and both men seem to complete the other.

Alan Seymour (age 20s) - Son of the top business man in town. Alan is being groomed to take over the successful family business. He has been "courting" Madge though he seems to be more enamored of her beauty as something that reflects on him versus truly having feelings based on common desires and compatible personalities. He is sincere and means well but speaks to Madge as if she is work of art to be preserved and kept in a frame vs. a visceral relationship. Alan is just as enamored of Hal,

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admiring his masculine equivalent of Madge. Alan is also a business man and realist when it comes to setting Hal's expectations.

Howard Bevans (age 40s) - Established bachelor and owner of a dime store. Prior to the arrival of Hal, Howard and Rosemary had an easy relationship with no pressure. Rosemary has always put out the fact that she does not need or desire a man, so Howard has female companionship without any strings attached. But once Hal arrives Rosemary's longing and desire to have permanent companionship is opened up like Pandora's box. However, like the other characters in *Picnic*, Howard also has his own insecurities in terms of his ability to take care of Rosemary and how that impacts his prior life of living alone.

Bomber – (age late teens – early 20s) Bomber represents the young men of the town. He delivers newspapers, is voyeuristic with Madge and a jerk with Millie.

Additional Audition Information/Instructions:

- **HOW WE WORK:** Most Providence auditions have actors up and down to read multiple times in multiple combinations and scenes. Most actors find this fun. As space allows, you will be able to watch the auditions. You may be asked to go into the hallway with audition partners and work a bit on a scene. We will do our best to get you up multiple times reading for parts you are interested in. You will also be asked to read for other parts you may not be auditioning for. The Providence Players strives to make our productions open to interested and engaged actors & actresses, regardless of their level of experience. We try and make our auditions as relaxing and fun as possible.
- **AUDITION PROCESS & SIDES:** Auditions will consist of readings from the script. No monologue required. Sides for the audition process will be supplied at auditions.
- **AUDITION FORM:** Please ALSO COMPLETE the attached Providence Audition Form and bring it with you to the audition. Resumes and headshots will be accepted but are not required. We may ask to take a picture of you, but this is for internal use only and will not be shared.

We look forward to seeing you at Auditions!