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GEN. BINGO

by

Jonathan M. Zaley and Mary A. Zaley

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES

This play is interactive with the audience from the moment they walk through the front doors into the facility. If possible, house staff (ushers, concessionaires, etc.) should be dressed in military uniforms or some fashion thereof to add to the atmosphere.

The audience will be playing bingo as part of the show just prior to intermission, for a chance to win a frozen turkey. Show programs with bingo cards inserted within should be given to each audience member (one program per person) upon entering the room.

There are great PR opportunities with this show to generate press coverage:

FOOD PANTRY DRIVE: Since many bingo regulars bring good luck charms to their bingo games, encourage ticket buyers to bring in a box of *Lucky Charms*® cereal for an extra bingo card that gives them an extra chance to win the frozen turkey. (For every box of *Lucky Charms*® they bring in, give them an additional card...the more boxes of cereal, the more cards they get.) All boxes of *Lucky Charms*® collected will then be donated to the local food pantry.

COLOR GUARD: Local VFW or American Legion members should be invited to the show in exchange for bringing in the colors (flags) at the start of the show. This makes a great local PR story!

4TH OF JULY CELEBRATIONS: This show should be sold to the local festivals held during the Independence Day holiday. Many of these festivals have Bingo Tents in conjunction with the amusement rides and entertainment. It is a perfect tie-in with this patriotic holiday. The Food Pantry Drive mentioned above could also be tied into this festival show!

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Audience participation games will be done throughout the show. The following items will need to be prepared prior to the audience arrival:

GENERAL BINGO SONG: The room should be divided into 5 sections and 5-1/2" X 8-1/2" signs with the letters in the word 'BINGO' should be placed on each table (one sign per person at each table...all people at same table having same letter). The majority of the room should be divided among 'B,' 'I,' 'N,' and 'G.' The "O" signs should be placed at one single table (with the smallest number of people) furthest from the stage, thus giving Major Payne "the table to pick on" during this routine.

FLAG BINGO: Payne will need a poster board size layout of a bingo card with appropriate squares blocked in to demonstrate to the audience how this version of bingo is played.

MILITARY MANEUVERS: Items Payne will need for this game include:

- Foam hopscotch game already assembled and kept backstage until needed.
- Three (3) sets of plastic toy western pistols and holsters in an Army green duffel bag held backstage until needed.
- Three (3) women's wigs (preferably one of each, blonde, brunette and redhead) in an Army Green duffel bag held backstage until needed

The audience participation parts of this show are what make it a lot of fun...both for the audience as well as the cast. Have fun performing it...feel free to adlib and improvise with your audience because you never know what will happen from performance to performance.

Thanks for performing my play! Have fun!

Jon Zaley

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Gen. Bingo

(That's "General Bingo" for all you civilians out there!)

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The Cast

MAJOR DARREN AARON PAYNE: *Vietnam Veteran, newly-appointed lodge president of his local VFW, proud American, not as slim and in shape as he used to be in his military days, and tends to run the lodge as if he were still in the army.*

DOROTHY 'DOT' WHITE: *Elderly, patriotic, God-fearing Catholic woman who is experienced in life and likes to meddle in other peoples' business. Stubborn and set in her ways, she cannot relate to liberal, 'free-for-all' thinking and the lack of pride in our country that is seen in younger generations, including her daughter, Ruthie.*

RUTHIE WHITE: *Today's younger generation kind of woman with live-in boyfriend, all the latest tech gadgets, just trying to find her place in society. Daughter to Dot, who loves and respects her mother, but doesn't understand her old-fashioned ways and can't stand her meddling in her life. Tries to remedy this by spending quality time with her mother, such as participating in Dot's favorite past time, bingo.*

SETTING: *Present time. Location should be made to feel as if the audience is attending their local VFW hall for Wednesday night bingo. Entrance way into hall has signs posted, such as:*

"No one under 18 admitted"

"25¢ per Bingo Card/5 for \$1.00"

"Jackpot Bingo Wins \$500"

Main room is set up with long rows of rectangular folding banquet tables, covered with paper tablecloths.

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On front stage is a long rectangular table covered with paper tablecloth where cast will perform.

A side stage is also in place where bingo caller table is set up with bingo ball cage and master bingo card. A large numbered BINGO board is behind this table. An American flag on a pole is off to the side behind the table with other veteran flags (Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, POW, state flag).

(UPON AUDIENCE ARRIVAL: MAJOR PAYNE, dressed in U.S. Army (Vietnam War) dress uniform, is in the lobby handing out bingo cards and striking up improv conversations with the audience as they arrive.)

PAYNE: Did you do your calisthenics today, mister? I do 500 sit-ups every day at 0:600. Keeps me in tip-top shape. Can't you tell? *(slaps his belly)*

Tuck in that shirt and straighten those pants. We run a tight lodge around here, soldier!

(giving the evil eye)

Forgot your lodge pin today, eh? Drop and give me 20!

(to someone entering in sneakers)

Put a spit shine on those shoes, mister! This isn't high school ROTC! Show some pride!

Stand up straight! Stick out that chest! Suck in that gut! Now do it all at the same time!

(to an attractive woman entering)

Ma'am, you look awfully familiar. Didn't I see you perform in a USO show with Bob Hope? You were the one in the short skirt, weren't you?

What are you smiling for? Wipe that grin off your face! You shouldn't be having any fun yet! All the fun's in there *(pointing to main room)*

End of FreeView—Now buy the entire play!

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