

WILBUR PEPPY'S BURGER QUEST

By Jon Jory

Copyright © MMXVII by Jon Jory, All rights reserved.
ISBN: 978-1-61588-416-2

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

RIGHTS RESERVED: All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS: All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Heuer Publishing LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Heuer Publishing LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Heuer Publishing LLC. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Heuer Publishing LLC.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

AUTHOR CREDIT: All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this Work must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this Work. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the Work. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this Work is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice: ***Produced by special arrangement with Heuer Publishing LLC.***

COPYING: Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Heuer Publishing LLC.

HEUER PUBLISHING LLC
P.O. BOX 248 • CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 52406
TOLL FREE (800) 950-7529 • FAX (319) 368-8011

WILBUR PEPPY'S BURGER QUEST

By Jon Jory

SYNOPSIS: Wilbur Peppy is back from fighting in the War and ready to serve the ONE thing every soldier craved in the trenches... vegetables! With the burger craze hitting the U.S., Wilbur (with the help of his wife, Rosie the Riveter) decides to open a burger restaurant for broccoli burgers! As you can expect broccoli burgers can't hold their pickles to -- The Cheese Burger. Wilbur sets out on a quest to find his perfect burger, meeting gurus, and learning a few lessons along the way. Written with fast paced, comedic sitcom style dialogue complete with a "greek chorus", this new one-act play from Jon Jory is not to be missed!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(9-12 females, 3-5 males, 0-1 either, extras)

ROSIE (f).....	(69 lines)
WILBUR (m).....	(122 lines)
TOINETTE (f).....	(11 lines)
MOM (f).....	(1 line)
DAD (m).....	(1 Line)
LOUIE (m).....	(2 lines)
LYDIA (f).....	(1 line)
LIONEL (m).....	(1 line)
JONELLE (f).....	(28 lines)
BALDY (m).....	(24 lines)
MR./MRS. NICKEL (m/f).....	(9 lines)
MRS. KREBS (f).....	(11 lines)
THE SISTERS: Rosie's sisters.	
RITA (f).....	(6 lines)
RHONDA (f).....	(2 lines)
ROCHELLE (f).....	(6 lines)
RACHEL (f).....	(6 lines)
RUBY (f).....	(12 lines)
ROBIN (f).....	(7 lines)
CHORUS (m/f).....	Any number. (30 lines)

DOUBLING POSSIBILITIES

2 FEMALES CAN PLAY: Toinette, Mom, Lydia, Jonelle, and Mrs. Krebs

2 MALES CAN PLAY: Dad, Louie, Lionel, Baldy, and Mr. Nickel

COSTUMES

CHORUS: Happy Snappy Peppy Burger Employee Uniform

SISTERS: Broccoli Burger Serving outfits

WILBUR: Suit, tie and shiny shoes; PJs, dark glasses

JONELLE: Red robe, yellow cord

PROPS

- 1 yellow kitchen table
- 2 yellow chairs
- 3 small tables
- 6 chairs
- Overstuffed roll chair
- Step ladder
- Lawn chair
- TV
- 2 burgers
- Two canes
- Two crutches

SPECIAL EFFECTS

- gong

AT START: *The CHORUS, employees of the Happy Snappy Peppy Burger chain, stands before us in a unit. They are, of course, in uniform. Above them is the Happy Snappy Peppy Burger sign in bright colors. Other than that, the stage is bare though perhaps painted a bright color.*

CHORUS: Oh happy, snappy, peppy burger
Burger we adore
We welcome Peppy patrons
Into our snappy store

TOINETTE: *(Steps forward from CHORUS.)* Glad to meetcha, pleased to greet ya! I'm Toinette, your better burger guide here at Happy, Snappy, Peppy Burger. Once you know our story, you'll appreciate the glory of chomping on a burger in our snappy peppy store. Back in 1948, Wilbur Peppy came back from the Second World War, a decorated veteran with a big idea.

WILBUR PEPPY enters in a suit and tie with shiny shoes. He speaks out toward the audience.

WILBUR: Mr. Nickel, I am Wilbur Peppy, back from the Great War. I know you are the biggest banker in our town. A man with big ideas and a big heart. I ask you, Mr. Nickel, to give me one minute and twenty- seven seconds of your very, very important time.

MR. NICKEL: *(Voice over.)* Well son, I have an important meeting with a fella who has developed something called a computer in his garage, but I would rather give one of our heroic veterans a listen, than waste my time with harebrained scientific fellas. What's on your mind, Private First Class Peppy?

Music plays.

CHORUS: And Private First Class Wilbur Peppy said:

WILBUR: Me and the guys in the Wild Partridge brigade, at night in our foxholes, up to our ankles in water, we used to dream of vegetables. Green beans, asparagus, tomatoes—It's all we thought about.

MR. NICKEL: No burgers?

WILBUR: Sometimes. But now that we're back in the old US of A that McDonalds fella seems to have all that sewn up. But my idea is we take the burger idea, but we take out the burger.

MR. NICKEL: You do what?

WILBUR: Well, I know it's a stretch, Mr. Nickel, sir, but, see, we keep the bun...

MR. NICKEL: You keep the bun.

WILBUR: Yes, sir. We keep the bun, we keep the mayo, we keep the mustard, but we take out the burger and put in broccoli.

MR. NICKEL: You what?

WILBUR: Yes, sir, all us GI's figure everybody is just crazy to get the broccoli burger and munch down on its crunchy goodness. We figure we'll pass those burger places like they were standing still.

CHORUS: I don't know, Wilbur.

WILBUR: I just need a little start up loan, Mr. Nickel.

MR. NICKEL: I don't know, Wilbur.

CHORUS: He doesn't know, Wilbur.

MR. NICKEL: Only way my kids will eat broccoli is if they have to, to get dessert.

WILBUR: But it's on a bun, sir and it's crunchy, munchy.

MR. NICKEL: I'm going to take a pass, Wilbur. Even though it's 1945, I think you're ahead of your time.

WILBUR: But, Mr. Nickel...

MR. NICKEL: Good day, Wilbur.

CHORUS: So Wilbur went home to his wife, Rosie the Riveter who worked down on the steel line. Rosie was a good egg.

Members of the CHORUS rush out a little yellow kitchen table and two bright yellow chairs. ROSIE enters, WILBUR enters. He kisses ROSIE on the cheek.

WILBUR: Evening, Rosie.

ROSIE kisses WILBUR on the cheek.

ROSIE: Evening, Wilbur. I put in twenty-two thousand one hundred and sixty-two rivets today and only one fell out.

WILBUR: You are Rosie the Riveter for sure.

ROSIE: Oh my goodness, I plumb forgot, how did the bank go?

WILBUR: They said no, Rosie.

ROSIE: Well Wilbur, that's just terrible.

WILBUR: Kinda terrible.

CHORUS: Pretty darn terrible.

ROSIE: Now don't get down in the dumps, Wilbur.

WILBUR: It did hurt my feelings.

ROSIE: I know, we'll sell our little cottage with the pink climbing roses and the white picket fence.

WILBUR: But...

ROSIE: No "buts", Wilbur Peppy, you are a man with a broccoli burger vision and I, Rosie the Riveter, your riveting wife will help you build a fast food broccoli hut with my six sisters.

Each SISTER appears when mentioned in broccoli burger serving outfits as they are named.

CHORUS: Rachel, Rita, Ruby, Rhonda, Rochelle, Robin.

ROSIE: And me, Rosie. We will turn America into a broccoli chomping paradise.

ALL SISTERS: Broccoli forever!

CHORUS: And Rosie, as per usual, did just what she said.

CHORUS sets up three small tables, each with two chairs. WILBUR stands looking off. ROSIE and her sisters stand around waiting.

RITA: What time is it, Ruby?

RUBY: 1:30

RHONDA: And the door to the store has never opened.

ROSIE: A grand opening with no opening.

ROCHELLE: We opened at 8 am. It's the customers who haven't opened.

ROBIN: Poor Wilbur.

CHORUS: Poor Wilbur!

RACHEL: He's out there lookin' down an empty street.

RUBY: The mortuary across the road had more business.

ROSIE: This just isn't fair. Broccoli burgers are a big idea. We all had one for lunch. They were good, right?

RITA: Not bad.

RHONDA: Not terrible.

RUBY: They were all right.

ROCHELLE: I've had worse.

RACHEL: Better than a Brussels sprouts burger.

ROBIN: It was crunchy.

ROSIE: This is the best you can say about our life's work?

MRS. KREBS enters.

MRS. KREBS: You open?

ALL SISTERS: We are open!

ROBIN: Lemme take your coat.

ROCHELLE: Lemme take your bag.

RUBY: Sit right here.

RACHEL: Take a look at the menu.

RITA: Lemme get you a glass of water.

ALL: Welcome to the broccoli burger!

MRS. KREBS: You're kidding, right?

ROSIE: Kidding how?

MRS. KREBS: I figure this whole thing is a joke.

ROSIE: You think this is a joke?

MRS. KREBS: My dear young lady, only one in eight hundred Americans ever eat broccoli. It's America's twenty-third favorite vegetable. It's even behind the elephant foot yam.

CHORUS: Oh-oh.

ROSIE: My husband loves broccoli.

MRS. KREBS: Did he pack a lunch?

ROSIE: Yeah, sure.

MRS. KREBS: Was there broccoli anywhere in there?

ROSIE: Well maybe not today.

MRS. KREBS: See?

ROSIE: But...

MRS. KREBS: I invented the ham and pineapple pizza. And what I had for lunch today was a ham and pineapple pizza. Beware of the owner who doesn't eat in his own restaurant. I like young people. I was one myself back two hundred years. I came in because you didn't have a single customer. My advice to you... what's your name, sweetie?

ROSIE: Rosie Peppy.

MRS. KREBS: You gotta know when to hold 'em and know when to fold 'em, Rosie.

WILBUR: (*Rushing in.*) Is that a customer? This is our very first customer! I am very, very, very, very, very, very, glad to make your acquaintance!

MRS. KREBS: Close the store.

WILBUR: What??

MRS. KREBS: You have had an idea, Mr. Peppy. A bad idea. As a matter of fact, it's the worst idea since the flying tank. When you have had a really, really bad idea, run! Get out! Flee! The only thing worse than a bad idea is to continue to believe it. Walk out the door, Mr. Peppy. Take your beloved Rosie with you. And then throw the key away. Or feed the key to a sheep, or bury it in quick sand or give it to a passing crow. Broccoli on a bun is a worse idea than a mud sundae with caramel sauce. You look like a very nice young man, but you are obviously a little deranged. Goodbye everyone, don't go down with the ship. (*Exits.*)

WILBUR: (*Confused.*) But we dreamed of vegetables in our foxholes.

ROSIE: I know Wilbur, but you had k-rations, right? K-rations in the foxhole?

WILBUR: But that was powdered food in packets. Powdered beef jerky, or powdered corned beef.

ROSIE: But no powdered vegetables?

WILBUR: (*Amazed.*) That's right, there were no vegetables.

ROSIE: See, a lot of time you dream of what you don't have. Now everybody has vegetables, so it's not a dream. What you were dreaming of, Wilbur, were side dishes.

WILBUR: Oh dear!

ROSIE: I worry that people don't come for fast food to get side dishes on a bun.

WILBUR: Have I made a terrible mistake?

ROSIE: Now, Wilbur. (*Pats WILBUR.*) This is only day one. Let's give your broccoli on a bun a real chance.

WILBUR: Exactly!

CHORUS: Day two.

ALL SISTERS sit in chairs. ROSIE stands with WILBUR.

ROSIE: Well, girls, how was day two?

ROBIN: We doubled our business.

WILBUR: That's fantastic!

ROSIE: That's two broccoli burgers, Wilbur.

WILBUR: In ten hours?

ROSIE: Give it a chance, Wilbur.

CHORUS: Day three.

RUBY: Four.

CHORUS: Day four.

RACHEL: Five.

CHORUS: Day five.

ROCHELLE: Four.

WILBUR: We're going backwards!

CHORUS: Day six.

RITA: Three.

WILBUR: I'm an idiot, an imbecile, a dunce, a dolt, an ignoramus.

ROBIN: But hold on, if we doubled three tomorrow we'd have six, and then twelve and then twenty-four. So look at it this way, a week from now we'd be selling 1,536 broccoli burgers a day!

WILBUR: That's fantabulous! In one week we'd be a broccoli sensation!

ROSIE: That's right. Let's give it seven more days.

CHORUS: And they did.

WILBUR: So, we sold 1,536 broccoli burgers today, right?

ALL SISTERS: We sold five.

WILBUR: I'm a failure, I'm just a cockroach on the earth, I'm like a pay toilet at a funeral home, I'm as useless as a baseball bat at a basketball game. Wilbur Peppy has failed!

CHORUS: Well, maybe.

ROSIE: (*To the CHORUS.*) You be quiet.

ALL SISTERS: (*Except ROSIE.*) We are soooooo sorry Wilbur.

ROSIE: I know you are.

ALL SISTERS: *(Except ROSIE.)* Soooooooooooooooooooooo sorry.

ROSIE: I would like a word alone with my husband.

ALL SISTERS leave except for RUBY who turns back.

RUBY: People just aren't recognizing broccoli's good qualities.

ALL SISTERS race back on and form a group.

ALL SISTERS: *(Except ROSIE.)* It's got manganese, magnesium, protein and niacin. If it was up to us, we'd go right down and buy us some.

ALL SISTERS race off except RUBY.

RUBY: It has both kaempferol and isothiocyanates which are good for your allergies.

ROSIE: *(Not too mealy.)* Beat it, Ruby.

RUBY: Bye-bye. *(Runs off then comes right back.)* Plus beta-carotene, a powerful anti-oxidant.

ROSIE: Ruby!

RUBY: I'm just saying. *(Exits.)*

WILBUR: I have failed you, Rosie.

ROSIE: Oh bosh and twaddle!

WILBUR: Rosie, I never heard you take twaddle's name in vain before.

ROSIE: Well, I'm sorry Wilbur. You are the most sensitive Medal of Honor recipient I have ever met. If your mother were here, she'd say...

MOM using two canes blasts her way to center stage.

MOM: My Wilbur was so sensitive he would go out without a shirt just to feed the mosquitos. He apologized to everybody for breathing when he had a cold. In high school he threw forty-seven straight wrestling matches because he didn't want to take away his opponent's macho. That boy apologized to an apple before he took a bite. I couldn't stand him. *(Exits.)*

WILBUR: Momma was a good woman. A little intolerant, but a good woman.

ROSIE: And your dad...

DAD enters from the other side on two crutches. When he stops center and is about to speak, WILBUR says...

WILBUR: Don't say it, Daddy.

DAD: Okay. (*Exits on the crutches.*)

WILBUR: The only thing that got me through World War II was you, Rosie. After I saved the world for democracy, I just wanted to come on home and make you proud of me.

ROSIE: I am proud as a peacock, Wilbur. You are a sincere, hardworking, honest, warmhearted man with a bad business sense.

WILBUR: You have got me dead to rights. But America runs on business Rosie, what are we going to do?

ROSIE: Over two blocks at the corner of Elm and Maple, what is sitting there, Wilbur?

WILBUR: I believe it's a fast food burger joint, Rosie.

ROSIE: What about at the corner of Eucalyptus and Pine?

WILBUR: Definitely a burger joint.

ROSIE: What about at the corner of Magnolia and Jabuticaba?

WILBUR: Jabuticaba?

ROSIE: That's a fruit tree native to Brazil. What's on that corner?

WILBUR: It's a burger joint.

ROSIE: Do you see a pattern here?

WILBUR: Yes! Yes, I see it!

ROSIE: What is it, Wilbur?

WILBUR: All those streets are named after trees!

ROSIE: No, Wilbur.

WILBUR: Oh-oh.

ROSIE: Practically every corner has a fast food burger emporium.

WILBUR: Wow!

CHORUS: Wilbur is maybe a little dense.

ROSIE: You all be quiet.

CHORUS: Sorry.

WILBUR: What should we do, Rosie?

ROSIE: Well, as I see it, there's one burger place where the line goes down the block.

WILBUR: Is that the one at Cypress and Spruce?

ROSIE: No Wilbur, it's at Redwood and Sequoia.

WILBUR: They got a line every day.

ROSIE: Why do you think that is?

CHORUS: They put cheese on it.

ROSIE: Shhhh. Wilbur?

WILBUR: They put cheese on it?

ROSIE: See, you are sharp as cheddar, Wilbur!

WILBUR: (*Proud.*) I'm on it.

TOINETTE: (*Steps forward from CHORUS.*) Hi, it's me again, the burger guide. Now Lionel Sternberger is said to have been first with the cheeseburger. Come on out here, Lionel.

LIONEL enters and mimes cooking at a grill.

TOINETTE: It is said that it happened in 1926 while he was working the grill at his daddy's sandwich shop called, luckily enough, The Rite Spot, in Pasadena, California.

LIONEL: Wonder what would happen if I threw a cut of cheddar cheese on the burger? (*Mimes it.*) Let me just give that a nibble. (*He does.*) Yum, yum! That is a rat-a-tat, kick the cat good! (*Runs off saying.*) Daddy, daddy, I invented the cheeseburger!

TOINETTE: But down in Louisville, Kentucky, Lydia Kaelin at Kaelin's Restaurant blurted out.

LYDIA: (*Enters furious.*) That Lionel Sternberger is a no-good, fork-tongued, slippery-lip, snake-bit, skunk-monkey of a liar. There was no such thing as a cheeseburger 'till I slammed on a slice of pepper cheese in 1934. He say anything like that when I'm around, I'll give that boy a fat lip so big it'll close both his eyes! (*Exits.*)

TOINETTE: And on top of that they gave the trademark to Louie Ballast for his cheeseburger at the Humpty-Dumpty Drive-In, in Denver, Colorado.

LOUIE: (*Enters.*) I am the one and only!! Any cheeseburger on earth got my initials on it. I am cheeseburger man, hear me holler! Yeee-haa! I got it and you don't! I'll get rich and you won't! Yee-haa! Am I good? I'm so good I'm made from maple syrup! (*Exits.*)

TOINETTE: He was a little excitable.

LOUIE: (*Steps back on.*) You say any different I'll sue you blue 'til you're naked as a jaybird and frozen like a popsicle! (*Exits.*)

TOINETTE: Anyway, I like my audiences to have a little background. (*Steps back into CHORUS.*)

CHORUS: You tell 'em, Toinette!

WILBUR: But see, Rosie, that just all adds up to a problem. Pretty soon there will be so many burger places on so many tree streets it'll just pave the way for pizza and salt-fried chicken.

ROSIE: See, we got to put that down to "the early bird catches the worm." We got to put a twist on the cheeseburger that ties it in a knot.

ALL SISTERS race on.

RUBY: Hold the phone, we got it down.

ALL SISTERS: We got the twist!

CHORUS: Not until pigs fly.

ALL SISTERS: (*To the CHORUS.*) You just hold your tongue!

CHORUS: Not.

ROCHELLE: How about we put the burger patty right in the glass of Coca-Cola?

RACHEL: Or say we put the burger in our shoe and if they can guess which shoe, they get the burger free?

RUBY: Or all the buns got cake icing on them so it's both a burger and a dessert.

ROBIN: Or, or, or... now I forgot what I thought up!

RITA: Every burger has the face of a different president of the United States stamped on it and we call it the Presidential Burger an' you can collect 'em all!

A pause. ALL SISTERS look at ROSIE.

ROSIE: Y'all have gone right out of your ever lovin' minds. It's not about all that. It's about how the burger tastes.

ALL SISTERS: Oh.

RITA: A lemon chiffon burger.

ROBIN: A burger with chocolate chips in it.

RUBY: A wild kangaroo burger on a cherry muffin.

RACHEL: A burger on a jalapeno bun with edible bugs on top.

ROCHELLE: A burger in caramel sauce on a brownie bun!

WILBUR: I think I'm gonna be sick. *(Runs off.)*

ROSIE: *(To SISTERS.)* Now see what you've done? *(Exits running after WILBUR, shouting.)* Wilbur? Wilbur!

ALL SISTERS race off in every direction. Only the CHORUS remains.

CHORUS: Oh Wilbur Peppy

Woe is you

You have failed

In the great search

For the perfect burger

You are a lost soul

A bust, a fusty blatherskite

WILBUR is pushed on in an overstuffed chair. He wears pajamas and dark glasses.

CHORUS: A wounded veteran of the burger wars

You're at the end of your rope

There is no more hope

You're a dummy, a dope Wilbur Peppy

ROSIE enters and stands behind WILBUR'S chair.

ROSIE: Wilbur, Wilbur! You have got to pull yourself together, Wilbur.

You have had what they call a reversal of fortune but you have got to pull up your socks, summon your nerve and screw your courage to the sticking point. You are a man not a mouse, Wilbur. If you can keep your head when those about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you, if you can trust yourself when all men doubt you, yet make allowance for their doubting too, if you can fill the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds worth of distance run, yours is the earth and everything that's in it, and what is more you'll be a man, my son!

WILBUR: Who said that?

ROSIE: I did.

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from:

WLBUR PEPPY'S BURGER QUEST

By Jon Jory

*For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the
script, please contact us at:*

Heuer Publishing LLC

P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406

Toll Free: 1-800-950-7529 • Fax (319) 368-8011

WWW.HEUERPUB.COM