

# Leapin' Lizards! Lafayette Hill's Andie Belkoff stars in sequel, 'Annie Warbucks'

By Janine Kusza  
Correspondent

While child stardom and show biz can lead to a hard knock life, Andie Belkoff has welcomed it with open arms as she takes the lead role as the beloved Annie in the long-awaited sequel to "Annie," called "Annie Warbucks." The play, directed by Chuck Abbott, opens at the Walnut Street Theater, premiering Sept. 7. Andie plays the little orphan Annie who tries to get adopted by the wealthy Daddy Warbucks. But in this play, there is a twist: Daddy Warbucks must get married to gain her adoption papers. So, who wants to marry a billionaire?

So what draws a 10-year-old girl to the spotlight? "I like to bring joy to everyone," said Andie in a telephone interview. "I love seeing happy faces." Laughter, tears and applause from complete strangers encourage Andie's love of acting, and her charm that warms the audience's hearts, keep them coming back for more.

With only two years of acting experience under her belt, Andie has already made many public appearances. Her first role was Gretl in "The Sound of Music," also directed by Charles Abbott at the Walnut, in 2002. A few months later, Andie landed the same role through Atlanta's Theater of the Stars, touring 13 cities across the nation. This role enabled her to become a member of the Actors Equity Association.

Soon Andie lit up the television screen, appearing on an NBC-10 show, a CBS promo, an ABC Channel 6 interview, and even a Dannon commercial. Her

talent also reached the radio waves when she appeared on KYW News Radio with John McDevitt. "When I heard Andie on the radio driving in Lafayette Hill," said her mother, Sherri Belkoff, "I almost had an accident!"

Andie's biggest role to date, as the star in "Annie Warbucks," came as quite a surprise to the young actress. "I was shocked when I found out — I dropped all my books!" said Andie. Only shortly after discovering the great news, Andie memorized all her

lines. "I can memorize scripts with the snap of a finger," she said. Although Andie is excited about getting new roles such as this one, her attitude when she isn't chosen is astounding for someone her age. "I don't think of the down sides; I think of the up sides. I have many more auditions and if I didn't get something, I can get something else."

Although she is confident in her ability as an actress, Andie

never forgets those who have contributed so much to her success. The dedication from the staff at the Actor's Center in Philadelphia, including acting coach Rodney Robb, voice coach Sal Dupree, dance coach Dale Robbins, and her manager Edie Robb from Creative Management Group, in New York City and Beverly Hills, provide a strong support system. "Where would I be without all these people?" she said.

Her strongest devotees — and biggest fans, naturally — are her family. "My brother and sister support me and do whatever they can," said Andie. "They might get a little bored, but that doesn't stop them!" While Andie's father, Larry Belkoff, started the drama club at Emory University and her mother was a champion baton twirler, when it comes to performing, it is obvious that the apple did not fall far from the tree. "I am both my parents," said Andie. Larry and Sherri's support extends to all three of their talented children. "It's bouncing the ball in nine different directions, but we manage to do it," says Sherri.

Keeping an acting career separate from everyday life can be challenging for some, but it's straightforward for Andie. "When

I'm at school, I try not to talk about acting because I want to have a regular life at school," said Andie. "Outside of school, I'm an actress. So I'm half kid and half actress." Simple enough.

While Andie's schedule can be tough, her mother shares it, never leaving her side. "She toured with me through 13 cities for five months and takes me to all my auditions," said Andie. "I think she's a superstar."

But Sherri Belkoff will not just go along with anything. "I will always be there for

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*Outside school, 10-year-old Andie Belkoff is an actress. But outside the theater, she's just a normal kid, comfortably balancing two different worlds.*

## THEATER

### IF YOU GO

#### "Annie Warbucks"

will run

at Walnut Street Theatre,  
825 Walnut St., Philadelphia,  
Sept. 7 through Oct. 24.

Andie plays Annie on Tuesday,  
Wednesday, Thursday & Friday  
evenings, with one matinee  
on Sept. 25.

Info: (215) 574-3550, ext. 6.

# Lafayette Hill actress to star in Walnut's 'Annie Warbucks'

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her as long as we both understand the ramifications of what's going to come out of it before we jump into it," said Sherri.

With such strong love and support from the people around her and her undeniable talent, it will be exciting to see what the future holds for young Andie Belkoff. "Every other kid says, 'you're so lucky.' I'm not lucky," said Andie. "Anyone can do it. Everyone is good at something." And Andie? "I was meant to be an actress."