



# Reading Room

*“Gale McNeeley’s performance of Archy & Mehitabel was outstanding. The audience was amazed at how many characters he could bring to life.”*

—Cesare J. Muccari, Greensburg Hempfield Area Library Director

*“Gale did a great job bringing the characters to life! He was very expressive and had a wonderful rapport with the audience. I really liked the background commentary Gale shared about Don Marquis and the events that occurred in his era. Everyone had a great time.”*

—Sandi Banks, Library Manager, Camarillo CA

*“Gale’s verbal and physical versatility beautifully served Don Marquis’ characters and verses. Audience members both familiar with and new to Marquis were privileged to enjoy the antics and wisdom emanating from his and Archy’s typing.”*

—Phil Wilcox, President, The Friends of the Montecito Library, CA

penn area library  
presents



Gale McNeeley

**“archy & mehitabel”**

saturday, september 17th

6:00—7:10pm

at the penn area library



## archy & mehitabel

Who are Archy and Mehitabel? Although the artist George Herriman of *Krazy Kat* fame drew cartoons of them for the first three Archy books of poems, they are not cartoon characters.

They are you and me.

Archy is a poet trapped in the body of a cockroach. He does not let his size or physical limitations keep him from writing some pretty amazing stuff. Mehitabel is a liberated woman in the body of an old alley cat. She claims that in a former incarnation she was Cleopatra.

Unlikely friends, they play with abandon in a body of more than 500 poems and sketches that humans like us can still enjoy.

Born in the daily newspaper column of Don Marquis, the most beloved wit of his day, they entertained and educated readers from 1916 to 1936 in newspapers and magazines read widely in the early 20th century.

Yet they are creatures of our time, speaking of the human condition in all its ironical twists and turns. Life and death are dealt with in such a way that we recognize their inevitability with a knowing smile. Archy and Mehitabel don't preach. They speak directly to what we are all thinking.

Their lives are as rich as ours can be, and many times are. But, as is true of many great writers, Archy puts things in words that open our eyes and hearts in a new way. Yes, his poems of 100 years ago can do that.

So, sit back and get ready for the wit and wisdom of a "poetic" cockroach and a "morally careless" alley cat, along with all their other friends in Shinbone Alley, in the heart of New York City. Enjoy the ride.

— Gale McNeeley



### About Gale McNeeley...

Gale's career has spanned Broadway, regional theatre, television, film, and circus. An Irish tenor with a wide musical and performance range, McNeeley has studied physical comedy in Europe, and teaches clowning and Commedia Dell'Arte throughout the United States, including the University of Pittsburgh, Point Park University, and Seton Hill University.

His love affair with Archy and Mehitabel began when he was cast as Archy, the poetic, singing and dancing cockroach in the musical *Archy & Mehitabel* in 1980.

Gale's show, which he's been honing and touring for twenty-some years, is noted in the new *Annotated Archy & Mehitabel*, edited by Michael Sims (available at the Penn Area Library).

**To learn more about archy and mehitabel, please visit [www.galemcneeley.com](http://www.galemcneeley.com) and [www.donmarquis.com](http://www.donmarquis.com)**