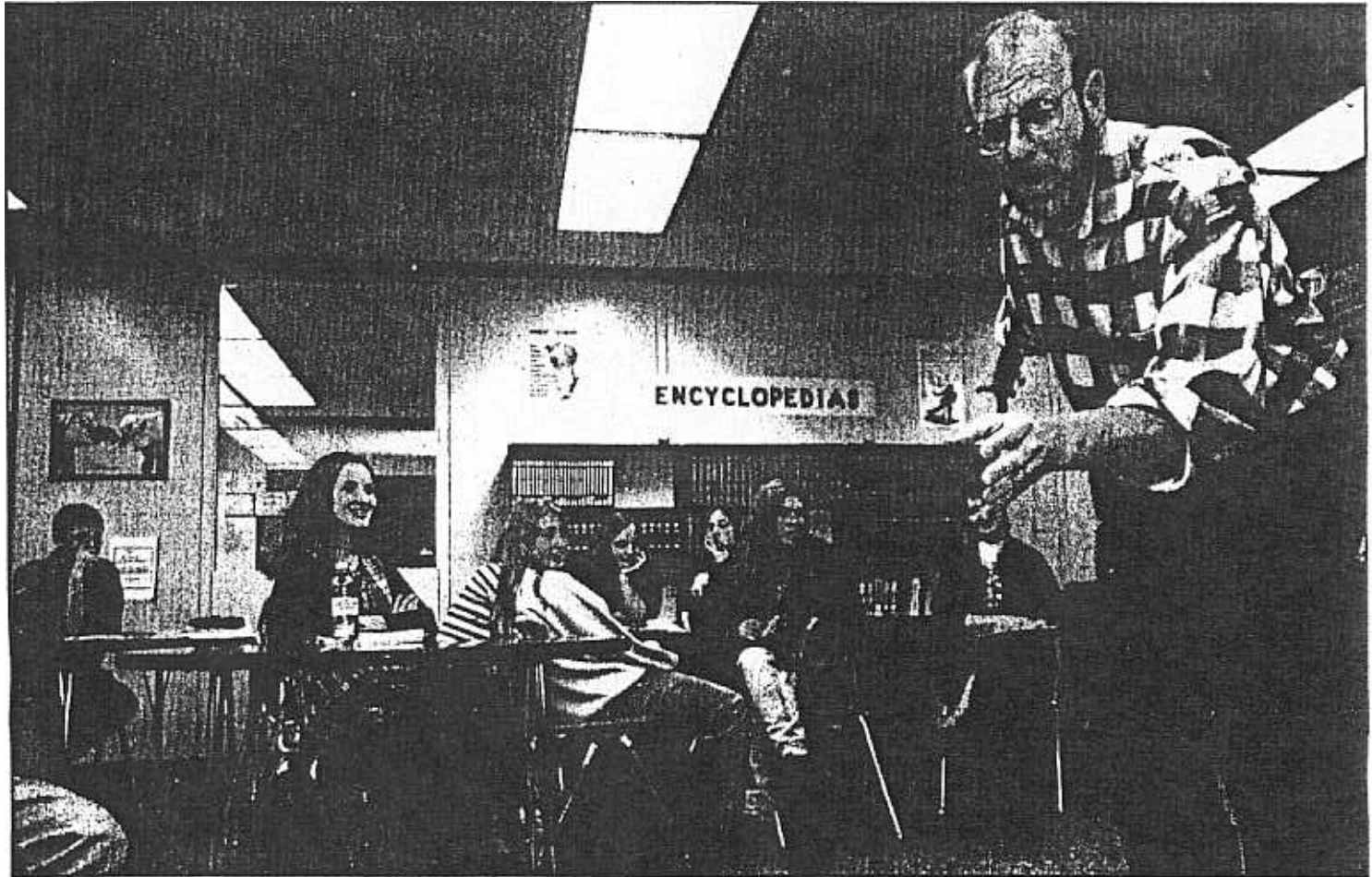


# McManus in Love

One-man play's author, actor guarantee laughs

By **DAVID BOYD**  
*Star-Tribune staff writer*



Photos by TRICIA McINROY/Star-Tribune

Actor Tim Behrens, above, acts out a story from author Patrick McManus' childhood for high school students Wednesday. Behrens and author Patrick McManus, below, both visited Douglas High School classes.

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So are 13 other characters created by outdoor humorist Patrick McManus. Actor Tim Behrens will bring them all to life in the one-man show *McManus in Love* at 8 p.m. tonight and Friday at Casper College's Krampert Theatre

"We've removed anything that might possibly improve a person," McManus says. "People cannot expect to go in this show and come out being 'better' than when they went in."

"But they will be looser and their cheeks will be rosy," chimes in Behrens.

In fact, Behrens says, if people "don't laugh longer and harder than they've laughed in a long time, I'll give them their money back."

McManus will be on hand at the shows to sign copies of his popular books, which include *Never Sniff a Gift Fish*, *The Night the Bear Ate Goombaw*, and *How I Got This Way*.

The show has already passed through most of the state, but McManus just joined Behrens on Tuesday in Rawlins as part of a book tour.

*McManus in Love* is the sequel to the first play by McManus, *A Fine and Pleasant Misery*, another one-man show featuring Behrens.



While the first play dealt with two boys' fear of the dark, the new play follows the same two boys struggling with dating girls.

"Now they're discovering that their fear of the dark is nothing compared to their fear of girls," Behrens says. "And that's when they're also discovering that darkness can be their friend."

Behrens changes from character to character without changing costumes, so the audience's imagination is fully engaged, he says.

*A Fine and Pleasant Misery* was adapted for the stage by McManus from one of his books of short stories, but *McManus in Love* was written specifically for the stage.

"One of the great things about theatre is you can adjust things as you go," says McManus. "When a book comes out and people don't understand something, you can't do anything about it."

Behrens approached McManus with the idea for the first play in the early '90s. The two have known each other since the 1970s, when Behrens was a graduate student under McManus at Eastern Washington University.

McManus jokes that Behrens drove him from teaching.

"Once I'd had Tim I decided this would never happen again," McManus says. "And I meant it."

**'We've removed anything that might possibly improve a person.'**

**PATRICK McMANUS, AUTHOR**