

ELU presents musical skits

By MICHAEL GUNSAULUS

CHARLESTON — "You're A Good Man Charlie Brown" is a highly successful musical about the highly unfortunate comic strip character who appears in over 900 newspapers daily.

Eastern Illinois University Theatre Company '78 is presenting a production of the award-winning musical August 4, 5, and 6.

This musical is filled with just the type of bone-tickling humor and light-hearted songs that make for an evening of family entertainment.

Eight characters from the "Peanuts" comic strip by Charles M. Schulz appear in a series of skits which reveal the characters' well-known idiosyncrasies through song and dance numbers.

For example, Linus, portrayed by Bill Pierson, sings a song called "My Blanket and Me" and Snoopy, portrayed by Randy Haege, storms through a number about his infamous battles with the Red Baron while Charlie Brown, portrayed by Duke Bagger, laments about his failures in a song entitled "The Kite."

Bagger turns in a fine performance as the forlorn little kid who just happens to be the captain of a baseball team that has lost 999 consecutive games.

But he shares top honors with Haege who plays the popular

Snoopy, a role that features an explosive, razzle-dazzle number called "Supertime." This song nearly stops the show.

Carrying a major part in the production is Dana Grigoroff as the loud-mouth Lucy. She has a powerful voice that projects well — extremely well — and she is seen throughout most of the production.

One thing that differs from this particular production by the Eastern Company from other productions of "You're A Good Man Charlie Brown" is that transitory material not written by Clark Gesner, creator of the musical, has been added. And sometimes the material gets laughs and other times the audience does not react.

The play's director, E. Glendon Gabbard, should make a decision as to what substitute skits should be kept and which ones should go. Otherwise, the show, which was designed to be fast-pace entertainment, will revert to a slow-moving framework.

Also appearing in the play are Chester Davis as Schroeder, Dana Grigoroff as Lucy, Kathy Lampen as Sally, Mary Jane Findley as Violet and Dorothy Voigt as Frieda.

One of the highlights from this show is the closing number, "Happiness."