

K graphic

Big Henry and the Polka Dot Kid

US : 1978 : dir. Richard Marquand : Learning Corporation of America : ? min
prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:
[Chris Barnes](#)
Ned Beatty; Estelle Parsons

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω □ ∅ Z ∞	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
5281	1½	2	2	583	3 - - - -	No	Unseen



Muzzle nuzzle – Chris Barnes takes it on the chin for love

Source: *International Film Guide 1978*

International Film Guide 1978 comment:

“There is no doubt that LCA continues to lead the educational film field in terms of consistent quality, entertainment value, and sales effectiveness – and all this without becoming a multinational conglomerate in which the left hand knows not one whit of what the right hand is getting or spending!

There is a host of new product to choose from.
"BIG HENRY AND THE POLKA DOT

KID", directed by Richard Marquand, is in the tradition of LCA's "ANGEL AND BIG JOE". Ned Beatty and Estelle Parsons star in this study of the relationship between youth and adulthood. A boy's love for an aged, ailing dog brings into focus the clash between blind obedience to parental authority and enterprise and imagination.. ”

The Moving Picture Boy entry on Barnes:

“Chris was the most daffily blond of **"THE BAD NEWS BEARS"**, and one of the least mannerly. Much of his subsequent work was done for TV. The two 1978 roles [**"YOU'RE GONNA LOVE IT HERE"**, **"BIG CITY BOYS"**] were in pilots for CBS sitcom series with Austin Pendleton, and he was in yet another pilot - **"TWO PLUS TWO"** - in 1982, also for CBS (which could well stand for Chris Barnes Station).

"BIG HENRY AND THE POLKA DOT KID" won a mass of awards, including an Emmy as "Outstanding Children's Special". **"THROUGH THE MAGIC PYRAMID"** was directed - well before 1981 in fact - by former child actor Ron Howard."

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

No further information currently available. Chris Barnes featured in the 1976 Canadian **"Family Theater"** episode **"Henry's Dog"** (father Ned Beatty wants to drown the old dog because it's outlived its usefulness – the boy nearly drowns trying to rescue it). It seems a bit of a stretch that these are not the same film, or – if the Learning Corporation of America chose to reshoot the story with exactly the same cast two years later, one would have expected Holmstrom to pick up on this eccentric behaviour.

America makes few bona fide children's films, as I would recognise the term, but that this is one of them is indicated by the fact it won "a mass of awards" yet is not listed in *one* of the American film guides at my disposal, even those which do include TV movies. It must be a kids' film alright.

Director Richard Marquand, incidentally, made **"RETURN OF THE JEDI"** in 1983, but whether blind dogs to Ewoks was a step up or down, I leave to you. Chris Barnes, exact age unknown, was also seen in **"Tutt and Tuttle"**, presumably a US TV series.

See also **"Family Theater: Henry's Dog"** and subject index under **DOGS** and **OSCAR WINNERS / AWARD WINNERS**.