

November
2025



COMMUNITY PLAYERS *of Salisbury*

Back Stage



Hello Everyone

It's that time of year when many prepare for cooler temperatures and celebrating festive holidays. Here at Community Players we are preparing two "gifts" to offer.

On November 7-9 we will bring spunk and optimism with our production of **Annie**. The show reminds us that while we may face challenges today, tomorrow offers the promise of joy. Director Sherri Trader-Hynes and her multi-talented cast and crew are hard at work to warm your hearts.

On December 11-14 we will present **A Gift To Remember**. Director Pete Cuesta has an excellent cast to share the moving story of strangers stranded in a train station as weather has interrupted travel plans. What starts as tension and frustration becomes acceptance and joy as the group of strangers transition into a loving community.

While we hope to see you in the audience for these two production gems, remember that you can get involved with Community Players in a number of ways. From being on stage to working backstage to serving on one of our many committees, there's always something to do. Please feel free to reach out to me at dgmullins58@gmail.com if you are interested.

Kind Regards,

Darrell Mullins
President



Players' next meetings will be **November 12 (7:00 PM) and December 3 (7:00 PM)**. Please note the November change so that we don't conflict with **Annie**. Join us as we continue to work on our season.

BACK STAGE SUBMISSIONS

Articles, photos, etc. for publication in Back Stage should be emailed to me (popirusty@comcast.net) by the 15th of each month. Also, if you have ideas for the improvement of our newsletter, please let me know!

Rusty Mumford

Corresponding Secretary

PROPOSED BY-LAWS CHANGE

Current By-Law #6:

No alcoholic beverages shall be consumed by any member or production participant during meetings, rehearsals, or productions either at the Nutters Cross Road facility or in an assigned auditorium.

Proposed Change to By-Law #6:

No alcoholic beverages shall be consumed during meetings or rehearsals either at the Community Players Theater facility or in an assigned facility. Alcoholic beverages shall not be consumed by actors or production crew actively performing duties during a performance at the Community Players Theater facility or in an assigned facility.

The vote on this by-laws change will take place at the December meeting.



A TALE OF THREE ANNIES

Everyone at players is excited about our first production of the season, **Annie**, which will be at Wi-Hi on Friday November 7 and Saturday, November 8 at 7:30 PM, and Saturday, November 8 and Sunday, November 9 AT 2pm.

Director Sherri Hynes was glad to see that the two little girls who shared the role of Annie in 1990 auditioned for adult roles in this production. She was also happy but not surprised to have numerous girls try out for the lead role. She says "Casting decisions are always hard, but I think everyone will love Anna, now known as Annie at school, playing the role. She has great stage presence and learns quickly."

Here is the bio supplied by Anna's Mom:

ANNA MARIE PERKOWSKI (Annie) is thrilled to make her Community Players debut! This Mardela Middle Schooler can usually be found rocking out with AMP Bands, singing her heart out with the Salisbury Children's Choir, or performing with her school's Drama Club. Though shy and soft-spoken offstage, she comes alive the moment the lights hit—a spark first lit by her then 5th-grade teachers, who convinced her to try a talent show. After debuting as a Mersister in **The Little Mermaid Jr.** at MMHS, Anna is beyond grateful for this chance to chase her "Tomorrow."

Now for those other two Annies, Kate Allen Dyer and Katie Simms Parsons, who shared the role 25 years ago.

Kate plays Grace, the sophisticated assistant of Daddy Warbucks. She provided an update from her **Annie** days.

I made my Community Players debut in **The Music Man** in 1999. In 2000, I Annie for two shows and. July in the other two. I went on to be in **The Wizard of Oz, Little Women, How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying, Footloose**, and **Anything Goes** with Players. I also choreographed their 2007 production of **High School Musical**. I also was very involved with the Eastern Shore Ballet Theatre for twelve years, performing with their company from 1996-2008. I then went to college at William and Mary and got a master's degree from Georgetown University in 2014. Since then, I have been working in independent education. I worked at the Sayre School in Lexington, KY for four years, and I currently work in the English department at The Salisbury School.

I moved back to Salisbury in 2018 with my husband, Nelson, who is a dentist. We have three children: Whitt--8, Mary Violet--6, and Clara--3. I am so excited to be back with Players for the first time in 18 years! I am also thrilled by their new space. It significantly enhances rehearsals and is a beautiful small performance space. I look forward to being in more Players shows in the future, and I am excited for my children to be able to experience quality local theater.

As to the other Annie, Katie Simms Parsons., who will have to act really well as the mean, abusive Miss Hannigan. She will make us believe that she would like to step on the orphans' freckles. She gave us some info on the real Katie.

My program bio is: Katie Parsons first took the stage 25 years ago as Annie and is delighted to return, older, wiser, and far less wholesome! Favorite Players roles include Nancy (**Oliver!**), Sandra (**All Shook Up**), **Mary Poppins**, and Mary (**Jesus Christ Superstar**). Endless thanks to her husband and three kiddos for surviving Mrs. Hannigan!

My journey in musical theater began in 2000 when I stepped on stage as Annie in the Community Players production of **Annie**, under the same directorship as this show with Sherri Trader Hynes. That first role sparked a lifelong passion for musical theater that continues to shape my life today. I can't audition for a show without thinking of that first step onto the Wi-Hi stage, bucket in hand, with a mass of people in the audience supporting me.

My love for performance grew, where I enjoyed roles such as Aunt Eller in **Oklahoma!**, Liesl in **The Sound of Music**, and Peter Pan in **Peter Pan** in my high school's productions. College offered further opportunities with Community Players, where I had the pleasure of working under the guidance of talented directors like Sherri Trader Hynes, Lisa Robbins, and Ken Johnson.

I attribute my musical foundation to my upbringing at Christ Methodist Church, where I was immersed in music from a young age. With a mother who plays the organ and piano and serves as choir director, music was always at the heart of my home and community. Mom, Susan Robinson, will be in the orchestra, and Dad, Tom Robinson, who is usually behind the scenes in the sound booth, will be on stage in a wheelchair, playing President Roosevelt.

As an adult, I married my high school sweetheart, and together we have three children attending The Salisbury School, our alma mater. I had the honor of conducting The Salisbury School's upper school choral program before transitioning into my current role as Dean of Students.

Returning to Community Players has been a full-circle experience. From rehearsing in the old "chicken house" in 2000 to practicing on the beautiful stage at Nutters Cross Road today, I have cherished every moment. While my roles have matured in age, the magic of performing in shows that touch hearts and leave lasting impressions remains unchanged.

I am deeply grateful to the visionary leadership and generous donors who have supported Community Players over the years. The opportunities, memories, and stages they've provided have shaped my life in countless ways. I look forward to witnessing their continued growth in bringing local theater to our community and hope you will consider supporting their capital campaign to keep this vibrant tradition thriving.

There is one other orphan update. Director Sherri reminds us that Shelby {Traum} Trenary, who played orphan Kate and was also in the Eastern Shore Ballet for years is now a professional dance instructor and adjunct faculty member At Salisbury University. She has two children and is excited to teach her daughter ballet!

While we have four shows and a large theater for **Annie**, we expect to have big audiences and advise getting tickets in advance by going to sbyplayers.org or calling 410-546-0099.





THEATRE TEASERS
Trivia by Sharon Benchoff
November - Juke Box Musicals

1. He wrote "I'm a Believer" for the Monkees and his songs tell his story in *A Beautiful Noise*.
2. This musical is inspired by the 1995 album by Alanis Morissette of the same name.
3. *Movin' Out* features the songs from this piano man.
4. You could say this story about four singers from New Jersey is the most successful jukebox musical.
5. The current Broadway musical *Hell's Kitchen* uses the music and lyrics of this talented woman.
6. What is the name of the musical that tells of the music and times of the Temptations?
7. He played King George III and now plays Bobby Darin in *Just in Time*.
8. This 1999 musical launched a new craze of jukebox musicals with its ABBA-inspired score.
9. This musical based on the lives of Gloria and Emilio Estefan, chronicles their inspiring true story.
10. Baz Luhrmann directed the film that became this Tony winner featuring chart topping songs.

Answers found on page 6

PRODUCTION COMMITTEE

It's that time of the year! The Community Players of Salisbury is looking for show submissions for the 2026-2027 season. Please reach out to the Production Committee Chair, Kyle Hayes at Kyle.HayesMS@gmail.com for a show submission form or if you have any questions about the process! The deadline for submitting a show is November 30, 2025.



A GIFT TO REMEMBER

(A Holiday Play)

A gift to remember is a warm-hearted holiday play for the whole family. We have a cast and will be beginning rehearsals soon.

Tickets are already on sale!

The Cast

Train Passengers:

CATHY NORRIS: Kim Cuesta
MATTHEW (MATT) MCHUGH: Mike Murphy
ELISE JONES: Caroline Lewis
KATE JONES: Olive O'Hare
LEN DAWBER: Ben Hamilton
NICK BERRY: Nick Thomas
KELLY BERRY: Charlie Szentesi-Thomas
SAM LARSEN: Dan O'Hare
LOUISE LARSEN: Caroline O'Hare

Telephone Caller/Choir members:

AMY: Mary Cathell
MADELINE NORRIS: Madison Cuesta
PAM MCHUGH: Judy Hearn

Others:

CLAYTON KEMPER: Matt Bogdan
DEANNA OWEN: Debby Nagel
TRAIN CONDUCTOR'S VOICE: Kel Nagel



ANSWERS TO TRIVIA QUESTIONS:



1. Neil Diamond
2. Jagged Little Pill
3. Billy Joel
4. Jersey Boys
5. Alicia Keys
6. Ain't Too Proud
7. Jonathan Groff
8. Mamma Mia
9. Get on Your Feet
10. Moulin Rouge

Answers:

GRANTS UPDATE

A grant application is being submitted to the Henson Foundation to help with the Capital Campaign. A grant application is also being submitted to the Maryland State Arts Council to help with general operating expenses.

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

The Craft and Vendor Event which was to be held Saturday, October 4, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. has been cancelled.

Edgar Allan Poe: Master of the Macabre was held in October. Thanks to the following who were involved in this year's production: Matt Bogdan, Holly Bruce, Jason Bruce, Pete Cuesta, Judy Hearn, Mike Murphy, and Charlie Szentesi-Thomas. Also, thanks to David Allen, Brenda Allen, and Tony Broadbent for their help at the performance at Community Players' Theater on October 17, and to Kim Cuesta for her work with the production in past years. We also thank the Brick Room, The Groove, and Poplar Hill Mansion for allowing us to present the production at their venues.

Possum Point Players will present a comedic radio play based on the theme of Thanksgiving at Community Players' Theater on Sunday, November 23, at 2 p.m. One of the acts features a Burns and Allen classic. Celebrate the spirit of Thanksgiving with vintage radio's finest! Tickets are \$10 per person and can be purchased at the door (cash or check). Seating is limited, so reservations are encouraged. Call 443-235-3272 for reservations or more information.

The Community Players of Salisbury will present **A Gift to Remember**, a heartwarming play in which strangers become friends, at Community Players' Theater. The dates and times are as follows: Thursday, December 11, at 7:30 p.m.; Friday, December 12, at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, December 13, at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; and Sunday, December 14, at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$25 for adults, \$20 for seniors and students, \$15 for children, and \$65 for families. Tickets are available at sbyplayers.org.

There will be a fundraising committee meeting on Wednesday, November 19, at 7 p.m. at Players. Planning of fundraisers for 2026 will take place. All are welcome to attend. If you have ideas for fundraisers for next year and cannot attend the meeting, please contact Matt Bogdan at 443-235-3272 or oceancityhappyme@aol.com.



Community Players of Salisbury
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Salisbury, MD 21802

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*Please consider
becoming a member
of Community Players.
If you are not sure if
your dues are paid for
the current year,
please check the
mailing label on this
newsletter.
If it does not show
2025-26, your dues
are not up-to-date.*



Back Stage is funded, in part by a grant from the Salisbury Wicomico Arts Council (SWAC). Players would like to thank SWAC for their continued support.

Next Meetings - Wednesday, November 12 (7:00 PM) and December 3 (7:00 PM).

Community Players Officers & Board of Directors
July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026

*President: Darrell Mullins
Vice-President: Kyle Hayes
Recording Secretary: Melissa Dasher
Corresponding Secretary: Rusty Mumford
Treasurer: Charlie Linton
Immediate Past-President: Matt Bogdan*

Board Members

*Lynne Bratten, Ken Johnson, Shelbie Thompson - Term Expires 2026
David Allen, Kim Cuesta, Charlie Szentesi-Thomas - Term Expires 2027
Pete Cuesta, Betsy Metzger, Tom Robinson - Term Expires 2028*

Community Players is committed to celebrating an inclusive culture of creativity by welcoming actors, technicians, designers, musicians, and production team members from varied backgrounds with regards to race, ethnicity, national origin, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, physical & mental ability, and religious & political beliefs.