

Community Players of Salisbury Monthly Board Meeting

October 1, 2025

Call to Order at 6:00pm by President, Darrell Mullins

Board Members Present: Darrell Mullins, Kyle Hayes, Melissa Dasher, Charlie Linton, Matt Bogdan, David Allen, Betsy Metzger, Tom Robinson, Charlie Szentesi-Thomas, Shelbie Thompson

Board Members Absent: Rusty Mumford, David Allen, Lynne Bratten, Kim Cuesta, Pete Cuesta, Ken Johnson

Members Present: Sharon Benchoff, Bonnie Bosies, Tony Broadbent, Bobbie Calloway, Mary Cathell, Kel Nagel, Susan Robinson

Guests Present: Damion Sykes

Approval of August 6, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve as submitted by Charlie L., seconded by Betsy. All responded yea. Motion Passed.

Treasurer's Report

Previously emailed to the Board. Charlie gave a summary. We recently received several grants this month.

President's Report

Sympathy to the Robinson family on their loss.

The following was previously emailed to the Board members.

Committee Structure

I had this issue as an agenda item for our September meeting. We did not have time to get to that so I am reminding everyone that the number of one-person committees needs to be addressed. My thoughts are that our committees could be re-structured as follows: :

1. House: Box Office, Season Tickets, Bar
2. Publicity: Advertising, Social Media, Marketing
3. Fundraising: Grant Writing, Patrons, Special Productions, Concessions
4. Historical
5. Hospitality
6. Facilities Management
7. Membership
8. Nominating
9. Production
10. Program: Program and Program Advertising
11. Scholarship

This approach involves the first word as the name of the committee with the labels after as functions/duties of the committee. This allows for those who have been serving on one-person committees to be part of a larger group, and individuals could be cross-trained on all functions thus providing backup if someone is unable to serve. This would result in 11 committees rather than the current 15. Other, better combinations may be possible; this was my first stab at it.

On a related note, I need to point out that Performance Space and Lifetime Achievement are not currently listed as committees in our By-Laws. Perhaps Performance Space can be part of the Fundraising committee and Lifetime Achievement could be part of Nominating? Again, just thinking out loud. If there are Board members who think this might be worth pursuing, I invite you to make a motion to that effect. As I have said before, no hard feelings if no motions emerge.

Annie

I understand that rehearsals and tech prep are in full swing for “Annie.” Thanks to everyone who has been able to help with set work on Saturdays. We could certainly use more help so please come out if you can. All skill levels are welcome.

Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce

I meant to send you all this information before now, but time got away from me. Apologies. Lynne Bratten and I met with Sigrid Vaelez-Nelson, Director of Membership, on August 26. She shared with us potential benefits that come with membership. I did ask about the “Business After Hours” event. If we are interested in hosting the event there is a host fee of \$250.00 and we would provide Lite Fare. As a potential alternative, we can do a Ribbon-Cutting to celebrate using our space as a performance venue. There would be no cost other than providing catering for the event. They have an opening to do so in January or February. We must apply at least 30 days before the event. We are required to use a Chamber member business for catering.

She then walked us through their committees and explained ways in which we might benefit. We can reach out and arrange to send a representative to any of the committee meetings. Committees are as follows:

Ambassadors Committee: Their focus is member retention and assimilating new members to Chamber function as well as visiting and surveying members throughout the year. Meeting times and locations may vary. Check the Monday Upcoming Events e-blast.

Education Committee: Addresses issues, topics and initiatives relevant to all levels of education in the community. Creates partnerships between educational institutions and community-based organizations. Maybe a way to enhance our summer camp program?

Eldercare Committee: Addresses issues, topics and incentives within the eldercare industry.

Government and Business Affairs: Committee works to identify, analyze and address issues affecting the business community

Eastern Shore Leadership Institute: Leadership training for those seeking to advance

their leadership skills. Pairs with leadership experts from our region. More details are available at easternshoreleaders.org

Lead Share Committee: Helps “businesses” grow their visibility and engagement through networking and structured lead-sharing opportunities.

Marketing Committee: Provides members with educational opportunities to enhance their public relations, marketing, and communication skills. In person presentations and online webinars are led by Chamber members in the marketing industry.

Young Professionals Committee: Welcomes all member representatives between the ages of 21-35. Offers opportunities for professional development, community outreach, and networking to support the growth stage of one’s career. Committed to the growth and development of local young professionals.

In addition to their committee resources, there other opportunities. They are as follows:

- We can upgrade to a “Patron Membership” that would give us more exposure.

They have various levels with various costs. Costs range from \$500-\$5000. Our basic membership dues are \$315. Specifics are available at <https://salisburyarea.com/chamber-membership/become-a-patron/>

- Business Profiles: The Chamber partners with the company “D3” who will produce a free, professional video that can be posted on our website, social media, the Chamber website, the Salisbury Business Journal, SBYBIZ Facebook channel, and the Chamber YouTube channel.

- SBYBIZ Journal: We can send press releases to them about our events.

Deadline is 3 weeks ahead of event.

- Access to Microsoft Co-Pilot: We can send content, it will format for us.
- Membership Marketing/Advertising Opportunities: Some are free, some cost.

Committee Reports

Concessions - Brenda Allen At this time, the next event planned for concessions is the fall musical. We will need additional help in November for Annie. If you are interested, please contact Brenda Allen.

Costumes* – Lynne Bratten (*Needs to be approved as a formal committee) No new costume donations this month. But still trying to get information on the clothing items that are in the men's room secured with zip ties. Just curious where they came from.

Facilities Management - Ken Johnson No Report

Fundraising - Matt Bogdan

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

2. *Edgar Allan Poe: Master of the Macabre* will be performed on the following dates and times at the following venues: Friday, October 17, at 7:30 p.m. at the Community Players Theater on Nutters Cross Road in Salisbury; Saturday, October 18, at 7:30 p.m. at the Brick Room in Downtown Salisbury; Friday, October 24, at 7:30 p.m. at The Groove in Delmar; and Saturday,

October 25, at 7:30 p.m. at Poplar Hill Mansion in Salisbury. \$10 admission, cash or check. Reservations are suggested since seating is limited at all venues. For reservations, call 443-235-3272. Tickets can also be purchased at the door. Under the direction of Matt Bogdan, the show features memorized, word-for-word tellings of *The Tell-Tale Heart*, *The Raven*, *The Masque of the Red Death*, *The Black Cat*, and other Poe's stories and poems. Get into the Halloween spirit and come see this fifth annual performance.

3. *WWII: Heroes of the Eastern Shore* will be held at the Delmar VFW on Sunday, November 9, at 12:30 p.m. The production highlights the sacrifices made by the men and women of the Eastern Shore during the war. Free admission. For more information, call 443-235-3272.

4. A radio play performed by Possum Point Players will be held at the Community Players Theater on Nutters Cross Road in Salisbury on Sunday, November 23, at 2 p.m. The theme of the radio play will be Thanksgiving. Tickets are \$10 and will be available at the door. Seating is limited. For reservations, call 443-235-3272.

5. *A Gift to Remember* will be performed December 11-14 at the Community Players Theater. Directed by Pete Cuesta, the show focuses on strangers who become friends during Christmas Eve. With understanding and humor, they realized the memory of this night will be a gift to remember. More details about tickets will be available in the next newsletter.

Grants - Matt Bogdan

1. Players received a \$1000 grant from the RD and LA Goldsborough Family Foundation Fund. We thank them for their generous support.

2. An application has been submitted to the Maryland State Arts Council for the FY2026 Arts Capital Grant.

Historical - Bonnie Bosies No Report

Hospitality - Rusty Mumford No Report

House - Betsy Metzger The call for ushers for Annie will go out next week. As I expect the show will be well attended, I will need eight per performance. I will be working backstage once everyone is settled but leaving Brenda with a radio in case she needs assistance. On the home front, Brenda and David and I have been putting small but necessary touches in our lobby and front office area. You will see our address posted on the walls, David has checked the batteries in the emergency lights, Brenda created an emergency exit map and posted it by the exits. I plan to make sure all the ushers know where each exit is located, where the fire extinguishers are and the AED machine as well. We have new first aid kits, one in the kitchen and one in the prop room. Brenda is working on finding small lights that will go on in case of a power outage in the hallways allowing those in that area to see where to go for safety. We also need to go over an evacuation plan in case of fire and talk about where to go in case of a tornado, when we need the audience to shelter in place. I would like to meet with Kenny, David and Brenda and come up with a plan that we can present and practice with the group at the next meeting.

Lifetime Achievement Awards – Sharon Benchoff LAA will meet in the first week of October to vote on this year's recipient.

Marketing - Rusty Mumford I WANTED TO DO THIS IN PERSON BUT I HAVE SPREAD MYSELF TOO THINLY TONIGHT. EFFECTIVE TODAY, I AM RESIGNING AS CHAIR OF THE MARKETING COMMITTEE. IN MY OPINION, THE ONLY THING LEFT OPEN IS THE LAUNCHING OF THE NEW WEBSITE WHICH HAS BEEN CHALLENGED AT EVERY ANGLE. MY ORIGINAL INTENT WAS TO REMAIN CHAIR UNTIL THE WEBSITE LAUNCHED BUT THAT IS NOT TO BE. I WILL NOTIFY WILL TOWNSEND THAT I WILL NO LONGER BE WORKING ON THIS PROJECT. MY RECOMMENDATION IS THAT MARKETING BE ABSORBED BY THE PUBLICITY COMMITTEE.

Membership - Melissa Dasher Our membership season runs September 1, 2025, through August 31, 2026. Applications are available at the Players' building, in the Newsletter or on the Website.

Nominating - Sharon Benchoff Nothing to report

Patrons - Kel Nagel We have several new Patron Members. They will need numbers so can order tickets. Brenda is working with Kel and plans to take over next season.

Performance Space - Kel Nagel BUILDING/ CAPITAL CAMPAIGN REPORT

We are planning to begin the public phase of the fund drive in mid to late October, to coincide with the publicity campaign for Annie. We believe that these efforts will complement each other.

We will break down the building campaign into three phases. First is the efforts when we acquired the building and renovated the rehearsal hall. Second is the quiet phase since Tom got us zoning and Fire Marshall permission to create a theater and up until we go public. Third will be the public phase. As we have said before, we will try to obtain major grants and seek major donors before we go public. We can count the approximately \$400,000 we have raised in grants and fundraisers since September of 2022. We will also count any money we raise between now and when we go public.

To that end, we have approached several potential major donors, with no firm commitments yet. Certainly, if our members or patrons are able to make a donation of \$10,000, or knows someone we can ask, we would like to get that done as soon as possible.

Matt and Kel are in the process of seeking a major grant from the Henson foundation, who have been very generous to us in the past. Bobby Calloway is helping put together a proposal to Tidal Health.

We are preparing both paper and online brochures and donation/pledge forms to publicize the campaign. Damion Sykes and Mary Cathel are helping with that.

We will revise the financial target once we have received the latest construction estimate from Gillis/Gilkerson.

Also, the Team is meeting after this Board meeting to work on visual stuff.

Production - Kyle Hayes The production committee has been formed with a variety of talents and areas of expertise. We are eager to review submissions. I want to note that the show submission form had some suggested changes that need to be approved. I've already been asked for the form and needed to give last year's form by default.

Deadline to submit is November 30

Program / Program Advertising - Tom Robinson Have 5 new advertisers and 8 still to renew.

Publicity - Pete Cuesta All goes according to plan. Billboard for Annie is arranged; yard signs are being ordered.

Scholarship - Lynne Bratten The scholarship program will be sent to schools in November 2025.

Tickets & Box Office - Rusty Mumford TICKET SALES ARE LIVE ONLINE FOR ALL OF THE MAIN STAGE SHOWS AND FOR THE SPECIAL PRODUCTION IN DECEMBER. WE HAVE SOLD 6 SEASON TICKETS AND ARE HOPING FOR MORE. WE HAVE A FEW NEW BOX OFFICE VOLUNTEERS.

Social Media – Cass Dasher & Mary Cathell Reach out if you want something submitted. Will use same graphics for Poe Show as last year. Planning a media day for Annie. Posters are available for Annie and Poe.

Old Business

- Costume Committee By-Law Change

Part of the Committee Structure revision

- Committee Structure (See President's Report)

See website for bylaw requirements. Much discussion on whether to combine some committees. House, Ushers, Bar, Concession / Box Office, Season Tickets. Patrons with Membership. Should hospitality or Historical be combined with something else. Darrell will continue working on this.

- Alcohol Policy
Also need a bylaws change. Sharon will write with a committee.
- New Website

Will need a webmaster. May need to be a paid position. Darrell will contact Will Townsend to see where we are with launching. Asking around local companies for someone to run it. Advertise in the newsletter.

- Bar Sales

Tabled until next meeting

- Other Old Business

New Business

- Microsoft Products For Non Profit Organizations

Also tabled until new website is running

- Shore Gives 365-Sharon Benchoff, Shelbie Thompson

Used to be Giving Tuesday, Shore Gives More - through the Community Foundation . Now it is open all year. We have a profile set up there for online donations. We will be notified and need to send a thank you note. Giving Tuesday will also still be happening. Can create a donation button on our website that will take us to this platform. Can create QR codes for programs, etc. If was asked if this will create confusion for our capital campaign? We can move these donations to our endowment if we want.

- Safety/Security Concern

Individual became violent at a rehearsal and then again at an audition. Decided that doors will be locked once all are in a rehearsal. David Allen will get a doorbell. Darrell will go to law enforcement for advice.

- Other New Business

Received a Thank You note from Bethesda Church for 2 tickets for the silent auction.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Tom., seconded by David. All responded yea. Motion Passed.

Adjourned at 7:12 pm