

COMMUNITY PLAYERS OF SALISBURY PRESENTS

# MISERY



by William Goldman

based on the novel by Stephen King

Directed by Devin La Femina  
at Community Players Theater

PERFORMANCES

1/30 | 1/31 | 2/01

2/06 | 2/07 | 2/08

269<sup>th</sup>  
Production

89<sup>th</sup>  
Year

**Community Players of Salisbury, Inc.**

presents

# ***Misery***

By William Goldman

Based on the Novel by Stephen King

Directed by Devin La Femina

Friday, January 30, 2026 - 7:30 PM

Saturday, January 31, 2026 - 7:30 PM

Sunday, February 1, 2026 - 2:00 PM

Friday, February 6, 2026 - 7:30 PM

Saturday, February 7, 2026 - 7:30 PM

Sunday, February 8, 2026 - 2:00 PM

Presented through special arrangement with  
Concord Theatricals

205 West 57th Street, New York, NY 10107

This production was made possible, in part,  
by a grant from the Salisbury/Wicomico Arts Council  
and the Maryland State Arts Council

# Community Players’ President’s Message

Hello and welcome to the second production of our 89<sup>th</sup> season, *Misery*. This piece of gripping theatre reminds us of how powerful live theatre can be. The production challenges the actors on stage, the crew backstage, as well as you the audience. The story is an intense, psychological thriller that demands focus and collaboration from everyone involved. Devin La Femina, making her directorial debut with Community Players, has approached this work with fierce determination and professionalism. The cast and production team have put in countless hours to share our passion for storytelling.

Community theatre thrives because of that passion. From the meticulous technical elements to the nuanced performances you will see, *Misery* is the result of not only volunteerism but because of an unwavering commitment to excellence and diversity.

On behalf of our board of directors and our members, thank you for supporting live theatre in our community. We are embarking on a capital campaign to transform our performance space into a state-of-the-art performance venue. We hope you will support that effort; gifts of any size are welcome and appreciated.

I hope you enjoy the show—and perhaps find yourself a little on the edge of your seat.

*Darrell Mullins*

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David Allen, Lynne Bratten, Kim Cuesta, Pete Cuesta, Ken Johnson, Betsy Metzger, Tom Robinson, Charlie Szentesi-Thomas, Shelbie Thompson

## Director's Message

Hello, and welcome back to our theatre!

Some of you may be joining us for the first time, and some of you may be very used to attending our performances; either way, I'm so happy you're here. I know what you may be thinking..."Is this going to be as scary as the movie?" or "How are they going to pull this off?" All I can say is, if you're in the front row, I hope you brought your rain jacket because you're in the splash zone! Kidding, kidding.

This show is only possible because of the hard work of this cast and crew. My vision and my hopes for this show were brought to life by all of them, and I am endlessly grateful. This is my directorial debut, but having this team behind me has made this experience much less scary!

The horror genre often gets reduced to gore, jump scares and haunts, but it is so much more than that. It is a glimpse into the darkest parts of humanity, an examination of the parts of us that we are unsure of how to face. It is often our biggest fears, traumas and secrets under a microscope. It is a portrait of the world we live in and the ways that people respond to it. I implore you to take in this performance of *Misery* with all of this in mind.

Lastly, I just want to say this. In the show Annie says about her mother, "She's the only person who's never let me down." Well, that is the way I feel about my grandmother, Brenda Phillips. I lost her on December 17, 2024. She was my everything. I dedicate this show to her, even though she would have hated it (it doesn't have Meryl Streep, and it isn't a Hallmark Christmas movie). I love you, Mom-mom. I know you're cheering me on, and I know you would have added this program to the stack of all the other ones you had saved from my other plays.

Enjoy this cock-a-doodie show!

*Devin La Femina*

# Cast

Annie Wilkes .....AJ Payne  
Paul Sheldon .....Chuck Rafferty  
Buster .....Heather Oland

# Production Staff

Director ..... Devin La Femina  
Producer .....Sharon Benchoff  
Stage Manager .....Cass Dasher  
Stage Crew .....Todd Bounds, Brent Cole, Edward Cole,  
Dan O'Hare, Angela Schilb, Drew Schilb  
Costumes .....Kim Cuesta  
Makeup.....Angela Colone, Stephen Jackson  
Set Design ..... Pete Cuesta, Judy Hearn  
Sound ..... Emily Lawson  
Lighting .....Sharon Benchoff  
Props ..... Alyssa Daniels, Angela Schilb  
Fight Choreography .....John Wixted  
Set Construction ..... Kate Adkins, David Allen, Justin Allen,  
Sammy Barnes, Sharon Benchoff, Brian Beyer,  
Todd Bounds, Tony Broadbent, Bobbie Calloway,  
Brent Cole, Edward Cole, Pete Cuesta, Alyssa Daniels,  
Gary Finley, Judy Hearn, Brian Lewis, Julianna Markel,  
Dan O'Hare, Joe Prettyman, Drew Schilb,  
Andre Scholler, George Steber, Bill Zlakowski  
Programs ..... Tom Robinson  
House Manager .....Betsy Metzger

## **Synopsis**

After a serious car crash, successful romance novelist Paul Sheldon is rescued by former nurse Annie Wilkes, who claims to be his “number one fan”. Annie brings him to her remote cabin to recover, where her obsession takes a dark turn when she discovers Sheldon is killing off her favorite character from his novels. As Sheldon devises plans for escape, Annie grows increasingly controlling, even violent, as she forces the author to shape his writing to suit her twisted fantasies.

## **Scene**

A secluded home just outside Silver Creek, Colorado.

## **Act 1**

Winter in Colorado - 1987

## **15 minute Intermission**

Refreshments are available for sale in the lobby.

## **Act 2**

Several weeks later - early Spring

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The use of devices with lighted screens,  
including texting, is prohibited.  
Video or audio recording  
of this production is strictly prohibited.**

## Who's Who in the Cast

**Heather Oland (Sherriff Buster)** is appearing in her sixth mainstage production with Community Players; she previously appeared in *Rumors* (Claire), *Crimes of the Heart* (Chick), *Senior Follies* (Bernice), *Noises Off* (Belinda), and *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Eunice). Favorite shows with other companies have included *On Golden Pond* (Chelsea), *Desire Under the Elms* (Abbie), *Noises Off* (Brooke), and *Come Back to the Five and Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean* (Mona) at Church Hill Theater; *A Delicate Balance* (Julia) at the Garfield Center for the Arts in Chestertown; and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Helena) with the Shore Shakespeare Company. Heather is a certified Spanish to English translator and lives in Salisbury with her husband Kevin and their canine chaos muppet Apollo.

**AJ Payne (Annie Wilkes)** is a Salisbury University Theatre alum, who is thrilled to be performing onstage with Community Players of Salisbury for the very first time. Prior to performing onstage, AJ ran props for *Leading Ladies* and was a stagehand for *Crimes of the Heart* for Players. Most recently they appeared in Fultontown Theatre Company's productions of *The Tempest* (Stephano), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Mr. Ford), and the originally adapted piece, *Falstaff the Friend, Falstaff the Fool* (Falstaff/Various Characters). Some of their other favorite roles include those in *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Smee), *Cabaret* (Fräulein Schneider), and *Hairspray* (Tracy Turnblad). AJ would like to thank their friends and family (and most specifically their mom, Jadie) for their endless love and support and hope you enjoy the show.

**Chuck Rafferty (Paul Sheldon)** is delighted to be making his Community Players' debut in *Misery*. Chuck has an extensive background in local theaters, participating in productions at Possum Point Players in Georgetown, Second Street Players in Milford, and the Kent County Theater Guild in Dover. Since 2012, he has enacted roles in a diverse variety of productions, from big musicals (*Miracle On 34<sup>th</sup> Street*) to Shakespeare (*The Merry Wives Of Windsor*), and from classical dramas/comedies (*To Kill A Mockingbird*; *The Sunshine Boys*) to more contemporary works (*God Of Carnage*). Particular favorites include playing Hamm in Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* and Sir John Falstaff in Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives Of Windsor*. Chuck has undergone an unusual preparation regimen for his role in *Misery*. That preparation includes practice rolling out of bed and painfully dragging himself across the floor; also nontraditional weapons training with a focus on the deployment of antique typewriters, and defensive wrestling techniques used to fight off crazed nurses. Chuck is extremely excited to be working with AJ and Heather and Devin and Cass to bring you a great *Misery*, and he sincerely hopes you enjoy this horrific blood-soaked gore fest of a light comedy.

## Who's Who Behind the Scenes

**Devin La Femina (Director)** is making her directorial debut, and she could not be happier that you are here to see this performance. Before *Misery*, she performed on stage with Players in many roles including Adelaide in *Guys and Dolls*, Stella in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and Lina Lamont in *Singin' in the Rain*. Devin would like to take this time to thank Cass Dasher and Sharon Benchoff for all of their help with this production; their hard work and expertise guided her through every step of this process. Devin also wants to thank her hard-working cast and crew- you all are amazing! Last but not least, she has to thank her people: Justin (her incredible husband), Michelle, Paige, Chloe, Brian, Max - your support means more to me than I'll ever be able to say!

**Sharon Benchoff (Producer/Lighting Designer)** has been a member of Community Players for over four decades. During those years, she has lit countless productions for Players. Some of Sharon's favorite lighting designs include *Jekyll & Hyde*, *The Dining Room*, *Into the Woods* and *Chicago*. Producer credits include *Noises Off*, *I Hate Hamlet* and *Crimes of the Heart* to name a few. Sharon is flattered that Devin asked her to be part of the production team for *Misery* and has enjoyed the collaboration tremendously. Sharon is delighted to add Devin to the list of visionary directors for Community Players.



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## Who's Who Behind the Scenes

**Kim Cuesta (Costumes)** has enjoyed taking on many roles both on and off the stage at Community Players of Salisbury and Possum Point Players in Delaware over the last 10 years. She has played comedic, dramatic and musical roles. Favorite on stage performances include *Calendar Girls* (both at CPOS and PPP), *The Dining Room*, *Pippin*, and, most recently Community Players' Christmas show, *A Gift to Remember!* She is currently serving on the board of directors for Community Players. Kim has thoroughly enjoyed costuming this cast, especially our "Number 1 Fan". Kim hopes you all enjoy this classic psychological thriller.

**Angela Colone & Stephen Jackson (Make-up)** are showcasing their makeup talents in their first show with Community Players. They are involved with Scareactor creating and have been in the haunt industry for 15+ years including acting in haunts across Delaware, PA, & Maryland, helping haunt actors with roles at Screams at the Beach, 301 Devil's Playground and Old Crow Manor. Angela considers herself a hauntrepeneur and loves to teach effects techniques, scareactor building, and creating horror scenes. Angela also loves meditation, crafting and reading! Stephen takes character creating to the next level with a variety of household effects and costume layering. He loves to find ways to get out of a normal night with themes in his weekend escapes. Naturally, they were ready to bruise (or break) a leg or two for *Misery*.

**John Wixted, (Fight Choreography)** is excited to have been involved in such a special performance. A graduate of Salisbury University with degrees in Music Education and Vocal Performance, John has an extensive background in performance and theatre education. He has appeared in over 50 musicals, plays, and operas, and for the past decade has focused primarily on directing, music directing, and choreography. His credits include numerous school productions, the All-County Musical, and multiple shows with the Community Players of Salisbury. JW has also served as MMEA Middle School State Representative and Vice President of ESCDA, and in 2023 received the MMEA Outstanding Music Educator Award. Most recently you can find JW serving as the Assistant Principal at Prince Street Elementary school where he also co-founded the Drama Club. A huge BREAK A LEG to this beautiful cast of Humans!



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## Who's Who Behind the Scenes

**Judy Hearn (Set Design)** joined Community Players in 2010 with the encouragement of one of her art students at Delmar High School. Since that time Judy has been seen in many productions including *Blithe Spirit*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Calendar Girls*, *Noises Off*, *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* and many special productions. When she is not on stage, she is busy on a ladder applying her art degree on Players' sets including *A Gift to Remember*, *Pippin*, *Into the Woods*, *Addams Family*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Les Misérables*, *South Pacific*, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, *On Golden Pond*, *Arsenic & Old Lace*, and *Wizard of Oz*.

**Emily Lawson (Sound Design)** is very excited to be a part of the production team for another show. Working with Community Players is always a great experience, from set building and stage crew to acting and running sound. Most recently, Emily was seen on stage in Community Players' production of *Kiss Me Kate* and was found at the sound board for Players' productions of *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Emily hopes everyone enjoys the show.

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## Who's Who Behind the Scenes

**Cass Dasher (Stage Manager)** has been involved in the technical side of theater with Community Players since joining stage crew for *The Addams Family* in 2015. They have worn a number of hats in that time, from running lights on *Leading Ladies*, to sound on *I Hate Hamlet*, to props on *Pippin*. Cass has acted as Stage Manager for numerous Community Players' shows, most recently on *Guys and Dolls* in fall of 2024. They also made their directorial debut with *The Importance of Being Earnest* in June 2025. By day, Cass works for the Worcester County Library. Cass wishes to thank Devin for allowing them to be part of this exciting project, and the cast and crew for being such great collaborators in bringing this story to life. And as always, thanks to Alyssa for her constant support.

**Pete Cuesta (Set Design/Construction)** loves being both behind the scenes and on stage. A podiatrist by day, Pete has enjoyed the theatre for most of his life. His passion for Theatre continues with his family with his wife, Kim and his daughters, Madison and Abigail, all finding a love of performance. Favorite performances include *Annie* (Oliver Warbucks), *Something Rotten* (Nick Bottom), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Butlers), *Edgar Allen Poe / Tales of Terror* (The Raven), *Curious Incident of a Dog in the Nighttime* (No. 7), *South Pacific* (Lt. Harbinger), *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Gangster 1), *Into The Woods* (Steward), and *Fiddler on the Roof* (Avram). Pete has directed the following productions for Community Players, *Pippin*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Deathtrap* and was stage manager for *Kiss Me Kate*.

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Dear Potential Donor:

Community Players of Salisbury, one of the oldest community theaters in Maryland, has been awarded a \$150,000 challenge grant from the Richard A. Henson Foundation so that the Players can complete renovations on the theater that is located at 5109 Nutters Cross Road in Salisbury, including installing handicapped bathrooms, dressing rooms, and costume storage. In order for Players to receive the \$150,000, Players needs to raise \$150,000. Would you be so kind to donate to this worthy cause?

To donate online, go to [www.sbyPlayers.org](http://www.sbyPlayers.org). On the home page there is a donate button, which takes one to the Players' Capital Campaign page. There, donations can be made by credit or debit card. If you prefer to write a check, make the check out to Community Foundation of The Eastern Shore, with Community Players' Capital Campaign fund on the memo line. Mail the check to Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore, 1324 Belmont Ave., Suite 401, Salisbury, MD 21804. All donations will be acknowledged and tracked by the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore, who will verify compliance with IRS and other regulations.

Your donation will be instrumental in helping the Community Players of Salisbury meet its mission of encouraging education, interest, and participation in theater and providing quality theatrical productions for the local audiences.

Thank you for considering donating to this worthy cause. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 410-726-0670.

Sincerely,

Kel Nagel

Capital Campaign Chairperson



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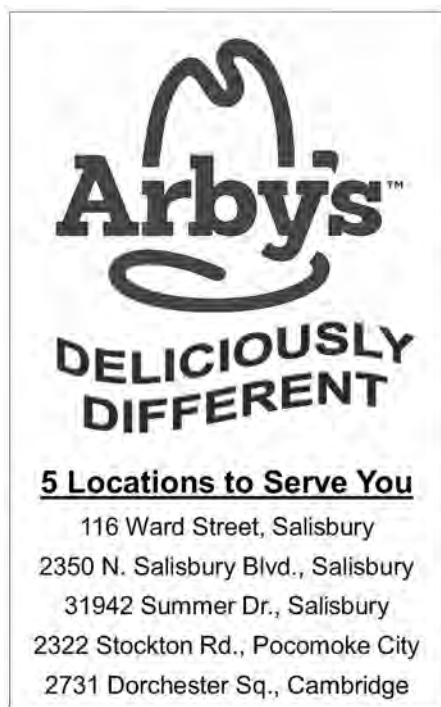


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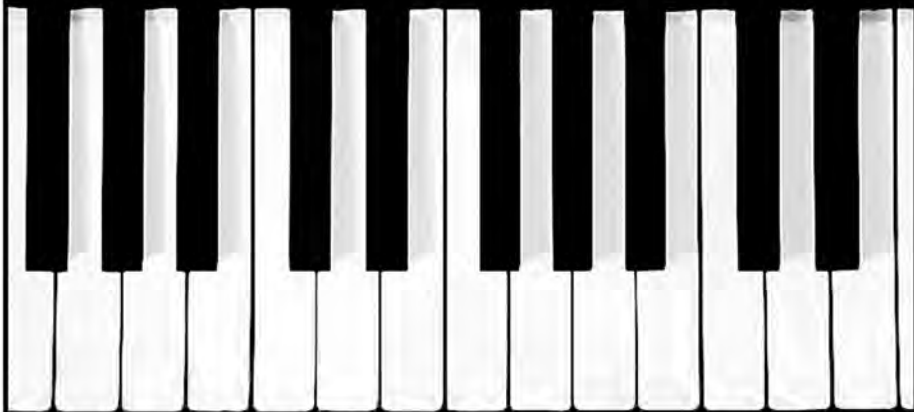
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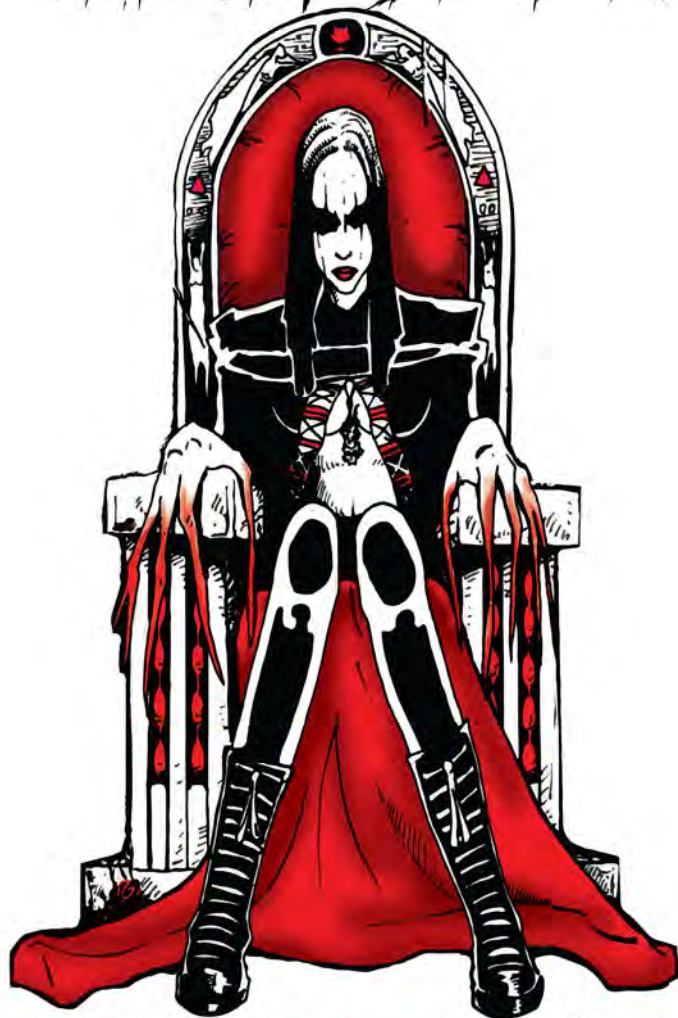
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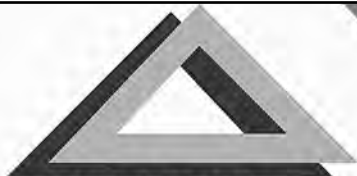
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