



COMMUNITY  
PLAYERS  
*of Salisbury*

April  
2026

# Back Stage



Greetings!

As the days grow longer and the chill of winter begins to fade, we welcome the arrival of spring—a season of renewal, fresh energy, and new beginnings. It's a time when creativity blossoms, much like the flowers around us, and we're excited to carry that spirit onto the stage.

For our next production we are delighted to bring you ***Old Hams***, a warm, witty, and heartfelt play that celebrates the enduring love of theatre. Set in a retirement home for actors, the story follows a group of once-great performers who refuse to let age dim their passion for the spotlight. With humor, nostalgia, and touching moments, ***Old Hams*** reminds us that the joy of performing—and the bonds it creates—never fade.

Spring is the perfect time to gather, laugh, and share in the magic of live theatre, and we can't wait to welcome you to this delightful production. Whether you're a longtime supporter or joining us for the first time, we hope this show brings a smile to your face and a bit of sunshine to your day.

Here's to a season of growth, laughter, and great performances!

Kind Regards,

*Darrell Mullins*  
President

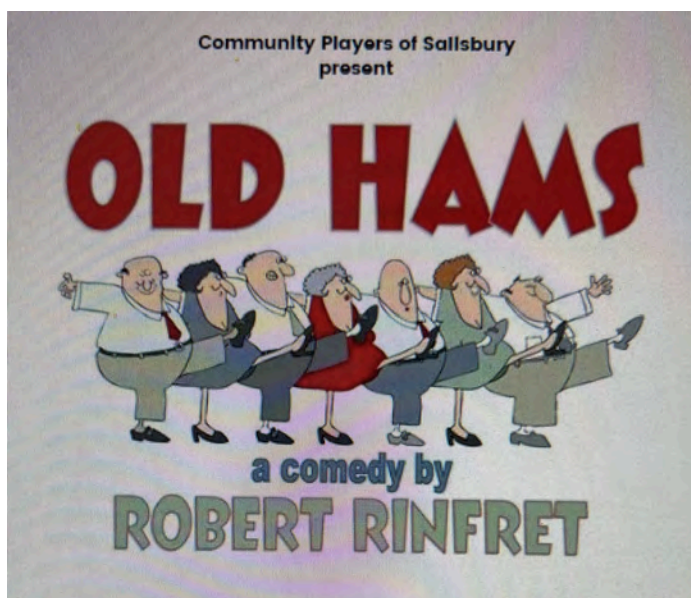


Players' next meetings will be **April 1 (6:00 PM) and May 6 (7:00 PM)**. Join us as we continue to work on our season.

## 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



## OLD HAMS UPDATE AND CAMEO PERFORMER REQUEST

Director Sherri Hynes is very pleased that rehearsals are going well for the third show of our season, Old Hams. This family-friendly comedy is sure to be a crowd pleaser. The cast and crew are hard at work, getting things ready to make our audience laugh.

We are pleased to announce that Players' veteran Jim King has joined the cast as the Radio Announcer. Area audiences will remember Jim from his decades of performances with Players as well as his time as a DJ on WJDY-AM Radio.

*As part of the show, we are looking for 4-5 cameo performers for each performance. Each cameo will be part of a group of people who appear briefly on stage as souvenir shoppers in the second act. There are no lines to learn—just a few minutes of walk on/walk off stage time. If you want to volunteer as a cameo for one (or more) performance(s) or want more information, please contact Assistant Director Rusty Mumford at [popitrusty@comcast.net](mailto:popitrusty@comcast.net) or 410-430-0423. What a fun way to be part of this show!*

Old Hams runs April 10-12 and 17-19 at Players' Theater on Nutters Cross Road in Salisbury. Tickets are available on our website, [sbyplayers.org](http://sbyplayers.org), or by calling Players at 410-546-0099.



## 1776 Audition Information

Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, at 7:00 on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. Auditions will be held at Christ Methodist Church at 211 Phillip Morris Drive in Salisbury. There will be signs on the road directing you to the church and parking. You will sing 16 bars or so of a song of your choice (other than one from 1776) either using Bluetooth or with a piano accompanist whom we will provide. You will read scenes I have chosen from the libretto.

There are 24 male roles. Some of the roles do not require singing, most do not require dancing. In fact, there are only two songs that contain dancing and neither one is complicated. You probably realize that John Adams, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson are the leads. But I consider other delegates to be much more than supporting roles. Edward Rutledge from South Carolina has an extremely powerful solo and is pivotal to the story of the birth of our Nation. Richard Henry Lee from Virginia is the delegate that makes the motion for independence and has a high energy solo. While John Hancock, Charles Thomson and Ceasar Rodney may not sing, we can't have the Continental Congress without them as President, Secretary and Patriot from Delaware. All present in the Continental Congress played a crucial role in declaring independence from England and though it is a cliché, it is a truism, there are no small parts. Be open to various roles and be part of telling the story of the birth of a nation and an idea while having a good time. There are many humorous moments and quirky personalities for actors to take hold of.

Now, to quote Abigail Adams in a letter to her husband, "Remember the ladies". I shall. Another of my favorites of Abigail quotes is "All men would be tyrants if they could". A very insightful woman indeed. We see and hear Abigail in her own words as she speaks and sings to John from her home in Braintree, MA where she runs the farm, the finances, the house and cares for their four children.

Martha Jefferson, whom we see arriving in Philadelphia (poetic license, she never visits PA) and the following morning. While singing and dancing with Adams and Franklin, she steals our hearts with her vitality, warmth and deep love for Thomas. Little is known of Martha. There are no surviving portraits or letters. We know she played the harpsichord extremely well and played duets with Thomas on the violin. We see her in 1776 to illustrate the deep love and desire Jefferson has to return to Monticello to his wife.

I could fill this newsletter with historical facts, but know this Tony winning Broadway hit, puts a human face on the pages of history. I hope you will audition and join in bringing 1776 to the stage and having lots of fun while we do. As always, any questions, please ask. My email address is [fresnelop@gmail.com](mailto:fresnelop@gmail.com)

## **FUNDRAISING UPDATE**

1. Our second annual Spring Craft and Vendor Fair was held Saturday, March 28, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Community Players' Theater. Thanks to all who were involved in this fundraiser, especially Wendy Stever for coordinating the event and David Allen for his work with getting the vendors in their places.

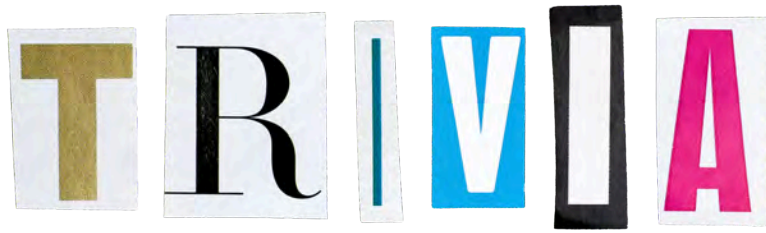
2. We are looking for teams to compete in the Community Players' Friendly Feud Fundraiser to be held April 23-26 at Community Players' Theater. We need 16 teams to compete for the grand prize of \$500, with a second place prize of \$250. Each team will consist of five members (friends, family, coworkers), answering survey questions with the aim to score more points than the other team. The first set of eight teams will battle it out on Thursday, April 23, from 7 to 10 p.m., and the second set of eight teams will battle it out on Friday, April 24, from 7 to 10 p.m. Winners advance to play on Saturday, April 25, from 7 to 10 p.m. Saturday winners advance to the semifinals and finals, to be held on Sunday, April 26, from 2 to 4 p.m. Cost of registration is \$100 per team. If you do not want to enter a team but would like to watch the teams battle it out, admission is \$10 at the door. If you are interested in entering a team, contact Matt Bogdan at 443-235-3272 or [oceancityhappyme@aol.com](mailto:oceancityhappyme@aol.com). The Friendly Feud Fundraiser is sponsored in part by Guardian Pest Control. We thank them for their support.

3. America 250: A Birthday Celebration will take place on June 26 and June 27 at 7:30 p.m. and June 28 at 2 p.m. at the Community Players' Theater. Sponsored by the Wicomico Historical Society in cooperation with Community Players, a two-act presentation of patriotic speeches, songs, poems, stories and slides will celebrate America's 250th birthday. The band WW2's, who played in last year shows commemorating the men and women of the Eastern Shore who participated in WW2, will be playing, as well. Admission is free; donations accepted. If you are interested in being in the production as a speaker or singer, contact Matt Bogdan at 443-235-3272 or [oceancityhappyme@aol.com](mailto:oceancityhappyme@aol.com).

## **GRANTS UPDATE**

1. The Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore granted the Community Players an award of \$2400 to be used to help pay the stipends of counselors at the Summer Youth Drama Workshop to be held in July 2026. The Coastal Association of Realtors also contributed \$1000 toward the cause. We thank these organizations for their support.

2. Community Players has been awarded a \$150,000 Challenge Grant from the Richard A. Henson Foundation to complete renovations on the Community Players' Theater, which include installing handicapped bathrooms, dressing rooms, and costume storage. In order for Players to receive the \$150,000, we need to raise \$150,000. Donations can be made by credit or debit card by going to our website ([Sbyplayers.org](http://Sbyplayers.org)) and clicking on the donate button which takes you to the Players' Capital Campaign page. 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' mission of encouraging education, interest, and participation in theater and providing quality theatrical productions for local audiences. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Kel Nagel, Capital Campaign Chairperson, at 410-726-0670.



**THEATRE TEASERS**  
**Trivia by Sharon Benchoff**  
**April - "Let's Hear It for the Boy"**

1. He is perhaps Dickens' best-known orphan and friend to the Artful Dodger.
2. While visiting his aunt for the summer in Maycomb, Alabama, he befriends Scout and Jem.
3. "Let's Hear it for the Boy" is from what musical about kids just wanting to dance?
4. What is the name of the boy and Barrie's muse in ***Finding Neverland***?
5. In ***Sweeney Todd***, who first sings the song "Johanna"?
6. He just can't wait to be king.
7. The musical ***Big River*** is the story of what Mark Twain character?
8. This musical features the characters Leaf Coneybear, William Barfee and Chip Tolentino.
9. Who is the main character and narrator in ***Brighton Beach Memoirs***?
10. Melchior Gabor and Moritz Stiefel are classmates in this coming-of-age musical.

Answers found on page 6

## **AUDITION NOTICE**

Auditions for ***America 250: A Birthday Celebration*** will be held Sunday, May 3, at 2 p.m. at Community Players' Theater. The show, sponsored by the Wicomico Historical Society in cooperation with Community Players, is a two-act presentation of patriotic speeches, songs, poems, stories and slides which will celebrate America's 250th birthday. Dramatic readers and singers are needed. No memorization will be required. Show dates are June 26 and June 27 at 7:30 p.m. and June 28 at 2 p.m. at Community Players' Theater. Those auditioning to be a dramatic reader will be asked to read a section from the script provided by the director. Those auditioning to be singers will be asked to sing one of the songs in the show, again provided by the director. For more information contact Matt Bogdan at 443-235-3272 or [oceancityhappyme@aol.com](mailto:oceancityhappyme@aol.com).



Your Your opinion and experience can make an impact on the future of Community Players. It is time to begin to think about who a terrific addition to the Board of Directors would be. If you believe you would contribute to the decision-making process or know someone who would be an asset to Players, then let me know. I am accepting nominations for Board Members and Officers.

Board Members serve a three-year term and are expected to attend the meetings and contribute to discussions and decisions that affect Players, including voting on the season of shows. Officers serve a one-year term.

The VP will automatically serve as President after their one-year term.

Nominations are accepted through the close of the May board meeting. Those nominated must be a paid member of Players. Elections take place in June and the terms begin in July.

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.

*Sharon Benchoff*  
fresnelop@gmail.com

## ANSWERS TO TRIVIA QUESTIONS:

1. Oliver Twist
2. Dill (for extra points, full name is Charles Baker Harris) from *To Kill a Mockingbird*.
3. Footloose
4. Peter (Peter Llewelyn Davies) Well done if you had the full name.
5. Anthony Hope
6. Simba
7. Huckleberry Finn
8. *The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*
9. Eugene Morris Jerome (you get credit for just Eugene, unless you are Darrell Mullins)
10. *Spring Awakening* (still one of my favorites)

ANSWERS:

Enter Your Team in  
**Community Players'**  
**Friendly Feud Fundraiser!**

**Grand Prize: \$500**

**Second place: \$250**

**April 23-26 at Community Players' Theater  
at 5109 Nutters Cross Road in Salisbury**

Assemble your dream team "family" and play the Community Players' version of a game show favorite! Duke it out in our fast-paced face-offs and unleash your inner game show star!

- A. Gather your team of five people (must be 18+). These can be family members, friends, or co-workers.**
- B. Gather the registration fee of \$100 per team.**
- C. Contact Matt Bogdan at 443-235-3272 or [oceancityhappyme@aol.com](mailto:oceancityhappyme@aol.com).**

Teams 1-8 play on Thursday, April 23, from 7 to 10 p.m.; Teams 9-16 play on Friday, April 24, from 7-10 p.m.

Thursday and Friday winning teams advance to play on Saturday, April 25, from 7-10 p.m.

Saturday winning teams advance to play on Sunday, April 26, from 2-4 p.m.

**Not ready for the stage? You can watch contestants sweat under the spotlight from the comfort of the audience! Admission is \$10 at the door. Interested in sponsoring or advertising in the program? Contact Matt Bogdan.**

**All proceeds from the fundraiser go toward meeting the Richard A. Henson Challenge Grant of \$150,000, helping Players raise funds for renovations to the theater.**

**SAVE THE DATES!!!**

Community Players of Salisbury's  
2026 Youth Summer Theatre Workshops

July 6-11 — entering grades 9-12  
July 13-18 — entering grades 3-8

More information to come soon!

**Community Players of Salisbury**  
**P. O. Box 2431**  
**Salisbury, MD 21802**

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**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

*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, April 1 (6:00 PM) and May 6 (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*

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