THEATRE HARRISBURG

PRESENTS

AGATHA CHRISTIE'S

MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS

A KEN LUDWIG PLAY BASED ON
AGATHA CHRISTIE'S BELOVED NOVEL

APRIL 25 - MAY 11, 2025

WHITAKER CENTER

AGATHA CHRISTIE'S
MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS

BY AGATHA CHRISTIE

ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY KEN LUDWIG

"Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com



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THEATRE HARRISBURG

Proudly Presents

AGATHA CHRISTIE'S MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS

Adapted for the stage by
KEN LUDWIG

Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express was originally staged by McCarter Theater Center, Princeton, NJ - Emily Mann, Artistic Director, Timothy J. Shields, Managing Director. The production subsequentlt transferred to Hartford Stage, Hartford, CT - Darko Tresnjak, Artistic Director, Michael Stotts, Managing Director.

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SPECIAL THANKS to HACC's Film & Theatre program, Gamut Theatre Group, Open Stage, and the Vinton Family for their support of Theatre Harrisburg, and this production.

THANK YOU to everyone who has assisted with our production, especially if we have failed to mention you by name in our program.

pennsylvania
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Theatre Harrisburg receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pensylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

KEN LUDWIG



Ken Ludwig has had six productions on Broadway and eight in London's West End. His 34 plays and musicals are staged around the world and throughout the United States every night of the year.

His first play, *Lend Me a Tenor*, won two Tony Awards and was called "one of the classic comedies of the 20th century" by *The Washington Post*. *Crazy For You* is currently running on London's West End. It was previously on Broadway for five years, on the West End for three, and won the Tony and Olivier Awards for Best Musical.

In addition, he has won the Edwin Forrest Award for Contributions to the American Theatre, two Laurence Olivier Awards, two Helen Hayes Awards, the Charles MacArthur Award and the Edgar Award for Best Mystery of the Year. His other plays include *Moon Over Buffalo, Leading Ladies, Baskerville, Sherwood, Twentieth Century, Dear Jack, Dear Louise, A Fox on the Fairway, A Comedy of Tenors, The Game's Afoot, Shakespeare in Hollywood* and *Murder on the Orient Express*. They have starred, among others, Alec Baldwin, Carol Burnett, Kristen Bell, Tony Shaloub, Joan Collins and Henry Goodman.

His book *How to Teach Your Children Shakespeare*, published by Penguin Random House, won the Falstaff Award for Best Shakespeare Book of the Year, and his essays on theatre are published in the Yale Review. He gives the Annual Ken Ludwig Playwriting Scholarship at the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, and he served on the Board of Governors for the Folger Shakespeare Library for ten years. His first opera, *Tenor Overboard*, opened at the Glimmerglass Festival in July 2022. His most recent world premieres were *Lend Me A Soprano* and *Moriarty*, and his newest plays and musicals include *Pride and Prejudice Part 2: Napoleon at Pemberley* and *Lady Molly of Scotland Yard*.

His plays include commissions from the Agatha Christie Estate, the Royal Shakespeare Company, The Old Globe Theatre, and the Bristol Old Vic. For more information visit www.kenludwig.com.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



All aboard and welcome to the fourth show in Theatre Harrisburg's 99th Season: *Murder on the Orient Express*! For those who are not familiar with Theatre Harrisburg, we are proud to say that we have been Harrisburg's community theatre since 1926.

We share our history with the Queen of Mystery herself, Agatha Christie, who came to sudden fame in the 1920's. With 77 books, 157 short stories, 15 plays, memoirs, poetry and more, Christie is widely regarded as the most popular and best-selling fiction writer of all time. Her works have sold over two billion copies worldwide and have been translated into over 100 languages.

Though there have been many stage adaptations of Agatha Christie's work, it was Ken Ludwig that was approached by Christie's estate to adapt Dame Agatha's most enduring novel. An honor which, it is said, he agreed to with alacrity. Ken Ludwig is no stranger to the stage with 31 plays and musicals performed in over 30 countries in more than 20 languages throughout the world. In addition to two Tony Awards for his classic comedy *Lend Me A Tenor*, Ludwig won the Edgar Award for Best Mystery of the Year, among others.

Although this play offers a great deal of levity and entertainment, *Murder on the Orient Express* also prompts critical conversation about democracy, justice, moral responsibility, and the cost of complicity. It is a story that remains dazzling, fun, and extremely relevant.

It truly takes a village to produce shows on the scale of the one you are about to witness and we couldn't do this without your incredible support. Whether through volunteering, donations, or simply supporting our performers from the audience, you are an essential part of our theatre's journey.

Thank you for joining us today, and for being part of our theatre family. Enjoy the ride!

Lorien Reese Mahay
Executive Director

FROM THE DIRECTOR



Welcome to Theatre Harrisburg's production of *Murder on the Orient Express*.

The story you are about to see is an age old story: Eleven passengers board a train, one of them is murdered, and another just happens to be a world famous detective. What could possibly go wrong?

As a young reader my parents handed me many different detectives to read. *The Boxcar Kids*, *Sherlock Holmes* and *Jessica Fletcher* were all novels carried in my backpack. The words of Agatha Christie did not come into view until much later. The way she balances the drama and comedy of these complex human moments allows the reader to trust at the end of the novel there will be a resolution. Ken Ludwig has expertly captured that in this adaptation.

Over the last few months, it has been my pleasure to lead this amazing cast and design team through this process. Each designer has been as meticulous as Poirot to make sharp decisions on how this should look and feel. The cast are at the top of their game in this show. It's my job to get out of their way and let them ride the train.

I must pause and thank Lorien, Abby, and Dave for allowing me to ride the train with this incredible team. The work of Laura, Julia, Mitra, Lea, Paul, Mike, Kalina, Curtis, Alexandra, and Jeanne have helped shape where we are today. No show opens without a village and this show is no exception. The ladies in the costume shop and Curtis's incredible scenic team have brought this train adventure to life.

Sit on the edge of your seat tonight, you may just miss a very important clue.

Matt Spencer
Director

THE CHARACTERS

HERCULE POIROT.....DARREN RIDDLE

MONSIER BOUC.....GORDON EINHORN

MARY DEBENHAM.....CHRISTINE TOMPKINS

HECTOR MACQUEEN.....JOEL COLVIN

MICHEL THE CONDUCTOR/HEAD WAITER.....QUENTIN WEST

PRINCESS DRAGOMIROFF.....BETH MCINTOSH

GRETA OHLSSON.....ALISON WHIPPLE

COUNTESS ANDRENYI.....BECKY MEASE

HELEN HUBBARD.....DIANE MCCORMICK

COLONEL ARBUTHNOT/SAMUEL RATCHETT.....TOBY BRADBURY

SETTING

The principal action of the play takes place aboard the Orient Express as it travels from Instanbul to Western Europe. The time is 1934. Act I takes place mid-day to morning. Act II takes place morning to mid-day.

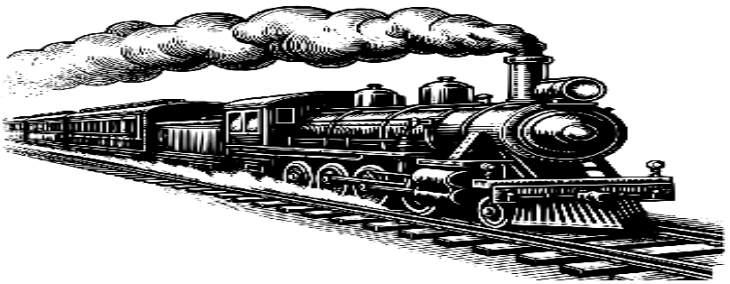
THE TEAM



MATT SPENCER he/him (Director) | This is Matt's 7th production with Theatre Harrisburg! He has previously directed and choreographed *Avenue Q, SpongeBob Squarepants: The Musical, Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike,* and *Seussical the Musical* at Theatre Harrisburg. Matt is the director for Theatre Harrisburg's Penguin Project, and he creates chaos at Hershey's Chocolate World with seasonal events and experiences. "Much love to Abby. Thank you to Mom and Dad for putting novels in my hands as a child that grew my love of mysteries."



LAURA DUGAN she/her (Stage Manager) | This is Laura's 12th production with Theatre Harrisburg! Past stage management experience includes, but is not limited to, *Next to Normal, SpongeBob Squarepants: The Musical, Oh, Joy! Oh, Rapture!,* and *A Christmas Story*, all at Theatre Harrisburg. Laura is a full-time freelance communications specialist. She has been working backstage for Theatre Harrisburg in a variety of roles since 2010. Laura is also a playwright, and in 2018 her adaptation of *Little Women* was performed at Open Stage. Laura is so thankful for this fabulous cast and crew. She would also like to thank her dad for instilling in her a love of British mysteries.



THE CAST



DARREN RIDDLE he/him (Hercule Poirot) | This is Darren's 15th production with Theatre Harrisburg! Past roles include Harold Hill in *The Music Man* at Hershey Area Playhouse, Gomez Addams in *The Addams Family*, Aldolpho in *The Drowsy Chaperone*, Dr. Watson in *Baskerville*, and Vanya in *Vanya, Sasha, Masha & Spike* all at Theatre Harrisburg. Darren is a professional corporate trainer with 33 years of sales and training experience and is currently employed by Crawford & Co. He enjoys serving on the Board of Theatre Harrisburg. His hobbies are golfing, travel, good food, and great times with family and friends! He would like to thank Monica, his amazing wife of 35 years and his entire family and close friends for their years of support in his theater endeavors!



GORDON EINHORN he/him (Monsieur Bouc) | Gordon last performed at Theatre Harrisburg as Alan Raleigh in *God of Carnage*! Past roles at Oyster Mill Playhouse include Sidney Bruhl in *Deathtrap* and Richard Greatham in *Hay Fever*. At Little Theatre of Mechanicsburg, his roles include George Hay in *Moon Over Buffalo* and Tony Wendice in *Dial M For Murder*. Past roles at Belmont Theater include Paul Sheldon in *Misery*. Gordon majored in theatre at Sarah Lawrence College, followed by several seasons of summer stock in New England and Canada. He also appeared in productions at the Liberty Theatre and the Colony Theater, both in Los Angeles. He received his law degree at the University of Southern California and is a partner at a law firm in Harrisburg. He is currently a member of the Board of Directors of the Little Theatre of Mechanicsburg. Gordon is thrilled to be working with so many great people in *Murder on the Orient Express* and thanks his wife, Anne, for her invaluable support.



CHRISTINE TOMPKINS she/her (Mary Debenham) | This is Christine's Theatre Harrisburg debut! Having just moved from Pittsburgh, Christine has been involved in theater in some capacity since she was 4 years old! She would like to give a massive thank you to her husband, Matthew, and another huge thank you to Matt and Laura, and to the entire cast and crew.

THE CAST



JOEL COLVIN he/him (Hector MacQueen) | This is Joel's 5th production with Theatre Harrisburg! Past roles include Genghis Kahn Schmitz/Wickersham 1 in *Seussical*, Motel in *Fiddler on the Roof*, Buddy in *Side Show*, and Issachar/Baker in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* with Theatre Harrisburg and Dromio of Ephesus in *Comedy of Errors* with Gamut Theatre. Joel is a software trainer for STARS Campus Solutions and enjoys watching horror movies in his free time! He would like to thank his friends and family for their constant support and encouragement!



QUENTIN WEST he/him (Michel the Conductor/Head Waiter) | This is Quentin's 2nd production with Theatre Harrisburg! Past roles include Herman in *Cabaret* with Theatre Harrisburg, Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Officer Lockstock in *Urinetown*, both at Penn State Harrisburg. Quentin is a recent graduate of Penn State with a degree in Mechanical Engineering!



BETH MCINTOSH she/her (Princess Dragomiroff) | This is Beth's 6th production with Theatre Harrisburg! Past roles include Sonia in *Vanya, Sonia, Masha & Spike* and Reba Freitag in *Last Night of Ballyhoo* at Theatre Harrisburg; Ofelia in *Anna In The Tropics* and Elizabeth in *The Crucible* at Hershey Playhouse; and Clairee in *Steel Magnolias* at York Little Theatre. Beth is an executive assistant at Capital Blue Cross. She also records audiobooks, knits, and loves spending time with her cat Lucy! "Special thanks to Matt Spencer for casting me again!"



ALISON WHIPPLE she/her (Greta Ohlsson) | This is Alison's 5th production with Theatre Harrisburg. Previously at Theatre Harrisburg, Alison "killed" it as Sally/Chiron in *The Lightning Thief*, Mayzie LaBird in *Seussical*, and Martha in *The Secret Garden*. Alison previously took a "stab" at improv training for two years at Second City, is "dying" to finish her master's degree in counterterrorism at PSU, "slays" at playing the harp with the Hershey Symphony, and could "murder" a chocolate shake right about now. She has a "killer" husband and loves her three kids to "death."

THE CAST



BECKY MEASE she/her (Countess Andrenyi) | This is Becky's 28th production with Theatre Harrisburg, but her very first non-musical! Past roles at Theatre Harrisburg include, but are not limited to, Mrs. Lovett in *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, Countess Charlotte in *A Little Night Music*, Alice Beineke in *The Addams Family*, Penelope Pennywise in *Urinetown, the Musical,* and Gertrude McFuzz in *Seussical*. Becky has spent the past 22 years volunteering with Theatre Harrisburg from performing onstage, helping backstage, and as a member of the theatre's Board of Directors. By day she is a professional civil engineer managing one of the largest interchange reconstruction projects in Central PA! Becky couldn't be more grateful to be part of another Matt Spencer-led production along with so many other talented folks. "Thanks for all the snorts my friends!"



DIANE MCCORMICK she/her (Helen Hubbard) | This is Diane's 13th production acting with Theatre Harrisburg (not counting the 3 she's stage managed)! Past roles include Margaret in *The Philadelphia Story*, Elvira in *Blithe Spirit*, Maggie in *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, Kate in *Wild Oats*, and Bananas in *The House of Blue Leaves*, all at Theatre Harrisburg (and formerly, Harrisburg Community Theatre). Diane is a freelance journalist for TheBurg and other publications, a Historic Harrisburg Association volunteer, and forever renovating her circa-1910 Harrisburg home! Diane knows that her late husband, TH's Marc Farrell, is laughing "heh-heh" in the audience.



TOBY BRADBURY he/him (Colonel Arbuthnot/Samuel Ratchett) | This is Toby's 2nd production with Theatre Harrisburg! Past roles include Trevor in *The Play That Goes Wrong* at Keystone Theatrics, Lenny Ganz in *Rumors* at Theatre Harrisburg, Macduff in *Macbeth* at Avalon Playhouse, Orin Scrivello, DDS/Every Ensemble Character in *Little Shop of Horrors*, and Biff Loman in *Death of Salesman*, both at The Belmont Theatre. Toby is a founding member of the Oxymorons Comedy Troupe, who perform regularly at The West Shore Theatre, and have performed and taught improv workshops up and down the East Coast. He also teaches and performs regularly at the Harrisburg Improv Theatre! "Thanks to all my friends and family for their support. It means more than you'll ever know."

ANGEL CONTRIBUTIONS

In the world of theater, an "Angel" is a financial backer who ensures the show will go on. Angels have never been more important than now in allowing us to preserve the past, protect the present, and prepare for the future of Theatre Harrisburg. Our angels help to keep the lights burning bright so that we can continue to provide the high-quality productions you have come to expect from Theatre Harrisburg.

For information on how you or your company can donate to Theatre Harrisburg, please email us at email@theatreharrisburg.com, or call (717) 232-5501 x1

2024-2025
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(This list reflects gifts for our 24-25 campaign year received before April 1, 2025)

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In memory of Rita Wambach by Jay & Nancy Krevsky
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In honor of Marc Farrell by Joseph Halko
In memory of Arnold Zuckerman by Jay & Nancy Krevsky
In memory of Marc Farrell by James & Marilyn Chestek
In honor of Jay & Nancy Krevsky from Drs. Michael Katzman & Margery Wasko
In Honor of Laura Dugan's Birthday by Tim & Jeanie Boucher
Dedicated to Laura Dugan, who just got older, by Martin Toth
In Memory of Marc Farrell by William & Kay Pickering
In Memory of Marc Farrell by Sandra Baylor
In Loving Memory of M. Rebecca Harley
In Honor of Jay Krevsky by Jason Brown
In Memory of Marc Farrell by David & Deborah Stutzman
In Honor Of Roberta & Jim Jacobs by Gary Treven
In Honor of Jay and Nacy Krevsky by Diane Sand
In Honor of Laura Dugan by Diane Dugan
In Honor of Jay Miffoluf by Lori Myers
In loving memory of my wife, Carolyn by Robin Dorff

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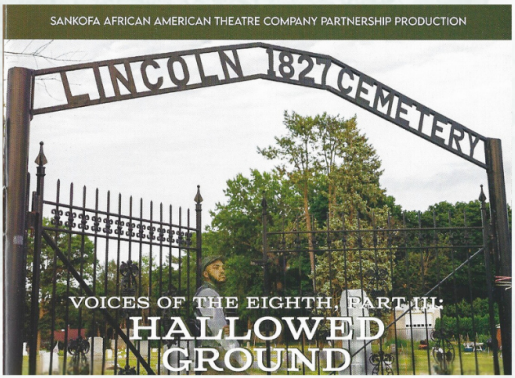
ENGAGING AND ENRICHING THE HARRISBURG REGION AROUND THE AFRICAN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE ON RELEVANT ISSUES THROUGH THOUGHT-PROVOKING THEATRE THAT REFLECTS ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE.



ABOUT: Written by Langston Hughes, the acclaimed American poet and playwright of the Harlem Renaissance, BLACK NATIVITY, a retelling of the Nativity story, is an expression of the playwright's interest in African American spirituality and the oral traditions of the African American church. Hughes' Christmas story is set to jubilant Gospel music that incorporates dance and Biblical narrative. Sharia Benn's stage direction blended with the musical direction and arrangements by Brian McGrady offers the audience an inspiring celebration of seasonal joy.
DATES: DECEMBER 6-8, 2024

West Shore Theatre
317 Bridge St., New Cumberland, PA

Performances:
Friday at 7:30PM
Saturday at 2:30PM & 7:30PM
and Sunday at 2:30PM



ABOUT: Four years have passed since Kay's last encounter with the spirits of the Eighth Ward, and her life is spiraling out of control once more. Desperate for guidance and a soul-stirring reunion with Della, her kindred spirit from the past, Kay ventures to Harrisburg's Lincoln Cemetery to summon her soul-sister. However, her plans are disrupted when Kayah, the fierce "SOAL" warrior dedicated to preserving the city's crumbling Black cemetery, intervenes. Kayah calls upon the ancestors to help Kay learn from the past so she can reclaim her future.
Will Kay find the strength to course-correct before it's too late?

Experience the life-affirming power of connecting with your heritage and history in this gripping sequel to Voices of the Eighth.
DATES: FEBRUARY 15 - MARCH 2, 2025

Gamut Theatre
15 North 4th Street Harrisburg PA, 17101



ABOUT: Step into "The Colored Museum," where bold satire meets provocative storytelling. Originally premiering in 1986, this groundbreaking show presents a series of 11 "exhibits" that challenge and redefine Black American culture. Playwright George C. Wolfe describes it as both "an exorcism and a party," electrifying, discomforting, and delighting audiences of all colors. From confronting stereotypes to celebrating resilience, each exhibit offers a unique perspective on what it means to be Black in contemporary America. With fearless humor and insightful commentary, "The Colored Museum" delivers a thought-provoking exploration of identity, history, and hope. Don't miss this innovative and seriously funny tour that shakes up perceptions and demands attention.
DATES: MAY 31 - JUNE 31, 2025

Open Stage
25 N Court Street Harrisburg, PA 17101

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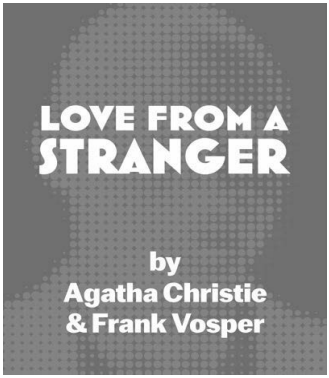
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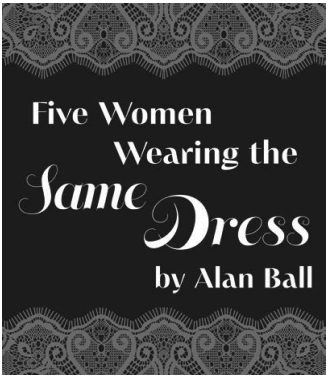
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Oyster Mill Playhouse 2025 Season



January 10 - 26, 2025



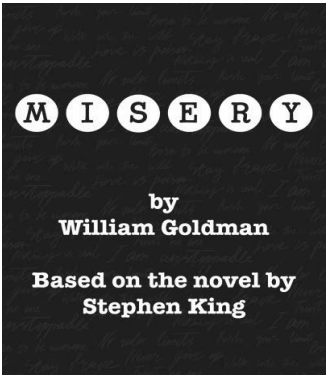
March 7 - 23, 2025



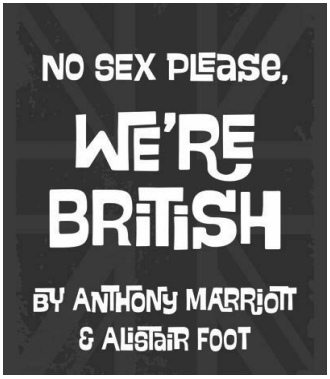
May 9 - 25, 2025



July 11 - 27, 2025



September 5 - 21, 2025



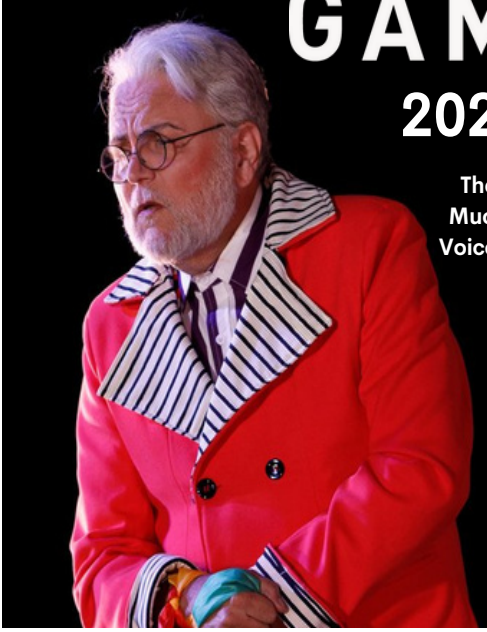
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Calidore String Quartet

Wednesday, September 25, 2024 at 7:30 PM
Temple Ohev Sholom



Tempesta di Mare

Saturday, November 9, 2024 at 7:30 PM
St. Michael Lutheran Church



Stuart & Friends

Sunday, January 5, 2025 at 4 PM
Market Square Presbyterian Church



Mark Markham, Piano

Saturday, February 22, 2025 at 7:30 PM
Market Square Presbyterian Church



Trio Gaia

Wednesday, March 26, 2025 at 7:30 PM
Derry Presbyterian Church - Hershey



Jasper String Quartet

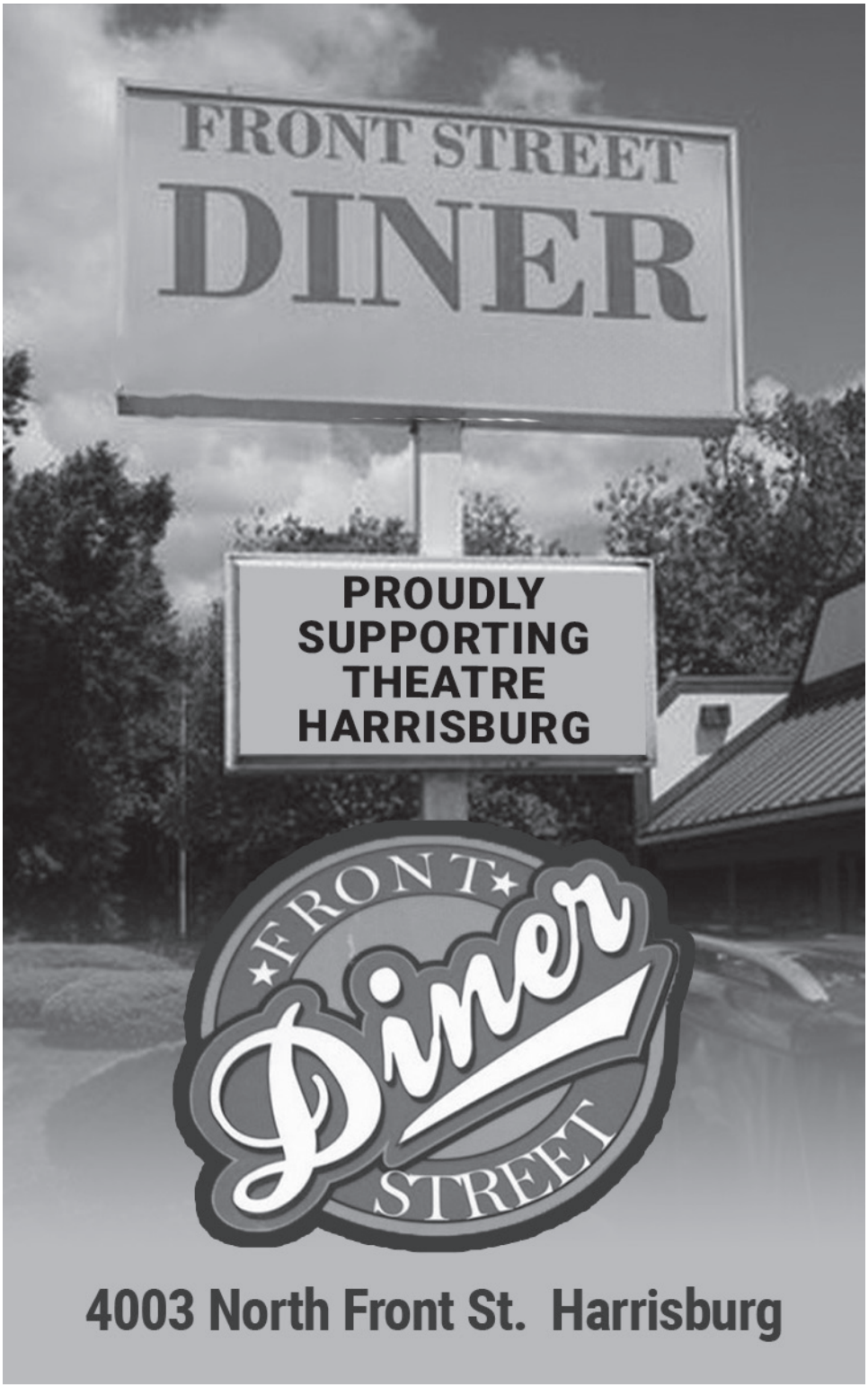
Sunday, April 27, 2025 at 4 PM
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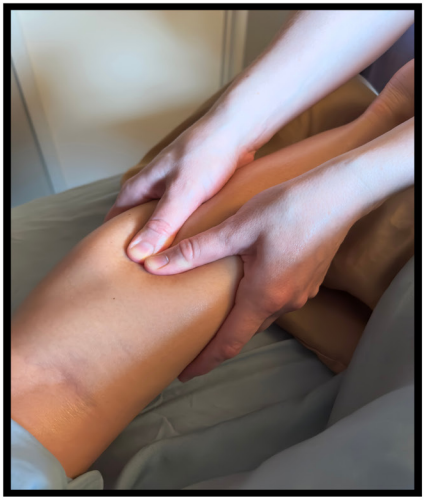
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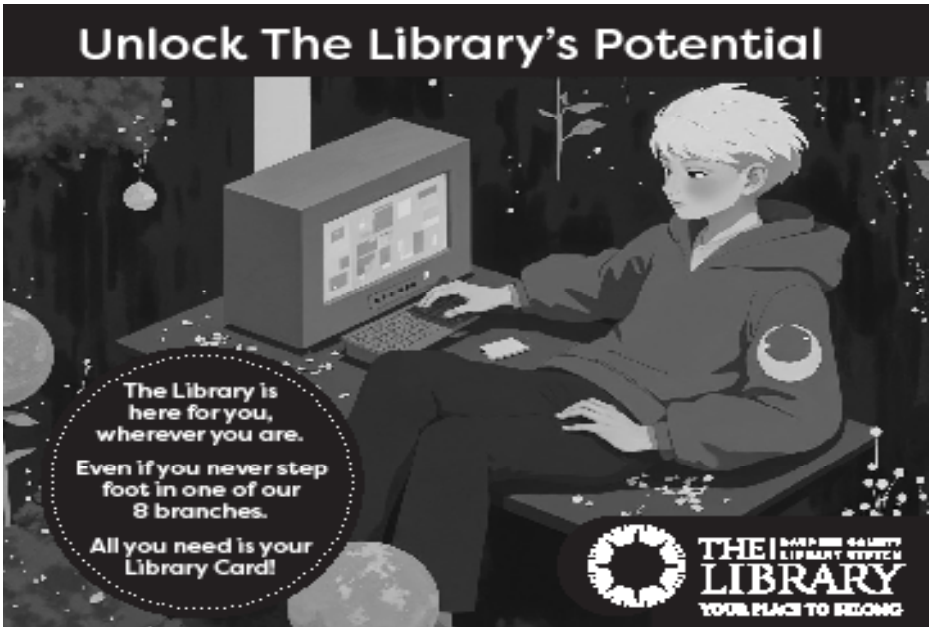
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