

Community Players of Salisbury
and Piedmont Airlines present

KISS ME

KATE!

Book by Bella Spewack & Samuel Spewack

Music & Lyrics by Cole Porter Directed by Kel Nagel

Wicomico High School Auditorium

June 21 - 7:30 PM

June 22 - 7:30 PM

June 23 - 2:00 PM



264th
Production

87th
Year

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and Piedmont Airlines**

present

Kiss Me, Kate

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Wicomico High School Auditorium

Friday, June 21, 2024 - 7:30 PM
Saturday, June 22, 2024 - 7:30 PM
Sunday, June 23, 2024 - 2:00 PM

Presented through special arrangement with
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25 W. 37th 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

Welcome to Community Players' final production of the 2023-24 season, *Kiss Me, Kate*.

With backstage shenanigans, Shakespearean sonnets, and singing gangsters – not to mention a romance that's just too darn hot – and a full-scale orchestra performing the Cole Porter classics, this might be another op'nin', but it certainly ain't just another show! It's all here in the all-zinging, all-dancing musical comedy. *Kiss Me, Kate* is a simple love story... about two people who just can't stand each other. Guess who wins...

We look forward to seeing you in the audience for our shows for next season, *Guys and Dolls* (November), *A Few Good Men* (February), *I Hate Hamlet* (April), and *The Importance of Being Ernest* (June).

If you are not getting our regular email blasts, you can sign up at <http://eepurl.com/hpth1T>. We won't sell your address nor overwhelm you with lots of emails.

If you have interest in being part of Community Players, please send me an e-mail at tomchicken@aol.com.

Tom Robinson

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Director's Message

Kiss Me, Kate, originally scheduled for June of 2020, was cancelled because of the Covid pandemic. It is the last of our cancelled shows to make it to the stage, having lurked in the back of my mind for four years.

It is a classic "Golden Age" musical, with great songs and dances and a mostly funny book. The plot is silly at times and serious at others. It is set in 1948 Baltimore, where a production of *Taming of the Shrew, the Musical* is being tried out prior to going to Broadway. The love lives of the four leads, Fred and Lilli and Bill and Lois, parallel the couples in Shakespeare's play in which the shrew, Kate, is "tamed" violently. The 1999 script, which we are using, was updated to reflect changing attitudes towards sexuality but still contains violence. The script and lyrics are full of good and bad puns and some wild anachronisms, like referring to Chicago in a song set in Renaissance Italy.

This is a big show, and it took a lot of help to get it done. Thanks to Music Director Bill Folger, who did a fantastic job with the singers and orchestra. Thom Harris, who has acted with us in two shows, brought his long years of experience to be our assistant director and choreographer.

I need to thank Ken Johnson, David Allen, and Bill Zlakowski for designing and building a fantastic set, and also Ken for doing lights. Tony Broadbent lent his technical expertise in many ways, in addition to doing sound.

Of course thanks to the cast, some very old friends and some new ones, who we hope will keep coming back to our shows.

In my previous director's messages, I have always concluded by saying "Thanks" to Debby Nagel "for everything." It is hard to imagine just how much work she did on this show, making most of the costumes, buying or borrowing the rest, gathering props and furniture, and decorating the set. So, thanks to Debby for everything.

I hope you enjoy our show.

Kel Nagel

The Cast

Pops, General Harrison Howell.....	Steven Culver
Hattie	Skye Osborne
Paul, Specialty Dancer	Wethny Antoine
Ralph	Pete Evans
Lois Lane, Bianca.....	Devin Bradley La Femina
Bill Calhoun, Lucentio.....	Kyle Hayes
Lilli Vanessi, Kate.....	Shelbie Thompson
Dance Captain, Ensemble.....	Christine Smith
Fred Graham, Petruchio.....	David Ospital
Harry, Baptista Minola	Mark Tyler
Stagehand #1, Electrician, Cab Driver	Kurt Ludwick
First Man (Gangster)	Matt Bogdan
Second Man (Gangster)	Zachery Werner
Gremio, General's Aide, Stagehand #2, Ensemble	Adithya Bhaskaran
Hortensio, General's Aide, Stagehand #3, Ensemble.....	Owen Shockley
Wardrobe Lady, Ensemble	Allison Tucker
Ensemble.....	Emily Lawson, Andrea Milito, Charlie Szentesi-Thomas, Sophia Tyler, Liz Wilcox

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Synopsis

Egotistical leading man, director, and producer Fred Graham is reunited with his ex-wife, Lilli Vanessi, when the two are forced to play opposite one another in a new production of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*. The battle of the sexes continues onstage and off, as it becomes clear that, as much as this couple profess to hate each other, they are also still in love. Alongside their bickering liaison, the show's supporting actress, Lois Lane, supports her gambling boyfriend, Bill, as he attempts to evade the clutches of local gangsters. Throw in a number of cases of mistaken identity, the mob, and comedic routines into the mix and you get *Kiss Me, Kate*.

Act I

- Scene 1 – The Stage of Ford's Theatre, Baltimore
- Scene 2 – The Backstage Corridor
- Scene 3 – Fred's and Lilli's Dressing Rooms
- Scene 4 – Padua
- Scene 5 – The Square in Padua
- Scene 6 – Another Part of Ford's Theatre
- Scene 7 – Fred's and Lilli's Dressing Rooms
- Scene 8 – Country Road in Padua
- Scene 9 – The Church Square in Padua

15 minute Intermission

Refreshments are available for sale in the lobby.

Act 2

- Scene 1 – The Theatre Alley, Baltimore
- Scene 2 – In Front of the Theatre Curtain
- Scene 3 – Main Room in Petruchio's House
- Scene 4 – The Backstage Corridor
- Scene 5 – Fred's and Lilli's Dressing Rooms
- Scene 6 – The Backstage Corridor
- Scene 7 – Before the show curtain
- Scene 8 – The Garden of Baptista's House

Production Staff

Director.....	Kel Nagel
Musical Director.....	Bill Folger
Choreographer/Ass't Director	Thom Harris
Producer, Costumer, Set Decorator.....	Debby Nagel
Lighting.....	Ken Johnson
Follow Spot Operator.....	Sharon Benchoff, Joshua Smith
Projections.....	Sharon Benchoff
Sound.....	Tony Broadbent
Fight Coordinator.....	John Wixted
Stage Manager	Pete Cuesta
Ass't Stage Manager	Andre Scholler
Stage Crew.....	David Allen, Jason Bruce, Holly Bruce, Maddi Cuesta, Brodie Capano, Bhaskar Bhaskaran, Hemalatha Bhaskaran
Props Supervisor	Heather Oland
Hair And Makeup.....	Michele Clauser
Set Design.....	Ken Johnson, David Allen
Set Construction/Painting	David Allen, Bill Zlakowski, Ken Johnson, Pete Cuesta, George Steber, Andre Scholler, Emily Lawson, Charlie Szentesi-Thomas, Sharon Benchoff, Holly Bruce, Jason Bruce, Kurt Ludwick, Tony Broadbent, Kat Schutte, Rick Gunter, Barry Geis
Specialty Painting	Heidi Lane, Andrea Milito
Costumes	Debby Nagel, Kathleen Thompson, Jodi Meyers, Dana Tyler, Michele Clauser
Hair, Makeup.....	Michele Clauser
Publicity.....	Debby Nagel (Outdoor Advertising), Kate Adkins (Social Media), Shelbie Thompson (Graphic Design), Kel Nagel (Print And Broadcast Media)
Program.....	Tom Robinson
House Manager.....	Betsy Metzger

Orchestra

Conductor..... William M. Folger
Violin Jeffery Hsia, Shao-Chung Hsia
Viola Courtney Coco
Cello Patricia Rose
Bass Buck Burton
Reeds ... Jonathan Adams, Lisa Adams, Frank Mahoney, Ashley Palmer
Horn Leanna Morris
Trumpets Pat Shaner, Bill Williams
Trombone William Kichty
Piano Veronica Tomanek
Guitar Riley Smith
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Musical Numbers

Act One

Scene 1

Another Op'nin', Another Show Pops, Three Stagehands,
Hattie, Wardrobe Ladies, Paul, Ensemble

Scene 2

Why Can't You Behave? Lois, Bill

Scene 3

Wunderbar Fred, Lilli
So In Love Lilli

Scene 4

We Open in Venice Kate, Petruchio, Lucentio, Bianca

Scene 5

Tom, Dick or Harry Gremio, Lucentio, Hortensio, Bianca
I've Come to Wive It Wealthily in Padua Petruchio and Men
I Hate Men Kate
Were Thine That Special Face Petruchio

Scene 8

Cantiamo Ensemble

Scene 9

Kiss Me, Kate Petruchio, Kate, Ensemble

Act Two

Scene 1

Too Darn Hot Paul, 2nd & 3rd Stagehands, Ensemble

Scene 3

Where Is The Life That Late I Led Petruchio

Scene 4

Always True to You in My Fashion Lois

Scene 5

From This Moment On General Howell, Lilli

Scene 6

Bianca Pops, Three Stagehands, Women Chorus
Reprise: So In Love Fred

Scene 7

Brush Up Your Shakespeare First Man, Second Man

Scene 8

Pavane Ensemble, Dancers
I Am Ashamed That Women Are So Simple Kate
Finale Reprise: Kiss Me, Kate Company

Who's Who in the Cast

Wethny Antoine (Paul, the Haberdasher) is very excited to make his musical debut with Community Players. Wethny is a designer who appeared in *A Cruise to Die For* at the Heritage Shores. When he isn't on stage, Wethny is hanging out with his friends and listening to music. He is grateful to be a part of this musical and hopes to not disappoint.

Adithya Bhaskaran (Germio, General's Aide) made his Players' debut as Nigel in *Matilda*. He loves being part of this amazing group and working with the cast and crew. He is doing several roles in *Kiss Me, Kate*.

Matt Bogdan (Gangster #1) is a writer, director, producer and actor. He has been involved with Players for over 40 years, making his debut in *Dracula* in 1982. His other acting credits include Thenardier in *Les Misérables*, Thomas Jefferson in *1776*, Jud in *Oklahoma!*, Buffalo Bill in *Annie Get Your Gun*, and Bill Sykes in *Oliver!* He wrote, directed, and produced *The Harlem Renaissance: A Celebration of the Arts* and *Paths to Freedom: The Underground Railroad on Maryland's Eastern Shore*. He also plays the part of the troubled narrator in "The Black Cat" in Edgar Allan Poe's *Tales of Terror*, to be presented in October.



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Who's Who in the Cast (continued)

Devin La Femina (Lois Lane, Bianca) is excited to be part of another Players' production. You may have seen them previously as Lina Lamont in *Singin' in the Rain*, Stella Kowalski in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, or Cassie in *Rumors*. Devin would like to thank the entire cast and crew of this production; none of this would have been possible without their talents. Devin would also like to thank their people (Michelle, Paige, Chloe and Drew) for their endless support. Devin would also like to thank their three cats, Sid, Nook and Scout, who would be here if cats were allowed in the theatre. Lastly, Devin thanks their husband, Justin. "I love you so big!"

Steve Culver (Pops, General Harrison Howell) made his debut with Community Players in 1979 as the Artful Dodger in *Oliver!*. In 2012 he appeared in *Oliver!* again, this time as Fagin. Other Players' shows include *The Wizard of Oz* (Professor Marvel/The Wizard), *The Foreigner* (Charlie Baker), *Beauty and the Beast* (Cogsworth), *Arsenic and Old Lace* (Teddy Brewster), *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Man in Chair), *Leading Ladies* (Doc Myers), and *Rumors* (Ken Gorman). Steve was most recently seen as Vanya in *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*.

Pete Evans (Ralph, Ensemble) is happy to join the cast midway through production. A 10-year veteran of Players, he was last seen as Leo/Maxine in *Leading Ladies*. He is known for feature roles in *The Addams Family*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *Moon Over Buffalo*, and *Jesus Christ Superstar*. He has worked under Kel's direction on two previous productions: *The Foreigner* and *The Drowsy Chaperone*.



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Who's Who in the Cast (continued)

Kyle Hayes (Bill Calhoun, Lucentio) is thrilled to be a part of another musical with Community Players. *Kiss Me, Kate* marks his sixth musical with them. You may have seen him in his last role in *Pippin* as the titular character in November. Some past credits include Cosmo in *Singin' in the Rain* and Chip in *Putnam County Spelling Bee*. He is excited to show off the hard work the cast and crew have put in and to have another show in the books.

Emily Lawson (Ensemble) is excited to finally be making her on-stage debut. She has had a lot of fun working back stage with Players as part of the crew for *Little Women* and doing sound for *Vanya and Sonya* and *Masha and Spike*. She would like to thank the cast and crew for this awesome experience.

Kurt Ludwick (Stagehand #1, Electrician, Cab Driver) appeared on the Players' stage last season in *Singin' in the Rain* and *Paths to Freedom: The Underground Railroad on Maryland's Eastern Shore*. He is a math professor at Salisbury University and plays trombone in the Salisbury Symphony Orchestra. In his spare time, he likes to read science fiction, solve puzzles, and drink coffee (which he would never give up for Sanka). He would like to thank his wife, Tina, and his daughter, Ruby, for their love, encouragement, and support.

Andrea Milito (Ensemble) is debuting as a dancer and singer in *Kiss Me, Kate*. She has production and design experience managing high school shows such as *Mamma Mia!*, *Into The Woods*, *1984*, and *Peter & The Starcatcher*. She is excited to be performing on stage joining the members of Community Players in a new adventure.



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Who's Who in the Cast (continued)

Skye Osborne (Hattie) has worked with the Players backstage on *Leading Ladies* and *Crimes of the Heart*. This year, she made her on-stage debut with *Harlem Renaissance: A Celebration of the Arts*. She is just tickled to have the privilege of gracing the Players' stage in *Kiss Me, Kate* as Hattie.

David Ospital (Fred Graham, Petruchio) is thrilled to make his debut with Community Players. A lifelong lover of the arts, he discovered his passion for music at any early age. His journey began with the piano, which he has played since the tender age of six. But it wasn't just the keys that captured his heart. His daughter, Orli, ignited a shared love for the stage. Together, they've rehearsed countless roles, creating magical moments under the spotlight. As he steps into the limelight for this production, he extends heartfelt gratitude to his wife and children. Their unwavering encouragement and understanding have fueled his artistic fire.

Owen Shockley (Hortensio, Stagehand #3, Ensemble) is thrilled to be in another show with Community Players. Some of Owen's previous theater roles have included Gilligan in *Gilligan's Island: The Musical*, Brian Colson in *Goosebumps: The Musical* and ensemble in *Singin' In the Rain* and *Little Women: The Musical*. Owen can't wait for audiences to see this amazing show that the entire cast and crew have been working so hard on, and he hopes they all enjoy watching it as much as we had putting it together.

Edward Jones

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Who's Who in the Cast (continued)

Christine Smith (Dance Captain) is an architectural designer at Becker Morgan Group and has spent most of her life singing in choir, a cappella groups, and other performance activities. She has previously played Mrs. Kirk in Community Players' *Little Women* and is excited to join the cast of *Kiss Me, Kate*.

Charlie Szentesi-Thomas (Ensemble) has been acting since 2006 and became involved with Community Players in 2012. Favorite roles include *A Laura Ingalls Wilder Christmas* (Carrie Ingalls), *Blithe Spirit* (Edith), *Fiddler on the Roof* (Fruma-Sarah), and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (Childcatcher). Most recently with Players, Charlie has been involved with *Leading Ladies* (Dresser/ Stage Crew), *Crimes of the Heart* (Assistant Stage Manager), *Singin' in the Rain* (Assistant 3/Ensemble), *Edgar Allan Poe: His Tales of Horror* (Masque of the Red Death), *Rumors* (Stage Manager and Officer Pudney), and *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* (Nina).

Shelbie Thompson (Lilli Vanessi/Katharine) is excited to be returning to the Players' stage in *Kiss Me, Kate*. She has been involved in numerous Community Players productions as an actor, assistant director, and producer. She was most recently on stage as Amy in Possum Point Players' production of *Company*, other favorite roles have been Blanche DuBois in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Phoebe D'Ysquith in *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, and Miss Honey in *Matilda*.



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Who's Who in the Cast (continued)

Allison Tucker (Wardrobe Lady, Ensemble) is an Eastern Shore native and a graduate of Salisbury University. She moved back to the Shore from Baltimore. She recently joined Community Players and plans to continue production in musicals and plays here on the Shore.

Mark Tyler (Harry, Baptista Minola) is excited to be performing with Players again. He has been involved in the performing arts since third grade. He was last seen in *Pippin* as Charles and in *Death of a Salesman* as Biff. Other favorite credits include Captain von Trapp in *The Sound of Music*, Daddy Warbucks in *Annie* and Richard Henry Lee in *1776*. Mark wishes to thank Kel and the entire production team for this opportunity.

Sophia Tyler (Ensemble) is a freshman at James M. Bennett High School. This is her first production with Players. She has performed with LSPAC in *Oliver!* and *Pippin*. She is a soprano in The Salisbury Children's Choir.

Zachery Werner (Gangster #2) is thrilled to be back on the stage at Players. He recently appeared in Players' productions of *Paths to Freedom* (Augustine St. Claire) and *Pippin* (Player 14). Some of his favorite roles include *Leading Ladies* (Butch), *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Oklahoma!* (Ali Hakim), and *Oliver!* (Mr. Bumble). Zack works by day as a 3-sport referee and by night as a radiologic technologist. Shout out to Kristin and Owen for their understanding while daddy is away at rehearsals. And special thanks to Kel for talking him into auditioning. It has been a blast bringing this gangster to life.

Liz Wilcox (Ensemble) is thrilled to be performing with Community Players once again. Liz's history with Players includes *Mary Poppins*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Into the Woods*, *Little Women*, and *Singin' in the Rain*. Please enjoy the show.

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Who's Who Behind the Scenes

Kel Nagel (Director) first appeared in *Guys and Dolls* in 1996. He has performed in over 20 shows and directed seven. He is delighted to bring *Kiss Me, Kate* to the stage with such a talented cast and outstanding production team. He notes that in the 1996 version of *Guys and Dolls*, director Chris Harris created the role of Big Jule's bodyguard for him. He wonders if Director Sherri Hynes can find anything for him to do when we open our next season with *Guys and Dolls* in November.

William M. Folger (Music Director/Conductor) is professor, director of choral studies, pianist, carillonneur, and music director, conductor, and vocal coach for the Salisbury University musicals where he is known for his super-hero abilities to maintain calm and play all his notes amid any technical malfunction. Folger has been musical director and conductor for over 30 Broadway shows, musical reviews, and opera productions, including the Community Players' production of *Chicago*. He is honored to be a part of the creative team, cast, and crew of *Kiss Me, Kate*.

Debby Nagel (Producer, Costume Coordinator) has been involved with Community Players for many productions, but this is the first time costuming. With over a hundred costumes, this has been quite a challenge. She is grateful for the notes taken watching the Brattens in past years and even more grateful for the donations and inspiration of Sallie Ridgway. Special thanks to Kathleen Thompson for her ongoing support and for keeping me on task.



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Who's Who Behind the Scenes (Cont.)

Thom Harris (Choreographer, Assistant Director) says the third time with Players is a charm. Two years ago was *Senior Follies*, then *Singin' in the Rain* and, thanks to Kel, *Kiss Me, Kate*. He always loved theatre. His childhood hero was Spanky in *Spanky and Our Gang*. He is an actor, singer, director, and choreographer. His favorite shows are *Sweeney Todd* (Toby in 1985 and Pirelli in 2014), *It's a Wonderful Life* (Clarence in 2014, Director in 2022), *A Christmas Story* (Father), *Ragtime* (Father), *Spamalot* (Patsy), *Into The Woods* (Narrator/Mysterios Man), and *Best Little Whore House in Texas* (Aggie). Through it all, the best part was his 29 year run as Brian's partner, which ended too soon 10 years ago, and knowing he is watching him from the clouds.

Pete Cuesta (Stage Manager) is thrilled to be given this opportunity step into the role of Stage Manager. Past performances include: *A Curious incident of a Dog in the Nighttime (no 7)*, *Pippin* (Director), *Social Security* (Director), *The Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Principal Panch), *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, (Director), *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, (Director), *The Drowsy Chaperone (Gangster 1)*, *South Pacific* (Lt. Harrison), *Into The Woods* (Steward), *Deathtrap* (Director), *Mary Poppins* (Bank President), *Beauty and the Beast* (bookseller), *Fiddler on the Roof* (Avram), *Les Misérables* (Chorus). A podiatrist by day, he has enjoyed the theatre for most of his life. "My favorite role however, is husband to Kim and father to Maddi and Abby - I love you guys!"

Ken Johnson (Lighting) is currently teaching Drama for Wicomico County. He is celebrating his 36th year teaching. He began his "career" with Community Players over 40 years ago, running a follow spot for *Don't Drink The Water*. Ken has directed several productions for Players, most recently *Noises Off*. He has appeared on stage often, most recently as Mrs. Trunchbull in *Matilda* and King Herod in *Jesus Christ Superstar*. He'd like to thank Yoshi and his friends in Players for allowing him to continue this "hobby".

"Special Thanks" for the help

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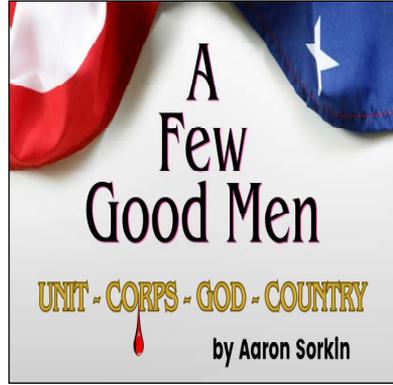
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Community Players Next Season



November 2024



February 2025



April 2025



June 2025

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Friday, July 25 - 7 PM

Friday, August 30 - 7 PM

Friday, September 27- 7 PM

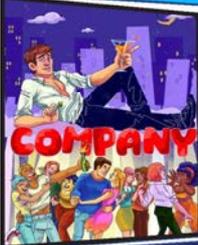
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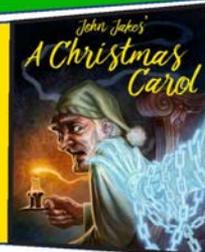
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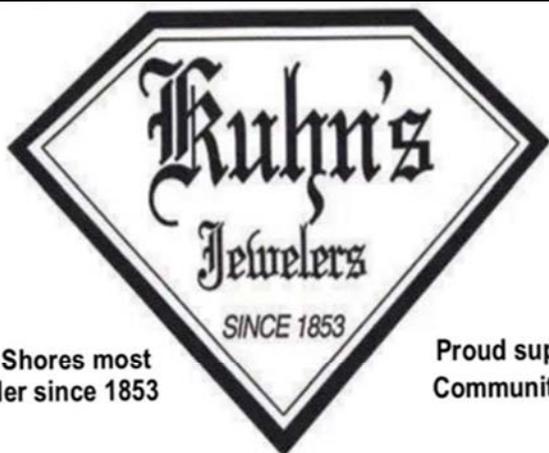
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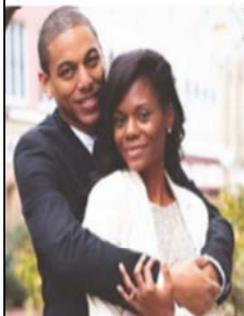
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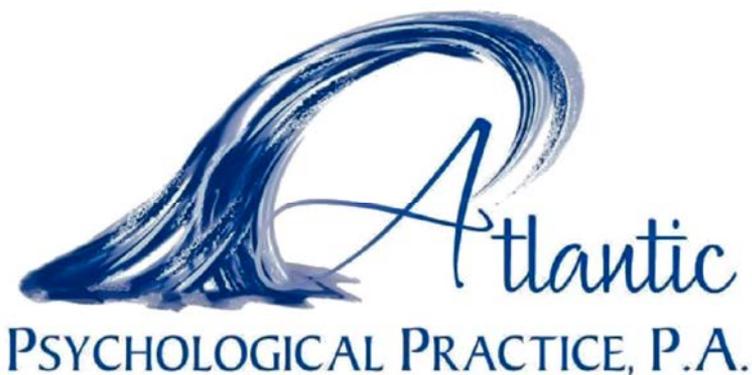
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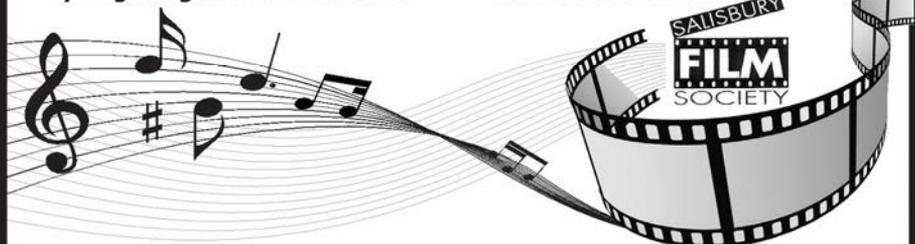
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