PALACE
THEATER



2025–2026 PALACE THEATER ANNUAL REPORT

PALACE
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Palace Theater Mission Statement

To preserve and operate the historic Palace Theater as a performing arts center and gathering place that provides a focal point of cultural activity and educational outreach for diverse audiences.

ROOTED IN HISTORY & CONNECTED WITH COMMUNITY

This past year, America celebrated the 250th anniversary of its founding. Across the country, communities reflected on the nation's story, looking at ways in which we define both our shared history and various cultural identities, often told creatively through storytelling and music.

The Palace Theater has stood in the heart of downtown Waterbury since 1922, an enduring symbol of American artistry, resilience, and community connection. For over a century, the Palace has gathered audiences to present storytellers in many forms — musicians and comedians, blockbuster shows and children's entertainment, local figures and media celebrities alike.

While we enjoy looking back at our own storied past, we also keep our eyes on the future. The Palace remains a vibrant hub for entertainment and arts education in the city, showcasing excellence in performance and a diversity of voices, whether from a national tour or a school production, while providing opportunities for new experiences for patrons of all ages.

What has set the Palace apart for so long is its role as a community gathering place for individuals, families, organizations, and schools. For students attending their first live show, long-time patrons meeting up with friends at intermission, or newlywed couples celebrating their first dance, the Palace is here to help them create their own stories and build their own community.

To further these connections, our Board of Directors approved a new Strategic Plan this past year, charting the course for the next five years in five major areas: Community Engagement, Fiscal Stability, Program Innovation, Visionary Growth, and the foundational Organizational Leadership. Board members and Staff are working together to investigate and implement new ideas and strategies that will continue to keep the Palace in the forefront of arts leadership in the region.

The Palace continues to be one of Waterbury's greatest treasures, creating a stage for America's cultural story, bringing people together and inspiring generations to come. On behalf of the Board of Directors and Staff, we thank you, our patrons and supporters, for helping us continue to connect and grow.

Sincerely,

Martin G. Morgado
Chair of the Board Directors

Frank Tavera
CEO



CONNECTING PAST & PRESENT

The arts shine a bright light on our cultural history, and many of this season's shows highlighted themes of individuality and connection, reinvention and resilience, all considered quintessentially "American" values.

From our Broadway lineup, *TINA — The Tina Turner Musical* showcased the story of an artist who overcame adversity to become a cultural icon, Blue Man Group celebrated the essence of artistic expression, while *Meredith Willson's The Music Man* brought us to 1912 small-town America for a story of personal growth and community transformation.

Artists and bands such as America, Ivy Queen, India, Diana Krall, and Satch/Vai Band brought people together to enjoy the power of music, while shows like S*esame Street Live* and *Blippi* welcomed our youngest patrons and their families to the joys of live theater.

Connecting with new audiences remains a key part of our mission, and presentations by Stardew Valley Orchestra, Rock Orchestra, and TV's Josh Gates helped welcome over 7,000 first-time patrons to the theater.

Our Spotlight Series (including 2ND Act, I Wrote That Author Talks, Immigrants Stories, Upstaged, and CommUNITY Spotlight) continued to weave together presentations and conversations between locally connected presenters and audiences.

Our 2025–2026 season was also notable for a surge in held events compared to initial bookings; by the close of the season, we saw increases both in booked Main Stage dates and Special Events. Community and Corporate event dates alone saw a 48% increase from pre-season expectations, keeping our Events Staff busy throughout the season.







Top: The "Princess of Salsa," India, gets the crowd on their feet during her concert.
Photo Credit: Felix Manuel Photography

Middle: Boxing takes center stage during *Fight Night at the Palace*.
Photo Credit: Felix Manuel Photography

Bottom: Peter & Kathleen Brochhausen meet Josh Gates backstage.
Photo Credit: Lüke Haughwøut





CONNECTING PRESENT TO FUTURE

Introducing young — as well as new — audiences to the arts is the key to creating long-term growth across all artforms. Research from the National Endowment for the Arts indicates that attending live performances leads to greater long-term participation in arts and cultural activities, as well as community and civic engagement.

Each season, we bring hundreds of local students who would not otherwise have access to live entertainment to the Palace, through free or reduced-price ticket programs. This season we saw students from across the Greater Waterbury area enjoy performances such as *Jurassic Park with the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra, Clue, Blue Man Group*, and *Meredith Willson's The Music Man*.

This year's six-week after-school program, *Instruments of Change: Building Creative Communities* brought together 28 students from 7 local middle and high schools for a dive into the themes, characters, and music of *Blue Man Group* and *The Music Man*.

Sharing a building with the Waterbury Arts Magnet School (WAMS) allows both organizations to share resources. In addition to performing on our stage for many of their concerts and musicals, WAMS students also used our building for film and audio projects this year.

Returning partner programs included the City-Wide Talent Show (Waterbury Public Schools), Black Men in White Coats Youth Summit (Saint Mary's Hospital — Trinity Health of New England), the HALO Awards (Seven Angels), and UConn's WISHfest.

Top: Palace after-school students and teachers gather after a session. *Photo Credit: Karen Streeter*

Bottom: WAMS students perform *Chicago* on the Palace stage. *Photos supplied by WAMS*

80
MAIN STAGE EVENTS

40
NON STAGE-RELATED SPECIAL EVENTS

35
OFF-STAGE EVENTS

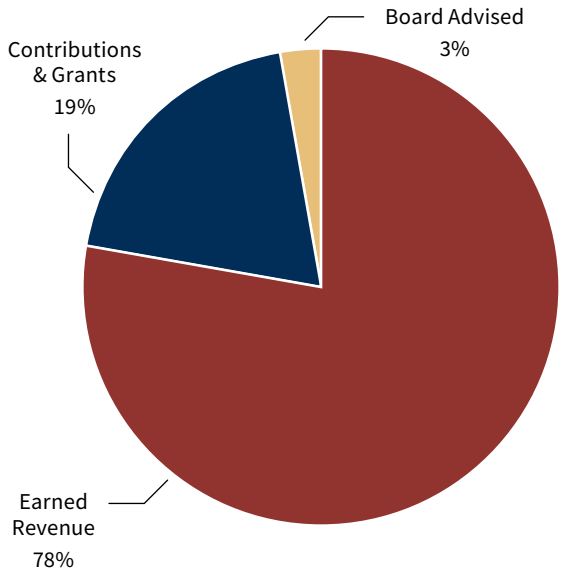
33
TECHNICAL-USE DATES

30
WATERBURY ARTS MAGNET SCHOOL DATES

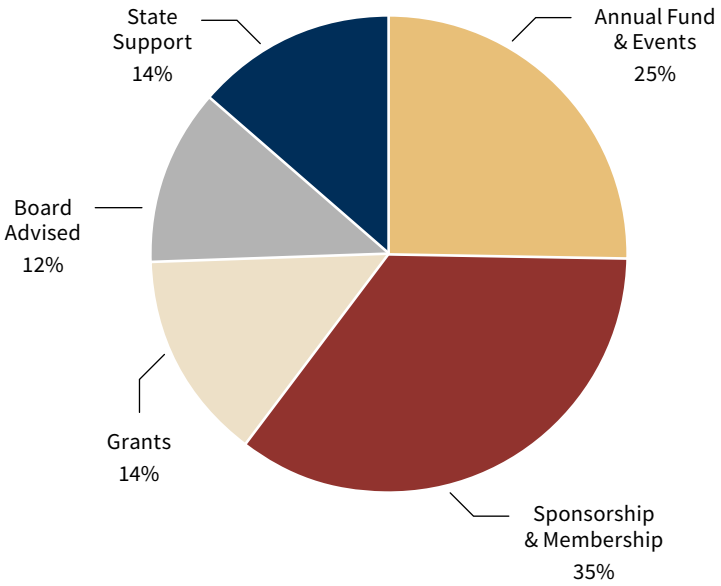
218
TOTAL EVENT-USE DATES

FINANCIAL POSITION

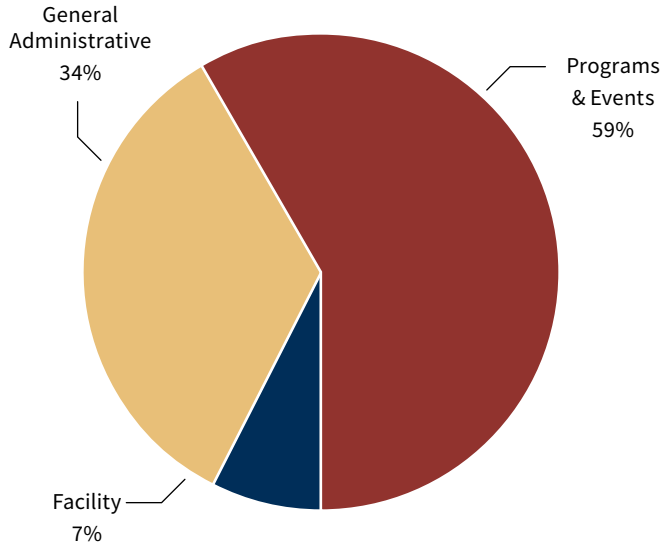
Revenue Breakdown



Contributed Income Breakdown



Expense Breakdown



Board Advised Fund

Unrestricted	$	5,684,848.00
Restricted	$	50,217.00
Total	$	5,735,065.00

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With the support of our Corporate Sponsors, we continue to build future financial security for our beautiful and historic theater, while expanding our outreach and mission. We thank the following organizations for aligning with us to enhance our arts programming, educational offerings and community partnerships.

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Dr. Philip Mongelluzzo & his brother Atty. Brian Mongelluzzo (left), Dave Ferraro, Al Vagnini, and David Rotatori (right) enjoy an elegant evening during the 18th Annual Stages Wine Dinner. *Photo Credits: Felix Manuel Photography*

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The always-popular band Almost Queen rocks the Palace. *Photo supplied by Almost Queen*

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Left: Tom Hutton & Beth Devino stop for a picture before Stages Wine Dinner. *Photo Credit: Felix Manuel Photography*
Right: Barbara & Joseph Gramando, Joe McGrath, Mayor Paul & Kim Pernerewski enjoy the evening. *Photo Credit: Dr. Fumiko Hoeft*

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Marya DiPerna, Madeline DiPerna, Diane Ploch, and Chris Stokes share conversation during the Main Street Waterbury Awards. *Photo Credit: David Hyuck*

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The annual “Palace Night” fundraiser at the Ponte Club drew a great crowd.
Photo Credit: Palace Theater

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Natalia Batista and Rachael Yimoyines pose for a photo (top), while Timmy Maia (bottom) performs seasonal tunes at Martinis & Mistletoe. *Photo Credit: Felix Manuel Photography*






Left: Representative Ronald Napoli, Cathy Smith, and President of the University of Connecticut Radenka Maric chat backstage at UConn WISHFest. *Photo Credit: Steve Bustamante*

Center: Children enjoy the fun at *Blippi: Join the Band Tour. Photo supplied by Kathy Craig*

Right: Lillian Colón discusses her book *Lilly* with NBC Connecticut's Amber Diaz during her "I Wrote That" Author Talk. *Photo Credit: Sheree Marcucci*

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Paul Ford
Harla Forrest
John Foshay
Alexandra Foster
Jeffrey Foster
Ciro F. Franco







Martinis & Mistletoe attendees & bartenders kick off the holiday season! *Photo Credit: Felix Manuel Photography*

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Peter & Elizabeth Frew
Myra Frost
Kevin Fung
John Gagliardi
Alan Gagnon
Analisa Gagnon
Gary & Mary Lynn Gagnon
Jason Gagnon
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Jeffrey Jablon
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Terri Johnson
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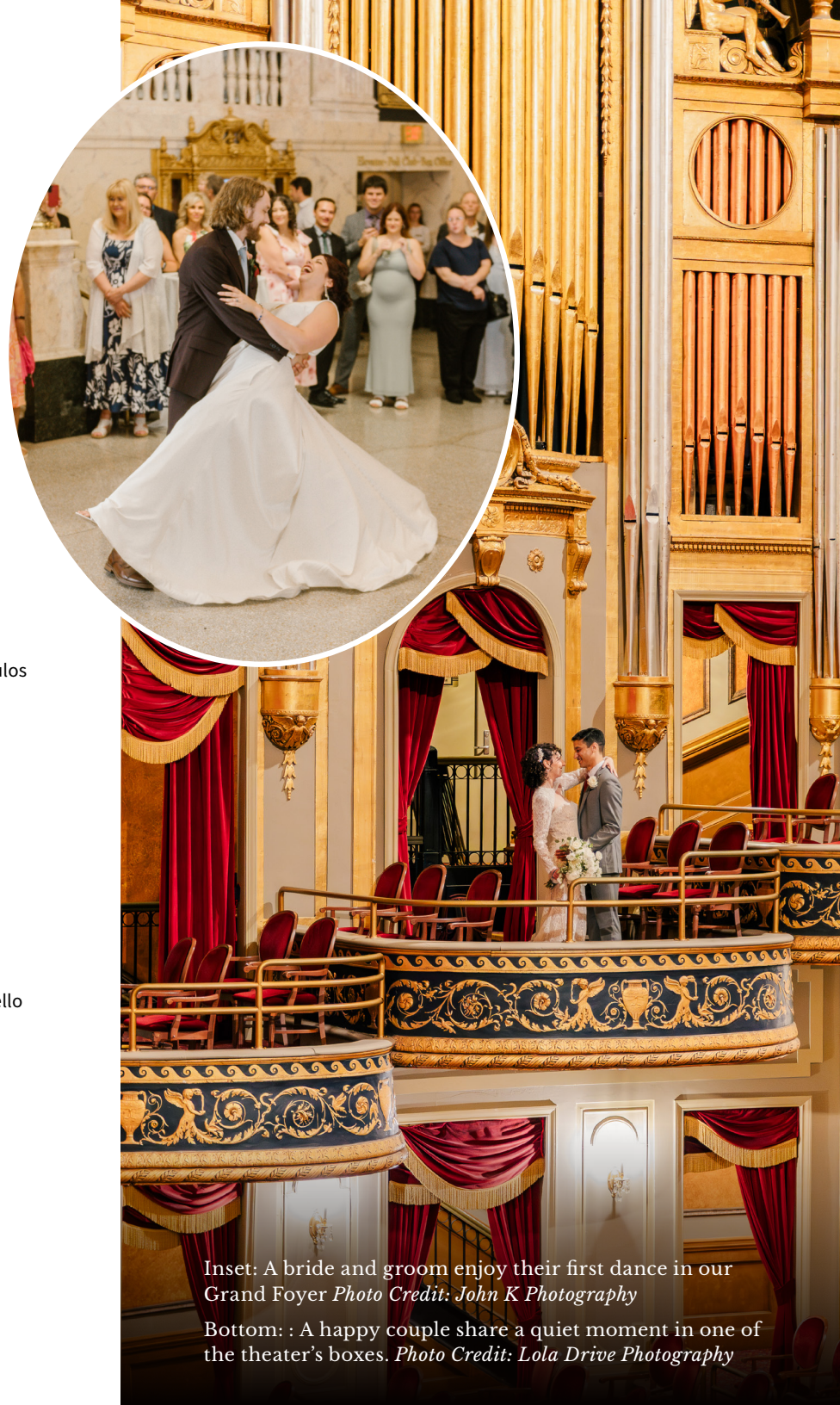

Inset: A bride and groom enjoy their first dance in our Grand Foyer *Photo Credit: John K Photography*

Bottom: : A happy couple share a quiet moment in one of the theater's boxes. *Photo Credit: Lola Drive Photography*

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Sabrina Matis
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Megan Mazzei
Shaun McColgan
Joyce McCormack
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Sandra McDonald
Eileen McDonnell
Quinn McFee
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Naziema Mendoza
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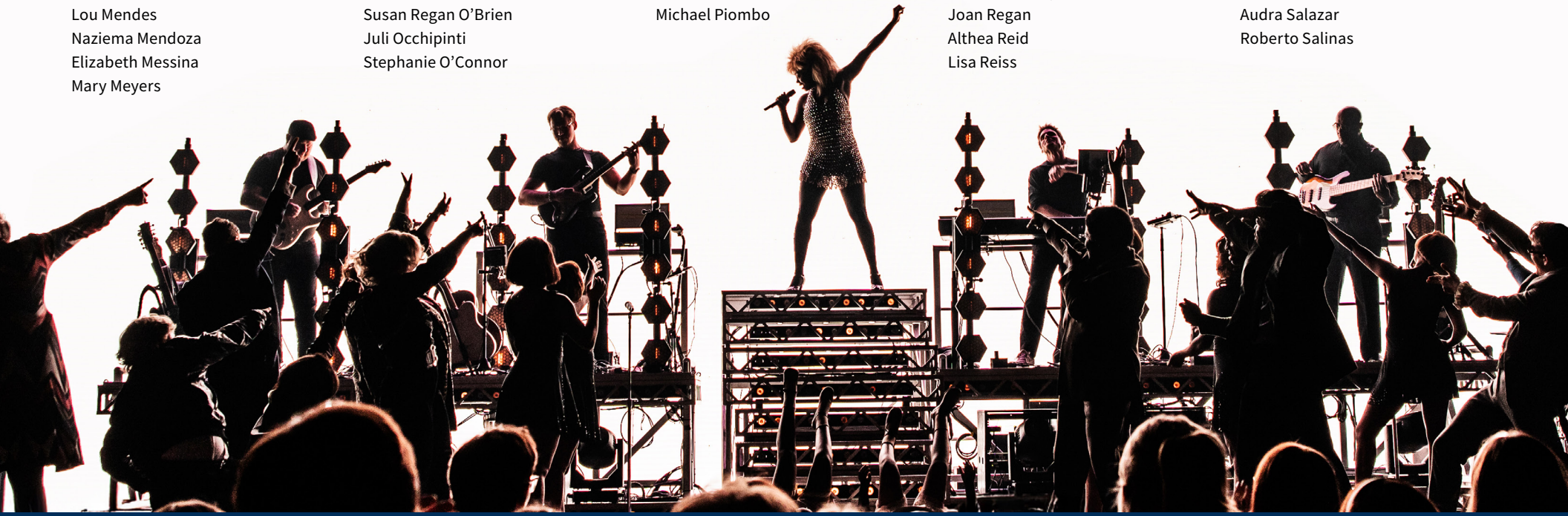
Wendy Rossi
Joan Rubbo
Linda Rubino
Pamela Ruccio
Madison Rudman
Madeline Russo
Audra Salazar
Roberto Salinas



Darilyn Burtley and the cast of *TINA — The Tina Turner Musical* perform to thunderous applause. *Photo Credit: Evan Zimmerman*

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Shirley Sayers
Lee Schlesinger
Ann Schober
David Schreiber
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Christine Thomas
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Ann Tietjen
Elizabeth Tilly
Sophie Tong
Mary Toto
Bob Tourangeau
Nancy Traver
Don Travis
Jay Trela
Gary Tryforos
David Turechek
Laura Tutoli
Fran Vacca
Susan Vaccarelli
Colleen Vadala
Marianna Vagnini-Dadamo
Beth A. Vail
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Jim Valentino
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Sarah Weisman
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Matching Gifts: Many employers sponsor matching gift programs and will financially match eligible charitable contributions made by their employees, potentially doubling or tripling each gift.

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Program Sponsors Linda & Selim Noujaim stop for a photo before seeing *Jurassic Park with the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra. Photo Credit: Palace Theater*

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Donna Cameron

In Memory of Frank Cesare
Frank Cangelosi

In Memory of Earl & Eva Sills
Edward & Karen Costa

In Loving Memory of Richard J. and Mary S. White
Bobbi & Jack Cremins

In Memory of Sadie Devino
Beth Devino

In Memory of Joy DeVivo
Mike DeVivo

In Memory of Ron Marciano & Lou Grasso
Marci Dwyer

In Memory of Peter Byrne
Gardner Friscia

In Honor of Anne P. Delo
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In Memory of Connie Heckendorf
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In Memory of Michael & Vilma Lombardi
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Rebecca Lucht

In Honor of Ashley Sweet
Elizabeth Messina

In Honor of Zakiyah Gathers
Elizabeth Messina

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Julianne Roth

In Honor of Susan Ponton-Pike
Jeannine Schetzen

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Richard Szanto

In Memory of Donald P. Tortora
Nancy Tortora

In Memory of Richard Ullrich
Jane Ullrich

In Memory of Lorenzo Vigliotti
Maria Vigliotti

In memory of Chris "Mighty" Williams

1977–2026

A long-term member of IATSE Local 74, "Mighty" had worked backstage at the Palace Theater since its reopening in 2004. He was a beloved co-worker, described as "one of the best" for his work ethic, generosity, quick wit, and selflessness. He is greatly missed by all who had the privilege and pleasure of working with him, at the Palace and at venues across Connecticut.





Members of the Grand Society of Giving celebrate the unveiling of the 2025–2026 Grand Society of Giving plaque. *Photo Credit: Benjamin Dressel*

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CLICK TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE MARQUEE SOCIETY OF WOMEN

MARQUEE SOCIETY OF WOMEN

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Barbara Helfer Corbo
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Laurie Delage
Beth Devino
Peggy DeZinno
Pattie Dunn
Sara Farisello
Ann Merriam Feinberg
Deborah Forchielli
Rosemary E. Giuliano
Moria Graham-Mehmet
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Sally Karnasiewicz
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Sheree Marcucci
Margaret Martin
Maribeth Mecca
Michele Monteiro
Heather Morgado
Marna Murtha
Joanne Nanavaty
Lysa Napoli
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Terri Ann Parks
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Maggie Tremaglio
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Dolores Veneziano
Marina Viale
Maria Vigliotti
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Top: Marquee Society of Women members gather on the Grand Foyer stairs.

Inset: Laurie Delage, Emma Barone & Lysa Napoli catch up during the society's reception. *Photo Credits: Benjamin Dressel*

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Operational Events Manager Ashley Sweet (right) and Volunteer Coordinator Debbie Forchielli (left) present the Volunteer of the Year Award to Marlene Lindquist (center). *Photo Credit: Derek Ward Photography*

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Celebrating our wonderful Volunteers at the annual Volunteer Picnic! *Photo Credit: Derek Ward Photography*



Cover: The cast of *Meredith Willson's The Music Man* performs "Ya Got Trouble." *Photo Credit: Marshall Meadows*

Back: *Austen's Pride* brings Jane Austen's characters and world to life at the Palace theater. *Photo Credit: Phillip Hamer*