

Tappahannock, VA — September 29, 2025

Our Town, Our Theatre

The DAW Theatre, a beloved cultural landmark nestled in Tappahannock's historic district, has been undergoing a dramatic transformation—one that promises to honor its storied past while ushering in a dazzling future. But they still need the community's help.

Originally opened in 1939, The DAW Theatre quickly became a cornerstone of community life, hosting films, live performances, and local events. It survived a devastating fire in 1949, was fully renovated in 1982, and continued to serve the public until its closure in the late 1990s—its final screening being *Titanic*. Though the building was gutted in anticipation of a revival, it remained dormant for years. Now, a new vision is breathing life back into the DAW, blending its Art Deco charm with modern amenities to create a vibrant venue for movies, theatre, and entertainment.

New Cast Members Join the DAW Theatre Foundation Board

The DAW Theatre Foundation is proud to introduce new leadership and board members who are passionate about the arts and community revitalization:

- **Beth Sharpe**, the new Board Chair, brings her experience from Tappahannock's Main Street revitalization efforts to the helm of the DAW's fundraising mission. Her love for community and the arts is now focused on restoring this historic gem. Beth lives in Tappahannock with her husband and their two children. She is actively involved in community service through organizations such as the Girl Scouts and the Junior Woman's Club, where she supports youth development and local outreach efforts. Her commitment to preserving the town's character and fostering civic engagement makes her a passionate advocate for the DAW's restoration and future.
- **Bernadette "Bernie" Barclay**, a Tappahannock resident for 14 years, joins the board with over 30 years of marketing and communications experience. She is currently serving as the Multimedia Specialist at Rappahannock Community College, Bernie is a passionate advocate for the DAW's revival and a proud stepmother and "Gigi" to two grandchildren.
- **Janet Little**, a professor of English at Rappahannock Community College, is pursuing her Doctorate in Arts in English Pedagogy. Originally from Richlands, Virginia, Janet brings grant writing expertise and a deep love for cinema and theatre to the board.

New Website, New Campaigns, New Momentum

The DAW Theatre Foundation has launched a newly updated website at www.thedawfoundation.org, where visitors can explore the theatre's history, sign up for newsletters, local theater history, campaigns and donor information, follow the progress of its restoration, and more!

The DAW Theatre Foundation has also restructured its giving campaigns under the banner "**Our Town, Our Theatre.**" This initiative offers three meaningful ways to contribute:

1. **Project-Based Giving** – Support specific stages of the restoration.
2. **Personalized Gifts** – Honor a loved one or business with a permanent tribute inside the theatre.
3. **Annual Fund: “Keeping the Lights On”** – Help ensure the theatre’s long-term sustainability.

Each campaign is designed with transparency and impact in mind.

Coming Soon: “Talkies” Podcast

In January 2026, the DAW Theatre will launch **“Talkies,”** a behind-the-scenes podcast hosted by Board Chair Beth Sharpe. The show will chronicle the theatre’s transformation, share stories from the community, and spotlight the people making it happen. Listen or view the podcast at www.thedawfoundation.org, or subscribe via the DAW’s new YouTube channel: youtube.com/@DAWTheatre.

The DAW Theatre is more than a building—it’s a beacon of creativity, resilience, and community spirit. The curtain is rising once again. Join us in bringing the magic back to Main Street. For more information, to donate, or to learn how to get involved, visit www.thedawfoundation.org.

If you have questions about the upcoming fundraising initiatives, the DAW Theatre, or would like to sign up for our newsletter, Beth Sharpe will be available to chat at the Northern Neck Conservancy’s Boots and Barbecue Celebration on Saturday, October 4. Join her at Wheatland in Essex County, VA!

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