

Library gala raises \$80,000

Harford County Public Library's 20th annual gala, "Cirque de Magie," raised \$80,000 net the evening of Oct. 26 at the Abingdon Library.

The gala is the library's largest fundraiser and is crucial to its mission of providing essential resources, services and programs to Harford County residents, according to a HCPL news release. From early literacy programs and STEM resources to internet access and more, contributions from the gala empower the community and impact the lives of all.

"We are immensely grateful to our community for uniting once again in strong support of Harford County Public Library," Mary Hastler, CEO of Harford County Public Library said in the release. "With the help of 600 of our closest friends, sponsors, volunteers, partners and staff, we raised critical funds that support essential resources and services. Our Libraries are the heart and soul of our community. We are a gateway for knowledge, a path of opportunity for job seekers and entrepreneurs, and a foundation for early literacy, school readiness and a lifelong love of learning. We strive to engage and empower every resident in Harford County, standing as one of the last free, public spaces where everyone is welcome. However, the benefits we provide are not guaranteed. Advocacy from our community is crucial to ensure that the Library continues to serve future generations. On Saturday night, the community sent a resounding message: the Library is not just important—it is essential to Harford County."

The gala's theme, Cirque de Magie, transported guests to the elegant, provocative setting of Erin Morgenstern's Victorian masterpiece, "The Night Circus." Guests enjoyed a night where magic knew no bounds, and every corner held a new and wondrous surprise including magicians and fortune tellers, live and silent auctions, food by Evolved Catering and Events, music by The Klassix, a jewelry raffle courtesy of Saxon's Diamond Centers and more.

The live auction, led by WMAR-2 News' Kristy Breslin and Harford County's Register of Wills Derek Hopkins, featured getaways to New York City, North Myrtle Beach and Ocean City along with a Gertrude's Chesapeake Kitchen locavore dinner for six with Master Chef John Shields,

a three-stop local brewery tour for 22 guests, club-level tickets to a Ravens game and a street naming in the Town of Bel Air.

Presenting sponsors of the 20th Annual Gala were Saxon's Diamond Centers and Klein's ShopRite of Maryland.

Headlining sponsors were Absolute Investigative Fingerprinting Security and Landlord Services; American Design and Build/American Sentry Solar; Bel Air Friends of HCPL; The Bradley Foundation on behalf of Dr. William Allen; The Daily Record; Heartfelt Florist; The Highlands School; Rockwell Jewelers; Skylight Creative Ideas; UM Upper Chesapeake Health; UR Washed Power Washing LLC; WebIXI; and Bobby and Angel Windsor.

Premier sponsors were ACER Exhibit and Events; Achieve Behavioral Health Services; APGFCU-Business Banking; Blend Salon; Broom's Bloom Dairy; Casella; Julia Chang; Coffee Coffee; Comcast; Coppermine Bel Air Athletic Club; Freedom Federal Credit Union; Full Circle Boards; Harford County Trash Services; Harford Mutual Insurance Group; Hillside Lawn Service Inc.; Keene Dodge Chrysler Jeep Ram; Maryland Brew Tours; McComas Funeral Homes; Nature's Care & Wellness; Pairings Bistro; PNC Bank; John Shields, Gertrude's Chesapeake Kitchen; Jon & Liz Shimaitis; Tar Heel Construction Group LLC; ThinkBig Networks; Thompson's Moving Inc.; and Vision Innovation Partners;

Supporting sponsors were Brown Advisory; Boutique 44; Brightview Senior Living; Bumble-Junk; Campion Insurance Inc.; Paige and Bill Cox; Deer Creek Exteriors; DiPaula Law; East Coast IV; Elite Power Washing LLC; Frederick Ward Associates; Hi-Brr Nation; Julie French; The Law Office of Shannon Gahs; Harford Community College; Mary and Mark Hastler; The Kelly Group; Library Interiors Design and Furnishings; MaGerks on a Roll; Wendy Meadows, Lawfully Lean LLC; NVS Merle Norman; Nemphos Braue LLC; Oak Contracting LLC; PK Law; Rainbow Restoration; Rockfield Foundation Inc.; Snee, Lutche & Helmlinger PA; Wade Sewell, Board of Education; T2S Solutions LLC; Towson University in Northeastern Maryland; Turf Connection Inc.; Vagabond Sandwich Company; Window Depot Baltimore; and Carol Wright and Mike Lafiandra;

For a complete listing of sponsors, visit hcplonline.org.

Mark your calendar now for the 21st annual gala on Saturday, Nov. 1, 2025. Tickets go on sale in August and will be available at hcplonline.org.

Harford County Public Library Foundation raises funds and awareness to support the Library's services, resources, capital improvements and access to information anytime, anywhere, for all people living and working in Harford County. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. All donations are fully tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. For more information, visit hcplonline.org.

Harford County Public Library operates 11 branches located throughout Harford County offering access to ideas that inform, entertain and inspire. Last year the library interacted with its residents more than 12 million times — borrowing free materials, visiting branches and the website, using free WiFi and attending classes and events. In 2023 Harford County Public Library received Graphic Design USA's American Inhouse Design Award for graphic excellence, the third time in five years. For more information, visit hcplonline.org.