



19th Annual
**Pops at
the Post**
Saturday, June 7

A special publication of the
Salisbury Post
Tuesday, June 3, 2025

FREE EVENT 19TH ANNUAL

POPS

at the

Post

JUNE 7, 2025

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 POPS AT 7:30 PM

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 Salisbury Symphony
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ANDY MOONEY / SALISBURY POST FILE PHOTO

The Salisbury Symphony performs during the 2024 Pops at the Post concert.

Point of pride: Late mayor loved Pops

By Jason Walser
For the Salisbury Post

the beauty in the diversity of people; she loved Salisbury; and she loved the Bell Tower Green.

And she particularly loved it when all of these things came together for a few hours each first Saturday in June for the Pops at the Post concert.

Mayor Alexander often referred to Salisbury as the “Paris of the Piedmont,” and was proud to share with her colleagues across the state that Salisbury had one of the best symphonies in the Southeast. And she was also proud that this symphony put on an outdoor concert that was free to anyone in Salisbury on this one magical day.

Although her schedule was more than full, the



ANDY MOONEY / SALISBURY POST FILE PHOTO

Mayor Karen Alexander gives her proclamation at the beginning of the 2024 Pops at the Post concert.

mayor made it a priority to serve on the board of directors of Pops at the Post, and she was among the most active board members in the organi-

zation. She adored reading proclamations at the event from City Council, and she invited friends from other towns to come see this signature event

for our city.

When she appeared on “Charlotte Talks” or on various television interviews, she always brought up Pops at the Post as part of her story about how Salisbury embraced the arts. Even when she was promoting the building of Bell Tower Green nearly a decade ago, she had a vision she shared frequently of Pops being held like it will be held this year — in the middle of the grass from a beautiful stage with gorgeous views of our surrounding community.

After her cancer diagnosis last fall, Mayor Alexander stayed active in planning for this year’s Pops, helping with creative feedback on how

the stage could be designed to hold all of the musicians in Bell Tower Green for the first time ever.


She was thrilled to learn that Daniel Wiley would be leading the symphony, and was excited about this year’s first concert for him in Bell Tower Green. She so wanted to be here with us this year.

Pops at the Post is a signature event for the city of Salisbury today because it was a source of pride for Karen Alexander for many years. As you watch the performers on the stage at Bell Tower Green this year, know that this is a dream come true for our former mayor.

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A missing piece: Pops at Post returns without late Robbins

By Jason Walser
For the Salisbury Post

2025 is a year of many firsts for Pops at the Post.

It will be the first Pops conducted by our new conductor, Daniel Wiley. It will be the first concert provided entirely in Bell Tower Green. It will be the first concert with expanded tailgating.

But 2025 will also be the first Pops at the Post in the past six years without Melissa Robbins quietly pulling strings behind the scenes to make this concert possible.

Unless you are on the board of Pops at the Post, you probably have no idea how many human hours go into making this concert happen. From executing contracts for

stages to ensuring delivery of “port-a-potties” to securing the musicians to literally dozens of other duties and activities, Melissa’s fingerprints are on almost every aspect of this event.

Melissa was the backbone behind the organization Pops at the Post (which is a separate 501(c)(3) nonprofit from the symphony), serving as its treasurer for all these years and paying every bill and overseeing all financial accounting.

And aside from the legal and organizational roles that she assumed in her service to Pops, Melissa was often the first to show up and the last to leave on the day of the event. This was not a job requirement in her work

at Rowan County United Way, but a passion project that she did for you — a fellow citizen of Rowan County. She believed in this community and wanted to make it the best it could be. Her contributions to this event went above and beyond in every imaginable way.

Furthermore, Melissa enlisted the help of her family each and every year. Her husband Gregg was often the first to be seen setting up chairs in the morning (along with their children). They also were the last to leave late in the evening after the music stopped and all of the contractors were satisfactorily loaded up and ready to leave with their checks, which Melissa was holding in her orga-

nized portfolio.

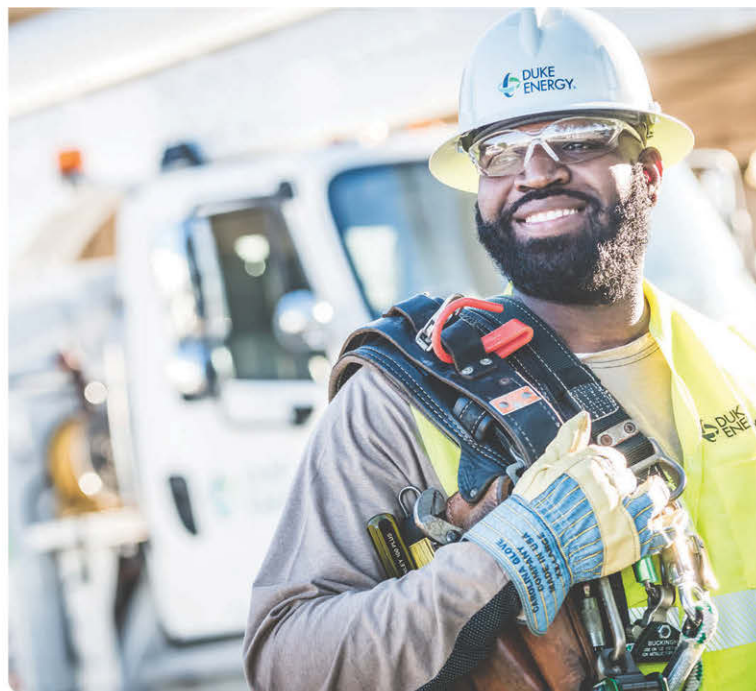
Melissa died unexpectedly on Jan. 21 of this year, leaving a huge hole in the organization, and, more importantly, in the hearts of all those who had the privilege to work with her. Pops at the Post (as an event and as an organization) are as special as they are because of all that Melissa poured into them. This community will never be able to adequately thank Melissa’s family for all that they too have poured into this event, but we hope that you feel great pride knowing that this community knows that this year’s performance still has Melissa’s fingerprints, whispers and influence all over it.

Thank you for sharing her with us.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Melissa Robbins of the United Way and the Pops at the Post board.



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New Pops conductor eyes first show

By Chandler Inions

chandler.inions@salisburypost.com

While Pops at the Post has been around for two decades, Saturday's show will be a first for new conductor Daniel Wiley.

Wiley was tapped to be the new music director for the Salisbury Symphony last year and will replace long-standing Pops at the Post maestro David Hagy this time around.

He called the opportunity more than just a privilege.

"I am super honored to be joining this tradition that we have," he said. "It is not just any other concert. There is a lot of history behind this show along with a huge community connection.

More than anything, what is most exciting is how it brings so many people together."

With a slight change of scenery, Pops at the Post will look a little different this year but Wiley is embracing the possibilities.

"This year, the Pops at the Post board made the decision to go over to the bandshell in the park that was built for the orchestras to play in," Wiley said. "It will be sort of a new lease in a new area, with the migration over there. We are excited about being able to utilize another part of the space of that park while keeping in line with the tradition to where things came from with the connection to the (Salisbury) Post and

paying homage to that."

As he has prepared, those considerations have left him asking the question: What kind of experience can we provide for the community and how can we bring people together?

The title of the program is "Tragedies and Triumphs."

As such, Wiley said the music will run the gamut of emotions from celebrations and victories to setbacks. Various pieces will transport the audience along that roller coaster throughout the evening.

"We will explore the two extremes of the human existence," Wiley said. "Everyone has experienced triumph and everyone has experienced

tragedies, so it will resonate. I have done this a few times. It is a really fun way to spend an evening."

Wiley is known around the country for his role as a composer and musical director. Although he has not led Pops at the Post, Wiley said he has shared his impressions of it with others across America.

"I like to talk about this like a block party," Wiley said. "It's a Pops concert at the Post but there are all sorts of things to do. There are food trucks, a swing band that plays. I want to welcome as many people as possible to come and enjoy that orchestra, the bands and Salisbury for what it is. Come enjoy the community."



Daniel Wiley is music director for the Salisbury Symphony.



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Partnerships like this bring beauty and joy to our community and build a brighter future we all can share — together.

June 7, 2025
19th Annual Pops at the Post Program

SALISBURY SYMPHONY POPS AT THE POST — TRAGEDIES AND TRIUMPHS

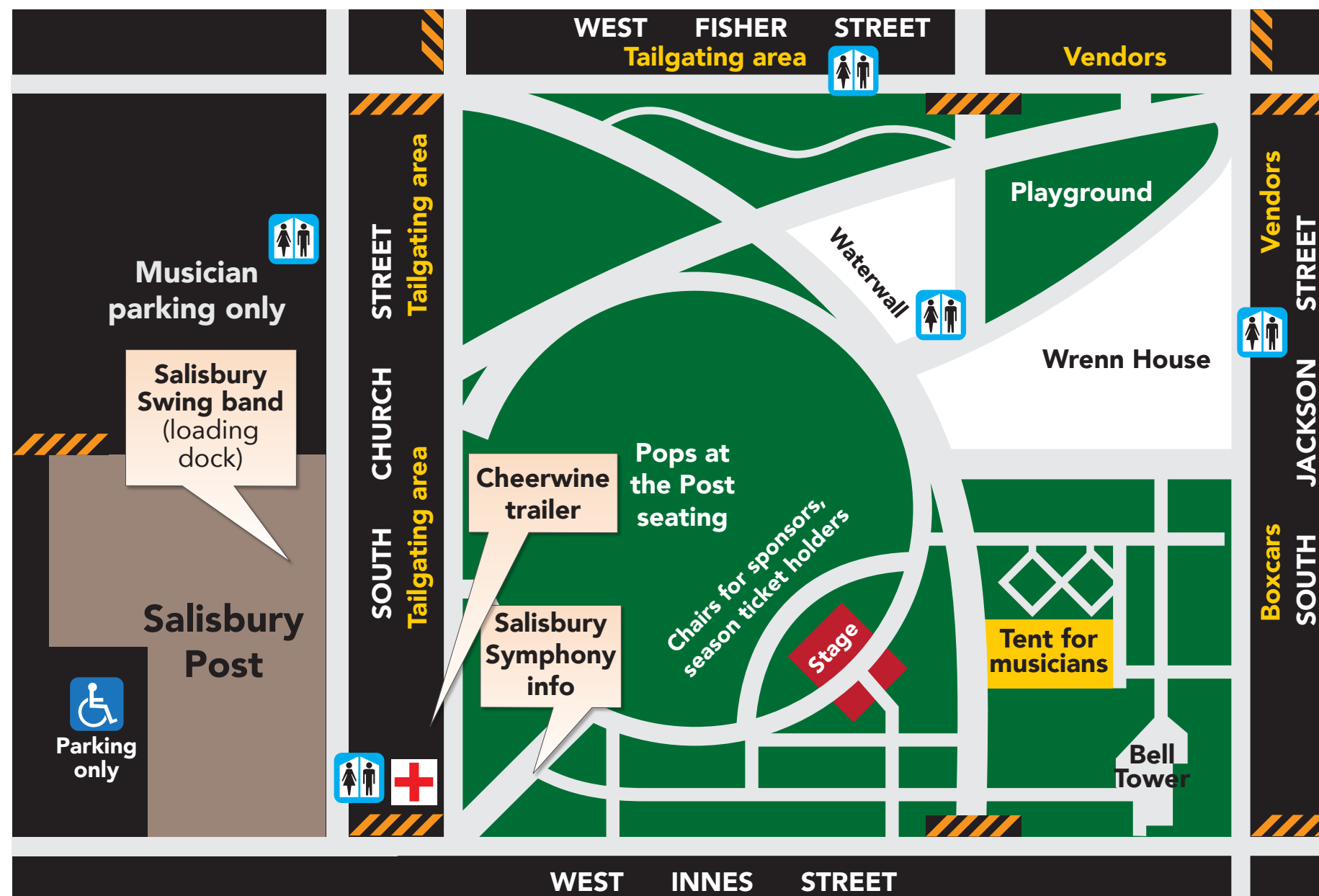
STAR SPANGLED BANNER — CONCERT VERSION . John Stafford Smith
OVERTURE TO THE MAGIC FLUTE W.A. Mozart
SELECTIONS FOR CARMEN George Bizet
PETITE SUITE DE CONCERT Samuel Coleridge-Taylor
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RAMSTEIN MARCH Davis Brown
SELECTIONS FROM SWAN LAKE Pyotr Ilich Tchaikovsky

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SERENADE FOR STRINGS, MVT. II Edward Elgar
1812 OVERTURE Pyotr Ilich Tchaikovsky
AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL Arr. Carmen Drago
“SALISBURY” POST MARCH John Philip Sousa
STARS AND STRIPES FOREVER John Philip Sousa

POPS AT THE POST

event map





ANDY MOONEY / SALISBURY POST FILE PHOTO

A large crowd turned out for the annual Pops at the Post concert last year. The Salisbury Swing Band performed before the symphony concert in Bell Tower Green.

Frequently asked questions

Where is the concert this year?

This year, the Pops at the Post concert will be held in the Bell Tower Green Park on the stage. The orchestra being led by Daniel Wiley will perform for the first time for our Pops audience on the stage located at 120 S. Church Street in Downtown Salisbury.

How can I follow along?

You can get a handheld fan with the program on the back at the Salisbury Symphony tent located near West Innes Street.

How long does the concert last?

Pops at the Post is typically a two-hour concert, with a 20-minute intermission. There are two planned encores, but families with young children may feel free to leave at any time. Please enjoy the concert, but please respect those guests who may be more focused on the music.

What time does the performance start?

The Salisbury Swing Band will perform on the Salisbury Post loading dock from 5-7 p.m. The Pops at the Post orchestra will begin sometime around 7:30 after sound-check.



Is there handicapped parking available?

Yes. There is limited handicapped parking in the Salisbury Post Building's courtyard located on the East side of the building. Placards are required.

Are their restrooms available?

Yes. There are public restrooms in the park. There will also be portable toilets available both for handicapped persons and not.

Is alcohol allowed?

Pops at the Post will be hosting vendors who will be serving beer and wine. Beer and wine must be consumed in the boundaries of the park. No outside

alcohol is allowed.

May I bring my dog on a leash?

The only pets allowed are service animals.

Will there be street closures during the event?

The three (Church, Fisher and Jackson) streets immediately surrounding Bell Tower Green Park will be closed on the day of the event. West Innes Street will remain open.

Will there be public parking?

Parking is available throughout downtown Salisbury. The lot behind the former Wells Fargo



Som's Meat on a Stick was among the food vendors at the 2024 Pops at the Post.

ANDY MOONEY / SALISBURY POST FILE PHOTO



Boy Scouts and the Rowan County Honor Guard present the colors during the national anthem during the 2024 Pops at the Post.

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Tailgating is a popular activity at the annual Pops at the Post concert.



ANDY MOONEY / SALISBURY POST FILE PHOTO
Maestro David Hagy conducts the Salisbury Symphony during the concert.

Building will be reserved for musicians. If you need help in located a parking space, visit the Downtown Salisbury website.

Can I tailgate?

Yes. Tailgating spots will be available along South Church Street and West Fisher Street and will open at 1 p.m. Tailgaters are allowed only one 10-foot by 10-foot tent and are allowed to bring coolers. Tables food and lawn games. Tailgaters must be in position no later than 6 p.m. To purchase your tailgating spot, go to Pops at the Post tailgating 2025 listed on Eventbrite.

May I bring something to cook on if I am tailgating?

Yes, but no open flames are allowed for safety reasons.

Where can I donate to the concert?

You may donate at the Salisbury symphony tent. Salisbury Civitans will collect donations during intermission by passing the hats. Donate online at www.givelively.org/donate/pops-at-the-post-inc/pops-at-the-post-2025.

Is there free Cheerwine again this year?

Yes. Cheerwine and Diet Cheerwine will be available at a trailer on the north side of the park near W. Innes Street.

Is there food available?

Yes. Vendors will be set up along West Fisher and South Jackson streets. This year's lineup is diverse and all vendors are excited to serve you.

What if someone has an emergency of some kind?

Uniformed police as well as Salisbury firefighters are on hand and will be available to assist you.

What is the seating situation?

People are encouraged to bring their own chairs and blankets. VIP seating for sponsors and special guests will be set up directly in front of the stage and appropriately marked around 3:30 p.m.



The crowd enjoys the symphony concert during the 2024 Pops at the Post.

What I love about Pops at the Post

Event board members share thoughts about annual concert

"I am really proud, as a board and a community, of being able to keep Pops at the Post as a free event that is open to everyone and is completely accessible to the public and that it is an opportunity to hear a really good symphony orchestra in a beautiful setting.

I also really enjoy tailgating. I enjoy being able to get a spot and host my friends and family. That has become a tradition in and of itself."

— Joe Morris, president

"I love that little kids love Pops at the Post and that they enjoy it their way with their friends. The parents love Pops at the Post and our older citizens love Pops at the Post. Even our teenagers. They walk around in their groups and are socializing and getting their ice cream. They love Pops at the Post. Everybody that comes loves it."

— Audrey Eudy, vice president

"My favorite thing about Pops is seeing people of all ages, from all over, enjoy music outside of its traditional setting. It's freeing to be outdoors and hearing a world-class orchestra perform all genres that speak to kids and adults alike."

— Andrea Anders, secretary

"For me, there is nothing better than watching a symphony performance, the sun going down and having a drink in my hand. That is the trio of great experiences as we approach the summer."

— Bill Bucher

"I love that it is a unique Normal Rockwell experience in modern day life."

— Greg Anderson

"As a child I could only dream of being a portion to help put this event on each year. We have grown from a parking lot, moved from a loading dock to what I see as a grand future for our city and county. All of us board members I think feel it building in us like a drum beat as we get closer. And this being the first time in the park and making it work is a feeling all its own."

— Jody Blackwell

Pops at the Post Board of Directors 2025

- **Joe Morris** — President
- **Audrey Eudy** — Vice president
- **Andrea Anders** — Secretary
- **Melissa Robbins*** — Treasurer
- **Greg Alexander** — At large
- **Karen Alexander*** — Designated seat
- **Jody Blackwell** — At large
- **Winfred Mention** — Designated seat
- **Stephanie Potter** — Designated seat
- **Sada Stewart Troutman** — Designated seat
- **Jason Walser** — At large
- **Daniel Wiley** — Staff
- **Director TBA** — Staff

* Deceased

"Our incredibly talented Salisbury Symphony musicians performing 1812 Overture with the Bell Tower bells ringing with all the church bells ringing and the sounds of the cannon, all under the stars at our Bell Tower Green park."

— Stephanie Potter

"I love being able to facilitate something each year that I know the people of Salisbury love. It is a gift and a blessing to be a part of that and seeing it all come together really hammers that home."

— Winfred Mention

"Pops at the Post embodies the best of Salisbury. People from all walks of life come to listen to acoustic beauty while surrounded by the beauty of Bell Tower Green, all in the good company of neighbors. Art, diversity, beauty, community. It's all there."

— Jason Walser



ANDY MOONEY / SALISBURY POST FILE PHOTO

Maestro David Hagy and the Salisbury Symphony Orchestra at last year's Pops at the Post. It was Hagy's final event before retiring.



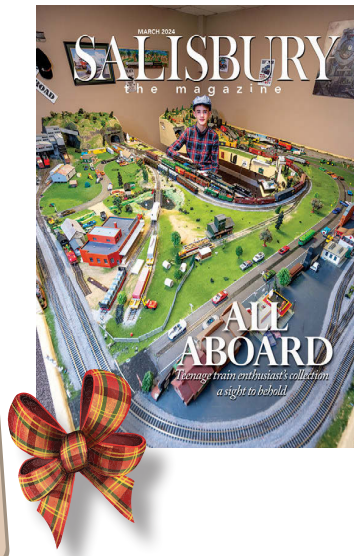
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