

THE BOXCAR CHILDREN



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June 16 - 25, 2023

at the New Hazlett Center for Performing Arts

ABOUT THE BOXCAR CHILDREN BOOK SERIES

The Boxcar Children book series tells the story of four orphaned children, Henry, Jessie, Violet, and Benny. They create a home for themselves in an abandoned boxcar in the forest. They eventually meet their grandfather, who is a wealthy and kind man (although the children had believed him to be cruel). The children decide to live with the grandfather, who moves the beloved boxcar to his backyard so the children can use it as a playhouse. This script takes elements from several of the books in the series.



An avid reader and writer from an early age, Gertrude Chandler Warner dreamed of becoming a writer from the time she was a little girl. She would write stories for her Grandfather Carpenter and give him one as a gift each Christmas. Inspired by her childhood experiences of living across the street from the railroad tracks, Gertrude imagined how amazing it might be to live in the caboose of a freight car. This idea prompted the creation of the original book *The Boxcar Children* which was the first book in the series in 1924.

A lifelong resident of Putnam, Connecticut Gertrude became a first-grade teacher at the Putnam Grammar School for 32 years. She wanted her students to love reading as much as she did. Using input from her students, Warner made *The Boxcar Children* to be fun and easy to read.

It was rewritten in 1942 at an entry level to serve as a children’s school reader—and to entice the nonreader. The books have captured the hearts of children who demanded more stories in the series. Warner’s original 19 titles are still in publication. Today, the complete series includes upwards of 150 titles with the subsequent books in the series being written by ghostwriters. Two authors, Stacia Deutsch and Rhody Cohen, are credited as the ghostwriters behind “many of the Boxcar Children books.”

The National Education Association named the original book one of its “Teachers’ Top 100 Books for Children,” and the original novel was also ranked among the all-time “Top 100 Chapter Books”, or children’s novels, in a survey by the School Library Journal.

The books have sold 50 million print copies over the span of decades. In 2004, The Gertrude Chandler Warner Boxcar Museum opened in Putnam, Connecticut, which is appropriately housed in an authentic 1920s New Haven Railroad boxcar.

EVERY DONATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

Please Give to Prime Stage and Support our Mission, Productions, Programs, and Staff. Your financial support will enable Prime Stage Theatre to inspire the imagination as we Bring Literature to Life on Stage.

- Online at www.primestage.com/support
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Prime Stage Theatre

Presents

THE BOXCAR CHILDREN

Based on the book by
Gertrude Chandler Warner

Adapted for the stage by
Barbara Field

Directed by
Laura Wurtzell

Featuring

*Rayna Akin, John Dolphin, Matt Henderson, Molly Frontz, Eamonn McElfresh,
Isaac Miller, Kylan Moore, Jocelyn Hillen Newham, Mairead Roddy*

Production Manager
Erin Barnhart

Scenic Designer & Technical Director
Alex Barnhart

Lighting Designer
Hope Debelius

Sound Designer
Samantha Magill

Costume Designer
Kimberly Brown

Properties Master
Alex Keplar

Vocal Coach
Lisa Bansavage

Stage Manager
Jason Kmetic

Assistant Stage Manager
Shianne Steck

Assistant Stage Manager
Lauren N. Wijangco

Produced by Special Arrangements with Plays for New Audiences

The Boxcar Children was first presented by Seattle Children's Theatre for the 1999-2000 season.

THE BOXCAR CHILDREN

Four orphaned children are running away from their grandfather who they believe is cruel. They find an abandoned boxcar in the woods, then decide to call it home where they can survive suspenseful mysteries and stay together.

THE CAST

In Alphabetical Order

Jessie Rayna Akin
Big Mike/Mr. John Henry Alden..... John Dolphin
Violet..... Molly Frontz
Officer Banning/Cookie.....Matt Henderson
Henry..... Eamonn McElfresh
Dr. Samuel Truman Isaac Miller
Benny/The Kid..... Kylan Moore
Mrs. Alberts/Bakery Woman/Mrs. Truman.....Jocelyn Hillen Newham
Sarah Calder Mairead A. Roddy

Setting: Small town in Illinois in the 1930s

Run Time: approximately 65 minutes without an intermission

ARTISTIC AND DESIGN STAFF

Director Laura Wurzell
Producing Artistic Director..... Wayne Brinda, Ed.D.
Production Manager Erin Barnhart
Technical & Scenic Director Alex Barnhart
Lighting Designer Hope Debelius
Sound Designer Samantha Magill
Costume Designer Kimberly Brown
Properties Master Alex Keplar
Carpenter Michael Boone
Stage Manager Jason Kmetic
Assistant Stage Managers Shianne Steck and Lauren N. Wijangco
Master Electrician and Light Board Operator Tony Clayton
Intimacy Director Michael R. Petyak
Vocal Coach..... Lisa Bansavage
Audio Describer Nathan Ruggles
ASL Signed Interpreters Heather Gray and Jennifer Flaggs
New Hazlett Sound Board Operator Laura Moeller
New Hazlett Box Office Manager.....Nathan Wagner



Please note: The use of any recording device, either audio or video, and the taking of photographs, either with or without flash, is strictly prohibited. Please turn off all electronic devices such as cellular phones, beepers, and watches.

PRIME STAGE THEATRE WOULD LIKE TO OFFER A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING:

John Clark
Elizabeth Hosier
Beth Lawry
Mike Pilyth
Front Porch Theatricals
Little Lake Theatre
McKeesport Model Railroad Club
New Hazlett Staff & Ushers
Pittsburgh Trolley Museum
Pittsburgh Children's Museum
Shaler North Hills Library
Techniques by Toni
Prime Stage Staff and Volunteer

thank you!

ACCESSIBILITY



SENSORY INCLUSIVE PERFORMANCE

Second Saturday of each production at 2:30 PM. Our Sensory Inclusive Performance is a family experience. We provide a social story with pre-theater preparatory activities for the person with a sensory, social, or learning disability so the person begins to understand and anticipate what might happen at a performing arts experience.

For all performances, our patrons have access to Sensory bags designed to assist the needs of adults and children. The bags are filled with items that may help lessen sensory overload and engage. The bag items are also easily cleaned and sterilized for multiple uses.

Prime Stage Theatre staff is certified for Sensory Inclusive with KultureCity



AUDIO DESCRIPTION PERFORMANCE

Second Sunday of each production with On-Stage Pre-Show, Actor Voice ID, and/or Touch Tour at 1:30 PM, Audio Pre-Show at 2:15 PM, and Performance at 2:30 PM

Audio Description (or AD) helps to make visual imagery accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired. Visual elements can include costumes, sets, and character appearances, along with action, gestures, facial expressions, and other visually important images. It's used to enhance understanding and enjoyment of the live performance.

This equipment was made available to the community thanks to the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council through a grant from the Allegheny Regional Asset District.



ASL SIGNED INTERPRETED PERFORMANCE

Second Sunday of each production at 2:30 PM.

We are pleased to offer American Sign Language interpreted performances with two certified interpreters. We also encourage students studying sign language to attend for observation.

AWARD FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN AUDIO DESCRIPTION *Received by Prime Stage and Nathan Ruggles*

The American Council of the Blind (ACB) proudly announces this year Achievement Awards in Audio Description, an initiative of the Council's Audio Description Project (ADP).



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JULY 7TH & 8TH AT 6 PM
JULY 9TH AT 2 PM

FOREST GLEN PAVILION
NORTH PARK



DIRECTOR

Laura Wurzell

Laura began working in the theatre over 35 years ago. She was a dancer in her much younger days, and quickly moved to the other side of the production table as a choreographer and director, working in many theaters and schools in the Pittsburgh area. She most recently directed *Kinky Boots* for Split Stage Productions, choreographed *Shrek, Jr.* for Penn Middle School, and will be choreographer for *Once Upon a Mattress* at The Theatre Factory after opening *Boxcar Children*. Recently retiring as a school counselor for the Franklin Regional School District, Laura is looking forward to traveling to Iowa State University this fall as a guest artist in residence. Laura is grateful for the opportunity to work with Prime Stage, working with old and new friends. She thanks the cast and creative team for “sticking together like glue” and hopes the audience enjoys sharing in this adventure!



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

The *Boxcar Children* series of children's books have been a staple of early childhood libraries, classrooms, and home bookshelves for over 80 years. I believe the reason for this longevity is the inherent theme that Henry introduces through the line, “We Alden's stick together like glue.” We all spend our life seeking family and friends that we can have lasting, healthy relationships with. We begin this story with the children becoming orphans through the sudden death of their parents. The story unfolds with very simple lessons about how we can deal with challenges of loss by relying on those people around us that we identify as our “glue.” The children show us how to focus on the needs of their siblings, not themselves. In taking care of each other, they begin to move forward through their loss, ultimately finding new relationships to celebrate.

So, join us as we follow the Alden children through their challenges in the *Boxcar*, and when you leave them to return to your own homes, I hope you can spend some time recognizing the “glue” you have in your own lives. And don't forget to be ready for those new relationships that can help your “glue” stick tighter!

THE BOXCAR CHILDREN



Eamonn McElfresh



Rayna Akin



Molly Frontz



Kylan Moore



Jocelyn Hillen Newham



Mairead A. Roddy



Matt Henderson



John Dolphin



Isaac Miller

ACTOR BIOGRAPHIES

Rayna Akin (*Jessie*)

Rayna is a Sophomore at PALCS cyber school. She caught the acting bug after first being cast in *Seussical the Musical* (Cat in the Hat) in 2018 at the Highlands Middle School. A few months later, she joined Pittsburgh Musical Theater to advance her skills and obtain further education in the arts. Her highlight performances include *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Cantor), *The Little Mermaid* (Arista), *A Lyrical Christmas Carol* (Belle), *Footloose* (Ariel), and *The Lightning Thief* (Charon). She recently started auditioning for Prime Stage in the summer of 2022. She played the leading role in *The Amazing Lemonade Girl* (Alex) and got to work alongside many fantastic actors. Rayna continues to perform with the wonderful support of her friends and family.

John Dolphin (*Big Mike and Mr. John Henry Alden*)

John, originally from Buffalo, is now a Pittsburgh based actor. He was last seen as (Dad) in *Painting Lessons* during this year's CSA Series at the New Hazlett Theatre. Before that he understudied the role of (The Legionnaire/Mike) for *What the Constitution Means to Me* at City Theatre. Locally, he has been seen at The Pittsburgh New Works Festival "*Warren and the Polar Bear, and Abroad Not Home*, The Young Playwrights Festival at City Theatre, Prime Stage Theatre, The New Renaissance Theatre *Children of the Night* and the staged reading of *Coach and Mrs. Jagoff*. In Buffalo, he worked on the main stage at the Studio Arena Theatre (Whit) in *Of Mice and Men* and as a teaching artist. NYC credits include productions at the Off-Center Theatre, The New Theatre, The American Folk Theatre, and The Music Theatre Lab.

Matt Henderson (*Officer Banning and Cookie*)

Matt returns to Prime Stage after appearances in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, Arsenic and Old Lace, Einstein, A Stage Portrait, Twelfth Night, Walk Two Moons, The Scarlet Letter, and The Westing Game*. He has worked with many theatre companies throughout the Pittsburgh area. Quantum Theatre: *10 for 21*. Arcade Comedy Theater: *The Thanksgiving Play*. City Theatre: *The Young Playwrights Festival* PICT Classic Theatre: *The Old Curiosity Shop, Romeo & Juliet, The Lion in Winter, 12 Peers* Theater: *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play, Thom Pain (based on nothing), an Colorado*. With Bricolage: *Speech & Debate, Midnight Radio - Mad Science Lab, Underwater Voyage, Animated Holiday*. For No Name Players: *Fixing King John*. Off the Wall: *boom*. Cup-A-Jo Productions: *Unhinged, Hospitality Suite*. Pittsburgh Shakespeare in the Parks: *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Twelfth Night, Shakespeare: The First Drafts*. At The New Renaissance Theatre Company: *The Merry Wives of Windsor, and The Tempest*.

Mairead A. Roddy (*Sarah Calder*)

Mairead is thrilled to return to Prime Stage after appearing last year in *A Wrinkle in Time*. Mairead grew up in Pittsburgh and earned a Bachelor's in Theatre from Point Park in 2019. Her favorite credits include *The Marvelous Wonderettes* (Betty Jean) with Stage 62, *Company* (Marta) with Riverfront, and *Arcadia* (Thomasina) with Little Lake. Mairead would like to thank this cast and crew for their imaginations and lively spirits in putting this production together. Much love to Mom & Dad for their boundless love, patience, and support. Mairead would like to dedicate this performance, in particular, to Keira and Alexander, and, as always, to Johnny, Todd, J. Frank, & Aunt Pat. Sláinte.

Molly Frontz (*Violet*)

Molly is a sixth-grade theater student at PPS CAPA and has been studying at CLO Academy since she was 6. She is excited to be joining this wonderful cast as she takes on the role of Violet in her return to Prime Stage Theatre. Other recent roles include Lucy in Prime Stage's production of *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*, Matilda in CAPA's production of *Matilda the Musical*, and assorted roles including Belinda Cratchit in CLO's *A Musical Christmas Carol*. Molly dedicates this performance to her twin, Matthew.

ACTOR BIOGRAPHIES

Eamonn McElfresh (Henry)

Eamonn is a musical theater major at Pittsburgh CAPA and a student at CLO Academy. He is thrilled to be reunited with the Prime Stage family. He was recently seen on the stage in Prime Stage's *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, CAPA's *The Prom*, The Pittsburgh Public's production of *The Christmas Story*, CLO Academy's *Into the Woods* and Front Porch Theatricals *Grand Hotel*. He would like to thank his family, teachers, and coaches for their continued support and guidance.

Isaac Miller (Dr. Samuel Truman)

Isaac is thrilled to be performing at the New Hazlett again in his hometown of Pittsburgh. Recent Prime Stage performances include *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (Professor/Father Christmas), *Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad* (Publisher/Master/Conductor), and *Frankenstein* (Victor Frankenstein/Percy Shelley). NY Credits include *America's Favorite Newscaster* and *What Elsa's Knew in Peril*. Isaac just played Deputy Governor Danforth in Vigilance Theatre's production of *The Crucible*. He has starred in other shows such as *Beauty and the Beast*, *Ragtime*, and *Little Shop of Horrors*. Isaac is also a musician and a graduate of the CMU BFA Musical Theater Class of 2017.

Kylan Moore (Benny and The Kid)

Kylan is excited to be making his theater debut with Prime Stage Theatre! Having just completed second grade at Whitehall Elementary School, Kylan is looking forward to summer vacation, which he will spend riding his bike, swimming, and going to the beach. When not performing, Kylan enjoys reading Calvin and Hobbes, Diary of a Wimpy Kid, and "Dog Man, or playing Minecraft and Super Mario on his Nintendo Switch. Kylan would like to thank his family for all their support and hope you enjoy the production! Next up - Performing Arts Camp in Sewickley!

Jocelyn Hillen Newham (Mrs. Alberts, Bakery Woman and Mrs. Truman)

Jocelyn is excited to be in her first production at Prime Stage! Jocelyn has been acting since her tween years and has a BFA in Theatre from the University of Arts in Philadelphia. Some of her favorite roles are *Private Lives* (Amanda), *Steel Magnolias* (Truvy), *Crimes of the Heart* (Chick), and *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* (Lucy). For the last several years, Jocelyn has been performing, coaching, and teaching long and short form improv primarily at Arcade Comedy Theater, as well as at festivals and theaters nationwide. She also co-produces several recurring improv shows. She's thrilled to return to the scripted stage and to have been cast in this lovely production. She wants to thank the entire cast and crew and love to her husband, Craig, and their three darling kitties.



ARTISTIC AND DESIGN BIOGRAPHIES

Alexander Barnhart (*Scenic Designer and Technical Director*)

Alex is a Theater artist and educator from Pittsburgh, PA. A graduate of Slippery Rock University's BA Theater-Design and Technology, class of 2014. Graduate of Kent State University's MFA Theater- Design and Technology, class of 2021. Alex has been working as a Designer, Educator, and Technical Director for various companies and universities in Pittsburgh and beyond including Prime Stage Theater, Kinetic Theatre, 12 Peers Theater Company, Carnegie Mellon University, Kent State, and Wilkes University. Over the years, they've had the opportunity to work on a number of incredible solo and collaborative projects. Thriving on creative challenges and building long-term relationships with artists and students along the way, Alex is always leaving an impactful impression behind.

Erin Barnhart (*Production Manager*)

Erin is a Pittsburgh based Production Manager and a theatre management graduate of Kent State University. She previously worked as a Resident Stage Manager and Production Stage Manager in Scranton, Pennsylvania before returning back to her hometown of Pittsburgh. Erin is thrilled to be working on another production as Production Manager here at Prime Stage Theater, and as always, she would like to thank her friends and family for their continued support!

Lisa Bansavage (*Voice Coach*)

Lisa is delighted to be working on her seventh production with Prime Stage Theatre. As an actor, her career spans Broadway, Off Broadway, regional theatre, film, television and national commercial credits including *Master Class*, *Sideman*, *Turn of the Screw*, *A Man for All Seasons*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Grace & Glorie*, *Mastergate*, *Red Scare on Sunset*, *The Changeling*, *The Country Wife*, *A View from the Bridge*, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, *The Sisters Rosenweig*, *Night of the Iguana*, *Mississippi Burning*, *Married to the Mob*, *Three Men and a Baby*, *The Fisher King*, *Diary of Anne Frank*, *The Loman Family Picnic* and a third of the full Shakespearean canon as well as a role opposite Sir Anthony Quayle in the BBC-London production of *An Exchange of Gifts*. She is a graduate of Carnegie-Mellon University's theatre conservatory and holds a Masters from The University of Pittsburgh where she was the Merrill Fellow. Her most recent New York performance was as Elizabeth Jackson, Rebekah Baines Johnson and Virginia Clinton in *First Mothers: The Women Who Raised America's Presidents*.

Kimberly Brown (*Costume Designer*)

Kimberly has MFA and BS degrees, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio. Kim marks her 25th costume design with Prime Stage on this production (2014-2022 seasons) and is glad to be part of bringing literature to life! Upcoming projects include "12:52 The Mike Webster Story" (Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre), "Spring Awakening" (The Collective) and "The Play That Goes Wrong" (Lincoln Park Performing Arts Center). Kim is the President of Spotlight Costumes LLC in Pittsburgh's West End and teaches costume design and theatrical makeup at LPPACS in Midland, PA.

Tony Clayton (*Master Electrician, Light Board Operator*)

Tony Clayton is a Spring 2022 graduate from IUP. He has been doing electrics and lighting design in the Pittsburgh area and Woodstock, New York. This is his third show at Prime Stage, previously working as Master Electrician on *Perseverance* and *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. He also recently designed the lights for *Grand Hotel* at Avonworth High School which received a Gene Kelly nomination for best lighting design.

Hope Debelius (*Lighting Designer*)

Hope is a Pittsburgh based lighting designer and recent graduate of Point Park University's Conservatory of Performing Arts. Recent design credits include: *Rapunzel* with the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, *IN/BETween* with Shana Simmons Dance, *Frankenstein* with Prime Stage Theatre, the *Fall Dance Concert* and *Spring Awakening* at the Pittsburgh Playhouse. She has also recently had the pleasure of being the assistant lighting designer for *The Wanderers* at City Theatre and *A Midsummer Night's Dream in Harlem* at the Pittsburgh Public Theatre. Website: hopedebelius.com

ARTISTIC AND DESIGN BIOGRAPHIES

Alex Keplar (Properties Master)

Alex is a Pittsburgh based scenic and properties designer. She is a recent graduate of Point Park University's Conservatory of Performing Arts and is excited to be working on her fifth production with Prime Stage! Some of her recent credits include *The Prom* (Scenic Designer, Pittsburgh CAPA), *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Properties Master, Prime Stage Theatre), *39 Steps* (Properties Master, Prime Stage Theatre), *The Sunshine Boys* (Scenic Designer, South Park Theatre), *The Amazing Lemonade Girl* (Properties Master, Prime Stage Theatre), *Silent Sky* (Properties Master, South Park Theatre), *Angels in America* (Properties Master, The Pittsburgh Playhouse), and *Little Children Dream of God* (Scenic Designer, The Pittsburgh Playhouse). She would like to thank her friends and family for all of their support!

Jason Kmetic (Stage Manager)

Jason has been working in theater for 20 years. He started with Prime Stage theater in 2005 and has worked with them on and off for the last 18 years. He has also worked for Disney, and production companies in California. Jason has recently returned to Pittsburgh to go back to his passion of theater. Some of Jason's credits include: *The Long Road Today/ El Largo Camino Del Hoy* (Lighting Technician/First Assistant Stage Manager), *Apsis Requiem* (Lighting Designer/Stage Manager), *Gypsy* (Master Carpenter/Stage Manager), *Of Mice and Men* (Assistant Stage Manager), *15 Minutes of Fame* (Assistant Director/Stage Manager), *Fifth Feeling: A Performance Ritual* (Lighting Designer/Stage Manager), *Westfield Mall Holiday Show 2014* (Lighting Designer/Stage Manager), and most recently *High School Drama Awards* (Production Stage Manager). Jason is proud to have worked on this production and would like to thank his parents for their continued support. He would also like to give a special thank you with much heart to Ahmer'e for his support and understanding during this production!

Samantha Magill (Sound Designer)

Samantha is thrilled to be a part of another Prime Stage Theater production! Her previous works include: *The 39 Steps* (Sound Designer), *Perseverance* (Sound Designer), *The Amazing Lemonade Girl* (Sound Designer), *The White Rose* (Sound Designer), *Harriett Tubman and The Underground Railroad* (Sound Designer), and *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe* (Sound Designer) with Prime Stage Theater as well as *Perdita* (Sound Designer), and *Morning Reckoning* (Sound Designer) with the New Hazlett CSA program. She is also a proud member of the SoundGirls' Pittsburgh chapter which promotes and inspires the next generation of women in audio. When she is not in the theater, she spends her time working as the full-time morning show producer for KDKA News radio. She is extremely thankful for Prime Stage and her friends, family, and cat for their support.

Shianne Steck (Assistant Stage Manager)

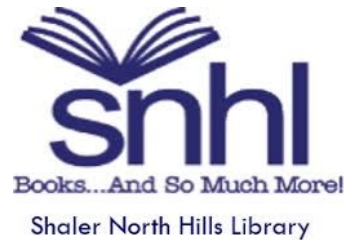
Shianne Steck (They/She) is so excited to be joining the Prime Stage team for the first time! She is a junior theater major at Pitt-Greensburg, and most recently, she was the ASM for Front Porch Theatricals' *Falsettos*! Other shows Shianne has worked on include *The Great American Trailer Park Musical* (ASM), *See How They Run* (ASM), *9 to 5* (ASM), and *Little Women* (SM). She would like to thank her mom, Beth, for all of her support.

Lauren N. Wijangco (Assistant Stage Manager)

Lauren is ecstatic to be working on her first production back of house with Prime Stage Theater! She is the resident CSA Stage Manager as well as a Patron Services Associate at the New Hazlett Theater. Regionally, she has also worked with Quantum Theatre (*Idaspe*), City Theatre (*The Garbologists; The Medium*), Kinetic Theatre Company (*The Speckled Band, An Adventure of Sherlock Holmes; An Octoroon*), Pittsburgh Fringe Festival (*Iron in Your Future*), Mountain Playhouse (*I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change; Too Many Cooks; Social Security, The Bikinis*), and A.D. Players Theater (*You Can't Take It With You; Cinderella: The World's Favorite Fairy Tale; Emma*). Proud Actor's Equity Association - Equity Membership Candidate and dog mommy to TJ the Beagi.

SUGGESTED READING LIST

If this play has piqued your interest, why not check out a book or movie and explore more? Your public libraries have many online resources you can access from home through Libby or Hoopla. Check your library's website for help in getting started.



Children's Books

***The Boxcar Children* by Gertrude Chandler Warner**

Henry, Jessie, Violet, and Benny are brothers and sisters. They're orphans too, and the only way they can stay together is to make it on their own. When the children find an abandoned boxcar in the woods, they decide to call it home--and become the Boxcar Children!

***Encyclopedia Brown (series)* by Donald J. Sobol**

Leroy Brown, aka Encyclopedia Brown, is Idaville neighborhood's ten-year-old star detective. With a fhte playwright wasn't an uncanny knack for trivia, he solves mysteries for the neighborhood kids through his own detective agency.

***My Father's Dragon (series)* by Ruth Gannett**

When Elmer Elevator hears about the plight of an overworked and underappreciated baby flying dragon, he stows away on a ship and travels to Wild Island to rescue the dragon.

***From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* by E.L. Konigsburg**

When Claudia decided to run away, she planned very carefully. She would be gone just long enough to teach her parents a lesson in Claudia appreciation. And she would go in comfort - she would live at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She saved her money, and she invited her brother Jamie to go, mostly because he was a miser and would have money.

***The Case of the Windy Lake (Mighty Muskrats series)* by Michael Hutchinson**

Sam, Otter, Atim, and Chickadee are four inseparable cousins growing up on the Windy Lake First Nation. Nicknamed the Mighty Muskrats for their habit of laughing, fighting, and exploring together, the cousins find that each new adventure adds to their reputation. When a visiting archaeologist goes missing, the cousins decide to solve the mystery of his disappearance. In the midst of community conflict, family concerns, and environmental protests, the four get busy following every lead.

***Tower Treasure (Hardy Boys mysteries)* by Franklin Dixon**

A dying criminal confesses that his loot has been stored "in the tower." Both towers of the looted mansion are searched in vain. It remains for the Hardy boys to make an astonishing discovery that clears up the mystery and clears the name of a friend's father.

***The Secret of the Old Clock (Nancy Drew mysteries)* by Carolyn Keene**

The mystery that began it all for America's favorite teenaged sleuth. The accidental rescue of a little girl who lives with her two great-aunts leads to an adventurous search for a missing will.

***All-of-a-Kind Family (series)* by Sydney Taylor**

Meet the All-of-a-kind family- Ella, Henny, Sarah, Charlotte, and Gertie- who live with their parents in New York City at the turn of the century. Together they share adventures that find them searching for hidden buttons while dusting Mama's front parlor and visiting with the peddlers in Papa's shop on rainy days.

***A Series of Unfortunate Events (series)* by Lemony Snicket**

Violet, Klaus, and Sunny Baudelaire are intelligent children. They are charming, and resourceful, and have pleasant facial features. Unfortunately, they are exceptionally unlucky. The three children become orphans following a fire and are sent to live with Count Olaf, who attempts to steal their inheritance.

SUGGESTED READING LIST

Teen Books

***Westing Game* by Ellen Raskin**

This highly inventive mystery involves sixteen people who are invited to the reading of Samuel W. Westing's will. They could become millionaires, depending on how they play the tricky and dangerous Westing game, which involves blizzards, burglaries, and bombings.

***Firekeeper's Daughter* by Angeline Boulley**

Eighteen-year-old Daunis Fontaine has never quite fit in, both in her hometown and on the nearby Ojibwe reservation. She dreams of a fresh start at college, but when family tragedy strikes, Daunis puts her future on hold to look after her fragile mother. The only bright spot is meeting Jamie, the charming new recruit on her brother Levi's hockey team.

***The Inheritance Games (series)* by Jennifer Lynn Barnes**

Avery Grambs has a plan for a better future: survive high school, win a scholarship, and get out. But her fortunes change in an instant when billionaire Tobias Hawthorne dies and leaves Avery virtually his entire fortune. The catch? Avery has no idea why -- or even who Tobias Hawthorne is.

***They Went Left* by Monica Hesse**

Germany, 1945. The soldiers who liberated the Gross-Rosen concentration camp said the war was over, but nothing feels over to eighteen-year-old Zofia Lederman. Her body has barely begun to heal, her mind feels broken. And her life is completely shattered: Three years ago, she and her younger brother, Abek, were the only members of their family to be sent to the right, away from the gas chambers of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

***Truly Devious (series)* by Maureen Johnson**

True-crime aficionado Stevie Bell is set to begin her first year at Ellingham Academy, and she has an ambitious plan: She will solve this cold case. That is, she will solve the case when she gets a grip on her demanding new school life and her housemates: the inventor, the novelist, the actor, the artist, and the jokester. But something strange is happening. Truly Devious makes a surprise return, and death revisits Ellingham Academy. The past has crawled out of its grave. Someone has gotten away with murder.

***Trouble is a Friend of Mine* by Stephanie Tromly**

Sherlock meets Veronica Mars meets Ferris Bueller's Day Off in this story of a wisecracking girl who meets a weird but brilliant boy and their roller-coaster of a semester that's one part awkward, three parts thrilling, and five parts awesome.

The Screaming Staircase (Lockwood & Co. series)

Lucy Carlyle teams up with Anthony Lockwood, the charismatic leader of Lockwood & Co., a small agency that runs independent of any adult supervision. After an assignment leads to both a grisly discovery and a disastrous end, Lucy, Anthony, and their sarcastic colleague, George, are forced to take part in the perilous investigation of Combe Carey Hall, one of the most haunted houses in England. Will Lockwood & Co. survive the Hall's legendary Screaming Staircase and Red Room to see another day?

Adult Books

***Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie**

Just after midnight, the famous Orient Express is stopped in its tracks by a snowdrift. By morning, the millionaire Samuel Edward Ratchett lies dead in his compartment, stabbed a dozen times, his door locked from the inside. Without a shred of doubt, one of his fellow passengers is the murderer. Isolated by the storm, detective Hercule Poirot must find the killer among a dozen of the dead man's enemies, before the murderer decides to strike again.

SUGGESTED READING LIST

***Hello Girls* by Brittany Cavallaro**

One harrowing night, Winona and Lucille realize they can't wait until graduation to start their new lives. They need out. Now. One hour later, they're armed with a plan that will take them from their small Michigan town to Chicago. All they need is three grand, fast. And really, a stolen convertible can't hurt. Chased by the oppression, toxicity, and powerlessness that has held them down, Winona and Lucille must reclaim their strength if they are going to make their daring escape--and get away with it.

***Around the World in 80 Trains* by Monisha Rajesh**

When Monisha Rajesh announced plans to circumnavigate the globe in eighty train journeys, she was met with wide-eyed disbelief. But it wasn't long before she was carefully plotting a route that would cover 45,000 miles - almost twice the circumference of the earth - coasting along the world's most remarkable railways; from the cloud-skimming heights of Tibet's Qinghai railway to silk-sheeted splendour on the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express.

***Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens**

For years, rumors of the "Marsh Girl" have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So, in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. But Kya is not what they say.

A Gentleman in Moscow

In 1922, Count Alexander Rostov is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, and is sentenced to house arrest in the Metropol, a grand hotel across the street from the Kremlin. Rostov, an indomitable man of erudition and wit, has never worked a day in his life, and must now live in an attic room while some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history are unfolding outside the hotel's doors. Unexpectedly, his reduced circumstances provide him entry into a much larger world of emotional discovery.

CHECK OUT THESE MOVIES

***The Boxcar Children* (2014)**

Four orphaned and homeless siblings happen upon an abandoned boxcar, which, with a little creativity and hard work, they gradually furnish with all the comforts of home. Fearful that they will be sent to live with the reputedly cruel grandfather they have never met, the children keep their new home a secret.

***James and the Giant Peach* (1996)**

An adaptation of Roald Dahl's fantasy about a boy, tended by two aunts, who discovers a magic pathway inside a giant peach. Together with some insect friends, he sets sail for the city of his dreams.

***The Little Prince* (2016)**

A downed pilot encounters a tiny prince from a mysterious, faraway place. The first-ever animated feature film adaptation of Antoine de Saint-Exupery's beloved timeless classic tale of innocence and discovery.

***Nim's Island* (2008)**

Nim Rusoe is a young girl who inhabits an isolated island with her scientist father and communicates, via e-mail, with the reclusive author of the novel she has been reading. Nim's existence mirrors that of her favorite literary character, Alex Rover, the world's greatest adventurer. But Alexandra, the author of the Rover books, leads a reclusive life in the big city. When Nim's father goes missing from the island, Nim gets Alexandra to come to her island. Now, the two must draw courage from their fictional hero, Alex Rover, and find strength in one another to conquer the island.

(Descriptions condensed from Amazon.com, Wikipedia, and GoodReads)

Congratulations



PLAYWRIGHT L.E. McCULLOUGH

MEMBER OF THE PRIME STAGE THEATRE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

L.E. McCULLOUGH IS A RECENT WINNER OF A GOLDEN QUILL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN WRITTEN JOURNALISM FROM THE PRESS CLUB OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA. DR. McCULLOUGH'S WINNING ARTICLE PUBLISHED IN NEXTPITTSBURGH WAS "JANICE KOCHIK BRINGS HEALTHCARE TO PITTSBURGH'S UNHOUSED POPULATION" (WITH PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEBASTIAN FOLTZ) THAT PROFILED A LOCAL NURSE AND HER MOBILE HEALTH CLINIC SPONSORED BY CENTRAL OUTREACH WELLNESS CENTER.

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The mission of Prime Stage is to entertain, inspire and enrich families, students, and educators through professional theatre by bringing literature to life. Our vision is enriching lives through theatre and literacy with programs that deliver quantifiable results and benefits to the region.

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The Prime Stage Teen Advisory board is a group of young adults who are passionate about theatre and the arts, who have the desire to uphold the mission of Prime Stage, to serve and engage the Pittsburgh community, to connect to and encourage the minds of youth, and prioritize social relevance in the arts.

TEACHER ADVISORY COUNCIL

We believe that literacy and the theatre can lift people up, inspire opportunities, and present new ways of seeing the world in positive ways. Effective teachers help students connect literature to their own world. Students discover literature, enjoy reading and vicariously "live in" the literature. Talented artists bring stories from the pages to life by providing multi-sensory experiences. Our adaptations of literature and historical figures and programs are selected and produced to meet those goals.

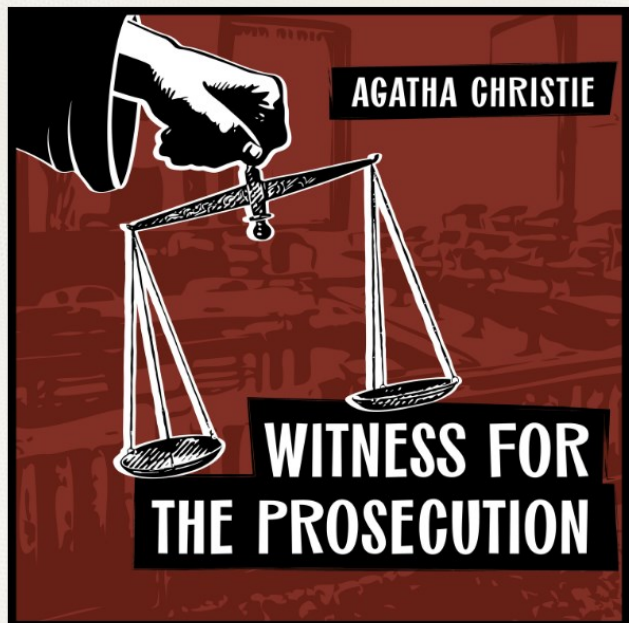
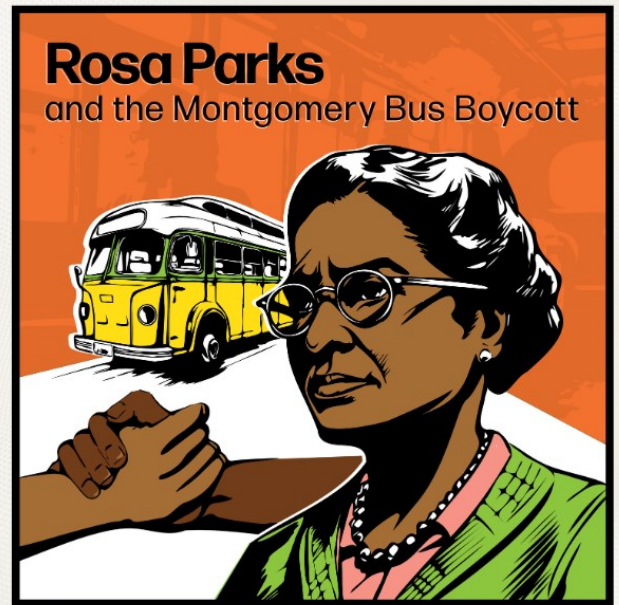
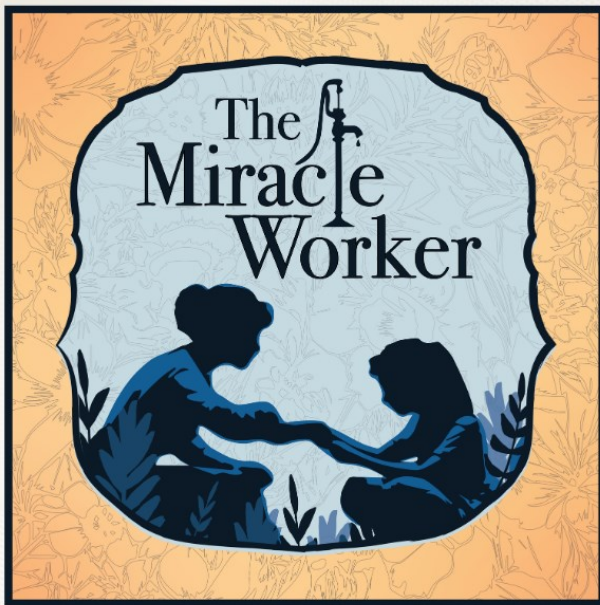
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Our 2023/2024 Season of *Courage & Discovery*

Our mission is to entertain, inspire, and enrich the lives of families, students, and educators as we
Bring Literature to Life!



Tickets and Flex Plan Memberships Coming Soon online at www.primestage.com
All of our performances are located at the New Hazlett Center for Performing Arts, 6 Allegheny Square East, Pittsburgh PA 15212