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September 27, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

It is with gratitude that I offer this letter of support for the Astral Theatre Collective. Although this fine organization has been in existence for only three years in the Charleston community, the impact they have had on the community has been profound.

Most recently, KCPL and the Astral Theatre Collective have collaborated to present the "Experience R.M.S. Titanic" at eight of our public libraries during September 2019. This all ages program was attended by children, teens, and adults to well received comments. Many people have asked when we will schedule the Astral Theatre Collective to present this program again!

This is due in part to the endless fascination that people of all ages have to the tragedy of the sinking of the Titanic. Three actors brought to life the stories of three of those aboard the Titanic when it foundered – Captain Edward Smith, Margaret "Molly" Brown, and Violet Jessop. At the performance I attended, the audience was so silent, even the children, as they drank in every word shared by the performers. My colleagues at the other performances also shared this observation.

It was a pleasure to work with John Johnson and his colleagues in this collaborative effort. The Astral Theatre Collective even provided us with teaching activities and coloring pages which we distributed to our patrons. The book and DVD displays we created to promote this program were very popular and were constantly needing to be restocked as people checked out these items.

After the performances, the actors graciously stayed to answer questions from audience members as well as take photos with anyone who wished to do so.

We look towards future collaboration with the Astral Theatre Collective with excitement and anticipation. The imaginative outlet that they provide for both the performers and the audience members is indeed an asset to the Charleston community.

Sincerely,

Terri McDougal
Head of Children's Services
Kanawha County Public Library