

CALLBOARD

April 2017



Host groups needed for 2018 Spring Conference and AACTFest 2019

Will your group be the one to step up and host our Spring Conference next year? The rewards are many:

- Bring people from around the state to your facility to meet your members and see how you operate;
- Show off a bit and do a full performance for everyone;
- Let your donors and supporters know that you travel among the leaders of the state theatre scene;
- Challenge your members to rally around the cause and present a united front; and
- Provide an impressive package of workshops for attendees and your members.

Properly organized, you could even make a few bucks for your treasury! It will take a lot of work from a lot of people, but you'll be surprised how your members will pull together. It can be anytime in the Spring, depending on your production schedule.

Also consider hosting 2019 AACTfest

We are also looking for a host for the 2019 Michigan AACTfest competition. That would be scheduled some time between mid-February and mid-March. AACTfest is a little different animal from the Spring Conference, please see article on page 6 for more complete information about hosting AACTfest.

If you are interested in discussing either statewide gathering, please contact Vice President, Festivals and Conferences [Heather Todd](#) and she'll be able to answer your questions.



Happy National
Volunteer Week!



April 23-29, 2017

They shouldn't have to set aside

a special week to say Thank You to our volunteers, but many times in the heat of the battle, we do forget.

So, make your plans now: Plan to send a handwritten note to your Board members, publish everyone's names in your program, buy them a doughnut Saturday morning, or just say thanks!

It's really a very easy thing to do if you can remember to do it!

2016-17 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Proud Member of



Support our Michigan winners at the Regional AACTfest

MAKE IT CHAMPAIGN! A Toast to Theatre Excellence for the Region III AACTFest. April 27-30, 2017 at Parkland College in Champaign, Illinois.

You will see the best community theatre productions from across the region, which includes Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Michigan.

Michigan's two winners are *Venus in Fur*, presented by **Center Stage Theatre**, Midland, and *Hamlet*, offered by **Standing Room Only Theatre Group** from Bay City. Both groups gave stunning performances at the state AACTfest in Bay City; we are very well represented with both shows!

The weekend in Champaign will treat you to a broad range of engaging workshops, networking and socializing with like-minded theatre people, and an opportunity to see a lot of great theatre. The winner(s) will advance to the national AACTfest in Rochester, Minnesota (June 26 - July 1, 2017).

Registration and tickets for regional competition via www.facebook.com/Community-Theatre-Illinois-255771034794236

CTAM Calendar of Events

April 27-30, 2017 Champaign, Illinois	<i>Regional AACTfest</i>
May 15, 2017	<i>Deadline for Playwriting Committee submission; see article</i>
June 26-July 1, 2017 Rochester, Minnesota	<i>National AACTfest</i>
July 1, 2017	<i>Awards Nomination Deadline</i>
July 1, 2017	<i>Deadline for Nomination for election to the Board of Directors</i>
July 14-16, 2017 Higgins Lake, MI	<i>Summer Master Class</i>
Sept. 22-24, 2017 Cadillac	<i>CTAM Fall Conference Evergreen Resort</i>

Callboard

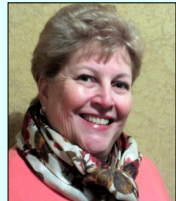
Editor.....Mary Lou Britton

This is the official newsletter of the Community Theatre Association of Michigan, issued monthly to all group affiliates and individual members with e-mail addresses on record. Distribution is by e-mail with a link to the newsletter on the association website. Back issues are available on the association website at www.community-theatremichigan.org. Correspondence to the **Callboard** should be sent to the Editor at mellbee@earthlink.net.

- Productions and dates should be sent to the Editor.
- Short informational articles are accepted and will be used on a space-available basis.
- Show photos should be carefully selected and sent to the Editor, along with identifying caption and permission from photographer for us to publish.

Updated e-mail and postal addresses are maintained by the Executive Secretary Nancy Peska and should be sent to her at peska@cmsinter.net.





The Prez Sez...

by Betsy Willis

In March I had the privilege of being one of the adjudicators at Indiana's state AACTFest. I had the opportunity to view four wonderful shows, network with community theatre members and their families, and further my learning about the art form that nurtures my soul.

I am telling you this because I was reminded continually over the course of the weekend just how detrimental the loss of funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) would be to community theatre and all of the arts organizations that the NEA serves.

You are probably aware that many theatres in Michigan receive grant funding from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs. What you may not know is those grants often contain additional money from the NEA. This funding helps us keep our budgets balanced without raising ticket prices to a level that would prohibit many of our community members from attending shows. The NEA also funds organizations bringing arts to underserved populations and helps to fund individuals who want to enrich our culture through art.

If theatres, other arts organizations, and individual artists cannot find adequate funding to operate, the loss to Americans goes far beyond losing entertainment. I am not only a volunteer in the arts, working for a theatre is also my career, and I witness first hand almost every day just how much theatre changes lives. Youth have a safe place to express themselves, learn team building skills, and gain self-confidence. Seniors, who may feel displaced or unneeded after retiring, find volunteer jobs in set building, painting, acting, constructing costumes, working backstage, or directing. With those jobs come new friends and a sense of belonging. For thousands of people, community theatre is a way to express their creative spirit outside of careers of business, medicine, engineering, automotive mechanics, sales, teaching, parenting,

homemaking, or hundreds of other jobs. They find an extended family, learn new skills (some of which transfer to their "real" jobs), make valuable contacts, enrich their own life, become more confident speakers, and gain countless other skills that benefit them and their communities. I have even heard more than one person tell me earnestly that finding community theatre literally saved his/her life.

I can't imagine a quality of life that does not include the arts, can you?

Please do not let this valuable service dissolve without speaking up. Contact your national leaders and let them know what the arts mean to you, what kind of economic impact they have on your community, and how they make us a more civil nation.

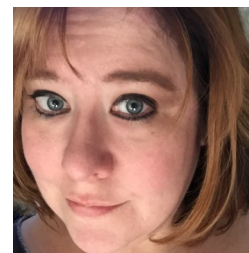
Thank you,

Social media advances for CTAM

Board member Kylie Piette is happy to announce that her efforts to bring us kicking and screaming into the 21st Century are slowly paying off!

We now have a new e-mail address: ctamich@gmail.com! How about that? Likewise, we now have an Instagram account: @ctamich.

Plus we've changed our web address to communitytheatre-michigan.org.



Kylie Piette

If you don't yet follow us on Facebook, please do so today so that you can receive the latest and most up-to-date information in the quickest possible way. We have 1,066 people who like us, so far, so please add your name to the list!



April Theater Tips of the Month from AACT

For Old Time's Sake?

Should you use authentic antique clothing as costumes? Probably not, says costume consultant Charlotte French. "Most old fabric doesn't hold up well unless it's been stored in boxes or drawers in tissue paper. However, old cottons and linens do quite well, even from before the turn of the century. At one university where I worked they had a lot of wonderful old things given to them, like beaded silk chiffon dresses. They were boxed and you could take them out to look at for a pattern or an idea, but you couldn't wear them. More to the point, you really can't use real period pieces on stage unless everyone is wearing them, because they are so obviously different. It's something intrinsic--they just don't look new, which is how they should look on the character in most cases."

Season's Greetings

When announcing your next season, consider displaying photos of the previous season. After all, you can only promise what's to come, but photos of the previous season prove that you can deliver. Be careful in choosing photos, however, use ones that are interesting in themselves, that don't depend on the viewer having seen the show.

More for Less

A few years back, a theatre in Sacramento, CA, sent out a fundraising letter that had response boxes for contributions of \$500, \$100, \$50, \$25 and "Other." At the suggestion of an anonymous

Callboard back issues on CTAM website

All back issues of the Callboard are now posted on the CTAM website at communitytheatremichigan.org, so you can go there to look up information you remember seeing somewhere! Thanks to Board member Chuck Goddeeris for making that happen!



-but-poor theater lover, the next year's letter asked only for a \$10 donation. The company received over \$17,000. Almost anyone can part with \$10, and we know of one person who said, "They only want \$10; I can give them \$20." How much better your patrons will feel if they can double their gift rather than think they are at the low end of your gratitude.

Sing Out!

If you have performers whose vocal talents aren't being fully utilized, consider forming a vocal group as an adjunct of your theater, and use them to raise money for your company. Performers volunteer their time, energy and talent to create the group, tailoring their performances for the client and event, whether it's a reunion, gala party or reception. The full group need not always perform together--a performance might involve just 3-4 people, if that's appropriate for the venue.

Early Birds

Some theatre companies have established a preview call-list. People sign up, and get to see shows free in preview--and the casts get to play before audiences prior to opening.

CTAM Scholarships can help underwrite attendance

Scholarship Chair Christy Frick wants to remind you that scholarships are available for all CTAM-sponsored educational events. This includes the Summer Master Classes at Higgins Lake and our Fall Conference next September in Cadillac.



Christy Frick

The deadline is two weeks prior to the event and the scholarship covers the cost of registration. We do have a stipulation that no more than two people from the same theatre group would be eligible. You can contact Christy by emailing her at cfrick9898@charter.net.

Hippity-hop to April theatre in Michigan!

St. Dunstan's Theatre Guild, Birmingham	<i>Calendar Girls</i>	Mar 17-Apr 2, 2017
Stagecrafters, Royal Oak	<i>The Red Velvet Cake War</i>	Mar 24-April 9, 2017
Pit and Balcony Theatre, Saginaw	<i>Of Mice and Men</i>	Mar 24-Apr 2, 2017
Southgate Community Players	<i>Fairy Tale Courtroom * **</i>	Mar 24-Apr 1, 2017
Center Stage Theatre, Midland	<i>Disney's Beauty and the Beast</i>	Mar 25-Apr 2, 2017
Holland Civic Theatre	<i>Moon Over Buffalo</i>	Mar 30-Apr 15, 2017
Riverwalk Theatre, Lansing	<i>The Wonder of the World</i>	Mar 30-Apr 9, 2017
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>Collected Stories**</i>	Mar 31-Apr 15, 2017
Cadillac Footliters	<i>Five Tellers Dancing in the Rain</i>	Apr 7-15, 2017
Kalamazoo Civic Theatre	<i>By the Way, Meet Vera Stark</i>	Apr 7-23, 2017
Tin Shop Theatre, Buchanan	<i>Way Out West in a Dress</i>	Apr 15-24, 2017
Ann Arbor Civic	<i>Morning's at Seven</i>	Apr 20-23, 2017
Little Traverse Civic Theatre, Petoskey	<i>Fools</i>	Apr 20-29, 2017
All-of-Us-Express Children's Theatre	<i>Pinocchio*</i>	Apr 21-30, 2017
Monroe Community Players	<i>Social Security</i>	Apr 21-23, 2017
Owosso Community Players	<i>Peter and the Starcatcher</i>	Apr 21-30, 2017
Riverwalk Theatre, Lansing	<i>Pinocchio</i>	Apr 21-30, 2017
Stagecrafters, Royal Oak	<i>Seascape**</i>	Apr 21-30, 2017
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>Shrek, the Musical*</i>	Apr 22-23, 2017
Hartland Players	<i>Always, Patsy Cline</i>	Apr 22-29, 2017
Pinckney Players	<i>Calendar Girls</i>	Apr 22-30, 2017
Standing Room Only, Bay City	<i>Little Shop of Horrors</i>	Apr 22-24, 2017
Farmington Players	<i>Spamalot</i>	Apr 28-May 21, 2017
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>Spamalot</i>	Apr 28-May 20, 2017
Players de Noc, Escanaba	<i>Miracle on South Division St.</i>	Apr 28-May 6, 2017
Rosedale Community Players	<i>The Gin Game</i>	Apr 28-May 20, 2017
Flint Community Players	<i>9 to 5, the musical</i>	May 4-14, 2017
Thornapple Players, Hastings	<i>The Addams Family</i>	May 4-7, 2017
Ann Arbor Civic	<i>Honk! Jr. *</i>	May 5-7, 2017
Clarkston Village Players	<i>Self Help</i>	May 5-21, 2017
Kalamazoo Civic Theatre	<i>Sister Act</i>	May 5-21, 2017
Lapeer Community Theatre	<i>Life in the Middle Ages</i>	May 5-13, 2017
Muskegon Civic Theatre	<i>Mary Poppins</i>	May 5-7, 2017
Players Guild of Dearborn	<i>Sugar</i>	May 5-24, 2017
Southgate Community Players	<i>A Chorus Line</i>	May 5-13, 2017
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>Beauty and the Beast</i>	May 7-20, 2017
Monroe Community Players	<i>Mary Poppins</i>	June 9-11, 2017
Alpena Civic Theatre	<i>Kitchen Witches</i>	May 11-21, 2017
Clio Cast and Crew	<i>Disney's Beauty and the Beast</i>	May 11-21, 2017
Bay City Players	<i>My Fair Lady</i>	May 12-21, 2017
Center Stage Theatre, Midland	<i>Assassins</i>	May 12-21, 2017

* indicates youth productions; ** indicates second stage productions, if submitted.

Please be sure to fill out your Dues Renewal Form completely, as that is the source for this information on shows! If your information is incorrect or missing, please send the correct information to [The Editor](#) to be corrected or included in the next issue. A more complete list is also available on the CTAM website.

Considerations for hosting a Michigan AACTfest

It needs to be scheduled for a weekend in late February to mid-March. A performance stage needs to be fully available all weekend, plus Thursday probably for rehearsals.

- Groups from around Michigan will converge on your location to perform their one-act, less than one hour, productions. (They get 10 minutes to set up, absolutely no more than one hour to perform and an additional 10 minutes to strike their set.) They also get one hour rehearsal time, including technical set-up, reasonably just prior to performance.
- The AACT national office sends an official festival rep/commissioner to attend and he/she makes sure that you and the competitors all follow the rules. There is some paperwork that everyone needs to submit in advance to assure that rules are being followed.
- You and CTAM need to recruit three adjudicators. You can work with our Joanne Berry to find these folks. None should be from your city. (One should be from elsewhere in Michigan, one should be from elsewhere in the Region, and one should be from elsewhere in the country!) They get a small honorarium and housing... either at 'the' hotel or perhaps with members willing to offer a room at their house, plus breakfast.
- The facility, itself, needs to have fairly generous backstage space so that while one show is performing, at least one/preferably two other groups can be stacked backstage in a 10ft x 10ft square area, ready to go on. A loading dock is good... but large access doors are necessary. Sufficient technical parking is sometimes a concern.
- Re technical needs: You are only obligated to provide general stage lighting (in six pools!) plus generic stage sound. The groups must provide everything else they need – you should have tech people available to assist in their set up and, if you prefer, to physically run the cues with their people. Having a spotlight avail-

able is a blessing to groups who need it, but I don't think you are obligated to have one.

- A piano may be needed by some groups.
- Recent festivals for Michigan have garnered six to nine groups; Bay City set a maximum (and received) 10 competitors! The performance schedule depends on how many enter; i.e. two shows Friday evening, two Saturday afternoon, and three Saturday evening, for example.
- Host groups traditionally host a get-acquainted party Friday night after the performances and a 'whew-it's-over' party on Saturday night.
- Sunday morning is usually an awards brunch so people can be gone and on their way home by noon.
- You are not required to provide any workshops... although it might be nice to have one or two Saturday morning to fill time for your guests.
- It would be nice for you to arrange for box lunches for everyone on Saturday... unless nothing starts until 2 o'clock or something like that. (They could order when registering and pay then... or pay extra on the spot.) Unless your theatre venue is surrounded by restaurants who will be expecting a rush of folks! Lunch could also be a potluck lunch provided personally by your members, although you might want to reserve that 'ask' for the two parties!!
- Saturday dinner is on their own, provided there is a break in the performance schedule!
- You should work with a reputable local hotel to get the best rates available. Many times your local convention bureau can be helpful ... as well as asking them to provide some publications for the registration packets.
- Re money. It shouldn't cost your group anything to host... you cover your expenses by the amount you charge for registration and tickets. In fact... if you can get donations and sponsor-

ships, you should be able to make a little money on this project. Registration fees in the neighborhood of \$70-90 would be acceptable. Groups who enter the competition are usually given ten free registrations and they pay for any more than that. You can set that fee also, but the idea is to encourage groups to enter and many are doing it on a shoestring budget. The group entry fee in recent years has been about \$100.

To summarize budget items, here's a list of the basic things you'll need to consider in setting your budget:

- Facility rental, if any
- Friday night gathering
- Saturday night party
- Saturday lunch, if applicable. (Can be a set-apart charge in case people want to bring their own or go out)
- Sunday Awards brunch
- Registration materials; i.e. name tags, folders, printing, etc.
- At least one mailing to CTAM list of about 250 people; other reminders can go by e-mail and Callboard, etc.
- Room and board for the three adjudicators and the AACT commissioner

You can charge the general public to attend the performances, but they wouldn't attend the parties, etc. (This is the area to make money to help underwrite the other activities. It doesn't cost you anything!)

Some groups, when they host, make a firm rule to charge all of their member/volunteers who work on the festival. The rate can be reduced, of course, but "it would be very easy for our folks to eat and drink up all the profit ... so we establish a rate for them which covers the food and drink they will most likely consume! Sounds tight... but we do it!"

Be sure to go to www.aact.org and look up their information on Hosting a Festival. It's a wealth of information.

Volunteers: You'll need a central committee of maybe 6 to 8 people; then lots of backstage helpers, ushers, party-doers, information folks, etc. The backstage crew is most important... and must include an official timer (who can actually sit in the audience), plus another backstage timer.

Publicity will state the following: Michigan AACTfest, sponsored by Community Theatre Association of Michigan and hosted by (name of group).

If you are interested or have questions, please contact Vice President, Festivals and Conferences Heather Todd and she'll be able to answer your questions... or find the answers for you!

Unleash your playwriting creativity!

It's time to unleash your creativity. The CTAM 2017 Play Writing Contest entries are due **May 15th**. Send your unpublished full-length plays to chair Pat Paveglio electronically. More information on the contest can be found at on our website at <http://communitytheatremichigan.org/index.php/playwriting-contest/>.



The 2017 Michigan AACTfest just featured two plays by Michigan authors; one of them was last year's winner, Art Nemitz's *Romance Guaranteed*, performed by Monroe Community Players.

Premier Previews at Fall Conference:

Excerpts from some of the play writing contest entries will be part of the entertainment at this year's CTAM fall conference. This will be a great opportunity to showcase Michigan playwrights and a great opportunity for your group to discover new works to perform.

2017 Playwriting Contest
deadline is May 15, 2017



Guest editorial:

God bless the artist!

No matter your political bent, your religious convictions, your race, creed, or nationality, the arts are integral to your life.



That statement may meet skepticism or ridicule; it is true, nonetheless. We are inundated and surrounded by art of some nature at every waking moment of our lives. Whether it's music, literature, visual art, graphic arts, dance, sculpture, architecture, beautiful botany, someone made the things

We are inundated and surrounded by art of some nature at every waking moment of our lives.

we view every day. It took artists -- good, bad, or indifferent -- to make these things. These reflections of our larger world show us moments we can digest, a way to better appreciate our more stunning surroundings, our lives and the nature in which we live.

If you're reading this note, chances are you agree with me. You have interest in the most communal of all the arts -- theatre -- and the most inclusive of all theatre genres (community). You celebrate and explore the arts at our grass-roots level,

where the arts -- and theatre -- begin. You understand that the arts must continue, must develop for us to appreciate our world ... and to make good decisions about living in it. You work the extra hour, give the extra dollar, recruit a friend, help a student ... make a difference in your community, and your community theatre.

So God bless the artists. They help us breathe.

Murray Chase

AACT President, 2015-2017

(Editorial in March/April issue of AACT Spotlight)



Kalamazoo Civic Theatre has been busy this year with Side Show (above) and To Kill A Mockingbird (below).

(Photos by Fred Western.)



Riverwalk Theater in Lansing is having fun with Wonder of the World which takes place at Niagara Falls!

Photo by Ariniko O'Meara and Rita Deibler