

CALLBOARD

Your Christmas gift concerns resolved -- CTAM New York trip awaits you and yours!



Are you wondering what to put on your Christmas list? CTAM has the answer. We have a fantastic Broadway trip available, just for you -- Wednesday, June 27, through Sunday, July 1. Five days/four nights!

Our host is Morrie Enders, a nationally known community "theatre evangelist," as he calls himself. You may remember him from his days as the artistic director at Kalamazoo Civic Theatre. He is a renowned adjudicator and a devoted lover of Broadway. His insight into the city's history and theatre is unparalleled.

The price for this 5-day trip is just \$1999, based on a shared double room. You can choose to travel from either Grand Rapids or Detroit Airport, whichever is more convenient for you. (The flights arrive in NYC at the same time!)

Your price includes...

- Airfare and transfers to and from hotel to airport in New York;
- Guided sightseeing tour of NYC, with refreshments;
- Four nights at the Millennium Hotel;
- Two Broadway shows, plus time to see oth-

ers that you may want to see on your own nickel;

- Backstage tour at Radio City Music Hall; and
- All local taxes and fees.



We are pleased to announce that one of our Broadway shows will be *Hello Dolly!* Bernadette Peters will be starring in that production. She is a Broadway legend and what a thrill to actually see her perform. The second show will be announced as soon as it becomes clear what shows will be playing at the end of June!

Arrangements are made through Executive Travel, out of Lincoln, NE. Deadline for full payment is March 27, 2018. A deposit of \$500 is due when you make your reservation at <http://executive-travel.com/ctam-playhouse-2018>.

For questions and a brochure with more information, you can contact them at 402/435-8888 or email GroupDepartment@executivetravel.com.

You can also contact CTAM Executive Secretary Nancy Peska (peska@cmsinter.net) with your questions.

2017-18 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Proud Member of



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 POLAR EXPRESS



*At one time most of my friends
 could hear the bell, but as years
 passed it fell silent for all of them.
 Even Sarah found one Christmas
 that she could no longer hear it's
 sweet sound.*

*Though I've grown old the bell
 still rings for me, as it does for all
 who truly believe.*

CTAM Calendar of Events

May 4, 5 and 6, 2018 Escanaba, MI	Spring Conference for the U.P.
June 27-July 1, 2018 New York City	CTAM trip to Broadway
July 13-15, 2018 Higgins Lake	Master Classes at MacMullen Center
October 12-14, 2018 Flint/Grand Blanc area	2018 Fall Conference Holiday Inn-Gateway Ctr.
June 16-22, 2019 Gettysburg, PA	AACTfest nationals at the Majestic Theater





Don't forget to make your reservations for the New York Trip in July 2018! We already have a few reservations. Remember that we have a flight out of both Grand Rapids and Detroit. Both should arrive in New York at the same time. There will be transportation from the airport to the hotel, with a tour around before arriving at the hotel. We will be seeing a couple of shows and there is time for you to go out on your own and see another show. Look for more information on our website and in this newsletter.

We are still working on our Spring Conference "on the road". We have the area North all settled, which will be in Escanaba the first weekend in May. Continue to watch the website and our newsletter for more information.

Now is the time to start thinking about recognizing your volunteers. CTAM has the Dorothy Arnett Volunteer Service Award. This award is awarded to your volunteer at your group – what a better way to say Thank You for all the hard work someone does in your group! This

award is presented based on your recommendation to an individual or couple who has given valuable and significant service to their local group for at least 10 years.

Another award CTAM has is our most prestigious award called the Robert A. McKenna Award. This award is given annually at our fall conference to a living person who exhibits, through action, commitment and dedication, his or her support of community theatre on the state and local level.

You can submit nominations for either or both of these awards by July 1st. So start thinking now of whom you feel deserves to be recognized. There is more information on our website on these awards. As the time gets closer, watch the newsletter too, for reminders on submitting nominations.



As Christmas and the New Year get closer -- and on behalf of the entire Board of Directors, I want to take a moment to extend to all of you our wishes for a Merry Christmas and a successful and seat-filled New Year! The future has never looked brighter for Michigan's community theatres!

Christy Frick



Rosedale Players had a good time with their successful run of It Came from Mars in November.

Like us on Facebook

Slowly but surely, the CTAM Facebook page is climbing higher and higher! We're up to 1,143 people 'liking' us now. We hope you enjoy and appreciate the news, information and laughs we share with you.

Ask your friends to join us on "Community Theatre Association of Michigan-CTAM" so they, too, will know what's going on with CTAM.

The Scoop on Scripts

By Tara Western



This month I'm "scooping" a smallish musical, a comedy with drama or is it a drama with humor (what does your group call it?) and a mystery. I would love to hear from any member groups who have done these shows. Send comments to me at tarawestern@hotmail.com and I will compile and share the results in the January issue.

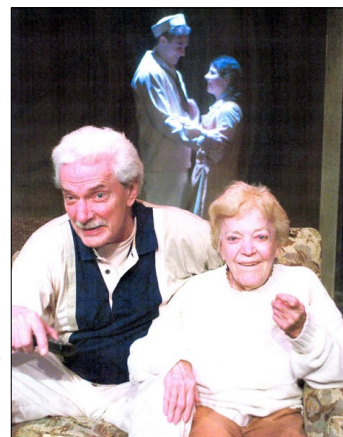
This time, I have listed the ages of the cast as an approximation. At the fall conference in Cadillac, an open panel discussion with the eight presenters addressed the issue of casting regarding age, gender and color. My aha moment: When sending out audition notices, don't limit your possibilities, by putting an end age. Say "50 plus" not 50-60 years old. An actor who is 62, may not tryout because he feels he's too old, although he looks 10 years younger! (See what I learned at Cadillac!)

Published by Samuel French, *The Spitfire Grill*, written by James Valcq in 2002 is set in a very small town in Wisconsin. With its mid-western vibe, charming musical numbers, humor and substance, this play is a little-known gem. The cast of three men and four women allows for age range from teens to seniors. A single unit set with levels and platforms can suggest the various scenes: the restaurant, a back porch, the Grill's kitchen and two "limbo" areas.

A feisty parolee (girl, plays early twenties) finds a job in Hannah's (plays 70) slowly dying Grill. She is desperate to sell the Grill, but finding no takers, Percy suggests an essay contest with the Grill going to the person with the best reason why they should own it. All the roles are "meaty," including a fiftyish busybody postmistress, a young sheriff (plays late twenties) with a restless nature, an abusive husband (plays 40 years plus), and his timid wife (plays 30 plus) who flourishes under the new energy

Percy brings to the Grill. Along with the great plot and captivating songs, substantive issues such as the aftermath of murder and rape, domestic violence and a Vietnam draft dodger are handled with great passion and sensitivity.

Moonglow (Playscripts, copyright 2001) by Michigan author Kim Carney, is a dramatic comedy requiring a single set divided into "his and hers" areas. Two large scrims were used in the original production for the dream sequences.



Set in 1997, feisty, bitter Maxine (70+) has just been placed by her daughter Benita (30-40s) in an Alzheimer's care facility. Joe (70+) has been in the same facility and is visited by his son, Greg (40-50) in the common room. A young Maxine and a young Joe (both late 20s) appear dancing in a dream as Maxine is being checked in by facility manager Diane (30-50). Fond of dancing, Joe and Maxine start an affair that rejuvenates them, and shocks their children.

As Maxine floats in and out of the past, the young couple appears, showing the audience Maxine and Joe's memories. Patrons will laugh and cry, and leave grateful for their own past, present and future.

Published by Dramatists, *The Art of Murder* by Joe DiPietro is an older (1999) mystery with one set, two men and two women. Winning the 2000 Edgar Award Winner for Best Mystery Play, the characters in this mystery include a handsome, egotistical artist (plays 40+), his flamboyant art dealer (40+), the artist's wife (30+) and the maid. Ages are flexible but the maid needs to be somewhat younger than the wife; you can guess why! The only set required is the couples' living room, with a coffin like "isolation tank" that is very important to the plot. Special sound and lighting effects, plus a dead body will thrill your techies and your audience. The plot twists and turns, providing laughs at the same time as the audience wonders "whodunnit."

Who's doing what over the holidays!

Clarkston Village Players	<i>Morning's at Seven</i>	Nov 17-Dec 2, 2017
Grand Rapids Civic Theatre	<i>Annie</i>	Nov 17-Dec 17, 2017
Kalamazoo Civic Theatre	<i>Disney's The Little Mermaid</i>	Nov 17-Dec 3, 2017
Muskegon Civic Theatre	<i>Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike</i>	Nov 17-Dec 3, 2017
Avon Players, Rochester	<i>A Christmas Story</i>	Nov 24-Dec 9, 2017
Cadillac Footlites	<i>The Musical, Elf, Jr.*</i>	Nov 24-Dec 2, 2017
Holland Civic Theatre	<i>Nuncrackers</i>	Nov 24-Dec 9, 2017
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>Annie</i>	Nov 24-Dec 16, 2017
Riverwalk Theatre, Lansing	<i>The Emperor's New Clothes*</i>	Nov 24-Dec 3, 2017
Holland Civic Theatre	<i>A Charlie Brown Christmas</i>	Nov 25-Dec 10, 2017
Master Arts Theatre, Grand Rapids	<i>Willy Wonka</i>	Nov 30-Dec 3, 2017
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Nov 30-Dec 10, 2017
Hartland Players	<i>Frosty the Snowman/Charlie Brown*</i>	Dec 1-3, 2017
Bay City Players	<i>A Christmas Story</i>	Dec 1-10, 2017
Farmington Players	<i>Greetings!</i>	Dec 1-17, 2017
Pit and Balcony Theatre, Saginaw	<i>The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe</i>	Dec 1-10, 2017
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>1940's Radio Hour</i>	Dec 3-16, 2017
Northland Players, Cheboygan	<i>Spirit of Christmas Dinner</i>	Dec 4-6, 2017
Alpena Civic Theatre	<i>A Charlie Brown Christmas*</i>	Dec 7-17, 2017
Little Traverse Civic Theatre, Petoskey	<i>The Christmas Schooner</i>	Dec 7-16, 2017
Twin City Players, St. Joseph	<i>Miracle on 34th Street</i>	Dec 7-16, 2017
Village Players, Birmingham	<i>Seussical the Musical, Jr.*</i>	Dec 7-10, 2017
Players de Noc, Escanaba	<i>The Marvelous Wonderettes</i>	Dec 8-16, 2017
Stagecrafters, Royal Oak	<i>Elf, the Musical*</i>	Dec 8-17, 2017
Center Stage Theatre, Midland	<i>SantaLand Diaries</i>	Dec 14-17, 2017
Twin City Players, St. Joseph	<i>How the Grinch Stole Christmas**</i>	Dec 20-23, 2017
Alpena Civic Theatre	<i>Stirrups</i>	Jan 11-21, 2018
Clarkston Village Players	<i>Escanaba in Love</i>	Jan 12-17, 2018
Grand Rapids Civic Theatre	<i>All the Way</i>	Jan 12-28, 2018
Kalamazoo Civic Theatre	<i>Baskerville-A Sherlock Holmes Mystery</i>	Jan 12-27, 2018
Players Guild of Dearborn	<i>Fools</i>	Jan 12-28, 2018
Center Stage Theatre, Midland	<i>Disenchanted</i>	Jan 13-27, 2018
Riverwalk Theatre, Lansing	<i>Buried Child</i>	Jan 18-28, 2018
Avon Players, Rochester	<i>Boeing Boeing</i>	Jan 19-Feb 3, 2018
Muskegon Civic Theatre	<i>Guys on Ice</i>	Jan 19-27, 2018
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>Arsenic & Old Lace</i>	Jan 19-Feb 3, 2018
Stagecrafters, Royal Oak	<i>Into the Woods</i>	Jan 19-Feb 12, 2018
Village Players, Birmingham	<i>Ain't Misbehavin'</i>	Jan 19-Feb 4, 2018
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>Peter and the Starcatcher</i>	Jan 21-Feb 3, 2018
Bay City Players	<i>Calendar Girls</i>	Jan 26-Feb 4, 2018

* 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 available on the CTAM website.



Five more Arnett Volunteer Awards presented last month

On Sunday, October 8 at the Old Town Playhouse Volunteer Party in Traverse City, Immediate Past President Betsy Willis presented two Dorothy Arnett Volunteer Service Awards to Don Kuehlhorn and Denni Don Hunting.

★ **DON KUEHLHORN** is a longtime volunteer at the Old Town Playhouse and currently the Chair of their Lighting Committee. He designs and run lights for shows, mentors new volunteers in these areas, and regularly teaches a class on lighting for children in the Young Company -- who then go on to run the lights for Young Company shows with his supervision. In addition, he takes most of the cast photos, often photographs rehearsals, shoots rehearsal video, and keeps their online photo archives up to date after each show. Finally, he is a talented actor, singer, and director, having recently directed their successful Studio show *Kitchen Witches* and played Don Quixote in *Man of La Mancha*. Don is always there when needed, from going onstage, script in hand when the lead actor lands in the hospital during the run of a show, to lending a hand with set strike when extra hands are needed.



★ **DENNI DON HUNTING** is a talented actress, director, and stage manager who can be found working on most of the shows at Old Town Playhouse in any given season. She is the Chair of the Stage Manager Committee. Last season she directed the sold-out run of *Outside Mulligan* in their Studio location, and takes on another Studio show, *Dirty Blonde*, in the 17-18 season. She appeared in *Over the River and Through the Woods* a few years ago on the Main Stage. She stage manages as many as four shows per season. In addition, she is a vital part of the Young Company, serving on the governing committee and teaching classes and camp sessions. Finally, she keeps the theatre family close outside of shows by organizing monthly lunches and evenings around the round table at the theatre's favorite watering hole.

Then, on Saturday, October 14, Betsy went to Little Traverse Civic Theatre in Petoskey to present the Dorothy Arnett Volunteer Service Award to **LARRY WILLIS**. Larry has been at the heart of Little Traverse Civic Theatre in Petoskey since 1981. He served as Board President several times, led their Long Range Planning efforts, acted, directed, designed and ran lights, helped on set construction, and worked on any number of other projects for the theatre. Over the years, when LTCT needed someone to revitalize lagging interest in the organization, Larry stepped in and helped rally the volunteers to keep it going. He is also a generous donor who understands that giving gifts of time and money are equally important. Larry was the co-recipient of the inaugural Eddi Award for Performing Artist, sponsored by the Crooked Tree Arts Center. *(Unfortunately, no photo is available of this momentous event!)*

On Monday, October 16, Terry Jolink presented the Dorothy Arnett Volunteer Service Award to **DAN SMIGIEL** of Grand Rapids Civic. Dan has been instrumental in the GRCT set construc-



tion crew and in his first year at GRCT he worked more than 1,000 volunteer hours. He works day and night, whenever needed to assist our Technical Director in building sets, making special items, and then striking it all to start over again. In the summer months he works with our teens that are learning how to make sets for the summer camp programs. Overall Dan has volunteered the following hours: 2011-2012, 1040 hours; 2012-2013, 989 hours; 2013-2014, 1859 hours; 2014-2015, 1363 hours; and 2015-2016, 1286 hours. According to his nomination form, "I do not know how we would survive without his help. He always has a smile and never lets a bad day get him down!"

Finally, on Friday, November 3, CTAM Awards Chair Terry Jolink attended the Community Theatre of Howell production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and presented the Dorothy Arnett Volunteer Service Award to **VERA CUNNINGHAM**. Vera has been an active member since 1993, during which time she directed 10 musical productions and four dramas. In addition, she has also appeared on stage in nine productions and choreographed three. She has also been an active member of their Board of Directors for more than 20 years, filling the role of membership, patron, database management and a very active member of our Script Committee during this entire period. In the early 2000s she attended several CTAM conven-



tions at Boyne to bring us fresh ideas as she always believed there was more to learn. Vera June (as many refer to her) is a beloved director, board member, choreographer, actress and dancer and, most of all, a patron and forever friend of the CTH organization.



2017 winning plays available for production royalty-free for two years

2017 First Place:

Family Pains by Erin Osgood, Farmington Players

Synopsis: *Pippa Matthews hasn't been home in 2 years. She returns home to reveal her true self to her very Catholic family. Her goal is to announce she is, in fact, gay, married, and expecting a baby. The reality isn't exactly what she imagines in her mind. Her brother, Claw, tries to help take the heat off Pippa by announcing that he is gay first. The problem is Claw is not gay. Phil/Dad comes from a very strict Catholic upbringing and is a Republican. He does not adjust to the news very well. Patty/Mom is obsessed with cleanliness, good manners, and tries to welcome the news with grace but fails miserably. Her sister Pam has inherited Mom's OCD tendencies. She isn't very close to either Claw or Pippa, but her cold demeanor cracks at the end of the play. Pam shows she has longed for closer relationships with her siblings after having a few shots of alcohol. Pippa's spouse Bobby shows up at the end of Act I and helps Pippa navigate her dysfunctional family. The play shows Pippa's imagination of how she would like her news received by her family, only to surprise the audience that it was actually very different. Although in the end, not all of her family members agree with Pippa's life choices, there is the hope of acceptance.*

Contact Erin Osgood, (810)355-8472,
erin.osgood@comcast.net



2017 Second Place:

Down on the Farm by Art Nemitz, Kalamazoo Civic Theatre

Synopsis: *The time is 1946. The war is over, but conflict is ongoing in the Mueller family. Fred Mueller, a prosperous dairy farmer and businessman, lies dying while his five children are engaged in various ongoing personal battles of their own, some of which have origins from many years past. Charlie, the oldest son who is in charge of the farm, is greedily impatient for the family's fortune and assets to come completely under his control. The second brother, Tom, has recently returned from the war with his new wife to take his former job of partnering in the overseeing the farm, but Charlie and his vapid wife Lola, plot to get him out of the way. Their sister, Ruth-Esther, is reluctant to give up her position as CEO of the family's creamery business given to her by Fred when he took ill. Lydia, hysterical by nature, and Albert, interested primarily in beautiful blondes and having fun, add their own special problems to the family's combustible dynamic. As the situation spins out of control, a murder occurs and the family is shattered. Following Fred's death, the reading of his will forces the family to deal with some long-kept secrets that they must face before they can hope to find resolution to their complicated relationships.*

The play calls for a two-story set, representing a farmhouse living room and two upstairs bedrooms. The cast calls for 7 men and 7 women. Double casting is possible for one man and one woman.

Contact Art Nemitz, at anemitzjr@gmail.com for perusal copies. Perusal copies of his prior works are also available: *The Zimmerman Annual 4th of July Picnic* and *Romance Guaranteed*, winners in the 2015 and 2016 CTAM Playwriting Contests.

