

CALLBOARD

Three Spring Conferences offered:

Plans announced for On the Road with CTAM

It's all new and wonderful this year, thanks to our VP for Conferences and Festivals (Suzan Dunham), and she's here to explain how it's all going to work?



"I love the CTAM spring conference! I remember the first one that I went to in Bay City, Mi. I met fantastic theatre people from all over. The workshops were filled with information that I could apply as soon as I got back to my theatre. When Sunday came, I did not want

it to end. The only saddening thought was how do we get more people involved? We all know that schedules are crazy between rehearsals, performances, family and of course work, we are yanked in many directions.

"CTAM has decided to try something new this year! Instead of having one spring conference on one weekend and trying to get our members from the entire state into one venue, we are having three identical conferences in three locations on three different weekends!

"Kalamazoo Civic will be hosting the weekend of April 13th and 14th; Fenton Players are hosting the weekend of April 20th and 21st and then Players de Noc in Escanaba will host May 4th and 5th!!!

"We will have the same five workshops at each weekend conference and the same presenters at each weekend. Please see Pages 4 and 5 for a

description of the workshops and the presenters.

- ✓ Comedy acting with Ben Zylman (half-day session)
- ✓ Grant writing with Betsy Willis (all-day session)
- ✓ Lighting with Aaron Butler (half-day session)
- ✓ Marketing with Ben Zylman (half-day session)
- ✓ Properties with Michael Wilson

"You will be able to register on the CTAM web page. Each group is completing their registration forms and getting them to us to be posted. Although, the workshops and presenters are the same, social gathering, performances, etc will vary. Participate in one or come to all three!!!!"

On the Road
CTAM
Community Theatre Association of Michigan

Kalamazoo Civic -- April 14 & 15
Fenton Players -- April 20 & 21
Players de Noc, Escanaba -- May 4 & 5

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Callboard

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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 mell-bee@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.

Plan now for National Volunteer Week - April 15-21

National Volunteer Week is coming up in mid-April, so now's the time to begin planning how your group will recognize the many volunteers that make your shows and your group successful. Many members hear



the applause and know they are appreciated, but many more never hear that recognition and they need to know that they are appreciated.

At your next Board meeting, bring it up and get the wheels moving now to celebrate all your volunteers in April! Contact the Points of Light Foundation for tips and how-tos! They have lots of ideas. <https://ww2.pointsoflight.org/nvw>

CTAM Calendar of Events

April 14 and 15, 2018 Kalamazoo Civic	Spring Conference - West
April 20 and 21, 2018 Fenton Village Players	Spring Conference - East
May 4 and 5, 2018 Players de Noc, Escanaba	Spring Conference - 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

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The prez Sez... by Christy Frick

Time is running out to sign up for our New York trip. We need a minimum of 20 people to sign up and pay their deposit of \$500 is due when you make your reservation and the balance is due by March 27. We need 10 people to fly out of Detroit and 10 to fly out of Grand Rapids. So get your reservations in now! For more information, please continue reading this newsletter.

Also coming up is our CTAM On The Road Spring Conferences. Our first one is the weekend of April 13 in western Michigan, being held at Kalamazoo Civic. The following weekend (April 21) will be on the east side of the state at Fenton Village Players. Our third will be the weekend of May 4 in Escanaba for our theater friends in the Upper Peninsula. Lots more information about this new 'configuration' for our Spring Conference on the front page and the workshops are highlighted on pages 4 and 5.

Our Master Class is coming up July 13-15 at the MacMullen Center on Higgins Lake. An **acting class** will be taught by Penny Notter, retired associate director of Grand Rapids Civic Theatre -- and a **class on costuming** will be taught by Joy Butler, former professional costume designer and college theatre instructor, currently the costume chair for Bay City Players. More info to come in March *Callboard!*

Our Fall Conference has been moved to the weekend of October 12 and we are having our TLC Conference (Theater Leadership Conference) at the same time at the same place! This Conference will be held at Holiday Inn Gateway Center in the Flint/Grand Blanc area -- very near the junction of I-75 and US-23!

Please mark your calendars for the above dates and we hope to see you there!

Christy Frick

See Page 6 for details on how you can join the gang and visit Broadway this summer!



Scholarship funds available for CTAM educational opportunities

This issue of the Callboard is filled with many opportunities for you to learn and grow in your craft. Along with support from your home group, CTAM scholarship funds are available to cover the cost of registration.

Please check out the website for more information or contact [Christy Frick](#), chair of the Scholarship Committee for more information.

Never stop learning!



Center Stage Midland had a good time with *Disenchanted* in January. Snow White and her posse of disenchanted princesses are anything but Grimm!

Presenters announced for Spring Conferences On the Road

The five workshops to be presented at the 2018 CTAM Spring Conferences have been announced and there is buzz-aplenty about the Spring gatherings. Here is the basic information; further details will be announced in future issues of the Callboard, as well as on the [CTAM website](#).



Dying is Easy, Comedy is Hard - with Ben Zylman

No one knows exactly who coined this well-worn phrase, but we can all attest to the sentiment! During this fast paced, fun-filled half-day workshop we will discuss acting technique in general and the art of comedic acting more specifically. Why is comedy so challenging? Can anyone do it? Can comedic timing be taught? These and many more topics will be addressed. If you're looking develop your comedic acting skills, this is the workshop for you!

Ben Zylman is a multi-award-winning actor and director whose career spans 40 years and 130 productions. A veteran of the stage, radio, television and film he has worked with



Jerry Seinfeld, Chita Rivera, Mayim Bialik, Renee Taylor and Claire Bloom, as well as Grammy Award winning artists Meredith Arwady and Timothy Nordwind. His training includes work with Paul Sills, the co-founder of The Second City. Ben has conducted his well-received acting workshop, which focuses on the art of comedic acting, at the local, state and regional levels.



Grant Writing 101 - with Betsy Willis

By the end of Betsy's all-day workshop, you will understand the basics of writing grants, how to pen a compelling story that tells your story in an emotional and factual way, and know how to approach grantors to find out the likelihood of receiving funding. We will discuss:

- ✓ How grants can increase your organization's financial health;
- ✓ What you should consider before applying for a grant
- ✓ Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs granting opportunities
- ✓ The Cultural Data Project/Data Arts reporting and the important impact it can have for your organization
- ✓ Grant language that will resonate with the reader
- ✓ How to determine the appropriate ask



- ✓ How to look for available grants
- ✓ How to build your grant budget

With over 15 years of theatrical management to her credit, Betsy Willis is one of the most highly regarded community

(continued next page)

theatre Development Directors in the state. Betsy's passion for fund development in general and grant writing in particular, has led her to create corporate sponsorship programs, plan fund raising events and perhaps most importantly, to write grants. With 95% of her grants being awarded, Betsy's grant writing skills have helped to provide funding for special programs, operational expenses and capital campaigns. In addition to her position as Development Director for the Old Town Playhouse in Traverse City, Willis has her own consulting business specializing in development, grant writing, and strategic planning. She currently serves as a grant panel reviewer for the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, and received her Certificate in Fund Raising Management from the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, IU-PUI (Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis) in 2014.

New (and Old!) Challenges in Lighting Design - with Aaron Butler

In this workshop you will learn how to integrate new technologies in lighting design and equipment within the restraints of community theatre budgets. We will also explore some methods for effectively communicating the capabilities of existing and emerging technologies to non-technical team members. This will be a half-day workshop.

Aaron has designed lighting for many shows in many venues, most recently for Bay City Players (Hair, Jesus Christ Superstar and All My Sons) and for their Stages of Discovery Youth Program, as well as for Pit and Balcony. He attended Illinois State University and worked on many shows there. In real life, he is employed at WLNS/WLAJ Television in Lansing.



The Art of Marketing - with Ben Zylman

New media! Traditional media! What's the best, most effective way to reach patrons and volunteers? It's never been more important to have a clear, dynamic message and a marketing plan that is designed for maximum impact. This informative half-day workshop will provide insight into what it takes to market your theatre while examining some of the obstacles all of us must overcome.

Ben's career in sales, management, marketing and development encompasses both the profit and non-profit sectors. During his 16 year tenure as Director of Marketing and Development for the Kalamazoo Civic Theatre, Ben

developed a Corporate Sponsorship Program, created a marketing strategy for all programs and productions and branded the organization in a meaningful way. Ben is Development Director for Kalamazoo Civic Theatre.



Props, Props and More Props! - with Michael Wilson

Mike has a great background in handling props for shows and will share his knowledge with everyone on how to find/buy/borrow/rent props, how to make them ... including blood, vomit and stage food for the actors. (You might want to dress casually in case to should get the aforementioned liquids on your clothing!

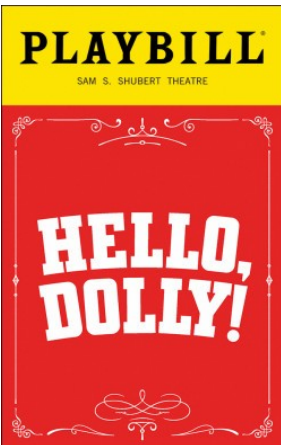


June 27 through July 1 this summer!

Top Five Reasons to go to Broadway with CTAM!

The top 5 reasons to participate in the CTAM New York Trip this summer:

1. You'll have an invigorating experience of sharing Broadway with theatre friends. Just think about the theatre discussions you can have and the theatre stories you can share.
2. All the arrangements have been made for you so you don't have to spend time planning your trip. It'll all run like clockwork and booking with the group has allowed us to enjoy rock bottom prices while having the best available theatre seats.



3. Morrie Enders will be our guide and take us many places we might not be able to see on our own. He is an experienced New York tour guide and will make it insightful and entertaining. We will even get a backstage tour at Radio City Music Hall.

4. The location of our deluxe hotel is right at Times

Square. Going with the group enables us to get great accommodations at the group rate and this hotel couldn't be in a better spot. You'll love it. It's just steps to theatres, there's one next door and one across the street.

5. Our schedule is a nice mix of structured and free time. You'll have time for shopping or additional sightseeing. Two shows are included in the package (including Hello, Dolly! with Bernadette Peters), but there is opportunity for you to book more on your own.

Now that the holidays are over, it's a good time to start putting money aside for the trip. Final payment doesn't have to be made until



March 27. You can reserve your spot with a deposit of \$500. GroupDepartment@executivetravel.com.

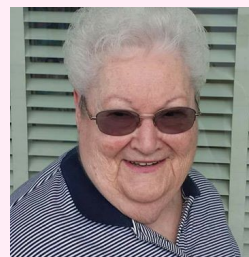
Arrangements are being made through Executive Travel, out of Lincoln, NE. Deadline for full payment is March 27, 2018. A deposit of \$500 is due when you make your reservation at <http://executive-travel.com/ctam-playhouse-2018>.

For questions and a brochure with more information, contact them at 402/435-8888. You can also contact CTAM Executive Secretary Nancy Peska (peska@cmsinter.net) with your questions.



Remembering Bev Hellus

We just learned that long-time Michigan theater-lover Bev Hellus died just before Christmas. She was 82. She will be greatly missed.



In addition to primarily working with Pit and Balcony, she and her husband, Don, were also active for a few years with Bay City Players. Bev was on the CTAM board for two terms and served one year as Vice President. She also chaired two statewide Michigan AACTfests, one in Saginaw and one in Bay City.

Playwriting Tip of the Month:

Keeping secrets to increase the tension

One of the most critical dramatic elements in any play is, of course, subtext. You've probably heard subtext described as "the things your characters DON'T say. As what happens between the lines."

But how do you create subtext? One easy way to build more subtext into your play is to give your characters a secret. Something they have to work to actively guard and protect from discovery. Giving your characters a secret creates instant subtext because your characters can't just come out and reveal their secret. Instead, they have to talk around it to achieve their scene objective. And in the process you'll be creating intrigue, mystery, and suspense for the audience.

Take *The Glass Menagerie* for example. In the second scene, Laura's secret is that she has not been attending her classes at Rubicam's Business College--although she continues to pretend to study when her mother is around. That secret provides much of the conflict and suspense in the scene. This would be a much weaker scene if Laura didn't have that secret (say, if she had simply told her mother from the get-go that she was no longer going to class).

In that same play, Tom also has a secret. He never tells his mother what he's really doing when he "goes to the movies." That secret leads to more conflict in the play. It also helps deepen Tom's character, adding an unknown element to his character that makes him more interesting to the audience.

In general, there are three different ways to handle secrets in your plays:

1. Have a secret that the audience discovers before the other characters do. Take Iago in *Othello*, for example. Iago's plot to ruin Othello is a secret from the other characters, but we in the audience know what he's up to. This adds a lot of suspense to the play because we can see Othello's downfall coming--

but we can't do anything to stop it.

2. Have a secret that the other characters discover before we do. Laura's secret is an example of this. Her mother discovers the truth about Laura's skipping class before we do, so we as the audience are forced to catch up over the course of the scene. This is a great way to keep the audience involved and guessing right up until the secret is revealed!
3. Have a secret that is never discovered. Tom's secret is an example of this. No one--not his mother, not Laura, not the audience--ever really knows exactly what he does when he "goes to the movies." As I mentioned, this type of secret creates a lot of subtext and keeps us guessing as to the true nature of this character. It makes the character seem more mysterious and intriguing to us.

And once you've established the secret, you have three choices for how to reveal that secret: reveal it to the audience first (to build suspense), reveal it to the other characters first (to keep the audience guessing), or never reveal it (to deepen characterization).

Harrison at Play Submission Helper hopes this tip helps enrich your current work-in-progress. Keep it in mind while you're working on your play. And as always, when you're finished, make sure to send that play out to theaters that are looking for new work. Remember, you can head on over to Play Submissions Helper to see the latest new play submission opportunities: <http://playsubmissionshelper.com>

CTAM Playwriting Contest Deadline May 15

Don't procrastinate! Scripts for the CTAM Playwriting Contest are due May 15, 2018. Prizes are awarded at the annual Fall Conference.

Rules and judging criteria are on the webpage. (<http://communitytheatremichigan.org/index.php/playwriting-contest-rules/>).

Or contact contest chairs, [Pat and Leo Paveglio](#), if you have any questions.

Who's doing what this Spring!

Avon Players, Rochester	<i>Boeing Boeing</i>	Jan 19-Feb 3, 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
Cadillac Footliters	<i>Almost Maine</i>	Jan 26-Feb 3, 2018
Kalamazoo Civic Theatre	<i>Rock of Ages</i>	Jan 26-Feb 11, 2018
Pit and Balcony Theatre, Saginaw	<i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i>	Jan 26-Feb 4, 2018
Rosedale Community Players	<i>Assisted Living</i>	Jan 26-Feb 10, 2018
Holland Civic Theatre	<i>Jake's Women</i>	Feb 1-17, 2018
Northland Players, Cheboygan	<i>An Intimate Evening with Jack, Boots & George</i>	Feb 2-10, 2018
Twin City Players, St. Joseph	<i>Nana's Naughty Knickers</i>	Feb 2-18, 2018
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>Escanaba in da Moonlight</i>	Feb 8-18, 2018
Farmington Players	<i>And Then There Were None</i>	Feb 9-25, 2018
Kalamazoo Civic Theatre	<i>Calendar Girls</i>	Feb 9-24, 2018
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>Romance Guaranteed**</i>	Feb 9-24, 2018
Riverwalk Theatre, Lansing	<i>The Bridge to Terabithia*</i>	Feb 9-18, 2018
Tawas Bay Players	<i>Weekend Comedy</i>	Feb 9-18, 2018
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>Other Desert Cities</i>	Feb 15-25, 2018
Master Arts Theatre, Grand Rapids	<i>The Imaginary Invalid</i>	Feb 15-Mar 3, 2018
Center Stage Theatre, Midland	<i>Oedipus, the King</i>	Feb 16-25, 2108
Downeaster Theatre, Lansing	<i>The Magic Flute*</i>	Feb 16-25, 2018
Kalamazoo Civic Theatre	<i>No Way Out**</i>	Feb 16-25, 2018
Muskegon Civic Theatre	<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>	Feb 16-Mar 4, 2018
Riverwalk Theatre, Lansing	<i>White Buffalo**</i>	Feb 22-Mar 4, 2018
Grand Rapids Civic Theatre	<i>My Fair Lady</i>	Feb 23-Mar 18, 2018
Port Austin Community Theatre	<i>The Kitchen Witches</i>	Feb 23-Mar 4, 2018
Stagecrafters, Royal Oak	<i>Bug**</i>	Feb 23-Mar 4, 2018
Hartland Players	<i>Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike</i>	Feb 24-Mar 4, 2018
Kalamazoo Civic Theatre	<i>Red</i>	Mar 2-17, 2018
Players de Noc, Escanaba	<i>Curtains</i>	March 2-10, 2018
Rogers City Community Theatre	<i>Shrek the Musical</i>	Mar 2-11, 2018
Avon Players, Rochester	<i>Dial "M" for Murder</i>	Mar 9-24, 2018
Bay City Players	<i>On Golden Pond</i>	Mar 9-18, 2018
Hartland Players	<i>Mary Poppins, Jr. *</i>	Mar 9-11, 2018
Players Guild of Dearborn	<i>Lost in Yonkers</i>	Mar 9-25, 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.

The Scoop on Scripts

By Tara Western



Happy February! I hope y'all are enjoying whatever show you are presently involved in. If you are not too crazy busy, try to catch another group's production this winter. Check out the "Who's Doing What" in the Callboard, call some friends and hit the road!

Richard Hingst from Lapeer Community Players asked me how our committee rates the scripts we read. Carol Kushion (formerly of Cadillac Footlites and currently Tawas Bay Players, and WitzEnd) suggested a "fist": 5 fingers "we gotta do it", four=great, three=okay, two= I may go along if the rest of you love it, One=please no! and a fist would say DON'T embarrass us!

Feeling the next readers may be influenced by someone else's rating, instead of writing the number in the script, we keep notes in a spiral binder which I provided. (17¢ at Walmart in August!) Ideally, we meet and discuss and decide if the script should be presented to our Board.

Looking over the last three columns, I see I am light on dramas. I'll work on it. That said, our group tends to choose comedies with substance, dramatic comedies, etc. Not sure if he was first, but Vincent Weiler said the best plays make you laugh, cry and think!

Published by Samuel French, *Camping with Henry and Tom* by Mark St. Germain ©1995, is a case in point. This historical drama has plenty of humor. The one exterior set of the Maryland woods has Henry Ford (58 years old), Thomas Edison (74), and President Warren G. Harding (56) on a camping trip, escaping their many obligations. (The fourth man is Secret Service.)

The three men discuss friendship, politics and leadership. This clash of two great minds and one great heart will keep teens to senior citizens engaged. So much history with laugh out loud humor. There are several challenges due to the 1921 setting: period costumes 1900-1920, a 1921 Ford bumper, and an Edison cylinder phonograph with horn, and musical cylinders!

We interrupt this column to bring you some fun and fluff! *Kitchen Witches* by Caroline Smith ©2003, won the Samuel French Canadian Playwrights' Competition. The cast is two women in their fifties and one man, of an age to be their son, and Rob or Robin the "camera guy or gal." The single set is a fictional TV cooking show set up (stove, oven fridge and lots of food) with three closed doors upstage. Plot: two cable-access cooking show divas have hated each other for 30 years, and are now thrown together on their show, "Kitchen Witches," where insults rival those heard on Jerry Springer. Stephen, the long-suffering son of one of the divas (but which one?) tries to keep them on track with hilarious results. *Kitchen Witches* was produced by Rose-dale Players and Old Town Playhouse if you would like more information.

Happy February!



Samuel French's *Octet Bridge Club* by P. J. Barry ©1985 is a dramatic comedy with one interior set, eight women and one man. Act I is set in late October of 1934. Eight women gather weekly to gossip and play bridge. The women's ages are specific and range from 37-54 years old, and they all age ten years in Act II which takes place in 1944! All of Irish descent, each has a distinct personality creating comedy

and drama as they face life's trials together. Challenges include: décor and costumes for 1934 and 1944, plus an old wheelchair, piano, and a 1934 camera for the male photographer.

Well, that's it for February. I would love to hear from you: tarawestern@hotmail.com with "Scoop" in the subject line! Will you be my Valentine?