

COMMUNITY THEATRE ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

# CALLBOARD

July 2017



## June 30 is deadline to register for the Summer Master Classes!

The June 30 deadline for Master Class registration is here! They are being held the weekend of July 14-16 at the MacMullen Conference Center on Higgins Lake near Roscommon.

You can register online with a credit card or, if you need to register by regular mail service, please contact the CTAM Executive Secretary Nancy Peska to let her know your registration is on the way. Her phone number is 989-463-1252.

Information on the classes, instructors, fees, and lodging/meals is available online at the CTAM website or in the May and June issues of *Callboard*, also available on our website. If you need more information, contact either Nancy Peska or Education Chair Joanne Berry.

Instructors **Rhonda Lehan** (Stage Management: Pre-production to Post-show) and **Leeds Bird** (Actor vs. Director: Eliminating the Struggle for Individual Success) are eager to conduct the classes and are now preparing activities for you.

If you wish to apply for a CTAM scholarship for the Master Class registration fee, contact CTAM Treasurer Christy Frick immediately or see more information on the CTAM website at [www.communitytheatremichigan.org](http://www.communitytheatremichigan.org).

The Master Class experience is one of CTAM's most valuable membership offerings. Don't miss your opportunity to take advantage of it!



*The proud graduates of the 2015 Master Classes!*



### **Special Notice for all musical performers!**

*Check page 4 for information about an all-day Saturday Musical Intensive at the annual Fall Conference. You must bring a musical number to class; you will leave with suggestions for a winning audition piece. Direction, dance and music will be covered. There is no additional charge for this specialized and valuable workshop.*

**HELPING COMMUNITY THEATRE THRIVE IN MICHIGAN SINCE 1961!**

## 2016-17 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President - **Betsy Willis**  
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City  
[betsy@oldtownplayhouse.com](mailto:betsy@oldtownplayhouse.com)

Vice President - **Heather Todd**  
Gratiot County Players  
[queeneytodd@zoho.com](mailto:queeneytodd@zoho.com)

Secretary - **Shyrl Cone**  
Hartland Players  
[scone1063@comcast.net](mailto:scone1063@comcast.net)

Treasurer - **Christy Frick**  
Gratiot County Players  
[cfrick9898@charter.net](mailto:cfrick9898@charter.net)

### At-Large Members of the Board

Suzan Dunham.....[info@witzend.co](mailto:info@witzend.co)

Tawas Bay Players

Chuck Goddeeris .....[charlesgoddeeris@gmail.com](mailto:charlesgoddeeris@gmail.com)

Rosedale Community Players

Kylie C. Piette.....[piette@gmail.com](mailto:piette@gmail.com)

Grand Rapids Civic Theatre

Ben Zylman .....[benkal@chartermi.net](mailto:benkal@chartermi.net)

Kalamazoo Civic Theatre

### Executive Secretary

Nancy Peska .....[peska@cmsinter.net](mailto:peska@cmsinter.net)

Gratiot County Players

989-463-1252

[www.communitytheatremichigan.org](http://www.communitytheatremichigan.org)

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Proud Member of



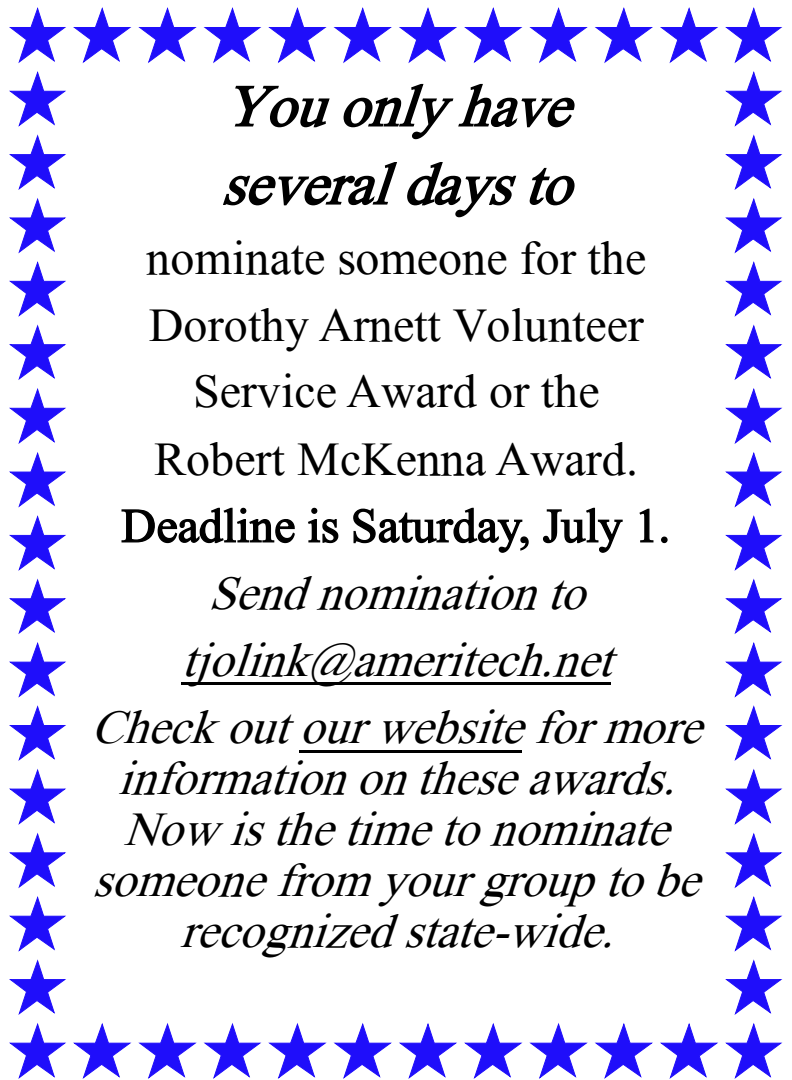
## Callboard

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](http://www.community-theatremichigan.org). Correspondence to the **Callboard** should be sent to the Editor at [mellbee@earthlink.net](mailto: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](mailto:peska@cmsinter.net).



*You only have  
several days to*

nominate someone for the  
Dorothy Arnett Volunteer  
Service Award or the  
Robert McKenna Award.

**Deadline is Saturday, July 1.**

*Send nomination to  
[tjolink@ameritech.net](mailto:tjolink@ameritech.net)*

*Check out our website for more  
information on these awards.*

*Now is the time to nominate  
someone from your group to be  
recognized state-wide.*

## CTAM Calendar of Events

June 26-July 1, 2017 Rochester, Minnesota	National AACTfest
July 1, 2017	Awards Nomination Deadline
July 1, 2017	Deadline for Nomination for election to the Board
July 14-16, 2017 Higgins Lake, MI	Summer Master Class MacMullen Conf. Center
July 16, 2017 Higgins Lake, MI	Board of Directors meeting
Sept. 22-24, 2017 Cadillac	CTAM Fall Conference Evergreen Resort
September 24, 2017 Cadillac	Fall Board Meeting at Evergreen Resort



## The Prez Sez...

by Betsy Willis

### **Name change for 'delegates' approved**

CTAM has had a Delegate program for many years. You may be one or may have been one in the past, but there is a good chance you never knew what it meant – except that it provided you with the opportunity to vote at our Annual Meeting at the September Fall Conference. We hope in the future you will think of it as much more than that!

When Michael Schacherbauer was on the CTAM Board he made it his mission to make sure our Delegates knew how important they are to CTAM. I believe the information on our website which describes the Delegates and what their duties and rights are, was authored by Michael. It says:

*A Member Delegate is a person selected by a group affiliate to represent them at CTAM meetings and events. Through your Member Delegates (MD), CTAM learns about your theatre group's particular needs and interests and through your MDs, in turn, CTAM informs your group members about upcoming CTAM events, programs and benefits which are of value and interest to them. In short, MDs are the crucial communications link between you and CTAM and help your group make the most of your CTAM membership.*

### **Member Delegate Duties**

#### **Keep CTAM informed about the needs and interests of your group**

Provide CTAM with updated database information. Keep your members up to date regarding CTAM programs, events and benefits. Provide timely information to the Michigan Callboard editor about events, programs and other timely news about your group. Keep your Board of Directors informed about CTAM. Attend the CTAM Annual Meeting (Fall Conference) as a voting representative of your group.

### **Member Delegate Rights**

#### **Right to vote at the CTAM Annual Meeting as a representative of your group**

According to the CTAM by laws, each member group (now Group Affiliate) in good standing is allowed two voting delegates at the CTAM Annual Meeting each September during the CTAM fall conference. If one or both of your MDs is not present at the Annual Meeting, the Group Affiliate may assign the voting right to someone else in advance of the conference.

### **Member Delegate Benefits**

**Free subscription to Michigan Callboard** which is delivered by email in advance of it appearing on the CTAM website.

The CTAM Board is making a renewed commitment to this program as part of our new strategic plan and enhanced website ability. The first step we took was to update the name of the position, which was also part of Michael's plan. It took us awhile, but at last our Member Delegates (MD) will now be known as Affiliate Representatives (AR). The goal of this change is to better describe what the job entails.

If you want to serve your home group and CTAM in this valuable role, and you plan to attend the Fall Conference, I urge you to contact your group's Board President or Executive Director and ask if you can serve as your theatre's Affiliate Representative.

*Betsy Willis*



# Are you planning to attend the Fall Conference? September 22-24 in Cadillac



We have an amazing line up for our fall conference at Evergreen Resort in Cadillac, formerly McGuire's. You have been seeing information about our presenters in the past several issues of the *Callboard*: Jim Carver, Steve Carver, Larry Nielsen, Frank Peot, David Wahr, Michael Wisiniewski - and we've added a few more recently.

Jim Carver will be our Keynote Speaker on Friday night at the Meet & Greet.

The Friday evening Meet & Greet this year will be the event to dress for, if you would like to dress up because Saturday's banquet is a sock hop! Wear your poodle skirts, saddle shoes, leather jackets, rolled up jeans... you get the picture! After the banquet, we will have a networking dessert, lead by one of our presenters and there will be '50s music in the main room for your pleasure! We will select the best costume at the event. We will have specialty drinks all weekend long and the resort makes a 50¢ donation to our group for each specialty drink purchased.

The youth program is growing each year and we need to encourage young theatre students to participate. Students 16 and older can register for either the youth program or for the general adult workshops. Students eight years of age and older can register for the youth program.

We are delighted that the Youth Program this year will be under the tutelage of Shryl Cone and Bonnie Grooters, two active and very well respected members who recognize the importance of includ-

ing the youngsters in our programming. Please see the article to the far right on page 5!

The weekend will be filled with theatre education through games, hands-on activities, learning scripts and a performance. The kids will be creating Fluppets (a puppet, but different). A Fluppet performance will entertain everyone on Sunday morning before the breakfast buffet.

Why is it so important that we encourage our youth to participate? The obvious reason is because as we grow older we need younger blood to carry on our art. It is important that they attend our conference because there is no other event where our youth will have the opportunity to meet and learn from so many talented adults who want to share their theatre knowledge. Please share this information with kids in your program or local schools.

We have several other new and exciting changes for the Fall Conference this year:

1. All conference registrations will be online, starting July 1st at [our web page](#). Credit card transactions will no longer be handled through the Executive Secretary;
2. If you are unable to register in advance, there will be laptops available at the registration table at Evergreen Resort;
3. An all-day Music Intensive will be offered this year for Saturday that will supersede all other workshops; and
4. You can register ala carte for certain events in case you are unable to attend the entire weekend or want to bring a friend to an event.

**Calling all musical theatre performers!** You will be

**The youth program is growing each year and we need to encourage young theatre students to participate.**

able to bring a piece of music, work on your vocals, dance and get direction. This will be an all-day Music Intensive! When you leave at the end of the day you will know how to audition for a musical and you will be prepared! Get registered today! This will have limited seating due to the nature of the class.

If you can't make it for the entire weekend, although we sure hope you can, you can purchase the following activities ala carte: Friday night keynote address, workshops, lunch, banquet and brunch. Bring friends to listen to our keynote speaker, Jim Carver, Friday night. Join in for the workshops or just stop in for lunch. If you have a child in the youth program, come join us for brunch on Sunday and watch their performance.

Here are the registration fees for the full conference, (which includes Friday night Meet & Greet, Saturday lunch, Saturday banquet and Sunday brunch):

- Early-bird (before July 31) Individual CTAM Member = \$95
- Early-bird (before July 31) non-member = \$115
- After July 31 Individual CTAM member = \$125
- After July 31 non-member = \$145

You are responsible for making your own reservations with Evergreen Resort by calling before August 29. Phone is 1-800-632-7302 and ask for the CTAM rate.

Our annual raffle to raise funds for education will be happening again this year. We are looking for raffle prizes for adults and kids, \$35 or more in value! Tickets are sold all weekend long and the drawing is held after brunch on Sunday morning. We raised more than \$1,200 last year. This money is available through CTAM Scholarship to help attendees with registration fees for events like Fall Conference, Master Class and Regional Workshops.

It will be a fun-filled weekend! We hope you all can make it. Invite your friends, share with your membership, encourage the youth! What an excellent and entertaining way to learn theatre. Theatre people really are the best!

## Leaders for the Youth Program (with the Fluppets)

**Bonnie Grooters** lives in Lowell but was born and raised in Grand Rapids where she studied at Kendall School of Design. She is married for 56 years and has two adult children. A child at heart, Bonnie operated a toy and gift store that carried several lines of puppets. The Fluppets the students will be creating will stretch their imaginations.



Bonnie writes and tells children's stories, two of which are published - "The Floor is Not a Closet" and "Math Yuck". Later she began writing plays which have been performed at Allegan Griswold Auditorium, Barn Swallow Theatre, Alpena Civic Theatre, and Dennison Performing Arts Theatre. She sculpts, paints and enjoys creative endeavors. She loves acting but prefers to write the plays because she doesn't have to remember the words!



CTAM Secretary **Shyrl Cone** is a veteran elementary school teacher with a thriving music studio for beginning vocal and piano students. Theatre is her passion, and Shyrl combines her expertise in instruction with that love

by directing youth theatre productions and drama camps. Her youth directing credits include *Beauty and the Beast, Jr.*, *Jungle Book*, *Kids*, and *101 Dalmations, Kids*. In addition to being active in her home theatre group of Hartland Players/Encore Youth Theater, she has acted as vocal director for Community Theatre of Howell camps.

# Fall Conference Workshops

## **All Things Set**

Where do you start with the set for a show? Who comes up with an initial concept? Who designs your set? Who builds your set? And last but not least, who decorates your set? In this workshop we will discuss these important aspects of putting on a show. We will discuss how each group is different, share ideas and come up with solutions to obstacles we may face. The goal is to take away ideas that you may incorporate in your own theatre group.

***MICHAEL WISNIEWSKI** is from Bay City Players and has been Committee Chair for Set Design, Construction and Decoration for many years. He has directed musicals and plays for Bay City Players, has directed at Pit and Balcony and recently directed Assassins for Center Stage Theatre at Midland Center for the Arts. Michael also directed Hair at Bay City Players in the summer of 2017 and is directing Anything Goes for Pit and Balcony this fall. Michael resides in Bay City with his two adorable Boston Terriers.*



## **Blocking Using Subtext**

As theatre people, we are story tellers. The audience has come to hear a good story and we want to tell the story so that they really “get it.” We have lots of tools and devices we use to tell the story. One of them is the way in which the actors portray what their characters are thinking. We call that subtext. As directors, we can help the audience “get inside the head” of characters by the way we have them move in relationship to each other. This workshop will explore use of subtext in making blocking decisions. Participants will be actively involved in blocking dialogue sequences.

***JAMES CARVER** was educated at Michigan State University and worked in television for a while before he joined the staff of The Kalamazoo Civic Theatre in 1958. As a Production Assistant he built and painted scenery, taught classes and started directing. In 1974 Jim was named Managing Director. Jim has directed hundreds of plays and acted almost that many roles. Jim has served as President of AACT, currently lives in Colorado and directs for community theatres nationwide.*



## **Creating the Back Story**

When you first meet your next character at, perhaps, a read-through or your first read of the script, you know that you will need to bring your character to life on stage by creating a history for the character -- or a back story -- using the script, your imagination and technology. Create the motivations that drive your character to perform the words written on the page and that reveal the wide range of emotion that you will be asked to create for the character. That’s your job as an actor. This workshop will suggest different ways to analyze the script and insert your own decisions into the playwright’s words.

***SUZAN DUNHAM** teaches Acting and Improvisation classes at Witz End and is a founding member and president for WE Players, Inc, a 501(c)(3) organization focusing on youth theatre in the Tawas area. She loves to direct but acting come in as a close second. She values all aspects of theatre but you will not find her behind a sewing machine or a sound board. She says that it is best for all of us.*

*Suzan serves on the CTAM Board of Directors and has performed in two AACTfest competitions receiving an award for Outstanding Actress in a Featured Role for her portrayal of Geralyn in Love, Loss & What I Wore in 2017. She feels it is important to give back to the community and help students learn life skills through theatre to become leaders.*





## ***Directing from the Technical Point of View***

Finally, a workshop focusing on the director's relationship with the technical staff. The workshop will deal with those things a director often forgets to include in their directing responsibilities. Discussion will include attributes and details often overlooked and that may cause tension between the director and the technical staff. Opportunities for discussion, questions, and feedback will be included.

***FRANK PEOT** began working in theatre when he was in high school. He has acted, directed, designed, built, painted, and has been a board member of several theatre organizations. He is currently secretary of the American Association of Community Theatre and chief US delegate to the World Congress of International Amateur Theatre. Other experiences include adjudicating community theatre festivals and conducting workshops with community theatres around the nation.*

## ***Playing the Action through Communication.***



This workshop will explore the two essential elements that will bring a play to life and captivate your audience. We will focus on analyzing the action a character takes to achieve his/her goal within a scene and how the character adjusts strategies in the face of opposition to achieve that goal. Once these strategies are clear, the actor now has a roadmap in which to play the scene, freeing them up to focus on living the character through playing the action of the scene. Volunteer participants will use improvisational scenes and scripted material to illustrate the points of the workshop.

***STEPHEN CARVER**, Executive Director with the Kalamazoo Civic Theatre, brings 38 years of experience in theatre, TV and film. He is an award winning director, and has guest starred on such shows as Golden Girls, Star Trek, Deep Space Nine, General Hospital, and Melrose Place. His film credits include Liar, Liar, Housesitter and Die Trying.*

## ***Rocking the Festival: Entering AACTFest***



It's not as simple as you first think! It is a massive undertaking to enter your group in the AACTfest movement. This workshop will provide an overview of how to prepare your play for an AACTfest competition. Topics will include script consideration, directing tips, and an overview of AACTfest itself. So, although 2019 seems a long way off, it's never too early to begin planning for one of the most exciting endeavors your group can experience.

***DAVID P. WAHR** has been active in community theatre for more than 30 years and has participated in AACTFest for more than two decades as an actor, director and playwright (including one state AACTFest win). He has also served on the CTAM Board in multiple roles, including president and is a recipient of the McKenna Award.*

## ***Wild and Crazy Marketing Ideas for Audience Development***



This 'round table' workshop explores marketing ideas geared to building audiences, building audience diversity, and various marketing efforts that members have used successfully. We will use 'idea generation' techniques; Larry's 66 fleshing-out technique, and explore 'Champions.' Attendees will share ideas and everyone will go home with at least one good idea to help them get more butts in the seats!

***LARRY NIELSEN** has been involved with community theatre since 1980; first an actor and stagehand. Now, this old dog mostly directs and adjudicates/responds. However, to keep his theatrical passion soothed; he remains active in his home group, Twin City Players (TCP). His most recent directing experiences with TCP have been Doin' Time at the Alamo, Proof, Book of Days, A Piece of My Heart, The Cover of Life, A Streetcar Named Desire, and, earlier this year, Assassins. As an Adjudicator, Larry has adjudicated state and regional AACT Fests and a national AACT Fest.*



## Dues statements mailed and payable before Conference

The CTAM 2017-18 dues renewal statements have been mailed and are due upon receipt. This applies to Individual members, as well as our group affiliates.

Our Executive Secretary Nancy Peska is especially anxious for member groups to fill out the information sheet completely so she doesn't have to follow-up with everyone to complete it.



The section asking for your upcoming season is where we get the information for the monthly listing of shows being done around the state, so please give us as much information as possible.

We also are specifically asking for the names and e-mails of your two delegates — your President and one other member appointed by your Board. We want to correspond specifically with your delegates, so we need that information. Please see the Prez Sez column on Page 3 about their duties and responsibilities.

**REMEMBER ... delegates must be identified in writing prior to the Annual Meeting at the Fall conference to be eligible to vote.**

Please contact Nancy directly if you have an issue or concern about paying your dues or selecting your delegate.



*Old Town Playhouse in Traverse City had a good romp with Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*



## CTAM loses great friend, author and artist

We are saddened to hear of the loss of **Pearl Ahnen** who died suddenly on June 7, 2017. Pearl, who was 90 years old, was a fixture at conferences and AACTfests as a representative of Ichabod's Little Theatre in South Haven. She worked as a journalist for 30 years in the metropolitan Detroit area. She authored ten books, five plays and numerous poems, and has entered several plays in the CTAM Playwriting Contest through the years.

She will be missed by her many friends, especially Mary Olendorf, Sue Wesley, B. J. Silverstone and others from Ichabod's Little Theatre.



*Pearl C. Ahnen*