

CALLBOARD

October 11-13 at Treetops Resort in Gaylord

Blimey! Fall Conference registration and hotel prices just announced!

Conference Chair Patrick Hubbard is pleased to announce that the hard work has paid off! He has negotiated a remarkable price for our Fall Conference October 11-13 at Treetops Resort near Gaylord, just three miles from I-75.

Treetops has been very generous in extending their rates starting at \$89 per night per room in the Inn. (Note: There is also a \$15 per night "Resort Fee" added!) Additional, higher-priced rooms are also available in The Lodge -- a separate building -- if you are interested, but the conference price applies only to rooms at the Inn!

Please call the group reservation line directly at 855-261-8764, by September 10 to make your room reservation. You will need to mention the "CTAM Fall Conference" to get our group rate.

The registration fee for the Conference this year is \$109 for Individual CTAM members and \$119 for non-Individual Members. That is a 32% reduction from last year for members.

Your conference registration includes:

- ✓ Friday Night Get Together @ The Inn (This is a BYOB night, snacks provided)
- ✓ Saturday Lunch and Dinner
- ✓ Saturday Night Party with cash bar
- ✓ All workshops and materials

- ✓ Keynote Speaker
- ✓ And the opportunity to hobnob with the greatest theatre folks in the land!

Online CTAM registration will be available soon!

Workshop sponsors being sought

In trying to keep the cost down, Patrick would also like to invite individual members, affiliate groups and organizations to sponsor one of the workshops. For \$200, your name or group's name will be boldly attached to a workshop for the full weekend.

To inquire about sponsorship opportunities, please contact Patrick for all the information and forms.

The first several workshops are announced on Page 4. Additional workshops will be announced as they become available.

The theme of the conference this year will revolve around PIRATES, so you can start thinking about preposterous parodies 'bout plundering pirates with their parrots and peg legs. There undoubtedly will be a party or two where your pirate costume would be appropriate dress! (Not so sure about the parrot and definitely not the monkey!)



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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. 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.



AHOY, MATEY! Not a soul responded, trying to identify these two roustabouts introduced in the last issue. Clue #2: They are NOT Hollywood or stage actors (that we know of), but internationally known contemporary pop-heroes who enjoy an annual 24-hours of fame. The first winning answer will be able to claim the title of Master of Useless Information! Clue #1: One ex-wife has a birthday coming up on September 19!

Manistee celebrates 80 years

The Manistee Civic Players (MCP) is celebrating 80 years this year with a Birthday Gala on Saturday, September 14, from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts (RRCA)—and you are invited to attend!

Also, they would love to receive a nice congratulatory card, a favorite playbill or poster or anything “theater” from all the other groups in the state. Their address is PO Box 832, Manistee, MI 49660. Or if you need a street address: MCP c/o Bonnie Brown, 1221 N. Gordon, Scottville, MI 49454.

Jennie Marie Naffie, MCP board member, suggests you check out their Facebook page for more information about the grand celebration.

CTAM Calendar of Events

October 11, 12,13, 2019 Treetops Resort, Gaylord	CTAM Annual Fall Conference
October 13, 2019 Treetops Resort, Gaylord	Board of Directors Organizational Meeting

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The prez Sez...

by Betsy Willis

This Prez Says will be like the Jeopardy category “Hodge Podge,” a few short takes on several topics. I will not, however, expect you to answer in the form of a question.

I learned in June that one shouldn’t write a story for the *Callboard* at 1:00 a.m. after driving all day to get home from AACTFest. Here is why.

“Let’s eat Grandma.” “Let’ eat, Grandma.” This is a classic grammatical fail that results in very different consequences for Grandma.

In the story introducing all of you to our new CTAM Administrator I typed and submitted the following at 1:00 a.m.



“We decided that the title of Executive Secretary was outdated as Nancy was, and Sara will be far more than a secretary to our organization.”

What I meant to say was: “We decided that the title of Executive Secretary was outdated, as Nancy was and Sara will be, far more than a secretary to our organization.”

The commas change the intent from saying Nancy was outdated, to the title being outdated, which of course is what I meant to say. I have already apologized to Nancy, but I wanted to let all of you know for sure that CTAM greatly values everything Nancy did on behalf of the organization. We definitely do not see her as past her “sell by” date!! THANK YOU NANCY FOR ALWAYS BEING THERE FOR CTAM!!!

The Board was very disappointed to cancel the summer Master Class as education for community theatre volunteers is paramount to our fulfilling the CTAM mission of “making



community theatre thrive.” We, however, must also consider keeping CTAM afloat financially, and the reality is that we cannot continue to offer programming that doesn’t break even or make a small profit. And we have to be considerate of the presenters, so they can make other plans if, in fact, we have to cancel. For us, that means we have to set an acceptable deadline for cancellation; and for you, it means you need to register before that date so the class will go. The Board spent a large portion of our July meeting working on ways we can keep cancellations from happening in the future. We think we have a couple of good ideas in the works, so watch the *Callboard* and the website, or better yet attend the fall conference to hear all about it.

Speaking of the Fall Conference, we are so excited that we made the decision to move it to Treetops in Gaylord! We held our July Board meeting there and it is a perfect place for us, in terms of location, facility and cost for attendees. It is just a few miles east of I-75 in Gaylord. Set high atop the hills, the setting could not be more beautiful. The golf courses are amazing, and there is a spa on premises. Patrick Hubbard, our new conference chair, has lined up some wonderful workshops, we are moving the annual meeting to Sunday morning so there is more time for education and networking on Saturday, and the playwriting contest showcases will take place during lunch on Saturday. I hope you are as excited about these changes as I am. If not, come along anyway and see if change really can be a good thing!

That’s it for this month. Tune in next month for more “Hodge Podge” or maybe even a real story.

Overheard in the Box Office

“Could I have two seats next Friday for *The Little House of Whores?*”

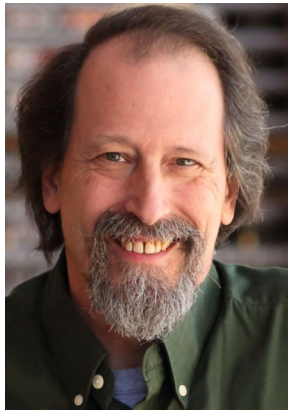


First two Fall Conference workshop presenters announced; more to follow next month

Basics of Unarmed Stage Combat

We'll look at basic techniques in unarmed stage combat, stressing safety and good partnering. Included techniques are the back fall, push/pull, slap, punch, kick, hair/ear pull, and front and rear choke. The format is demonstration/drill, with a short choreographic example at the end. Open to beginners, as well as a brush-up for more experienced performers.

Steven M. Schwall, Fight Choreographer/Violence Designer/Fight Director, has been staging fights professionally since 2006. He is a Certified Teacher of Stage Combat with the Society of American Fight Directors. In addition, he is a Level 2 professor of the Margolis Method of Dynamic Movement. He is also a practitioner of Historic European Martial Arts (HEMA), and Ko-Ryu Kabudo (Okinawan weapons). He has recently added Intimacy Direction to his repertoire. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Fine Arts and did his graduate work in Theater/Performance Studies at Eastern Michigan University. He has been an instructor at several SAFD regional workshops and has presented workshops for the Community Theatre Association of Michigan (CTAM), the SouthEast Theater Conference (SETC) thrice, the American Association of Community Theaters (AACT), and the Grand Valley Shakespeare Festival Conference twice.



Steven M. Schwall

Writing Your Play and Getting It Produced

This is a workshop on not only how to write a play, but how to get it produced. In the first half of the workshop, we will cover ideas, one-act plays, full-length plays, formatting, scriptwriting programs, and the various resources that will give you leads on where to send your plays for production and/or publication. In the second half of the workshop, we will workshop/discuss story ideas provided by the participants, and there will also be a Q&A session. No, you don't need an MFA or an agent to get your play produced...but you do need a play, and this workshop will provide you with everything you need to help make that happen.



David MacGregor

David MacGregor is a playwright and screenwriter, currently in residence at Jeff Daniels' Purple Rose Theatre in Chelsea, where six of his plays have been produced. His play, *Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Elusive Ear*, recently enjoyed a sold-out run, and its sequel, *Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Fallen Soufflé*, will open the Purple Rose's 2019-2020 season. His plays have been performed from New York to Tasmania, and his work has been published by Dramatic Publishing, Playscripts, Smith & Kraus, and Heuer Publishing.

He wrote the screenplay for the dark comedy, *Vino Veritas* (2013), which stars Carrie Preston (Emmy-winner for *The Good Wife*), and his screenplay *In the Land of Fire and Ice* was a 2016 Athena List Winner (best screenplays featuring female protagonists). His street-soccer series, *Shadowplayers*, is currently in post-production and will air on the Zeus Network. He teaches writing at Wayne State University in Detroit.




Scholarships available for Fall Conference

Scholarships are available to help with the registration costs for the Fall Conference at Treetops Resort in Gaylord. (Not for room and board!) All that needs to be done is to fill out the application found on our website: <http://ctam.online/>. If you do not have access to a computer, please feel free to contact Christy Frick at cfrick9898@charter.net. Scholarships are available for members of affiliate groups and we award two per theatre group and will cover the cost of registration only.

Please apply for the scholarship before you register. Once your application has been approved, you will receive an email stating that your scholarship application has been approved and will include a code to enter while registering.



Christy Frick



Forget
EVERYTHING
AND
**BECOME A
PIRATE**

Treetops Resort in Gaylord
October 11-13



Do you know where our raffle prizes come from?

The simple answer is “you.” We invite our Individual Members and our Affiliate Groups to make a raffle prize donation each year to raise money for our Scholarship funds. (See item directly above for more information about applying for scholarship grants to our CTAM educational events.)

The bigger, better, more diverse the raffle prizes are, the more people are likely to buy tickets -- and to buy more tickets during the weekend and before the Sunday brunch drawing. Donations should be at least \$35 value.

The variety of gifts boggles the mind: Hand-crafted items; radios; performance and event tickets; beach towels; baskets of related items; meaningful clothing; jewelry; glassware (and the libation to go inside!); books; show CDs and books on tape; and, of course, gift cards to stores in Michigan that would be widely accessible. Gas credit cards are always a big hit! One of the more unusual raffle prizes was donated by The Tin Shop Theatre in Buchanan MI, nationally recognized for their beautiful redbud trees all around the community. “Fifteen or 20 years ago, they donated a real redbud tree, then just a twig in a pot of dirt, but now it is a 30-foot beauty in my front yard that brags to passers-by each spring.”

Please plan ahead to bring a marvelous raffle prize for this year’s Scholarship Raffle.



Please Stop Looking Down on Community Theatre

by *Timothy Fitzgerald*

It truly hurts me to acknowledge that there are people out there who try to give community theatre a bad reputation. It's the truth, folks, they exist, and I genuinely feel they need to be educated on the importance of community theatre the benefits that it provides to all of us.

Having been involved in community theatre for over 40 years...yes, I admit it and do it proudly....I have personally seen this wonderful genre from multiple sides. As an actor, producer, stage manager, director....I have seen it. And the benefits that have been reaped have contributed to many aspects of my life, socially and privately.

When I first got involved, I was a teenager who had a miserable home life. One of seven children, I lived in a strict Irish Catholic family and was locked inside a shell. If there is a term for being more than introverted, that was me. I didn't live up to my Dad's expectations by being involved in sports. My interest in the arts was not encouraged or supported. I loved music and knew I wanted to be involved with something where I could immerse myself with people who shared my appreciation. I discovered community theatre and auditioned for my first production. My singing was okay, but I was not the most talented apple in the barrel. But I had one thing going for me...the desire to be a part of it. I got cast in the ensemble with not a lot to do, but for me, it was a beginning.

Every production after that was a learning experience for me. I learned self-discipline from having to learn music and choreography with deadlines given to me by the directors. I took every opportunity on stage as a learning experience. I would observe my fellow actors and how they handled themselves in the different roles they played. I would absorb as much as I could to learn about the craft. I would learn from my music directors about how to use my voice correctly and get tips on vocal presentation and advice on how to listen to others. I would

learn from my directors about stage terms as for how to use the stage appropriately. I learned from the directors about character work and how to create a character and the importance of working together as an ensemble while still maintaining an individual presence on stage. The choreographers took someone like me with two left feet and help me to discover my hidden ability of coordination. I wasn't the best dancer, but I was pretty good and improved with each performance.

I wish people would understand that being involved in community theatre isn't just "Hey, let's do a show, just for the fun of it!". Many of these people on or offstage are usually students or adults with daytime jobs, who receive no money for their time. They give up their personal time to do something they love. For me, it usually means rehearsing four to five times a week, giving up hours and hours of "me time." This is a passion. We may not be paid for doing this, but we put our hearts and souls into it. Wanting to give an audience the best show possible. Community theatre may not have all the resources available to professional theatre, but the powers that be care about the quality of their productions and providing entertaining experiences for the audiences. And getting an audience is life or death for the continued existence of the theatre company. It is important to remember that with the rising cost of theatre tickets, community theatres can provide an affordable option making theatre more accessible to the masses.

Many of your professional actors can attribute their humble beginnings and training from these community theatres. Many of these community theatres also offer training for children, which we didn't have growing up. Again the benefits to these children can be immeasurable.

I am proud to be a part of community theatre and thank it for helping to make my life more complete than I ever thought it could be when I was that introverted unhappy child. It has been a road worth traveling.

(Discovered and picked up from an online blog, presumably Mr. Fitzgerald is not a Michigander!)



What shows are being done this season?

Grand Rapids Civic	<i>All Shook Up</i>	July 26-Aug 4, 2019
Grand Rapids Civic	<i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i>	July 27-Aug 3, 2019
Hartland Players	<i>Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</i>	Aug 3-10, 2019
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>	Aug 8-18, 2019
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>The 39 Steps**</i>	Sep 5-8, 2019
Clio Cast and Crew	<i>Rabbit Hole</i>	Sep 9-Oct 6, 2019
Master Arts Theatre	<i>Anne of Green Gables</i>	Sep 12-Oct 5, 2019
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i>	Sept 13-28, 2019
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>	Sep 20-29, 2019
Pit and Balcony Theatre, Saginaw	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>	Sep 21-29, 2019
Manistee Civic Players	<i>Miss Holmes (Michigan premiere)</i>	Oct 1-10, 2019
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>Lord of the Flies</i>	Oct 10-20, 2019
Pinckney Players	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>	Oct 12-20, 2019
Alpena Civic Theatre	<i>Deer Camp, The Musical</i>	Oct 17-27, 2019
Hartland Players	<i>Addams Family Musical</i>	Oct 12-20, 2019
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>The Outsiders*</i>	Nov 1-3, 2019
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>Elf, The Musical</i>	Nov 15-Dec 14, 2019
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>Rumours</i>	Nov 15-24, 2019
Master Arts Theatre	<i>Miss Bennet: Christmas as Pemberley</i>	Nov 21-Dec 14, 2019
Pit and Balcony Theatre, Saginaw	<i>The Giver</i>	Nov 29-Dec 8, 2019
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Dec 5-15, 2019
Manistee Civic Players	<i>Elf, The Musical</i>	Dec 5-7, 2019
Alpena Civic Theatre	<i>The Best/Worst Christmas Pageant Ever*</i>	Dec 5-15, 2019
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Dec 5-15, 2019
Hartland Players	<i>The Best Christmas Pageant*</i>	Dec 6-8, 2019
Clio Cast and Crew	<i>The Day Before Christmas</i>	Dec 11-15, 2019
Master Arts Theatre	<i>The Struggles*</i>	Jan 10-20, 2020
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>Guys & Dolls</i>	Jan 10-19, 2020
Alpena Civic Theatre	<i>Wait Until Dark</i>	Jan 16-26, 2020
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>Indecent</i>	Jan 17-Feb 1, 2020
Pit and Balcony Theatre, Saginaw	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>	Jan 24-Feb 2, 2020
Pinckney Players	<i>No Sex Please, We're British**</i>	Feb 1-3, 2020
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>On Pine Knoll Street** (AACT Playfest winner!)</i>	Feb 6-16, 2020
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>Love, Loss and What I wore**</i>	Feb 7-22, 2020
Clio Cast and Crew	<i>Game's Afoot</i>	Feb 14-23, 2020
Master Arts Theatre	<i>Father Brown</i>	Feb 20-Mar 7, 2020
Hartland Players	<i>Proof</i>	Feb 22-Mar 1, 2020
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>Silent Sky</i>	Mar 6-21, 2020
Alpena Civic Theatre	<i>All My Sons</i>	Mar 13-22, 2020

* 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.



The Scoop on Scripts

By Tara Western



Happy August! As a teacher, I called August 1st, July 32nd! I love summer and hate to see it end. But August also brings a new exciting season of community theatre. I am looking for a few lesser known, but intense mysteries or thrillers. Email me your suggestions please! Maybe bring some quirky scripts of any type to TreeTops in October?!

Samuel French's Lend Me a Tenor by Ken Ludwig ©1989 is labeled a comedy, but I say farce! Bigger than life characters and lots of action, make this play a hilarious romp. It is 1934, Cleveland, Ohio, and Tito Merelli, a famous opera star, is performing as Othello. Mr. Saunders, the head of the opera company and his assistant, Max, try to keep the wheels on the Tito "bus" as Max's girlfriend, Maggie, (who is also Saunders' daughter) is desperate to meet Tito; Diane, his "Desdemona", offers herself, hoping for a boost in her career, and Julia, president of the Opera Guild, tries to seduce Tito as she is mad about Tito, too. Maria, Tito's jealous wife is just mad! When Tito falls ill, and is accidently drugged by Max, they think he's dead. In a last-ditch effort, Max goes on as Othello and scores big with the audience and in bed with Maggie, who thinks he's Tito. Tito, awakens, but barely, and is susceptible to the machinations of Maggie, Diane, and Julia. There lies the basis for bedlam! Keeping Max's Othello a secret, keeping the women from running into each other, hiding Maggie's plan from her father, etc.!! Everyone except Max wants something from Tito, even the bellhop, another aspiring opera singer! When Maria and Tito reunite, one feels that married love triumphs. Now to the requirements: the single set has two rooms: a 30's vintage sitting room and a luxurious bedroom with SIX doors needed. Other than fairly easy sound requirements,



recordings of classic opera that goes from the house to a radio on stage: a scratchy 33rpm sound. Quite a bit of opera is sung and Ken Ludwig recommends casting great actors for Tito and Max rather than great singers as they sing for about two minutes out of a two-hour show. He says "... vocal coaching will do the trick and the illusion of voices of operatic quality can easily be pulled off.....". As there are many sexual situations, depending on your group's standards: suitable for 14 and up? 16+? Characters' ages are flexible, with Tito, Maria, Saunders and Julia approximately the same age and Max and Maggie young enough to be Saunders' children. I had a blast playing Maria for Tawas Bay Players in the 1994-95 season.

Written in 2008 by Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope and Jamie Wooten, Dixie Swim Club is published by Dramatists' Play Service. It is a dramedy about five Southern women, former college swim teammates, who meet every year for a weekend in August. These five distinct personalities are portrayed at 44, 49, 54, and 77 years of age. The set is the living room of a beach cottage on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. As it is a rental, major set décor changes are not needed.



Athletic Sheree, team captain, still leads the group, while trying to maintain the façade of her "perfect" life. Over-achiever Dinah, now a successful lawyer, wise-cracks to hide her pathetic personal life. Highly opinionated Lexie, serial wife, pampers herself to stay young. The self-deprecating school teacher Vernadette lives in chaos and, eager-to-please, Jeri Neal surprises everyone by becoming pregnant in late middle age. This is a great vehicle for the women of a "certain age" who are looking for juicy roles with depth and nuance. Dixie Swim Club won the 2019 AACTFest Region II competition.