



**CTAM**  
Community Theatre Association of Michigan

# CALLBOARD

November 2019

## Another successful Fall Conference

Many people made it happen and a wonderful time was had by all! Although threatened by rain most of the weekend, you could hardly notice! Chair Patrick Hubbard and his band of helpers worked diligently through the weekend to keep things on time and to assure a wonderful slate of workshops for everyone to attend on Saturday.

The Friday night Pirates' Gathering started the weekend out in fine shape with a lot of Yo-ho-hos and some bottles of rum! And several games entertained everyone as they greeted old friends and made new ones. (See photos on Page 5.)

The Saturday evening banquet was highlighted by our keynoter, playwright David MacGregor from the Purple Rose Theatre in Chelsea. He also presented a workshop on playwriting earlier in the day, to great acclaim.

Although no Dorothy Arnett Volunteer Awards nor the Robert McKenna Award were presented this year (because no one was nominated by our members!), two Volunteer Spirit Awards were presented by the Board to Leo and Pat Paveglio, Chairs of the annual playwriting competition, and to Mary Lou Britton who edits the monthly newsletter, the Callboard. What a delightful surprise!

We had a very successful raffle this year to benefit the Joyce A. Schultheiss Scholarship Fund to assist people in attending CTAM educational events. We raised about \$600. Thanks to the organizations, affiliates and individuals who donated such lovely prizes -- and, of course, the generous people who bought strips and strips of tickets! Even if you didn't go home with a prize, you are all winners in our books! We could never do it without you!



*Above left, Leo and Pat Paveglio receive their Volunteer Service Award from returning President Betsy Willis. Likewise, top right, Betsy presents a similar award to Mary Lou Britton.*

*Photo to right, Sara Hartley, (left) CTAM Administrator, and friends.*

*Bottom photo, keynote speaker David MacGregor spoke Saturday evening before dinner.*



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

## 2018-19 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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 Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City  
[ryonwillis915@hotmail.com](mailto:ryonwillis915@hotmail.com)

Vice President - **Patrick Hubbard**  
 Clio Cast and Crew  
[theatrepat511@gmail.com](mailto:theatrepat511@gmail.com)

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[Mr.jamiepeterson@gmail.com](mailto:Mr.jamiepeterson@gmail.com)

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 Bay City Players

**Ben Zylman** ..... [benkal@chartermi.net](mailto:benkal@chartermi.net)  
 Kalamazoo Civic Theatre

### CTAM Administrator

**Sara Hartley** ..... [ctamthrives@gmail.com](mailto:ctamthrives@gmail.com)  
 P. O. Box 693; Traverse City MI 49685  
[ctamthrives@gmail.com](mailto:ctamthrives@gmail.com)     <http://ctam.online/>  
[ctamich@gmail.com](mailto:ctamich@gmail.com)     Instagram: @ctamich

### Callboard

Editor..... Mary Lou Britton

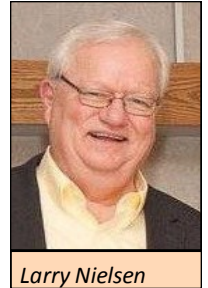
This is the official newsletter of the Community Theatre Association of Michigan, issued monthly to all group affiliates and individual members with e-mail addresses on record. Distribution is by e-mail with a link to the newsletter on the association website. Back issues are available on the association website. Correspondence to the **Callboard** should be sent to the Editor at [mellbee@earthlink.net](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 Administrator and should be sent to [ctamthrives@gmail.com](mailto:ctamthrives@gmail.com)

## Are you planning on having an adjudication this season?

Everyone is busy getting into their 2019-20 season. Remember that CTAM has trained adjudicators ready and eager to visit your group and adjudicate one of your shows. As a benefit of your CTAM annual affiliate dues, each member group gets one free adjudication per membership year. After that, your group pays a modest fee for additional adjudications.



Larry Nielsen

Adjudicators are an independent second pair of eyes, looking at your production and seeing things you may not have noticed. Adjudications are not 're-directing' or a pass/fail situation, but rather a starting point for improvement in future shows. Contact Adjudication Chair Larry Nielsen to make arrangements.



## CTAM Calendar of Events

March 21, 2020 Saginaw	CTAM On The Road Hosted by Pit & Balcony
April 25, 2020 Traverse City	CTAM On The Road Old Town Playhouse
May TBD, 2020 Escanaba	CTAM On The Road Players de Noc

Proud Member of



## Take in a play or two at nearby CTAM affiliates...

Attending other community theatre productions can inspire and instruct. You can also have a lot of fun! Tara Western from Tawas Bay Players suggests you find a coordinator to organize all the friends who would like to carpool or go to a show in a nearby location. You might even qualify for a group discount if you have enough people involved. And be sure to mention CTAM ... some groups give a discount to their CTAM ticket-buyers!

Would this work for you and your friends? For starters, look through the list of upcoming plays across the state on Page 7. (A list of additional plays into the future -- not just a month or so -- is available on [the website.](#)) See what's of interest and get the ball rolling! If you don't do it, no one will! Right?

## Attention: Stage Managers

Award-winning stage manager Rich Costabile was interviewed for *Stage Directions* magazine about his long career. "If you take the approach of listening, you will find your problems or questions can be solved so much more easily. Take in the words of those you're working with. Listen and accept their perspectives. Learn by what you hear. You'll understand and see new ways to do things, and also get to know the people you work with so much more clearly.

I take the same approach when it comes to working with so-called 'divas' -- often, people in the theater who act this way do so because they feel very insecure. If you simply listen to them, you give them a feeling of security, not by being the boss as their stage manager, but by being compassionate. The simple act of your listening to them without interrupting lets them come out and tell you, and show you what's really bothering them. You don't have to be friends with them, necessarily, but they will understand that you are there with them. It creates context of support which is just invaluable."

## ... OR HEAD OFF TO BROADWAY AND NEW YORK CITY WITH THE CTAM TRIP NEXT SEPTEMBER!

CTAM is planning another New York Broadway trip for mid-September of 2020! The price, to be announced soon, will include airfare to and from Grand Rapids, Times Square hotel, several Broadway shows, a city tour, and many other highlights that we will announce as time goes by. We also will schedule time for you to do your thing; i.e. visit a special place, see another show, or go to special museums or wonderful restaurants. Our last trip in 2018 (see photos here) was so successful that we can't wait to go again. Start thinking about it, and saving your money and vacation time. Check out the **CALLBOARD** each month for more details.



# THE WORKSHOPS...



Sweet  
November



# ... AND THE PARTIES!



## Playwriting contest winner announced

The 2019 CTAM Playwriting Contest is a wrap and Priscilla Cogan is celebrating her first AND second place awards for *Tidal Shifts* and *Love, Lust and Other Liabilities*. Congratulations to Priscilla and all the authors who submitted plays this year. Great job everyone!

A reminder: Your theatre troupe can perform either of Priscilla's plays, royalty-free, during the next two seasons.

A special thanks to the playwrights presenting excerpts of their plays during the conference and to the actors who read them:

- ✓ Priscilla Cogan - *Tidal Shifts*
- ✓ Arnie Johnston and Debby Percy – *Beyond Sex*
- ✓ T.E. Klunzinger – *The Hermit of Malta*
- ✓ Art Nemitz – *A Weekend in Wisconsin*
- ✓ Maggie Savage – *Don't Go There*

Thanks also to the judges who had the gargantuan job of reading and critiquing 13 plays!

For 2020, we hope to see entries from all the folks attending David McGregor's inspiring playwriting workshop at the Fall Conference. Remember, as David said, the key to writing a play is to finish it!

Keep an eye on the CTAM webpage for synopses of this year's entries and the authors' contact information.

Kudos also to our stalwart Playwriting Contest chairs, Pat and Leo Paveglio. They do such a great job organizing and orchestrating this annual project.



# Getting ready for the holidays...

Owosso Community Players	<i>Marvin's Room</i>	Oct 20-Nov 3, 2019
Riverwalk Theatre, Lansing	<i>A Piece of My Heart</i>	Oct 24-Nov 3, 2019
Twin City Players, Benton Harbor/St. Joe	<i>Marjorie Prime</i>	Oct 25-Nov10, 2019
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>The Outsiders*</i>	Nov 1-3, 2019
Richmond Community Theatre	<i>You Can't Take It with You</i>	Nov 1-10, 2019
Clarkston Village Players	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>	Nov 8-23, 2019
Owosso Community Players	<i>South Pacific in concert</i>	Nov 9-10, 2019
Community Theatre of Howell	<i>Annie</i>	Nov 15-24, 2019
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>Rumors</i>	Nov 15-24, 2019
Muskegon Civic Theatre	<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Nov 15-Dec 1, 2019
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>Elf, The Musical</i>	Nov 15-Dec 14, 2019
Master Arts Theate	<i>Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley</i>	Nov 21-Dec 14, 2019
Avon Players, Rochester	<i>Forever Christmas</i>	Nov 29-Dec 14, 2019
Pit and Balcony Theatre, Saginaw	<i>The Giver</i>	Nov 29-Dec 8, 2019
Players deNoc, Escanaba	<i>Fruitcakes</i>	Nov 29-Dec 7, 2019
Richmond Community Theatre	<i>Elf, Jr., The Musical*</i>	Nov 29-30, 2019
Riverwalk Theatre, Lansing	<i>You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown</i>	Nov 29-Dec 8, 2019
Alpena Civic Theatre	<i>The Best/Worst Christmas Pageant Ever*</i>	Dec 5-15, 2019
Manistee Civic Players	<i>Elf, The Musical</i>	Dec 5-7, 2019
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Dec 5-15, 2019
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Dec 5-15, 2019
Bay City Players	<i>The Snow Queen</i>	Dec 6-15, 2019
Farmington Players	<i>Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley</i>	Dec 6-21, 2019
Hartland Players	<i>The Best Christmas Pageant*</i>	Dec 6-8, 2019
Twin City Players, Benton Harbor/St. Joe	<i>Kris Kringle, the Musical</i>	Dec 6-15, 2019
Clarkston Village Players	<i>Red vs. the Wolf*</i>	Dec 7-8, 2019
Cadillac Footlites	<i>Home for the Holidays</i>	Dec 12-14, 2019
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>Elf, Jr., The Musical*</i>	Dec 13-15, 2019
Owosso Community Players	<i>Holiday at Lebowsky</i>	Dec 13-15, 2019
Clio Cast and Crew	<i>The Day Before Christmas</i>	Dec 11-15, 2019
Players deNoc, Escanaba	<i>Miracle on 34th Street</i>	Dec 19, 2019
Twin City Players, Benton Harbor/St. Joe	<i>Grinch **</i>	Dec 19-22, 2019
Riverwalk Theatre, Lansing	<i>Holiday Cheer, a Musical Revue</i>	Dec 20-22, 2019
Clarkston Village Players	<i>Vino Veritas</i>	Jan 10-25, 2020
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>Guys &amp; Dolls</i>	Jan 10-19, 2020
Master Arts Theate	<i>The Struggles*</i>	Jan 10-20, 2020
Alpena Civic Theatre	<i>Wait Until Dark</i>	Jan 16-26, 2020
Riverwalk Theatre, Lansing	<i>Boy Gets Girl</i>	Jan 16-26, 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.



## Using a kitchen timer to write better!

This is a time management trick I picked up from Lauren Graham's book *I'm Talking as Fast as I Can*. When she started writing, she kept feeling stuck. A screenwriter friend told her about

"Kitchen Timer" which he adapted from *The Pomodoro Technique* by Francesco Cirillo. (FYI, Pomodoro means



"tomato" in Italian.) I was inspired to share this method after attending Purple Rose playwright David MacGregor's playwriting workshop at the CTAM conference at Treetops, mid-September.

This method is for writers, actors, busy people, anyone who has a monkey-brain like me. It will help you focus and be productive every day. If you need to learn lines, write a play for the CTAM playwriting contest, design a set, or create costumes, this can help you get it done!

- ✓ Step 1: Get a timer. It can be on your microwave, a real kitchen timer, Alexa/Siri,

or your phone (last resort).

- ✓ Step 2: Gather working materials such as pen, paper, sketch pad, open your work document on computer, etc.
- ✓ Step 3: Turn off all distractions, such as TV, radio, podcasts, phone alerts. Tell your loved ones that you need quiet time alone.
- ✓ Step 4: Set your timer for 25 minutes. That's what Cirillo suggests and I have found it to be perfect for me. Go!
- ✓ Step 5: Stop when the timer goes off. Take a five-minute break before you do another Pomodoro, or go about your day.

The adapted "Kitchen Timer" is not an arbitrary 25 minutes. Busy day? Set the timer for 10 or 15 minutes. Got a deadline? Set it for 40 minutes or longer. The critical part is focused work. Since using this method, my writing time is much more productive.

David MacGregor said that the difference between the people that "want" to write and those that have a play entered in a contest, produced or published is that "they finished it!"

*Article by Tara Western,  
Tawas Bay Players*

## AACT to measure economic impact of theatres across the U.S.

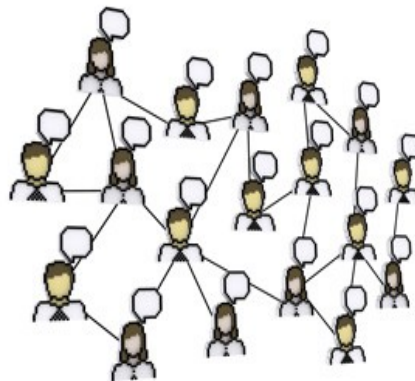
American Association of Community Theatre (AACT) is embarking on an exciting effort to create the first-ever, comprehensive Theatres in Communities Inventory, measuring the valuable impact of theatres across the United States.

The Inventory—collecting, and reporting on current fiscal and programmatic data—will serve as a critical baseline to measure the health and vitality of theatres in communities across the country. AACT is partnering with

theatre organizations and businesses at the local, state and national level, in a collaborative effort to achieve the highest participation rates possible.

Assisting AACT with this project is Drexel University's Antoinette Westphal College of Media Arts and Design in Philadelphia, and the firm of Mataraza Arts Management Consulting. Drexel has agreed to serve as the long-term repository for AACT's data.

We hope that you will consider joining us in this important effort to elevate and promote the enormous value and impact of theatre in communities all across America.





# The Scoop on Scripts

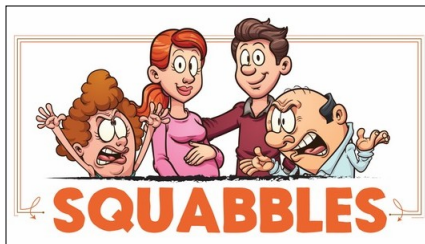
By Tara Western



At the Thanksgiving table, when you are asked what you are thankful for, do you say, “community theatre”? Or do you say that all the time? I know it has been a huge part of my life.

**Squabbles** by Marshall Karp, published by Samuel French ©1983, is a witty comedy of two

acts, four men and two women. One interior set: a living room and a kitchen. I strongly suggest setting the play in 1983. As you might have



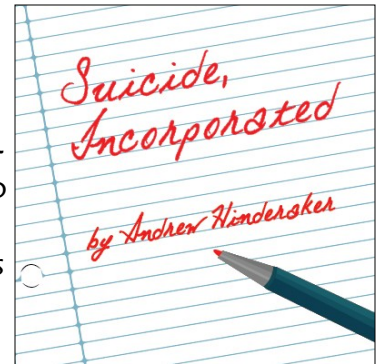
noticed everything has changed since 1983; everything that is, except the plot: parents often live with their grown children, people bicker, generations love each other, and love has no age limit. Jerry (jingle writer) and Alice (lawyer) are expecting a baby and they live with Alice’s father, Abe, 66 years old. Hector, the Puerto Rican handy man adds comic relief. Mildred (Jerry’s mom) moves in with the threesome after her house burns down. Mildred and Abe started arguing the minute they met at their children’s wedding. The battle continues, hilariously, until Mildred and Abe are left alone, as Alice and Jerry race to the hospital in the middle of a blizzard. During a power outage, Mildred and Abe make a truce for the sake of the new baby; actually, they fall in love. The last scene introduces a wonderfully prim German baby nurse, 40-50 years.

Although Mildred and Abe continue to argue, love is abundant and they all live happily (arguing) forever after. Sound: a 1983 phone is a must, a crying baby, car horns, and a chiming clock. Lights—a power outage requires a “working” firelight. Props need to be chosen carefully—snow on a coat (I hate it when it just sits there for half an hour!), a hand-

made rocking horse and a 1980s camera with a flash. A large stuffed monkey is used as a weapon, and you will need a piano that works, or seems to. Suitable for 14+. Caveat: Tawas Bay Players produced this in 2010 and gave not a thought to the stereotypical Puerto Rican, Hector. I suggest not playing Hector broadly, i.e. as stereotype. Some lines about Hector sound racist today and with the playwrights’ permission may be dropped. It’s a very funny play and I would hate to give up on it!

**Suicide, Incorporated** is a powerfully moving, darkly comic script. Although it may offend some audiences, it could spark a much-needed community mental health discussion. The script is frequently funny but never treats the subject flippantly.

Written by Andrew Hinderaker ©2010 and published by Playscripts, the requirements are few except for great acting. The premise: Legacy Letters is a company that will help you with your “last letter.” Six men: the founder, Scott, who is in it for the money; Jason, who takes the job to talk people out of suicide because he feels guilty for his brother’s suicide; Tommy, Jason’s dead brother; Norman, Jason’s client; Percy, an unhappy employee; and a cop who finds the last letters with the body and files the report.



With minimal furniture, lighting sets the scenes: an office, a call center, an apartment, a diner. Few sound effects and adult language.

This is the first time I have read a script and immediately wanted to write about it. Jamie Peterson (Escanaba Players de Noc) loaned it to me—complaints and accolades go to him. FYI: The author thanks the JED Foundation “for putting (him) in touch with families and survivors who graciously shared their stories. JED is a non-profit organization to protect the emotional health and prevent suicides for our nation’s teen and young adults.