



# CALLBOARD

October 2021

## There is still time to register for the CTAM Fall Conference!

Take a break from making your Halloween costume and come to the CTAM Fall Conference. Go to our CTAM website for more information and to register for the Conference.

### Schedule for the day:

8am - Registration, Coffee, and welcome

9am - Town Hall meeting regarding reopening concerns.

10:15am - Workshops

11:30am - Lunch break - on your own.

1pm - CTAM Annual Meeting

1:45pm - Workshops

3pm - Q&A / Farewell

Total cost for the day

is a very reasonable \$38 (less discount if you are an Individual Member!) Lunch is on your own; contact the CTAM office if you would like information on nearby hotels to make it a wonderful weekend in the Midland area!

The Central Auditorium is a lovely and spacious location for our Conference. There is plenty of room to be socially distanced; everyone is asked to wear a mask.



**HELPING COMMUNITY THEATRE *THRIVE* IN MICHIGAN SINCE 1951!**



**Community Theatre  
Association of Michigan**

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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 [maryloubritton@gmail.com](mailto:maryloubritton@gmail.com).

Updated e-mail and postal addresses are maintained by the Administrator and should be sent to [CTAMthrives@gmail.com](mailto:CTAMthrives@gmail.com).

**Scene Shop Tip:**

**Get A Grip  
On a Stripped  
Screwhead**

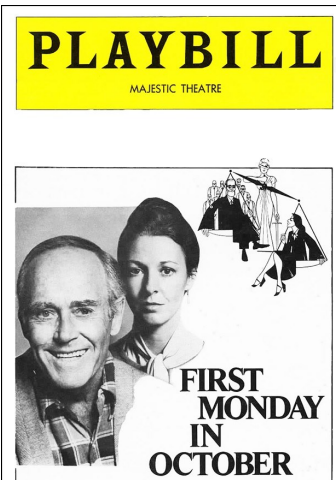
Let he (or she!) who has not stripped a screw cast the first stone.

Next time this happens to you or your scene shop volunteers, slip a rubber band over the tip of the screwdriver before tightening or loosening the screw.

The rubber band is thin enough to fill in the screw

groove (even a Phillips Head) and textured enough for the screwdriver to grasp. This works on screwheads that are already stripped and will also prevent the stripping of new screws if your screwdriver isn't a perfect fit!

**Tip  
of the  
Month**



**CTAM Calendar of Events**

October 2, 2021 Midland	CTAM Fall Conference
Sept. 22-25, 2022 Gaylord	CTAM Fall Conference @ Treetops Resort





Glen Arbor  
Players



Northern  
Lites Readers  
Theatre

Audio  
Air Force



Dave Downing said that "The Audio Air Force is a theatrical organization dedicated to the creation of original material for presentation as 'audio theater' for presentation on Radio, Internet, CD or whatever audio venues are appropriate. As an organization, we strive to preserve the history of Radio/Audio Theatre as we work to create Audio Theatre's present and future." If you'd like to contact Audio Air Force, you can reach out to [info@audioairforce.com](mailto:info@audioairforce.com). Or visit their website: <https://audioairforce.com/>.

The CTAM SPOTLIGHT is also shining brightly on The Vista Theatre in Negaunee in the Upper Peninsula. The theatre opened in 1926 and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It has housed countless theatrical productions, concerts, and movie

viewings. Tragically, in August, 2020, during the height of the pandemic, the roof collapsed and, although the building was empty, the damage has hurt and affected many people involved with the theatre.



The building is more than 90 years old and their legacy remains the same; to enrich those in the Upper Peninsula through story telling and performance arts of all kinds. The Historic Vista Theater in Negaunee takes great pride in continuing to be involved in the Marquette County community.



CTAM encourages everyone who is able to donate to their effort to save their theatre and visit their website to learn more about their events and their rich history! Donate Here -> <http://www.vistatheater.org/donate.html>

For our first CTAM SPOTLIGHT, we are recognizing our three CTAM readers theatre members! First Up, **Glen Arbor Players**. We contacted Teddy House, who gave us a quick rundown of what they do: "We are a Readers Theater group that produces four shows per season. Our shows are selected from classic and local playwrights, as well as adapted movie scripts that run the gamut of comedies, mysteries, and dramas." If you're interested in getting involved, you can email [teddyh@centurytel.net](mailto:teddyh@centurytel.net), or visit their website: <http://www.glenarborplayers.org/>.

Next, we have the **Northern Lites Readers Theatre** in Cadillac! We asked Pat Paveglio about their organization and she said "Our small, newly-formed group was just tasting success when the Covid curtain came down. We had done a variety of performances - readings of jokes, quotes, and anecdotes, Valentine's Day dinner plays and an adapted play." You can find out more info and how to get involved by emailing [readerstheatrecadillac@gmail.com](mailto:readerstheatrecadillac@gmail.com).

Finally is **Audio Air Force**! This theatre puts their own spin on Readers Theatre by embracing the age-old tradition of Radio/Audio Theatre. When asked about the organization,



## CTAM website debuts new promotion opportunity for affiliates

Our CTAM website has recently undergone a facelift and is always evolving. As part of our regular changes, we will be promoting the shows of our affiliate groups that open each month on our main page (as well as under the Events section).

If your affiliate group has a show opening, please send us a production photo or two a month before it opens so we can add it to our slide-show. We think this could be a valuable service to our members as we encourage the general public to check out our statewide website as they make their entertainment plans.

And if there is anything else you'd like to see added to the website, please let us know. We are here to help your organization grow and thrive!

Please send your photos to [webmaster@ctam.online](mailto:webmaster@ctam.online) or [ctamthrives@gmail.com](mailto:ctamthrives@gmail.com)



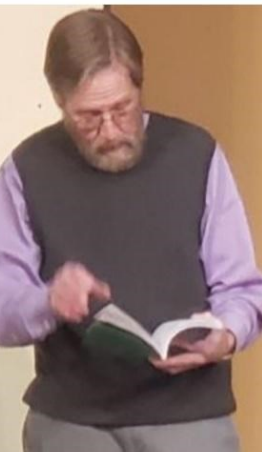
## CTAM networking at its finest!

This past July, Players de Noc of Escanaba produced an outdoor version of the beloved children's story, *Charlotte's Web*. Players partnered with their local State Fair authority and performed the show, using not only a barn, but a barn located at the community fairgrounds in the center of Escanaba, Michigan. This was the first time in more than 30



years that Players de Noc returned to outdoor performances. To add to the experience, actors and volunteers dressed as fair vendors, and distributed concessions throughout the crowd before the show and during intermission.

Players de Noc drew inspiration for this production from one of its fellow Michigan theaters and CTAM partners. In the prior summer of 2020, the idea to produce *Charlotte's Web* using an actual barn was done by The Sauk Theatre located in Jonesville Michigan. Past CTAM board member and director of The Sauk theater Trinity Bird produced the show as a safe option to continue productions during the pandemic. He also inspired others to do the same!



Rosedale Community Players, our newest renewing affiliate group, is re-mounting their successful production of *Making God Laugh* for their post-pandemic audiences!



# Don't Panic!

*Monthly musings by  
Chuck Goddeeris*



So your theatre is opening back up but the numbers are down. Don't panic. Don't get discouraged. Don't hang your head in sorrow. Delta is in the air and people are still wary of getting into enclosed spaces right now, so don't be surprised if your participation numbers are down. However, there are lots of ways to re-engage your members and your audience.

First of all, your season is probably set for the season or mostly set. So now is the time to organize volunteers to reach out to past and regular members to see how they can help. Don't do a mass email, take the time to give them a call, leave them a voicemail or even a personalized email. In the past I have almost always emailed or called volunteers individually to help with a set build, help assemble mailings or put some creative designs together, and that method is almost always ten times more useful than an email blast.

Start small by organizing a small group to recruit your regular members for specific tasks and grow from there. Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of your members is crucial. This is a great opportunity to make sure you have lists (even if it is an Excel spreadsheet) of who your regular members, performers, and crew members are and what they love to do (and hopefully that matches their specialty).

Assuming your season's shows are smaller in cast size, this is a great opportunity to add workshop programming. Many of your experienced performers are probably very capable of leading workshops or classes on acting in various styles or

preparing for an audition. Not to mention your directors can do the same for audition prep – explain to actors what they are usually looking for and how they can add more skills to their toolbox.

Most importantly, have your technical people hold workshops, teaching others how to use your light board or your sound board or how to stage manage, etc. There are basic skills needed for each of these positions that can be taught very easily in less than an hour. Not to mention this is a great way to expand your talent pool offstage so you aren't stressing out the same five people every year.

Ultimately these questions lead to the butts-in-seats dilemma. Attendance may be difficult during this time, but I think this is a golden opportunity to try new ways to engage your audience. My best recommendation is to have your cast and crew take videos, short 30-60 second clips, about why they should see the show (and what safety measures you are taking). It's easy to do (Most people have a Smartphone!) and then you have lots of material to space out for promotions. Supplement this with some production photos on your Facebook or website and you will train your audience to come back on a regular basis for new content and information about what your group is up to. You may not see a huge increase right away, but this will help you build up best practices for the future.

In short, don't panic if your numbers are down. This should only be temporary and gives you more time to focus on reinforcing good processes and documenting these steps. Don't just look at short term solutions but look at how to build sustainable methods that will last several years.

Take a deep breath, work smarter, not necessarily harder and focus on building and establishing strong processes this season and you will reap the benefits down the road. Above all, don't panic!





## It seems to me...

By Dexter Brigham



### The Theatre Community of Community Theatre

We have a real opportunity here, friends. As we begin the painfully slow and incremental return to presenting regular performances for the public again, there are numerous areas where we can draw a firm line in the sand to mark the Before Time, and to differentiate it from the Moving Forward Time.

- ☆ In the Before Time, we were committed to rewarding those folks who showed up to audition. If they were willing to put forth the effort when others weren't, then they should be in the show.
  - ✓ *But in the Moving Forward Time, we know that many folks don't come to auditions because they don't feel welcome or invited, and by insisting on casting only the folks who show up, we end up with the same faces, usually white, and an ever shrinking and insulated pool of talent and artistic perspectives. We know that there is no shame in going out into the community and inviting people to the table.*
- ☆ In the Before Time, we programmed our seasons from a list of plays and musicals, sorted into various buckets named "Popular with Audiences," "Popular with Actors," "Family Shows," etc. The shows on that list were almost universally written by dead white guys and told stories about young, thin, straight white people.
  - ✓ *But in the Moving Forward Time, we know that these stories don't have to continue to be exclusively played by thin, straight, white actors. If the story is universal enough to stand the test of time, then it is universal enough to reflect the*

*true diversity of our society. We also know that there are other voices out there writing exciting new plays and musicals, and these creators deserve our love, attention and royalty dollars more than the great-grandkids of a guy who wrote a show in 1950.*

- ☆ In the Before Time, we didn't think about the health of our fellow cast and crew, except when it interfered with rehearsals and/or performances. We lamented when a particular virus was "making its way through the cast" without taking any real action to mitigate the spread.
  - ✓ *But in the Moving Forward Time, we know how much each individual can do to protect our fellow community members. We know that by staying home when ill, by wearing masks, by social distancing, and by getting vaccinated, we can keep each other safe.*

Community Theatre is now facing the dark parts of its legacy: a century of reinforcing the idea that only thin people are worthy of love; decades of blackface (Lend Me a Tenor) and yellowface (The King and I, Anything Goes, Miss Saigon, Thoroughly Modern Millie, Mikado... the list is almost endless here), and the centering of male, Euro-centric stories to the exclusion of everything, and everyone, else.

In the Moving Forward Time, let's shed that shameful past and allow the beautiful art that has enriched our lives to be shared with everyone. I am an eternal optimist, and I can see a community theatre that is open and welcoming, that has learned from the past and is more exciting and vibrant because of it.



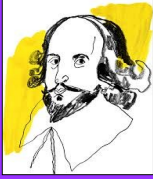
# This Fall in Michigan theatre

Avon Players, Rochester	<i>Night of January 16</i>	Sept 24-Oct 9, 2021
Bay City Players	<i>Present Laughter</i>	Sept 24-Oct 3, 2021
Players de Noc, Escanaba	<i>Cemetery Club</i>	Sept 24-Oct 2, 2021
Pit & Balcony, Saginaw	<i>Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express</i>	Oct 1-10, 2021
Players Guild of Dearborn	<i>Murder in Uptight Abbey</i>	Oct 1-10, 2021
Monroe Community Players	<i>Doubt, A Parable</i>	Oct 1-9, 2021
Holland Community Theatre	<i>The Government Inspector</i>	Oct 7-23, 2021
Grand Rapids Civic	<i>Black, Bold, &amp; Beautiful</i>	Oct 14-24, 2021
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>Godspell</i>	Oct 14-23, 2021
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>Clue: The Musical</i>	Oct 14-24, 2021
Clio Cast and Crew	<i>The Curious Savage</i>	Oct 15-24, 2021
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>Some Enchanted Evening</i>	Oct 15-24, 2021
Lebowsky Center, Owosso	<i>Evita</i>	Oct 15-24, 2021
Northland Players, Cheboygan	<i>The All Night Strut</i>	Oct 21-24, 2021
Center Stage Theatre, Kalamazoo	<i>Moana, Jr.*</i>	Oct 22-24, 2021
Twin City Players, St. Joseph	<i>The Haunting of Hill House</i>	Oct 22-Nov 7, 2021
Players de Noc, Escanaba	<i>Playing Dead (Cemetery Walk)</i>	Oct 22-23, 2021
Glen Arbor Players	<i>The Hound of the Baskervilles</i>	Oct 28-30, 2021
Center Stage Theatre, Midland	<i>Men on Boats</i>	Oct 29-Nov 7, 2021
Tawas Bay Players	<i>Messiah on the Frigidaire</i>	Oct 29-Nov 7, 2021
Monroe Community Players	<i>Things that Go Bump in the Night</i>	Oct 29-30, 2021
Bay City Players	<i>Ten November</i>	Nov 5-14, 2021
Clarkston Village Players	<i>Bus Stop</i>	Nov 5-20, 2021
Community Theatre of Howell	<i>Bonnie &amp; Clyde, the Musical</i>	Nov 5-14, 2021
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>Measure for Measure (Pigeon Creek Shakespeare)</i>	Nov 6, 2021
Little Traverse Civic Theatre	<i>Steel Magnolias</i>	Nov 11-20, 2021
Center Stage Theatre, Kalamazoo	<i>All Together Now (MTI)</i>	Nov 12-14, 2021
Stagecrafters, Royal Oak	<i>R&amp;H Cinderella</i>	Nov 12-Dec 5, 2021
Monroe Community Players	<i>All Together Now!</i>	Nov 12-14, 2021
Master Arts Theatre, Grand Rapids	<i>The Best Christmas Pageant Ever</i>	Nov 18-Dec 4, 2021
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>The Savannah Sipping Society</i>	Nov 18-Dec 4, 2021
Farmington Players	<i>A Hunting Shack Christmas</i>	Nov 19-Dec 4, 2021
Grand Rapids Civic	<i>The Sound of Music</i>	Nov 19-Dec 19, 2021
Avon Players, Rochester	<i>It's a Wonderful Life, the Radio Show</i>	Nov 26-Dec 11, 2021
Holland Community Theatre	<i>Miracle on 34th Street</i>	Nov 26-Dec 11, 2021
Bay City Players	<i>Cole in your Stocking</i>	Dec 2-4, 2021
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>Anne of Green Gables</i>	Dec 2-12, 2021
Center Stage Theatre, Midland	<i>She Loves Me</i>	Dec 3-12, 2021
Lebowsky Center, Owosso	<i>Holiday at Lebowsky</i>	Dec 3-12, 2021

\* indicates youth productions; \*\* indicates second stage productions, if submitted.

If your information is incorrect or missing, please send the correct information to [The Editor](#) to be corrected or included in the next issue.





## Playwright's Corner

# YOUR MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

## DRUM ROLL PLEASE!

It's almost time to reveal the winners of the 2021 Playwriting Contest! The winners will be announced at the CTAM conference, October 2, in Midland. We wish we could entertain you with short excerpts from some of the plays this year, but we'll just let you know we received some great entries. We'll tell you about the plays after the winners are announced.

Remember: The first-place winner receives \$500, second place \$250, and CTAM affiliate groups can perform the winning plays for the next two seasons without royalties. You'll also have the chance to work with some of Michigan's greatest playwrights.

*(P.S. It's now time to start writing **your** winning play for the 2022 Playwriting Contest. It begins January 1, 2022.)*

Other contest news: Grosse Pointe Theatre's 10-minute play competition closes December 31, 2021. You have plenty of time to finish your play. Performance festival in May 2022. Questions to [playfestival@gpt.org](mailto:playfestival@gpt.org) or visit their website at [www.gpt.org](http://www.gpt.org).

CTAM is in the midst of our Membership Drive and we wanted to report that the following groups have renewed as Affiliate Members of CTAM.

1. Alpena Civic Theatre
2. Audio Air Force, Lansing
3. Avon Players, Rochester
4. Bay City Players
5. Clarkston Village Players
6. Clio Cast & Crew
7. Community Theatre of Howell
8. Farmington Players
9. Fenton Village Players
10. Fowlerville Theatre
11. Glen Arbor Players
12. Grand Rapids Civic Theatre
13. Grosse Pointe Theatre
14. Holland Civic Theatre
15. Lebowsky Center for Performing Arts, Owosso
16. Little Traverse Civic Theatre, Petoskey
17. Northern Lites Readers Theatre, Cadillac
18. Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City
19. Pit & Balcony Community Theatre, Saginaw
20. Players de Noc, Escanaba
21. Players Guild of Dearborn
22. Pontiac Theatre IV
23. Rosedale Community Players
24. Spotlight Players, Canton
25. Stagecrafters, Royal Oak
26. Tawas Bay Players, East Tawas
27. The Sauk, Jonesville
28. The Tin Shop Theatre, Buchanan
29. Twin City Players, St. Joseph
30. WE Players, East Tawas

If your group is not included above, please check with your administration to be sure that your group dues have been paid! We can't do it without you!



*The Lebowsky Center in Owosso offered Five Women Wearing the Same Dress for their audiences in mid-September.*







## Not Young, Not Old: Engaging Young Adults in Theatre

By Marcus Chapman

In today's world, young people have access to so much more information

than generations before us, but we are rarely trusted to utilize the skills that develop with this knowledge. I want to share with you just a few ways I think will help your theatre engage Young Adults (aged 16-23) in your future programming. I want to focus on one thing: giving young people responsibilities.

When people are asked to take on responsibilities, it gives us a sense of purpose and belonging. As young adults, we are constantly in the process of defining who we are. If we are given a place and respected as a vital part of a theatre, we can start to align our own identities with the theatre's. This is what I like to call the "Volunteer to Life-long Theatre Practitioner Pipeline."

There are so many ways to engage young adults in your theatre, you just need to put in the effort to ask them. This isn't as easy as it sounds, because young adults are often at a place in life that requires them to rely less and less on their parents' money, and they need to be able to justify spending their time on something that is most likely unpaid. Here is a short list of responsibilities that I think intrigue young adults the most in order from least to most:

Assisting with Social Media: This can be anything from graphic design to video editing to posing for promotional photos. Young people, especially those in theatre, like to be associated with organizations, and allowing them to share that association on social media with their peers is very rewarding.

Being a part of show selection: If you use a "civilian group" to choose your shows make sure that there are one or two young voices on the panel. If you don't, this can

be as simple as sending out a google form or survey asking what they might be interested in and then filing that information to help influence your decisions.

Mentorship and Knowledge Sharing: A large phenomenon with young people today is Tik Tok, a social media app that uses short videos instead of the standard photo and copy combo popularized by Facebook and Instagram. One of the most popular uses of the app is demonstrating how to do simple/unique skills that not everyone has access to. Theatres can learn from this. Host small workshops or set up assistantships for productions that teach young people how to do specific skills, and then trust them to use those skills on their own. Trust me, they will keep coming back.

Engaging and energizing young adults can be difficult, but far from impossible and can be done completely free, just utilizing what your theatre is already doing and allowing young adults into the room.

*Marcus Chapman is our newest volunteer with CTAM's Marketing Team. He is 21 years old and recently graduated with a degree in Theatre and Non-profit Administration from Grand Valley State University. We welcome his insight, enthusiasm and his new ideas!*



The Birmingham Village Players offered Shakespeare in Love to their audiences in the heat of mid-September.

# The Scoop on Scripts

By Tara Western



Happy October! Hope you are healthy and busy with community theatre. This month I am scooping two plays written for the stage, but which can also be produced as Readers' Theatre.

***The Long Hot September*** ©2009 is a romantic comedy by Vincent Rhomberg. If interested contact Vincent at [vincentsius@yahoo.com](mailto:vincentsius@yahoo.com) for a script. I have chosen to "scoop" the radio version.

The setting is a front porch "when people sat on front porches." Fifties is the vibe of this play; displaying that kind of innocence and sense of propriety, when people, even in their late middle age, worried about their reputation. Mary is 50-60ish, widowed and lonely. Veera, younger, has never been married. She likes Boonie, the local handyman who is oblivious. Joe is also a late middle age widower and quite the catch. Elizabeth, older than Mary, is the town "easy mark for romantic and sexual escapades," her reputation goes back to 8<sup>th</sup> grade!



It's a hot September midafternoon. Mary and Veera, good friends, are discussing Joe when Boonie arrives. Joe invites Mary to go visit his ailing brother. Mary is reluctant (is this a date?), but has a wonderful time. At the end of the evening, Mary and Joe kiss. Elizabeth spies on the two and spreads salacious gossip. Mary is mortified, and tells Joe off, suspicious of his motives. Boonie finally asks Veera out, Joe and Mary decide to date, and Elizabeth gets her just deserts (sic). Many, many aging jokes, bon mots, and snappy, if old-fashioned dialogue. Bonus: two cute commercials i.e., the alliterative "Shirley's Sweet Sensational Sugar Shack".

Best suited for an older audience, this play addresses aging, loneliness, the agony of being set in your ways, and taking chances.

***Shutting Down Christmas*** ©2017 by Michigander Linda LaRocque is a sweet play that would be a lovely fall production. There is a large cast, with eleven characters, but with doubling it is possible to cast just six. Voices/cast needed: one older male for Santa Claus, two older females for Grandma and Mrs. Crouch, one middle-aged man for Tommy, two middle-aged women for Laurie and Belle. Gender neutral: three elementary age kids, the Christmas Spirit and Elf. The play begins with Santa Claus and the Christmas Spirit having coffee in a diner near the North Pole. Belle, the waitress, overhears their complaints about how Christmas just isn't the same anymore and it may be time to just "shut it down". Elf enters and he/she vents his/her own complaints (the shoes!) and joins



Belle in encouraging Santa and the Spirit to change their minds.

Belle tells the story of a family who were helped by Santa and the Christmas spirit one year. Flashback to Tommy and Laurie, parents of three children anguishing over

their financial situation that promises a miserly Christmas. Grandma arrives and as she and the kids decorate the tree, Mrs. Crouch brings over a turkey for the family's Christmas dinner. Grandma and Mrs. Crouch become fast friends. Grandma explains to the kids that Mrs. Crouch seems mean because she is hard of hearing and since she lost her husband, she hasn't felt like celebrating Christmas. Inspired, Grandma and the kids present their parents with a beautiful hand-made gift. Back at the diner, Elf and Belle remind Santa Claus and the Christmas Spirit how they "saved" the family's Christmas that year and giving the family hope for the future. This is a charming play that audiences of all ages would enjoy. To read this script contact: [www.christianpub.com](http://www.christianpub.com).