



Save the Date:

Thursday, January 20 at 7 p.m.

Ticketing Webinar

Presented by



CTAM is so excited to kickstart the new year by welcoming Ludus to lead a webinar about their easy-to-use ticketing software! Ludus is a Michigan-based ticketing service that offers an affordable ticketing, fundraising, marketing, and streaming software, perfect for theatres of any size.

The system is account based, making it super easy to maintain patrons and even easier to reach out to them. It comes with an email

designer perfect for marketing. And best of all, if you don't absorb the fees, it is completely free.

Join us Thursday, January 20, at 7pm!

Registration will be

available on our website and social media soon!



ON THE ROAD AGAIN



We're packing up the bike, grabbing the dog and planning to arrive near you again this year for our **Travelling Spring Conferences**.

We're planning three identical all-day Saturday programs at three locations selected to be near you!

- ✓ (March date and location to be announced)
- ✓ Saturday, April 23 - Players de Noc, Escanaba
- ✓ Saturday, May 14 - Stagecrafters, Royal Oak

Topics and presenters are still being worked on, but we'll announce them as soon as we can.

The workshops are specifically planned to be in the acting, directing, tech and administrative areas, so our offerings match the needs of our members.

Mark your calendar and save the date so you don't miss the CTAM Travelling Spring Conference!



**Community Theatre
Association of Michigan**

2021-22 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President - Michael Wilson

Grand Rapids Civic

michaelwilsonprops@yahoo.com

Vice President - JR Bornemann

Center Stage, Midland

jbornemann229@gmail.com

Secretary - Rhonda Lehan

Grand Rapids Civic Theatre

rlehan@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer - Jamie Peterson

Players de Noc, Escanaba

mr.jamiepeterson@gmail.com

At-Large Members of the Board

Ruthann Liagre ruthannliagre@gmail.com

Lebowsky Center, Owosso

Gregory Martini gregorydanielmartini@gmail.com

Stagecrafters, Royal Oak

Rodel Salazar rcsalazar10@yahoo.com

Stagecrafters, Royal Oak

Sarah Salerno sarahsalerno@gmail.com

In the Mitten, Northville

Michael Wisniewski mwisn62@gmail.com

Bay City Players

CTAM Administrator

Mary Jo DeNolf CTAMthrives@gmail.com

811 Craven Avenue NE, Grand Rapids 49525

<http://ctam.online/>

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 maryloubritton@gmail.com. Updated e-mail and postal addresses are maintained by the Administrator and should be sent to CTAMthrives@gmail.com.

Before retiring as long-standing co-chairs of the annual CTAM Playwriting Contest, Pat Pavaglio, left, and husband Leo, right, presented a Dorothy Arnett Volunteer Service Award to Michal Jacot from Tawas Bay Players in early December. In addition to being an award-winning playwright in his own right, Michal has served for many years as a judge for our CTAM contest.



Chuck Goddeeris appointed new Playwriting Chair

Don't forget the playwriting contest where you could win \$500 for your fabulous script! Submissions are due by May 15, 2022 and beginning this year there will be no submission fee. There will be an online form to use beginning in January to simplify the process or you can email any questions or all the particulars to playwriting@ctam.online. For more information visit our contest page on our CTAM website: <http://ctam.online/playwriting-contest/>

“Pat and Leo have left me large shoes to fill, but we are grateful for their leadership,” added new chair, Chuck Goddeeris.

CTAM Calendar of Events

Thurs, January 20, 2022 Zoom @ 7:00 p.m.	Ticketing webinar, presented by Ludus
Saturday in March (TBD—west side of state)	On The Road Again Spring Conference
Saturday, April 23 Players de Noc, Escanaba	On The Road Again Spring Conference
Saturday, May 14 Stagecrafters, Royal Oak	On The Road Again Spring Conference
May 15, 2022	Deadline for CTAM Playwriting Contest
July 15, 2022	Deadline for Board of Director nominations and CTAM awards
Sept. 22-25, 2022 Gaylord	CTAM Fall Conference @ Treetops Resort





The Prez Sez...

by Michael Wilson

Should we/can we go back to the old normal?

It seems to happen this time of the year. The holidays approach and we disappear for a while into the hustle and bustle of preparations but at the same time begin to slow down a bit and become reflective. We look back and evaluate where we have come from and think about possibly making a few changes as we begin our journey into a new year. These past two years have turned all our lives upside down. As we begin to work our way out of that chaos, it really is a natural time to pause and evaluate where we are heading. With that in mind I ask. Should we, can we return to the old normal of our personal and work lives that we lived before everything changed?

I know for myself I have looked hard at how I did things before and have made several changes to what I do and how I do it. I have dropped a few past responsibilities which allowed me more personal time and find that I am far more protective of that time. I have looked for ways to make things simpler, more efficient and found that the activities I choose to keep have become much more enjoyable. But I haven't just made changes in my personal life but in my work life also. While I have always worked some from home the past two years have shown me that it's possible to do a lot more from home than I ever believed I could, and I am very reluctant to switch back to the old normal. Don't get me wrong — I really love and enjoy working in my Prop Shop and never regret my time spent there. When I am in the shop working on a project, time slows and really, if I am honest, I am not working ... I feel like I am playing. But what I have discovered as I have begun to change the pattern of my life, even though I may be spending less time in the shop I am enjoying my time spent there even more than I did before, and my time spent elsewhere has also improved considerably.

So where am I heading with all this? CTAM is in the process of reevaluating and figuring out where we go from here. This organization has come a long way

from its initial beginnings as the Michigan Little Theatre Enclave in 1933. We became the Community Theatre Association of Michigan in 1949 in an effort to better reflect the “modern sensibilities” of the larger growing national movement of amateur theatre. Formal incorporation came in 1951 with the election of its first board.

I recently heard a story about what would become the CTAM Fall Conference. In the early '50s, the CTAM board members decided that what they really should do is get all the groups together for a weekend to meet and discuss their mutual challenges...and party! One of the group said that his Aunt and Uncle had a small resort where CTAM might be able to hold this event. The place was a seasonal ski resort and they agreed to open the facility early and CTAM held its very first Fall Convention there. That resort was Boyne Highlands, and our Fall Convention was the beginning of their change to a year-round resort. Now that is just a story that has come down through CTAM history, but it does point to the fact that changes that we make for ourselves can also greatly help others.

Over the next few months, we will be asking for input from all of our members. We will be asking questions about what we can do to help you and your theatre groups. How do we continue to support each other and what are the challenges we all face and how do we address those challenges? We will ask questions not only here in the Callboard but also on our Webpage and Facebook pages. I would ask you all to take the time to answer them and give us your feedback. To remain vital, we need a healthy conversation between our members and the Board so we can provide the support that is most relevant.

While change is uncomfortable, it is necessary for growth, and we have opportunities, new technologies, ideas and resources that have never existed before that are now available to us. Let's take advantage of them and continue to grow. So, I ask once more. Should we/can we go back to the old normal?



For myself I say, lets create a new normal!

Highlights from the AACT National Theatre Directors Conference

A beautiful weekend in San Antonio, Texas, earlier this fall was the backdrop for the AACT biennial conference. Moderated by Michael Fox, this three-day conference discussed everything that is pertinent to our daily lives as a theatre management – executive director, artistic director and more. The conference is incredibly worthwhile and immensely helpful to hear from other organizations nationally dealing with the same issues as our Michigan-based community theatres.

Just a few highlights regarding interesting topics and trends:

Ticketing trends – Ever consider tier pricing? Charge more for tickets in front rows or lower mezzanine as a way to make additional revenue. Or some community theatres initiate demand pricing and raise the ticket price as the shows begin to sell out and they have the “hottest” ticket in town. It’s also not uncommon to “paper the house” and give away tickets to groups in the community or your donors when a show is not selling as well as expected. This allows you to offer community outreach while making your cast feel good performing to full houses.

Digital ticketing – Most groups are not printing and mailing physical tickets any longer.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion — All groups struggle with this, but all have prioritized the need.

- Be careful of outreach unless you are going to continue to follow up. Don’t just reach out once when you need actors, etc. and then not again. Be consistent to develop partnerships with diverse organizations.
- Groups seemed to have success when holding auditions in other venues where they can draw some diverse auditionees. It also helps if there are people of color on the production staff and out in front at auditions.
- Don’t rush to put out an inclusion statement until you’re ready to act on it.

Boards of Directors — Majority of the groups present have 10-20 people on their boards. Some large

er organizations had many more (one had over 60) because the boards are just supportive/developmental boards and not working boards. The more on the board, the more community engagement.

- Most boards do not have any say in selecting the season – The Executive and Artistic Directors select the slate of shows.
- Board retreats work well. Make sure board members have job descriptions, orientation handbooks, etc.

Salaries — The majority of the community theatres at a national level are either already paying or looking into paying their actors. Most already pay tech people and directors. Options include flat stipends, reimbursement for babysitting to get qualified actors, reimbursement for gas or transportation, or a flat amount to help with those expenses.

These are just a few of the topics which I found interesting and enlightening at the conference. I appreciate the opportunity to share them with you.



Linda Zublick,
Executive Director,
Grosse Pointe Theatre



Grosse Pointe Theatre’s second post-pandemic production was “It’s A Wonderful Life - The Radio Show,” a different take on the classic movie.



Northern Lites Readers Theatre out of Cadillac is a brand new group and new CTAM member. In early December, they offered jokes, quotes and anecdotes, Christmas Grins, including a performance of Keep the Home Fires Burning, an over-the-top Christmas melodrama.

Twin City Players offer free lending library

Twin City Players has added a free lending library at its campus in St. Joseph. The TCP Board quickly jumped on the idea proposed by Larry Nielsen. As is great with TCP and every community theatre, other members stepped forward to bring the idea to fruition. Builder Bruce Banghart agreed to design and build the library. Banghart made sure the library is weather tight and able to withstand anything Michigan can throw at it. He came up with the cottage design. Once built, member Cindy Jakeway and John Taylor took on the task of painting and staining the library. After MISS DIG ruled out the most favorable locations for anchoring the library in the ground, the idea to place it without digging was decided on. Taylor came up with the idea of anchoring the library in a barrel and attached the library to a post set in cement.

The TCP lending library is stocked with theatre related books such as biographies of actors and playwrights, books on the theatre arts (acting, directing and tech like costuming, lighting, etc.) and scripts for those that want to read plays. There are some anthologies and collections of plays and monologues, as well. Some of the scripts are one-acts and some are for youth theatre. TCP has well over 1,000 resource books

and scripts in our Sasha Velez Memorial Library. Nielsen will keep the free library continually stocked.

While it may officially be called a lending library, TCP knows some books and scripts will find new homes...and that is Okay!

The barrel has over 120 pounds of cement. There is also 3 inches of stone topped with about 18 inches of potting soil. To further enhance the look, plants will be added in the Spring to enhance its 'cottage' look.

Just a few days after announcing the library, Nielsen noticed that it had already been used.





Monthly musings by
**Chuck
Goddeeris**

I would like to offer some *sound* advice as we journey into a new calendar year. Make sure you keep your techies happy and an easy way to do that is to provide the means to put on a terrific production. There are a few simple ways to do that, thanks to advances in technology. Most of my advice that follows will be geared to your sound engineers.

To start with, your organization should invest in a laptop dedicated to running sound. You most likely have a sound board so take it that extra step and provide a laptop as the benefits are plentiful.

- ✓ First, it takes away the stress of your potential sound technician from providing a personal laptop.
- ✓ Secondly, I've noticed several groups run lights and sound by committee for a production and this helps provide a consistent platform for everything so each person working a show doesn't have to bring in their own system.
- ✓ Thirdly, you can easily store all your sound effects in a central location (and you should also back it up to a cloud account) so when you have three shows needing doorbells or phone rings you can easily locate and use them.
- ✓ And last, but certainly not least, you can install several applications to help make the sound engineer's life simple.

Now, for the laptop itself I would recommend any Intel-based laptop (i5/i3/i7/i9) that runs Windows 10. You want at least 4 GB of RAM (most will start at 8), and at least 128 GB of storage for the hard drive. The larger any of the numbers, the better the build, but you can simply spend \$500 or less to get one that will do the trick.

Two pieces of free software that will make their life simple and easy are the following: [VLC Media Player](#) and [Audacity](#).

VLC media player is an easy-to-use application to play sound effects and music, even if it's a video, and it will play just about any file format out there. You can set it up so that it plays the sound file and stops (so that it doesn't go right into the next sound effect) or set it as a loop (so if you had pre-show music to play you can start it and forget it). You can also open multiple instances of the application so you can run a music playlist with automatic looping and switch back and forth to a clickable sound effects playlist.

Audacity is a good basic application for editing sound files. You can save most file formats of any kind to .wav or you can download a plug-in to save them to .mp3 but you'll be just fine using the .wav extension. This is a very easy to use application that lets you edit sound – I use it all the time to add additional silence to the end of sound effects (in case I forget to change my setting in VLC) and increase or decrease the volume itself.

Now, if you want to get a little more advanced, you can get a program that does both – plays the files as well as edits the files. The best and most economical option I've come across is [Show Cue Systems](#). You'll have to pay for a yearly license – the \$100 level is where you want to start – and it'll make things even easier for you. It lets you map sound effects to specific keys so anytime you need a generic cell phone ring — for example — you hit the A key and if you need music or other effects to play at the same time you can just hit the various trigger keys and they will all play concurrently.

If you need any further clarification or assistance on any of this software or just another set of eyes to review the laptop you may want to purchase, you can feel free to reach out to me by emailing chuckgoddeeris@gmail.com. Hopefully this sound advice will help your organization further succeed in the new year.

What's playing in Michigan in the new year?

Clarkston Village Players	<i>Murder at Howard Johnsons</i>	Jan 7-22, 2022
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>Disney's Frozen Jr. *</i>	Jan 14-23, 2022
Grand Rapids Civic	<i>Shakespeare in Love</i>	Jan 21-Feb 6, 2022
Stagecrafters, Royal Oak	<i>9 to 5</i>	Jan 28-Feb 20, 2022
Rosedale Community Players	<i>Of Devine Interest</i>	Jan 28-Feb 12, 2022
Holland Community Theatre	<i>Agnes of God</i>	Feb 3-19, 2022
Avon Players, Rochester	<i>Little Shop of Horrors</i>	Feb 4-19, 2022
Bay City Players	<i>One Slight Hitch</i>	Feb 4-13, 2022
Pit & Balcony, Saginaw	<i>Guess Who's Coming to Dinner</i>	Feb 4-13, 2022
Farmington Players	<i>Tokens of Affection</i>	Feb 11-26, 2022
Northern Lites Readers Theatre, Cadillac	<i>Love Letters</i>	Feb 12-13, 2022
Master Arts Theatre, Grand Rapids	<i>Guess Who's Coming to Dinner</i>	Feb 17-Mar 5, 2022
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>R&H Cinderella</i>	Feb 17-Mar 19, 2022
Bay City Players	<i>The Exonerated</i>	Feb 18-19, 2022
Clio Cast and Crew	<i>Absolutely Murder</i>	Feb 18-27, 2022
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>Nunsense</i>	Feb 18-27, 2022
Players Guild of Dearborn	<i>The Nerd</i>	Feb 18-27, 2022
Center Stage Theatre, Midland	<i>MLM is for Murder</i>	Feb 25-27, 2022
Lebowski Center, Owosso	<i>The Sound of Music</i>	Feb 25-March 6, 2022
Grand Rapids Civic	<i>Dragons Love Tacos*</i>	Mar 4-Mar 13, 2022
Twin City Players, St. Joseph	<i>Silent Sky</i>	Mar 4-20, 2022
Bay City Players	<i>Detroit '67</i>	Mar 11-20, 2022
Clarkston Village Players	<i>Deathtrap</i>	Mar 11-26, 2022
Grand Rapids Civic	<i>Ten for All Festival (Ten Minute Plays)</i>	Mar 18-Mar 20, 2022
Stagecrafters, Royal Oak	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream*</i>	Mar 23-Apr 3, 2022
Pit & Balcony, Saginaw	<i>The Greek Mythology Olympiaganza</i>	Mar 25-Apr 3, 2022
Avon Players, Rochester	<i>Run for your Wife</i>	Mar 18-Apr 2, 2022
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>I Hate Hamlet</i>	Apr 1-10, 2022
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>[title of show]</i>	Apr 1-10, 2022
Clio Cast and Crew	<i>Anne of Green Gables</i>	Apr 15-24, 2022
Master Arts Theatre, Grand Rapids	<i>Disney's Hunchback of Notre Dame</i>	Apr 21-May 7, 2022
Holland Community Theatre	<i>Guys on Ice</i>	April 21-May 2, 2022
Bay City Players	<i>Follies</i>	Apr 22- May 1, 2022
Lebowski Center, Owosso	<i>Clue: The Musical</i>	Apr 22-May 1, 2022
Twin City Players, St. Joseph	<i>Angel Street (Gaslight)</i>	Apr 22-May 8, 2022
Rosedale Community Players	<i>Hero and the Hag</i>	Apr 22-May 7, 2022
Grand Rapids Civic	<i>The Wiz</i>	Apr 29-May 22, 2022

* 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.



The Scoop on Scripts

By Tara Western



Happy 2022! Here's hoping for a healthy and productive, fruitful, prolific (got my thesaurus out) community theatre season. This past fall I did get to see some community theatre and it was splendid. I'd like to see more so I can tell you about wonderful plays I HAVE SEEN. You know, the plays I "scoop" are loaned to me, or freebies from (mostly) Playscripts. Read, not seen, unfortunately. So, if I'm light on drama or somebody's version of "quality" theatre, mea culpa. I enjoy reading and writing, so I hope you enjoy my work.

Playscripts' *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*

by Christopher Durang
©2014 was named the 2013 Tony's award for Best Play. This character-driven comedy has a cast of two men and four women. Vanya is resigned to his fate along with his adopted sister, Sonia; both stuck in this "lovely farmhouse in Bucks



County, Pennsylvania." In their fifties, Vanya and Sonia resent sister, Masha, also 50s, a glamorous successful actor and world traveler. When Masha visits the farmhouse with Spike, a sexy, friendly, but self-absorbed aspiring actor, past resentments rear their ugly heads. Nina, a lovely, sincere aspiring actor in her early twenties is visiting nearby, and while she remains above the fray, she perturbs the aging Masha, as she is attracting the ever-horny Spike. Nina also encourages poor downtrodden Sonia and befriends lonely Vanya. Cassandra, the psychic cleaning woman, channels her Greek tragedy namesake by seeing into the future...well, a little bit. Simple lights, sound, costumes, and props. Spend time on character development.

Dramatists Play Service's *Lonestar*, © 1980, is a comedy in one act by James McClure. At the 2015 AACTfest in Grand Rapids, I saw a one-hour cutting. I laughed until I cried. It is raw, rude, touching and bittersweet at times, but defi-

nately hilarious. Set in small-town Maynard, TX, two brothers, Roy and Ray are sitting behind Angel's bar, taking a breather from a night of drinking. The back of this dive (probably the front too) is old and peeling, decorated with old license plates and beer signs. It's "a place where junk goes to die." These set pieces are needed: a discarded front seat from an old car, garbage cans and a two-level garbage can rack full of old tires, (not garbage cans). Down stage we see a large wood rack 4 to 5 feet long, two feet wide, and two feet high. The playwright was really specific, so I'm passing that along; it is used as a bench.



Ray is the tough, Vietnam vet, uneducated and looking for a fight---any fight.

Ray, the

younger brother is larger than Roy, but slooooooow. Roy and Ray talk about their lives, current and past with multiple funny moments but at times, on senses an underlying layer of false bravado and sadness. Roy especially misses his youth, his glory days. Ray, who never had any glory days, and having heard these stories for years, asks lots of questions which seem dumb but shed light on Roy's glorified version of his life.

Mid-play, Ray's friend, nerdy Cletis Fullernoy joins the brothers and an awkward, and funny conversation about Cletis' sex life ensues. Scared to death, Cletis admits he totaled Roy's treasured 1959 pink Thunderbird. Cletis has always felt that if only he had that car, his life would have turned out differently. Roy had left his keys on the bar, and Cletis just had to try. Ray, not as dumb as he appears, finds a way to tell Roy the truth without getting himself or Cletis killed. (Ed note: This one act often travels with *Laundry and Bourbon*, the ladies' story, for a full evening of hilarious Texan entertainment.)

Caveats: lots of descriptions of violence, a racial slur or two, swear words and a crude discussion of lack of sexual prowess.