



CTAM
Community Theatre Association of Michigan

CALLBOARD

February 2022

Travelling Spring Conferences scheduled for Grand Rapids, Escanaba and Metro Detroit

Every time you hear the wonderful notes of Willie Nelson's hit, "On the Road Again," we hope you'll think about the upcoming 2022 CTAM Traveling Spring Conferences. The same conference with the same topics and same speakers are scheduled in three locations so that the all-day Saturday gathering is somewhat close to you — without overnight travel.

The dates and locations are as follows:

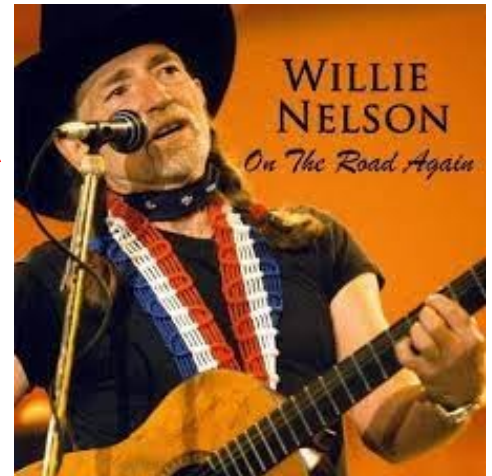
- ☆ Saturday, March 26, hosted by Grand Rapids Civic
- ☆ Saturday, April 23, hosted by Players de Noc, Escanaba
- ☆ Saturday, May 14, hosted by Stagecrafters, Royal Oak

The workshops and topics haven't been confirmed yet, but the dates and locations are solid. These three affiliate groups are planning for you to attend, so don't disappoint anyone and be sure it's on your calendar.

On the road again.

Just can't wait to get on the road again

The life I love is making theatre with my friends !



CTAM Fall Conference

September 22-25, 2022

at Treetops Resort in Gaylord.

HELPING COMMUNITY THEATRE *THRIVE* IN MICHIGAN SINCE 1951!



**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

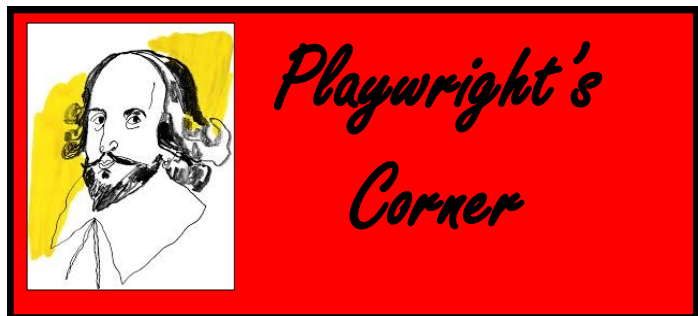
<http://ctam.online/>

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.



After five excellent years of stewardship, Pat and Leo Paveglio have retired from chairing the Playwriting Contest and Chuck Goddeeris has graciously agreed to take over the helm. We here at CTAM cannot thank the Paveglios enough for their diligence and dedication and Chuck hopes he can fill their shoes successfully.

Moving forward, the Board has agreed to waive the submission fees for scripts in hopes that this will encourage more playwrights to submit their works. Additionally, we plan to connect affiliate groups with samples of winning scripts (both past and present) to further help our fantastic playwrights get their works produced.

The **deadline is May 15, 2022**, and we've made things even easier by allowing you to go to our website and submit your script(s) and acknowledgement letter in one easy-to-use form. All information about the contest, as well as a link to the submission form can be found online at <http://ctam.online/playwriting-contest/>

CTAM Calendar of Events

Saturday, March 26 Grand Rapids Civic	On The Road Again Travelling Spring Conference
Saturday, April 23 Players de Noc, Escanaba	On The Road Again Travelling Spring Conference
Saturday, May 14 Stagecrafters, Royal Oak	On The Road Again Travelling 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



Thoughts from Mary Jo

By Mary Jo Denolf,
CTAM Administrator



Can you believe it's February already? Hopefully, the little ground hog won't see his shadow and your partner will shower you with love on Valentine's Day!

I know we say this a lot but the CTAM Board is here to serve you. Just as you are working with your theaters and trying to stay ahead on CDC guidelines and what you can or cannot do within your theatres, the CTAM Board is working hard at making sure we can support you any way possible. Please reach out to us for support, suggestions, comments and concerns. Our board are all members of theatre communities, large and small, and they represent you. However, we don't know if we are serving the needs to Michigan theatres unless we hear from you. We need your participation and feedback. Here is a list of things we're working on and would love to hear your thoughts on the questions below. Please respond to ctamthrives@gmail.com.

Membership - It's never too late to join CTAM as a group affiliate or an individual member. Membership renewal information will be sent in June, but you can contact me at the CTAM office and we can talk about options for membership renewals now.

Feedback needed: *What can CTAM membership do for you? More benefits and, if so, what kind of benefits? More Education opportunities - and what kind would you like to see? Or something completely different?*

Communication - Is our best way to communicate is through this newsletter and our webpage? But is it enough? Do you find what you need to know from these publications?

Feedback needed: *How can CTAM board*

communicate effectively with your theatre? Would it be more emails? More social media posts? Or what type of communication would work the best?

Education - CTAM offers conferences, workshops, webinars, roundtables, and master classes. CTAM board tries hard to offer a wide range of topics, but are they enough?

Feedback needed: *Are we offering topics and classes that you want to attend? What topics or presentations would bring you to a conference? Would a prominent keynote speaker make it worth the trip?*

Promotion - CTAM wants to promote your theatre, but we need information from you. We have Spotlight opportunities, scrolling photo capabilities on our website and we will be asking groups for video presentations soon.

Feedback needed: *How can CTAM promote your theatres? We want to promote your group but do not have the means to search out your events, so what would assist you in using CTAM as a media source?*



Bonus: Any person or theatre group that responds to these questions will have their name in a drawing for FREE registration for "On the Road" Traveling Spring Conference or the 2022 Fall Conference. Four names will qualify for the three locations of "On the Road" and then Fall Conference at Treetops Resort in September.



Plays-in-Development

How they develop new plays and playwrights at The Sauk

In 2015, two longtime volunteers came to the board of directors at The Sauk with full-length scripts they had written. Both had written the plays independently of each other and both were looking for some kind of feedback. The plays were given to the play selection committee. Both scripts were ambitious undertakings with interesting storylines but neither seemed ready for a full production. This is how our annual Plays-in-Development program was born.

During my undergraduate years at Grand Valley State University, I had the unique opportunity to work on a number of original pieces with both student, local and professional playwrights. This work ever led to one of my first paid directing gigs – developing an evening of monologues in response to 9/11 with the former Grand Rapids-based Attention Deficit Drama company.

I proposed a two-week workshop process where the playwrights would work with a director and cast to improve the plays. The added step would be to do a public reading of the plays and have an audience talkback afterward. This way, our two writers would receive feedback from a director, a cast of actors and an audience. The first year was a huge success. We decided to do it again in 2016.

What we noticed immediately was that everyone involved, from playwright to audience talkback members, felt invested in the work. They felt an ownership and an obligation to help the play. The first few years we read the same plays two nights in a row and encouraged the playwrights to make changes between readings. While it was fun for audience members and cast members to see what changes were made, it became clear that the writers were making changes for the benefit of making changes...whether they helped the plays or not.

In 2016, we only had one local script come forward. Wanting to keep the program alive, we solicited a script from the playwriting program at Emory University, where one of our theatre youth was attending. This led to a workshop of a local and a national play.

Wanting to expand the program, we decided to make the plays different each night. This meant we could select up to four shows for the process. We searched at the local level and also found two additional Emory scripts to develop in 2017. That was the year something unique happened. One script, “The Flower Girls” by Lindsay McNair Patton, struck a chord with the audience. For the first time, the audience demanded a full-length production. We produced the show in our SaukSeconds season the following year.

In 2018, we decided to go big. We publicized our program at a national level. We began receiving scripts from all across the country and the world. On an average year, we now receive 400-700 scripts.

We have trained directors, actors and audiences on how to respond constructively and artistically to what they hear. We have also expanded the program with funding from Walmart and several local sponsors to bring the playwrights to Jonesville for the final week of the workshop.

In 2019, we were selected as a producing theatre for the 2020 AACT NewPlayFest. We used our Plays-in-Development program to develop our winning play, “On Pine Knoll Street.”

A year later, when the world was closed, we brought Plays-in-Development online with four weeks of new play readings presented live online with interactive talkbacks with the playwrights.

The program continues to grow as we go into 2022. We are once again producing the world premiere of a play that came through the PID program in 2021. We continue to keep an emphasis on balancing at least one national and one local playwright each year.

We also continue to produce new work in our annual ten-minute play festival, the “Sauk Shorts” and in our annual



(Continued, page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

“24-Hour Theatre Project” fundraiser. We now have developed relationships with playwrights across Michigan and across the country. The relationships helped us create our “Living Room Monologues” during the Stay at Home Order in 2020.

Our theatre community at The Sauk continues to grow and thrive because of the relationships we create. Why not introduce your theatre family to new work?

I am always happy to answer any questions or visit any theatre looking to create a way to produce or workshop new plays. Just e-mail me at trinitybird@gmail.com.

Our 2022 Plays-in-Development will be held July 1 and 2. *Living* by Grand Rapids-based playwright G.M. (Bud) Thompson and *The Challenge* by North Adams-based writer Meaghan Bryant will be featured on July 1 at 7:30 p.m. *A Shore of Abundance* by Pearl Moore of Cana, Virginia will be the featured play on July 2 at 7:30 p.m. Admission is free. Donations are accepted.

To check out more about our Plays-in-Development program, visit www.thesauk.org/pid.html. To see the “Living Room Monologues,” visit www.thesauk.org/monologues.html

*Trinity Bird, Executive Director
The Sauk, Jonesville, MI*



Desert Song rehearsal for the recent staged reading at The Sauk.



It's never too early to plan your volunteer recognition!

When working with volunteers it's never too early to plan how you want to recognize their hard work. **April is National Volunteer Month** so maybe you bring cookies in for a rehearsal? Take advantage of the cold and have an outdoor outing with a bon fire, hotdogs, and s'mores? No matter what you do, take the time to tell all of your volunteers - **thank you**. Especially with the uncertainty that we have all faced, it's important to let them know how much you appreciate them and being at the theatre.

Plan ahead! Work with your board, peers and volunteers and let CTAM give a state award for their commitment to your groups. Recognition is closely associated with motivation and encouragement. Go to our webpage and fill out the CTAM Dorothy Arnett Volunteer Service award (ctam.online/awards). Let us present a state volunteer award to one of your volunteers. Award nominations can be submitted anytime but deadline is July 1, and available for presentation after the Fall Conference in October. A CTAM board member will come to your event, performance or board meeting to present this award.



Ludus Ticketing **Tickets subject of January webinar**

Our first 2022 webinar on Thursday, January 20, was a success! This webinar was the first installment of our 2022 Member Engagement Campaign “Artistic Solutions,” where we take your goals, and make them ours! You can access the full webinar here: <https://youtu.be/aam727QwLU>

CTAM was honored to host Zachary Collins, the co-founder & CEO of Ludus, a ticketing software company founded in 2016 in Holland, Mi. They are used by more than a thousand theatre organizations with house sizes as small as 50 seats and as large as 2000+ seats all across the country.

In the webinar, Collins discussed how Ludus was built in a very organic way. It started as a side project for a director in Holland for a particular show. After the show closed, other theatres expressed interest in their ticketing software, and from there, Ludus was formed.

Beyond Ludus’ backstory, Collins walked our members through what to look for in a good ticketing system. Here’s his list:

1. Everything you need to support your patrons
 - a. Easy and modern ticket selling
 - b. Quick ability to issue refunds and exchanges
 - c. Real-time reporting
2. Pricing that doesn’t break YOUR budget
 - a. No annual or hidden fees
 - b. No “Ticket Master fees”
 - c. No extra support packages or fees
3. Friendly, Proactive, & Fast Support
 - a. Always a human to speak with
 - b. Someone who can help day-of-show
 - c. Multiple support channels (chat, email, phone, etc.)

4. Go beyond ticketing in one platform
 - a. Marketing, Fundraising, etc.

After breaking down this list, Zachary walked through how Ludus checks all of these boxes, and more!

Thank you to everyone who attended the webinar and made it so successful. Your participation reinforces our aim in bring quality educational programs to our members.

To learn more about Ludus, order a demo, or register to use Ludus, visit their website:

<https://ludus.com/product.php>



Midland Center for the Arts offered She Loves Me for their audiences in early December, to rave reviews!



Michigan AACTfest 2023 in the planning stages

We're only a year out from Michigan's 2023 AACTfest and the CTAM Board is looking for a host affiliate group to accept the challenge and agree to host this exciting event. We've pulled together some of the salient points in determining if your group could be the host they are looking for.

- ☆ The Festival needs to be scheduled for a weekend in late February to mid-March. A performance stage needs to be fully available all weekend, plus at least Thursday for rehearsals.
- ☆ Groups from around Michigan will converge on your location to perform their one-act, less than one hour, productions. (They get 10 minutes to set up, absolutely no more than one hour to perform and an additional 10 minutes to strike their set.) They also get one hour rehearsal time, including technical set-up, reasonably just prior to performance.
- ☆ You and CTAM need to recruit three adjudicators. None should be from your city. (One should be from elsewhere in Michigan, one should be from elsewhere in Region III, and one should be from elsewhere in the country!) They get a small honorarium and housing... either at 'the' hotel or perhaps with members willing to offer a room at their house, plus breakfast.



- ☆ The facility, itself, needs to have fairly generous backstage space so that while one show is performing, at least one/preferably two other groups can be stacked backstage in a 10ft x 10ft square area, ready to go on.
- ☆ Re technical needs: You are only obligated to provide general stage lighting (in six pools!) plus generic stage sound. The groups must

provide everything else they need – you should have tech people available to assist in their set up and, if you prefer, to physically run the cues with their people.

- ☆ A piano may be needed by some groups and should be available.
- ☆ Hosts traditionally offer a get-acquainted party Friday night and a whew-it's-over party on Saturday night. Sunday morning is usually an awards brunch so people can be gone and on their way home by noon.
- ☆ It would be nice for you to arrange for box lunches for everyone on Saturday...unless nothing starts until 2 o'clock or so. (They could order when registering and pay then...or pay extra on the spot.) Unless your theatre venue is surrounded by restaurants who will be expecting a rush of folks! Lunch could also be a potluck lunch provided personally by your members, although you might want to reserve that 'ask' for the two parties!!
- ☆ Saturday dinner is on their own, provided there is a break in the performance schedule!
- ☆ You should work with a reputable local hotel to get the best rates available. Many times your local convention bureau can be helpful ... as well as asking them to provide some publications for the registration packets.
- ☆ Re money. It shouldn't cost your group anything to host...you cover your expenses by the amount you charge for registration and audience ticket prices. In fact, if you can get donations and sponsorships, you should be able to make a little money on this project.
- ☆ You can charge the general public to attend the performances, but they wouldn't attend the parties, etc.
- ☆ Be sure to go to www.aact.org and look up their information on Hosting a Festival. It's a wealth of information, along with the official Handbook.
- ☆ Publicity should state the following: Michigan AACTfest, sponsored by Community Theatre Association of Michigan and hosted by (name of group).

The CTAM Board of Directors will provide whatever support you need and are ready to help wherever you need them. Please contact CTAM administrator Mary Jo Denolf at CTAMthrives@gmail.com if you have any questions or need more information.



What's playing in Michigan for Valentine's Day?

Grand Rapids Civic	<i>Shakespeare in Love</i>	Jan 21-Feb 6, 2022
Rosedale Community Players	<i>Of Devine Interest</i>	Jan 28-Feb 12, 2022
Stagecrafters, Royal Oak	<i>9 to 5</i>	Jan 28-Feb 20, 2022
Holland Community Theatre	<i>Agnes of God</i>	Feb 3-19, 2022
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>Cheaper by the Dozen</i>	Feb 3-13, 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, 2021
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>Nonsense</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 (AACT World Premiere)</i>	Feb 25-27, 2022
Lebowsky 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
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>Tony N' Tina's Wedding**</i>	Mar 24-Apr 2, 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
Center Stage Theatre, Midland	<i>Seussical The Musical*</i>	Apr 7-10, 2022
Clio Cast and Crew	<i>Anne of Green Gables</i>	Apr 15-24, 2022
Holland Community Theatre	<i>Guys on Ice</i>	April 21-May 2, 2022
Master Arts Theatre, Grand Rapids	<i>Disney's Hunchback of Notre Dame</i>	Apr 21-May 7, 2022
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>Sauk Shorts**</i>	April 21-24, 2022
Bay City Players	<i>Follies</i>	Apr 22- May 1, 2022
Lebowsky Center, Owosso	<i>Clue: The Musical</i>	Apr 22-May 1, 2022
Rosedale Community Players	<i>Hero and the Hag</i>	Apr 22-May 7, 2022
Twin City Players, St. Joseph	<i>Angel Street (Gaslight)</i>	Apr 22-May 8, 2022
Grand Rapids Civic	<i>The Wiz</i>	Apr 29-May 22, 2022
Center Stage Theatre, Midland	<i>The SpongeBob Musical</i>	May 5-13, 2022
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>Chicago</i>	May 5-June 4, 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



This month I scoop two shows that would be excellent Readers' Theatre vehicles. One is very similar to *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*, with shades of *Menopause: the Musical*. The second is a Christmas skit. It may seem counterintuitive to scoop a Christmas show in February, but maybe this is the time to start thinking about it?!

Laugh, Cry, Pee, Repeat—a Joy Ride Down the Other Side of the Hill ©2021 by Patti Corsini,

Carole Fenstermacher, and Natalie King is a show for and by “women of a certain age” with monologues, dia-



logues, dialogues, and zingy one-liners. The ensemble cast is (minimum) six women with ages from early sixties to late seventies. It consists of seventeen vignettes in the first act and fifteen in the second. There are many musical opportunities with public domain selections a definite possibility. The suggested tunes run the gamut from “Great Balls of Fire” to Beethoven’s Fifth. With a riser in front of a center flat, and two more flats on both stage left and stage right, the suggested set is simple. Leaving space between the flats creates a total of six entrances. A few set pieces are handled by the actors. At the top of the show, the women appear in matching graduation/choir robes which they remove to the tune of “The Stripper.” Underneath, the actors wear basic black with colorful tops. As with *Menopause, the Musical*, the script deals with issues important to women in the later part of life: memory loss, frustration with modern technology, incontinence, exercise, the “sandwich generation,” body image, funeral wishes and memory loss...did I say that already? The authors write with humor, flippancy, pathos, sympathy and

sometimes, downright anger. Suitable for ages 16 and up. Contact Carole Fenstermacher (carolefens@gmail.com) for more information.

Pioneer Publishing’s *Keep the Home Fires Burning* by Craig E. Wright is an over-the-top Christmas melodrama (!), that is neither pious, nor smarmy. It’s that hard-to-find thirty-minute holiday play that can be fully staged or done as Readers' Theatre. Pat Paveglio produced this show in Cadillac with her Northern Lites Readers' Theatre, utilizing some costuming, all the props and, of course, scripts in hand. She paired it with a half an hour of holiday “Jokes, Quotes, and Anecdotes.” The cast of ten consists of four females, and three males, with three gender neutral. Actually, they are all gender neutral when you double up because you ran out of people!



The play starts with Mary and her mother, Mother Kindlady on Christmas Eve, sitting by their Charlie Brown tree in their dilapidated cabin somewhere in the Virginia wilds. Then, alas! the villain, Whiple Skidmore, arrives, giving the women one hour to pay the mort-

gage or he throws them out, all the while leering at Mary hoping she comes with the house. Suddenly, a cacophony of sounds (your choice!) and a freeze, announces the entrance of the Yahoo (whose purpose is revealed later). Next, the hero, Will Strongheart arrives to save the day. The Hag interrupts to bring Will a Christmas present, which seems to be her only purpose other than comic relief, which isn’t necessary, but she’s a hoot! Will finds a magic whistle which summons... who else, but Santa Claus. Santa proceeds to host a game of “Let’s Make a Deal,” complete with Carol Merrill in front of the “curtain.” Of course, Whiple is foiled—literally, Mary and Will fall in love, and someone gets to say “Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus.” Sound effects can be performed by whoever is backstage, and lights can be non-existent...well, just on/off. Suitable for all audiences.