



CTAM CALLBOARD

July 2022

September 23 and 24 Fall Convention this year in Detroit area

CTAM is bringing back the annual meeting and Fall Conference this year on September 23rd and 24th. We are restructuring and rebranding the concept to adapt to the times and basically taking our On The Road model and applying it to the Fall time frame.

We are referring to it as the Fall Convention and calling this year's version Level Up.

LEVEL UP!!

Firstly, we are partnering with three community theatres in the Metro Detroit area to host the classes, so you can get more hands-on type classes. Our three host theatres this year are

- ✓ **Birmingham Village Players** (celebrating their 100th season!),
- ✓ **Stagecrafters** (starting their 67th season in Royal Oak at the Baldwin Theatre), and
- ✓ **St. Dunstan's Theatre Guild of Cranbrook** (kicking off their 91st season).

They are all very close to each other so it will be very easy to get to the various classes. If you are coming from out of town, we are in the process of securing some rooms at a couple hotels and should have that information in an upcoming Callboard.

Contact [Chuck Goddeeris](#) with your thoughts and suggestions.

March 17 (St. Patrick's Day) AACTfest next Spring in Owosso

Every other year, the American Association of Community Theaters (AACT) conducts a competition for member groups to find the best theatre our country has to offer.

It starts at the local state level, moves on through the regional level and ends up with the national competition sometime in June. (See the CTAM calendar on Page 2 for the exact dates and locations!)

The state level competition will be hosted by the Lebowsky Theatre in Owosso — the perfect location for this event! The hotel is right next to the performance venue so getting back and forth is very easy.



In addition, the Owosso volunteers have done this before, so they have the routine rehearsed and are right on top of

things!

Now is the time that potential competitors should be planning for their entry.

- ✓ Selecting their one-hour piece and securing the rights for it.
- ✓ Thinking about how to fund the company that will be travelling to the competition.
- ✓ Do you have enough volunteers to make it happen?

Please see page 7 for more news about AACTfest.



**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

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Michigan Nomad

Ruthann Liagre.....ruthannliagre@gmail.com
Lebowsky Center, Owosso

Gregory Martini.....gregorydanielmartini@gmail.com
Stagecrafters, Royal Oak

Keith Rikli.....actingpilot@gmail.com
Southeastern Michigan Nomad

Rodel Salazar.....rcsalazar10@yahoo.com
Stagecrafters, Royal Oak

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.

**Bay City
mourns
loss of
Leeds
Bird**



Leeds Bird, the consummate actor and teacher, died June 23 fol-

lowing a tragic fall. He just couldn't overcome the injuries from the fall. Everyone who has come in contact with Leeds through the years will have a loving memory or story to share. He always brought the party with him!



He has provided countless workshops for CTAM and he and his wife, Margaret, could always be found at CTAM festivals and conferences.

We extend our condolences to Margaret and all of the members of Bay City Players on the loss of Leeds Bird. Good night, sweet prince.

CTAM Calendar of Events

July 1, 2022	Deadline for Board of Director nominations and CTAM awards
September 23-24, 2022 Metro Detroit area	2022 Fall Convention at several area theatres
March 17, 2023 Owosso, MI	Michigan AACTfest
April 14-17, 2023 Hartford, WI	Region III AACTfest
June 12-17, 2023 Louisville, KY	National AACTfest



Welcome two new members to the Board of Directors

CTAM is happy to announce that **Chuck Goddeeris** and **Keith Rikli** will be joining the Board, effective immediately. They were appointed by President Michael Wilson at the June 13th Board meeting. Chuck will be serving a one-year unexpired term while Keith will be serving a two-year term. These positions were vacated by **Michael Wisniewski** and **Sarah Salerno** who we thank so much for their time and service to Michigan theatres while they were on the CTAM Board.

KEITH RIKLI is excited to join the Board of Directors for CTAM! While this is his first theatre board, he has been involved on boards for other organizations, most recently IMAGIN (Improving Michigan Access to Geographic Information Networks). Keith has been found on and off stage for many years, first in Grand Rapids and now in the Southeast Michigan Area (His latest show was with St. Dunstan's performance of *Something Rotten*). Keith is excited to bring his passion for theatre and his backstage hard work ethic to helping CTAM be the best it can be.



CHUCK GODDEERIS is our resident CTAM webmaster and happy to rejoin the Board of Directors. He has served on the board previously and also received a Volunteer Spirit award in 2021 from CTAM. He started doing community theatre at the tender age of 8 with All of Us Express Children's Theatre where he debuted as an Oyster in *Alice in Wonderland*. Most recently he has served a stint as President for Rosedale Community Players (in Southfield) and currently is on the artistic board at Birmingham Village Players. If you're in the Metro Detroit area you've most likely seen him behind a sound board at one of their theatres.



Players de Noc in Escanaba presented *James and the Giant Peach* in April for their audiences. With a cast of 27 and an equal number behind the scenes, this was a major welcome-back-after-Covid undertaking for the community youngsters. As you can see left, the audiences were plentiful!





The Prez Sez...

by Michael Wilson

Well, I have tried three different times to write something for the column this month and not much wanted to flow out on the paper. It would seem I am in that stage of the year that I think we all go through as we move through our 'season.' We've been go, go, go --moving from show to show as our seasons progressed -- and finally we come to the end.

For me that break comes with summer's arrival, and I can find about six weeks to slow down some and regroup. Figure out what worked well for me and the shows and what I might want to change to my process. While it is a welcomed and needed break in my schedule, I also struggle with getting myself to actually slow down. This year I have been forced into that rather rapidly as right after we closed our season with *Kinky Boots*, I packed the show up and got it into storage and got the Prop Shop back into some semblance of order and two days later had a full knee replacement that has been needed for a long time.

Now that brought my life and schedule to a screeching halt in a hurry! I, just like a lot of you in the theatre world, do not sit still well and these past weeks have been difficult to keep myself slowed down and not do too much or even worse, something stupid. As I am getting around more and more, I am also noticing how good this forced slow down has been for me. I am far more refreshed and ready to go, but also more aware that I might need to regulate how much I am taking on moving forward. I share this because I think it's important to stop occasionally. Just let the world pass. Shockingly it does remarkably well without us sometimes, as much as we like to pretend it would fall apart.

So, I encourage you all to look for the places you can do that. Then look even a bit harder and find a few more. We owe it to ourselves, and we



owe it to those who work and create with us also.

Anyway, thanks for indulging my ramblings and I hope you all have a great Summer. We have some exciting things coming here at CTAM. We will hold our first in-person Fall Conference post-COVID and look forward to seeing everyone there September 22-23.

Planning is also in the works already of for AACTfest 2023 next Spring and we hope to have many of our theatres compete. We are also looking at some new ways of doing and presenting educational programs for our members, so stay tuned as we begin to present all of this in the coming months.

I would be remiss if I didn't extend a personal welcome to our two new Board members!

- ✓ In addition to all that Chuck Goddeeris does for CTAM already (as our webmaster), I have great gratitude that he has agreed to serve on the Board for another year to finish an unexpired term. His background and expertise are very valuable as we face the challenges on the Board.
- ✓ Secondly, CTAM newcomer Keith Rikli will bring new thoughts, perspectives and ideas to our discussions and I welcome the fresh air he can bring, along with his massive experience both on stage and behind the curtains.

If you are interested in getting involved in the administrative workings of CTAM, the deadline is July 1, so please send me an email to Michaelwilsonprops@yahoo.com. I would love to hear from you!



AACT honors two volunteers from Michigan

Two Michiganders received recognition at the recent aactWORLDVEST 2022, held in Venice, Florida, June 20-26.

The AACT Distinguished Merit Award is presented to individuals and organizations in recognition of contributions made to promote and develop the highest standards for community theatre.

Tim Higgins (Royal Oak, Michigan) joined Grosse Pointe Theatre in 1985 and has been sharing his incredible talents ever since. His most recent production, *The Sound of Music*, is currently in production and he was unable to be in Venice to accept this exciting award.



Timothy Higgins

As an award-winning actor, director, and choreographer for more than 30 productions, Tim's thoughtful artistic vision and attention to detail raises the level of excellence with each production he takes on. Now retired, his professional career as Vice President of Information Technology for a major bank brings yet another critical skill set that has benefited his theatre. Tim is the driving force behind Grosse Pointe Theatre's Strategic Planning Committee, working to increase member engagement and coordinating with the board to implement policies and procedures to enhance business operations. Other theatre groups in Michigan, as well as the Naples Players in Florida, have also benefited from Tim's artistic talents. As Tim says, "the transformative power of theatre continues to inspire people of all walks of life for themselves and their community."

The Robert E. Gard Superior Volunteer Award is presented to people above the age of 65 who have faithfully served community theatre on a non-paid basis for more than 25 years.

Emmajean Evans (Grosse Pointe, Michigan) has made a more than 50-year commitment to Grosse Pointe Theatre, gracing and helping expand nearly every aspect of the organization.



Emmajean Evans

An award-winning actor, she has also worked offstage in just about every capacity, including directing, producing, makeup, props, and costumes. She is a Past President of the Board, chair of social events, and has served on many committees, including leading the 50th anniversary celebra-

tion. Emmajean received the coveted GPT Hubbard Worker of the Year Award twice and was instrumental in building the Youth On Stage program by teaching leadership and theatre skills for 16 years. Emmajean has shared her wisdom and perspective regarding diversity and inclusion, engaging special needs children and encouraging people from various cultures to be part of the theatre family. As Emmajean puts it "I love encouraging people to be the best they can be and, in turn, they bring out the best in me."



What's going on in Michigan theatres?

Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>The Sound of Music</i>	June 24-July 3, 2022
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>Plays-in-Development</i>	July 1-2, 2022
Center Stage Theatre, Kalamazoo	<i>Disney's Beauty and the Beast</i>	July 8-17, 2022
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>How to Eat Fried Worms*</i>	July 15-24, 2022
Lapeer Community Theatre	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	July 21-23, 2022
Tawas Bay Players	<i>I Love Lacy</i>	July 22-31, 2022
Bay City Players	<i>The Who's Tommy</i>	July 28-31, 2022
Master Arts Theatre, Grand Rapids	<i>The Magician's Nephew*</i>	July 28-30, 2022
Rogers City Community Theatre	World premiere of <i>Trial by Media</i>	July 28-31, 2022
Community Theatre of Howell	<i>Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	Aug 5-21, 2022
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>R&H Cinderella</i>	Aug 11-21, 2022
Rogers City Community Theatre	<i>The Wizard of Oz *</i>	Aug 18-21, 2022
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>Desert Song** (World premiere)</i>	Sept 8-11, 2022
Village Players, Birmingham	<i>Arsenic & Old Lace</i>	Sept 9-25, 2022
Twin City Players, St. Joseph	<i>Monty Python's Spamalot</i>	Sep 9-25, 2022
Ridgedale Players, Troy	<i>Cabaret</i>	Sept 16-Oct 2, 2022
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>Steel Magnolias</i>	Oct 13-23, 2022
Tawas Bay Players	<i>Disaster, the Musical</i>	Oct 14-23, 2022
Twin City Players, St. Joseph	<i>The Psychic</i>	Oct 21-Nov 6, 2022
Rogers City Community Theatre	<i>Moon over Buffalo</i>	Oct 28-Nov 6, 2022
Village Players, Birmingham	<i>The Addams Family</i>	Oct 28-Nov 13, 2022
Ridgedale Players, Troy	<i>The Odd Couple</i>	Nov 4-20, 2022
Community Theatre of Howell	<i>9 to 5</i>	Nov 4-13, 2022
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>The Nutcracker</i>	Dec 1-11, 2022
Twin City Players, St. Joseph	<i>Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley</i>	Dec 2-18, 2022
Village Players, Birmingham	<i>Harold & Maude</i>	Jan 13-29, 2023
Ridgedale Players, Troy	<i>Baby</i>	Jan 20-Feb 5, 2023
Community Theatre of Howell	<i>Murder on the Orient Express</i>	Feb 3-12, 2023
Twin City Players, St. Joseph	<i>The Outsider</i>	Mar 3-19, 2023
Village Players, Birmingham	<i>Lend Me A Tenor</i>	Mar 10-26, 2023
Community Theatre of Howell	<i>Tuck Everlasting</i>	Mar 17-19, 2023
Ridgedale Players, Troy	<i>Enchanted April</i>	Apr 14-30, 2023
Twin City Players, St. Joseph	<i>Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike</i>	Apr 21-May 7, 2023
Village Players, Birmingham	<i>Into the Woods</i>	May 12-28, 2023
Community Theatre of Howell	<i>Sound of Music</i>	May 12-14, 2023
Twin City Players, St. Joseph	<i>First Date</i>	June 2-25, 2023

* 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.



CTAM board announces adjudicators for Michigan AACTFest next March 17-19

CTAM is excited to announce we have secured three of the very best AACT adjudicators for our State Festival next Spring.



Kathy Pingel - Kathy has adjudicated AACTFest at the state, regional, national and international levels, and has been AACT's Adjudication Workshop leader and facilitated AACT's Theatre Education Director's Conference. Kathy is retired from Des Moines Community Playhouse where she served as Director of Education and Youth Programming. She also served as Artistic Director at the Kate Goldman Children's Theatre.



Ron Cameron-Lewis - Ron has also adjudicated AACTfest on the state, regional, national and international levels. He also taught the art of adjudicating twice at the AACT National Festivals and five times in Canada. At his home in Ontario, Ron taught and coordinated the Music Theatre Department at Sheridan College in Oakville. Ron has served as Member-at-Large for AACT since 2012 and has worked for regional theatres in Ontario, the Canadian Maritimes, and major TV networks.



Ron Ziegler - and Ron Z has also served as adjudicator on a state, regional, national and five times for Army Festival of One Act Plays. Previously Ron served as AACT Festivals Coordinator and continues to free-lance as a director and teacher. He has directed many productions for various theatres, including Venice (FL) Theatre and Ocala (FL) Civic Theatre and Des Moines Playhouse, but he still loves Michigan best!

CTAM is excited to have such quality professional adjudicators and hope that all of our affiliate theatre groups consider submitting a production for AACTFest23 in Owosso. The education and feedback you will receive will be worth the trip alone....and remember the Outstanding production in Michigan will move forward to represent our state at the Regional III competition.

For more information on AACTFest23, please contact the CTAM office or Ruth Liagre at the Lebowsky Center for the Arts,

AND.....MORE EXCITING AACTFEST NEWS.....

CTAM is offering a fantastic educational opportunity for you at the State AACT-Fest23. Larry Nielsen has graciously agreed to lead an ADJUDICATION WORKSHOP during the festival.

What does this mean? This is an intensive workshop that will start with some homework at home, then meet up on Friday, see all of the shows together, then go back into the workshop room to discuss, dissect and learn how adjudication works. This tool is valuable for anyone who is a director, or wants to be a director, actors, and anyone interested in learning more about the adjudication process.

Larry is an experienced adjudicator of state, regional, and national AACTfests. He is also the CTAM Adjudication Chair.

More details to come but mark your calendars to attend this valuable workshop. Space will be limited so look for the registration information coming soon on our website and social media.





In My Opinion:

An Editorial

By Mary Lou Britton, Editor

Yeah, but ...

How many of you have been through the strategic planning process with your group — or any other volunteer group with which you are involved? Unless you flat-out ignore the process, I'm guessing that many groups took advantage of the Covid slow-down to get your house in order.

And, what were the top several things that your group identified as being a focus for the next couple of years? Let me guess!

1. Make more money to get us back on track after the slow-down.
2. Build our audiences; i.e. sell more tickets.
3. Find more, younger volunteers.

I would venture to say that these three strategies are pretty common among community theatre groups across the land.

I would like to address the third common strategy: *Find more, younger volunteers!* As you will soon find out, we need to do our recruiting at places and with messages with which the younger people identify.

Asking the ladies in your mom's bridge club to volunteer probably won't bring you any closer to your goal. But exploring the dance academies in your community might create partnerships that will bring new dancers (and their parents!) to your group.

Encouraging your current members to support the local community chorus or church choir could give you access to a whole new group of potential volunteers/members who can already sing! Maybe several of them have been looking for the next step up in performing.

Yeah, but ... that's more competition and I still won't get the part I've always wanted to do!

Why would I want more competition? Just like in a retail situation, competition makes everyone do better. Better productions bring better audiences; larger audiences bring more money — and the cycle just goes on and on!

Also, a big part of the younger-volunteer situation is making room for them! With the drain pipe clogged up with all the old volunteers, it could be very difficult for the new, younger, fresh-blood volunteers to get through. Just like I'm having my household gutters cleaned of collected debris on Tuesday, you need to come up with a strategy that encourages older volunteers to step aside and let 'the kids' take over.

Yeah, but ... they don't know how to do it right! I've done it that way for 16 years and everyone seems to like it that way. She/he doesn't have enough experience yet to do it right! She/he will just change everything around and confuse all us volunteers.

Yeah, but ... letting go is very hard! In some situations, nature will take over and age will tell you when it's time to slow down. The back hurts too bad, or you can't handle the 27 steps up to the make-up room any more, or rehearsals interfere with your senior aerobics class. The realization suddenly comes one day that you're just getting too old for all this falderol.

But in other situations, the first clue it's time to go is when you hear yourself saying, "Yeah, but we've always done it that way." Those few words are the kiss of death to many structured, ingrained plans, programs, and procedures.

There are many ways to acknowledge the contributions and dedication of your long-standing volunteers: New titles, mentoring situations, awards, consultants, etc. You just need to be creative and sensitive to their feelings.

So, don't always appoint the same people to the committee chair jobs, break up the cliques, be bold in recruiting your show staffs and give the younger members a chance. Their ideas may shock you at first, but you'll be pleased with how many other younger members will now be paying attention to your group as a potential volunteer opportunity for themselves!

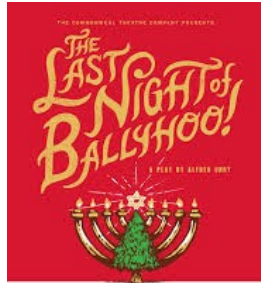
The Scoop on Scripts

By Tara Western



This month I inadvertently delved into some current issues. *Ballyhoo* deals with “hidden” prejudice within a Jewish community, and *Professor*, written before #MeToo, deals with sexism and ageism.

Dramatists Play Service’s *The Last Night of Ballyhoo* by Jane Harmon ©1998 takes place in December 1939 Atlanta. Three important events are taking place: Christmas/Hannukah, Ballyhoo, an iconic ball for the city’s young adults, and the premiere of *Gone with the Wind*. Most of the action takes place in the Freitag living room also showing a hallway with a staircase and a portion of a dining room. The playwright suggests heavy Moorish furniture and Moorish archways.



Inhabiting the house are Adolph, 50s, the unmarried patriarch/business man; his 50ish sister, Beulah, aka Boo; Boo’s daughter, Lala, an awkward 20-year-old; and Reba, late 40s, Boo and Adolph’s widowed sister-in-law. Reba’s daughter, Sunny, the opposite of Lala, is at Wellesley. Joe Farkas, Adolph’s protegee, late 20s, is a handsome go-getter. The three older family members are content with their Jewish faith. All express some distaste for the prejudice they experience but all three have heartbreak of their own; undisclosed and undiscussed. The action starts with Lala decorating a Christmas tree. When she places a star on the top, the ongoing debate begins: How Jewish are we? How do others perceive us? How much prejudice do we see? Joe Farkas is a catalyst as he talks to Sunny about his Jewish faith and points out that the Freitag family is prejudice against him because he is not a German Jew. This play won best play in 1997. 14 and up

Professor, How Could You! is an ancient (©1939 revised ©1967) script by Anne Coulter Martens. From Dramatic Publishing Company, this quaint farce in three acts has a cast of five men (approximate ages: 60, 40, three in their mid-20s) and five women (60, four late teens to late 20s).

Chosen as a teen play, Tawas Bay Players toned

down the sexist overtones and a letter from the director in the program explained how the teens were encouraged to think about how men and women’s roles and attitudes have changed since 1939 and 1967.

Set in the sumptuous library of the upper crust Perry family, the three acts are three consecutive spring nights in the 1940’s.

The titular “Professor” is Keats, a history professor, content with his life until he has the opportunity to become Dean. When Keats realizes he must have a wife to secure the position, three characters try to help: Vicky Randall, his strong-willed, outspoken student; Boggins, his grandparents’ opinionated butler; and his best friend, John, a confirmed bachelor. Each has a girl in mind (and you were a girl back then until you became OLD). They put money on it. Second act: Keats’ grandparents host a dinner with all of the candidates in attendance. Of course, John, Vicky, and Boggins tout their potential spouse’s best qualities. Lots of over-the-top fun ensues.

Completing the cast are: Grandpa Perry, 60s, “an alert, chipper little man of sixty” ageism anyone? Mischievous too, as he stirs the pot by sending an unsigned love poem to each potential mate.

Grandma, is “a sweet, white-haired woman of sixty, rather like a fussy little hen”. Okay, enough already!

The three candidates are childish Priscilla, Valerie, a “heartless flirt” with a Southern accent, and Tootsie, who at 28 fears spinsterhood. Last is Butcher Boy, 22, a boxer and Tootsie’s brother.

The script’s age is problematic but it’s good clean fun, with enjoyable characters, and witty lines; a play for all ages.



Tawas Bay Player’s production of *Professor, How Could You!*