



# CTAM

# CALLBOARD

November 2022

## Owosso, March 17-19, 2023 **Setting the stage for AACTFEST 2023**

The Owosso Community Players (OCP) are honored to be hosting 2023 AACTFEST. The group of volunteers at OCP said their amazing experiences hosting the event in 2019 made it an easy decision to host again.

"We are so very excited to host the AACTFEST again," said event organizer Ruthann Liagre. "It was a fantastic experience, meeting new people, connecting with other community theatre groups and being able to bring the shows to our community."

The 2023 AACTFEST will take place March 17-19, 2023 and up to 10 community theaters may participate.

AACTFEST is a competition held in odd-numbered years across the United States. Community theatres have 10 minutes to set up their show/set from a 10' by 10' box, an hour to perform their show, and finally another 10 minutes to break down their set back into the 10' by 10' square.



There are three levels of competition: State, Regionals and Nationals, which includes additional workshops. Region III Festival will be April 14-17 in Hartford WI, and Nationals will be a five-day celebration June 12-17, 2023, in Louisville KY. (Please see photographs on page 6.)

Registration and more information will be available starting on November 1, via the OCP website at [lebowskycenter.com](http://lebowskycenter.com). For more information or questions, contact event chair Ruthann Liagre at [ruthannliagre@gmail.com](mailto:ruthannliagre@gmail.com)

## **Fall Conference cancelled; Annual Meeting rescheduled**

Due to the cancellation of the CTAM Fall Conference, the CTAM Board of Directors has announced the Annual Meeting and election of the 2022/23 CTAM Board of Directors

**December 3, 2022**

**3:00pm**

**Zoom Meeting at**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88304488368?pwd=QXhHMld4ODQxUUU1bVI2a3REYysvZz09>

As with any non-profit organization, we need to follow our bylaws which state: "The Annual Meeting of this Association shall take place each Fall at a site determined by the Board of Directors and designated by the previous Annual meeting."

At this time CTAM will also hold the election of new Board members as determined by our membership.

- **NEW PROGRAMMING:** CTAM is working hard to find a way to enrich our membership. Come to this meeting for a roll out of a new program being brought to you and your theatres

We will also announce the playwriting winner and update our membership on happenings around the state.

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



**Community Theatre  
Association of Michigan**

**2021-22 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President - **Michael Wilson**  
Grand Rapids Civic  
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**At-Large Members of the Board**

**Chuck Goddeeris**.....[charlesgoddeeris@gmail.com](mailto:charlesgoddeeris@gmail.com)  
Michigan Nomad

**Ruthann Liagre**.....[ruthannliagre@gmail.com](mailto:ruthannliagre@gmail.com)  
Lebowsky Center, Owosso

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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).

**James C. Carver**



It is with deep sadness that we share the news of the passing of James C. Carver. The son of Kalamazoo Civic founders, Norman and Louise Carver, Jim joined the Civic staff in 1958 as a Production Assistant. In 1974, he was promoted to Managing Director, a position he held until his retirement in 1997. Mr. Carver's contributions to the Civic, the Kalamazoo Community and community theatre throughout the state and around the country is unmatched. Jim enriched the lives of all who knew him and we owe him a debt of gratitude. Our most sincere condolences to his family and friends. His presence will be forever felt...and missed.

Jim has been a huge supporter of CTAM since the beginning, served as President for several years, and has presented many workshops and master classes for CTAM whenever asked. Those fortunate enough to attend any of them will remember his humor, warmth and vast knowledge of community theater. He will indeed be missed.

**CTAM Calendar of Events**

Saturday, December 3, 2022 at 3:00 pm	CTAM Annual Meeting and Board Election, via Zoom
March 17-19, 2023 Owosso, MI	Michigan AACTfest
April 14-17, 2023 Hartford, WI	Region III AACTfest
June 12-17, 2023 Louisville, KY	National AACTfest





## The Prez Sez...

by Michael Wilson

As I sit down to write this, we as a Board have just made the difficult decision to cancel the Fall Conference originally scheduled for November 5 in the Detroit Area. The whole process of trying to get this conference off the ground during the beginnings of this post-Covid period has been a series of speed bumps and obstacles. We were first set to go at the end of September and then had to postpone at the last minute, due to the unforeseen circumstances of two of our hosts having to drop out.

So, we moved the date back to November and got things refigured and arranged. A very special thank you is owed to St. Dunstan's Theatre Guild of Cranbrook, Village Players of Birmingham, and Rosedale Community Players for stepping up and offering the use of their facilities when we needed to reschedule.

Unfortunately, CTAM is having the same difficulties most of our member theatre groups are having: It is proving slow and difficult to get our patrons and volunteers back into the theatres and venues. After speaking with several others about this, it has become clear that people are hesitant to return because of the trauma of the pandemic and the chaos and stress it has created, combined with the rapid development of the internet and online technology. While I can understand and rationalize this thinking, it really is something we need to address and change. Human beings are by nature very social creatures and the result of this two-punch blow has been to isolate us, while giving us the impression of being connected.

I am at a loss right now as to what we can do. But something must change. We are at a spot in history where we as individuals



and society need a course correction, so to speak. We need to take a hard look at what we do, how we do it, and why we do it. Once that has happened then the next step would seem to be reevaluating, keeping what is necessary and beginning the process of recreating ourselves and our organizations. So much has changed, we must be honest with ourselves and accept that things can not and will not return to the way they were pre-pandemic.

With that in mind the CTAM Board is going to begin a strategic reevaluation of what we do and how we do it. Our purpose is simple: To promote and support our membership in providing live theatre. To do this, we really need to hear from all of you -- both as individuals and organizations. Without your input into this process the Board is just blindly casting stones in the dark, hoping to hit the target. We need to know from you what that target should be. If we all work together, we may find our way to what we need to be doing for ourselves, our theatres, and our patrons.

Please don't just assume that others will have more or better ideas or opinions, we need everyone to share with us. Every thought, idea and opinion is important. Please direct your comments to me directly at [michaelwilsonprops@gmail.com](mailto:michaelwilsonprops@gmail.com) or to our CTAM email address, [ctamthrives@gmail.com](mailto:ctamthrives@gmail.com) or speak to any of the Board members when you see us. (Their contact information is listed on page 2.) We are going to figure this out, we just need to decide where we want the path to go, so we can move forward, together!

## **CTAM 2022 Annual Meeting and Elections**

**Saturday, December 3**

**3:00 via Zoom**



Left is the stage in Louisville KY where the AACTfest nationals will be held next June

Directly below and pictured left is the magnificent stage you will be performing on if you enter the state AACTfest competition next March 17-19 in Owosso.



## SCENES FROM 2019 AACTFEST IN OWOSSO



## Thoughts from Mary Jo

By Mary Jo Denolf,  
CTAM Administrator



### **AACTFest 23 is coming to Michigan**

- March 17-19, 2023 - at the Lebowsky Center for the Arts in Owosso, hosted by the Owosso Community Players.

**WHAT IS AACTFEST?** - AACTFest is a program of the American Association of Community Theatre (AACT). The festival process or cycle culminates in a national theatre festival held in odd numbered years. The festival cycle presents a forum for community theatres from the ten regions of AACT to enter productions for adjudication and possible advancement to higher festival levels.

### **WHY SHOULD WE GET INVOLVED?** -

Bringing a show to a state festival enriches your theatre and volunteers in many ways.

- ✓ First, you have the ability to do a show that your theatre might not normally put on stage, a show that you feel your theatre has done well, or another property that you feel showcases the talents of your members.
- ✓ AACTfest gives your volunteers an outlet to express themselves differently and you may find new and different volunteers getting involved.
- ✓ Your volunteers have the chance to work as a team. Shows are 10 minutes to set up, 60 minutes to perform, 10 minutes to strike. Plus you then get feedback from trained adjudicators which gives you a different insight to your show or, in many cases, validation of your performances.
- ✓ Finally, your group will be able to network with other theatres and adjudicators from around the state and country. The "warm fuzzies" of the weekend are worth the entry fee. No lie!!

**CAN I GO EVEN IF I'M NOT PART OF A GROUP PERFORMING?** Absolutely!! There will be individual registration. Plus we will be having a state adjudication training by a National AACTFEST adjudicator, Larry Nielsen, during this event. If you have ever thought of becoming an adjudicator, now is the time to take the training. Larry is one of the best in the nation and it will enrich you as a director and audience member to take this training from him.

**WHO ARE OUR ADJUDICATORS THIS CYCLE?** Only some of the best in the nation. We are a lucky state to have these three: Kathy Pingel, Ron Ziegler and Ron Cameron-Lewis.



Pingel



Ziegler



Cameron-Lewis

**REGISTRATION:** Group and Individual registration is going online soon. But in the meantime, if you have any questions for the event, please contact our hosts:

Kathy Brooks - [kathy@lebowskycenter.com](mailto:kathy@lebowskycenter.com)

Ruthann Liagre - [ruthannliagre@gmail.com](mailto:ruthannliagre@gmail.com)

**AACTFESTIVAL HANDBOOK** - which will provide answers to questions I'm sure you have as a company wanting to participate, please follow this link: [https://aact.org/sites/default/files/aactfest\\_2023\\_handbook\\_final\\_12\\_15\\_2021.pdf](https://aact.org/sites/default/files/aactfest_2023_handbook_final_12_15_2021.pdf)

Remember.....if Michigan has 4 or more groups participating, we can send two groups to Regionals (April 13-16 in Hartford WI) and the chosen show from there will proceed to National AACTFEST23 in Louisville KY (June 12-17, 2023.)



# What's going on in Michigan theatres?

Rosedale Community Players	<i>The Hero and the Hag</i>	Oct 21- Nov 6, 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, the Musical</i>	Oct 28-Nov 13, 2022
Master Arts Theatre, Grand Rapids	<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Nov 2 -Dec 17, 2022
Flint Community Players	<i>Decision Height</i>	Nov 3-13, 2022
Bay City Players	<i>Treasure Island</i>	Nov 4-6, 2022
Clarkston Village Players	<i>Rip Cord</i>	Nov 4-19, 2022
Community Theatre of Howell	<i>9 to 5</i>	Nov 4-13, 2022
Ridgedale Players, Troy	<i>The Odd Couple</i>	Nov 4-20, 2022
Dexter Community Players	<i>Clue</i>	November 4-6, 2022
Kalamazoo Civic Theatre	<i>Puffs</i>	Nov 11-20, 2022
Players Guild of Dearborn	<i>The Game's Afoot</i>	Nov 11-27, 2022
Pontiac Theatre IV	<i>Shrek Jr.</i>	Nov 11-20, 2022
Flint Community Players	<i>Gidion's Knot</i>	Nov 18-20, 2022
Grand Rapids Civic Theatre	<i>Mary Poppins</i>	Nov 18 - Dec 18, 2022
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>The SpongeBob Musical</i>	Nov18- Dec 10, 2022
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Nov 25-Dec 4, 2022
Holland Community Theatre	<i>Babes in Toyland</i>	Nov 25-Dec 10, 2022
Stagecrafters, Royal Oak	<i>Elf</i>	Nov 25 - Dec 18, 2022
Players deNoc, Escanaba	<i>Charlie Brown Christmas</i>	December 1-10, 2022
Players deNoc, Escanaba	<i>It's a Wonderful Neverland</i>	December 1-10, 2022
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>The Nutcracker</i>	Dec 1-11, 2022
Farmington Players	<i>The Game's Afoot and Holmes for the Holidays</i>	Dec 2-17, 2022
Kalamazoo Civic Theatre	<i>Meet Me in St. Louis</i>	Dec 2-18, 2022
Lapeer Community Theatre	<i>The Best Christmas Pageant Ever</i>	Dec 2-4, 2022
Midland Center for the Arts	<i>A Christmas Story, the Musical</i>	Dec 2-11, 2022
Twin City Players, St. Joseph	<i>Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley</i>	Dec 2-18, 2022
Glen Arbor Players	<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Dec 8-10, 2022
Village Players, Birmingham	<i>Matilda, Jr.*</i>	Dec 8-22, 2022
Bay City Players	<i>A Child's Christmas in Wales</i>	Dec 9-18, 2022
Central Park Players, Grand Haven	<i>Guys on Ice</i>	Dec 9-17, 2022
Pit & Balcony, Saginaw	<i>The Holiday Channel Christmas Marathon</i>	Dec 9-18, 2022
Northern Lites Readers Theatre	<i>It's A Wonderful Life: Radio Play</i>	Dec 10 & 11, 2022
Pit & Balcony, Saginaw	<i>Who's Holiday</i>	Dec 10 & 17,2022
Tawas Bay Players	<i>Christmas Songs &amp; Stories</i>	Dec 13, 2022
Pinckney Players	<i>Holiday Variety Show</i>	Dec 17 & 18, 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 included in the next issue.*



# The Scoop on Scripts

By Tara Western



Happy November! I hope your season is robust and your group is flourishing. I know that the pandemic took the wind out of a lot of sails, but we persevere!

Playscripts' *Ghostlight* by Stephen Gregg ©2022 is a quirky play for middle to high school students. With a minimum of three women and one male, few props and a bare stage, this comedy is ripe for a creative team.

The characters include high school students, teachers, ghosts; each with their own quirkiness. Several characters are imaginary. A minimum of two Foley artists performs on stage. An original musical score is included free of charge with the royalties.

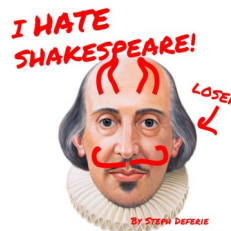
The basic plot: it is Gabriella's (note: not Gabriella—a birth certificate mistake!) first day at the exclusive Doves' Forge Academy, which is on the 24<sup>th</sup> through 28<sup>th</sup> floors of a skyscraper. Gabriella has been hearing voices saying "You're burning up" for a long time. Hearing that her new school has a burned-out theatre, she is intrigued. Plot point: the three-year-old Gabriella set the fire and two students, one her sister Fantine died in the fire. Gabriella seeks the truth of the voices she hears. Students and teachers alike encourage and/or interfere with her journey. Sound confusing? I agree. I found a charming video on YouTube from the Olathe South Theatre which is an easier way to understand the script. The plot threads do come together in a satisfying manner.

This 80–85-minute play has tons of opportunities for creativity in all areas. Lots of pantomime, hilarious characters and special effects make this a worthwhile challenge.

Did I mention the audience participation? In the YouTube video, six different inserts were placed in the programs. When the ghost light flashes,

each person follows the directions on *their* note. The patrons are to "make this sound". Examples: Cough twice softly; Use the program as a fan; Whisper to your neighbor; Say "Can I help you with that?" Or "Hang on, I'll check the program." The play opens with an actor explaining this to the audience.

Playscripts' *I Hate Shakespeare* by Steph DeFerie ©2008 is a hilarious 60–70-minute comedy suitable for teens on up.... casting and audience. All you need is a bare stage, a small, but expandable cast (5-43), and lots of energy!



Nine of Shakespeare's plays are included. Hamlet and MacBeth get long treatments—over ten pages. Richard the Third, Timon of Athens, and Julius Caesar appear briefly before being destroyed by zombies.....

yes, it's a silly play. Othello appears on a Jerry Springer segment, with Romeo and Juliet on "The Dating Game". There are three other skits: "The British Literary Historian" with goofy portraits of the Bard and his wife Anne Hathaway, although "Jane Hathaway" from "The Beverly Hillbillies" shows up. Richard Burbage, an actual contemporary of Will's and theatre owner acts as Shakespeare's agent, encouraging him to include more violence and comic relief in his scripts. A TV ad for "Shakespeare in a Can" claims the product will improve your vocabulary in order to get the girls. Oh....and there are cheerleaders who appear now and then to emphasize a point: I-R-R-E-L-E-V-A-N-T!!!

Nothing really difficult with the set, lighting, or sound. Props require five portraits, two witch puppets. Costumes: quite a few traditional Shakespearean attire, at least two zombies, a cow costume with udders and sixties garb for "The Dating Game". Side note: Hamlet, Unhappy Person in the Audience, an emcee, and narrators make the transitions from one section to the other. I think this play would be a lot of fun. Let me know if you stage it!