



CTM  
Community Theatre Association of Michigan

# CALLBOARD

April 2025

## Stagecrafters Royal Oak claim a winning spot at regional AACTfest

March 21 to 23 was a wonderful theatre weekend and a huge thank you goes to Amy Jo Brown, Ruthann Liagre, Quentin Brainerd, and all of the volunteers of the Lebowsky Center for taking such wonderful care of all the theatres who traveled to this event.

Region 3 was the recipient of the Wildcard position which is granted to the Region who has the most participation in the AACTFest theatre cycle. This Wildcard position means Region 3 can send two theatres to the national festival.

Those theatres are:

- ✓ Stagecrafters, Royal Oak MI, who presented *Silent Sky*. (Pictured below.)
- ✓ Verona Area Community Theatre, Verona WS presenting *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*
- ✓ *Alternate* (if for any reason one of the above two groups are unable to advance): 3B Productions from Waterville, Ohio, with their production of *Bright Star*, a musical, for goodness sake!

Congratulations to all three theatres - you will represent Region 3 well at the National AACTFest25 in Des Moines Iowa, June 25-28. See page 3 for a full list of all the awards presented at regionals.

Great and prolific thanks go to Owooso for hosting the Regional competition this year, as well as Bay City Players, who hosted the state gathering. You all did good!



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



**Community Theatre  
Association of Michigan**

**2024-25 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**PRESIDENT**

**Chuck Goddeeris...** [charlesgoddeeris@gmail.com](mailto:charlesgoddeeris@gmail.com)  
Birmingham Village Players / Rosedale Players

**VICE PRESIDENT**

**Suzan Nemeth .....** [info@witzend.co](mailto:info@witzend.co)  
WE Players (East Tawas)

**TREASURER**

**Gary Walker .....** [grwalker61@comcast.net](mailto:grwalker61@comcast.net)  
Grand Rapids Civic Theatre / AACT Past President

**SECRETARY**

**Keith Rikli .....** [actingpilot@gmail.com](mailto:actingpilot@gmail.com)  
St. Dunstan's / Ann Arbor Civic / Dexter

**MEMBERS AT LARGE**

**Amy Jo Brown.....** [amyjo@owossoplayers.com](mailto:amyjo@owossoplayers.com)  
Lebowsky Center for the Arts, Owosso

**Heather Grimes .....** [feath\\_farmer@yahoo.com](mailto:feath_farmer@yahoo.com)  
Players de Noc, Escanaba

**Ruth Ann Liagre .....** [ruthannliagre@gmail.com](mailto:ruthannliagre@gmail.com)  
Lebowsky Center for the Arts, Owosso

**Kirk Wahamaki .....** [k4sail@gmail.com](mailto:k4sail@gmail.com)  
Muskegon Civic Theatre

**Laura Zervic .....** [lzervic@kazoocivic.com](mailto:lzervic@kazoocivic.com)  
Kalamazoo Civic Theatre

**CTAM ADMINISTRATOR**

**Mary Jo DeNolf.....** [ctamthrives@gmail.com](mailto:ctamthrives@gmail.com)  
811 Crahen Ave NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525  
Circle Theatre/AACT/CTAM  
616-822-0006

**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).*

**May 26 deadline for Playwriting Contests**

The deadline for the 2025 Playwriting Contests is getting closer -- midnight on Memorial Day which this year is on Monday, May 26. So while you are having the family picnic in the backyard, take a minute to send your submission(s) to us!

**Full length plays**

All plays must be in generally accepted manuscript format\* and 105 to 110 pages. They should be a full evening's entertainment, or possibly two one-acts somehow tied together with an overall theme. The subject matter is your choosing, but keep our midwestern community values in mind, as far as subject matter and language are concerned.

**Ten Minute plays**

These shorter plays will be 9 to 10 typewritten pages in the generally accepted manuscript format\*. These plays will be continuous action (no scene breaks or set changes), contemporary setting, and minimal costumes, make-up and very few lighting and sound requests. Each year will have a specific theme and, this year, each play should include a wrapped package or bag of money -- about \$3,000.



There are cash prizes for the best plays in both categories!

*\*For both categories, use 12 pt. Courier New type face (looks like a typewriter!), single-spaced. The speeches should be flush left and the character name should be boldface caps, centered over the speech or line. Don't forget to number your pages.*

**The deadline for both categories of plays is midnight of Memorial Day -- Monday, May 26, 2025. Please send all plays (or questions) by email to [playwriting@ctam.online](mailto:playwriting@ctam.online)**





## Additional Awards presented at Regional AACTfest:

- ☆ Backstage Award (presented to the theatre who worked well with backstage crew) - Twin City Players/*A Measure of Cruelty*
- ☆ Outstanding Costume Design - Rhonda Hendrickson, Stagecrafters/*Silent Sky*
- ☆ Outstanding Costume Design - Gail Gomach, Verona Area Community Theatre/*Love, Loss and What I Wore*
- ☆ Outstanding Set Design - Twin City Players/*A Measure of Cruelty*
- ☆ Outstanding Set and Props Dressing - Little Theatre Off Broadway/*The Psychic*
- ☆ Outstanding Visual Element - Verona Area Community Theatre/*Love, Loss and What I Wore*
- ☆ Outstanding performance in a Featured Role - Christine Kapusky Moore, Stagecrafters/*Silent Sky*
- ☆ Outstanding Performance in a Featured Role - Emma Glover, 3B Productions/*Bright Star*
- ☆ Outstanding performance in a Supporting Role - Jonathan Kind, Stagecrafters/*Silent Sky*
- ☆ Outstanding Performance in a Supporting Role - Lane Hakel, 3B Productions/*Bright Star*
- ☆ Outstanding Performance in a Leading Role - Josh Scheibe, Kettle Moraine Players/*Under Control*
- ☆ Outstanding Performance in a Leading Role - Emma Skaggs, 3B Productions/*Bright Star*
- ☆ Outstanding Performance in a Leading Role - Gayathri K Raman, Mandi Theatre/*The Carbon Footprint of a Cradle*
- ☆ Outstanding Music Direction - Janie Bachmann, 3B Productions/*Bright Star*
- ☆ Outstanding Direction - Sara Ward-Cassady, , Verona Area Community Theatre/*Love Loss, and What I Wore*
- ☆ Outstanding Ensemble Performance - Verona Area Community Theatre/*Cast of Love, Loss and What I Wore*



Left, Owosso co-chairs for the Festival -- Amy Jo Brown and Ruthann Liagre. Right, Twin Cities Players, accepting the award for their performance.

# “I had never taken an Adjudication Class...”

In my 40+ years of community theatre I had never taken an adjudication class. I had *experienced* adjudication and have listened to many adjudications, but as a regular participant in the State AACTFest, I never felt the time was right to take the class, as most classes are held around festivals. However, my home theatre group was not competing in AACTFest this year so I finally had my chance.



The class consisted of three sessions. Two sessions were via Zoom prior to the State Festival and were composed of two, 2-hour sessions primarily led by Kathy Pingel, a nationally recognized adjudicator, who wrote the curriculum for the AACT Adjudication Workshop and has adjudicated theatre at the state, regional, national, and international levels. Kathy covered a range of topics including: the philosophy of adjudication, guidelines to use when adjudication, AACT guidelines, and how to phrase your adjudication in positive, constructive ways. *Newly accredited adjudicator Dave Wahr.*

Once we arrived at the State Festival, our own Betsy Willis took over the instruction duties. Betsy is the CTAM adjudication chair and has been a CTAM/AACT adjudicator for many years and at both the state and regional levels. She gave us some last-minute reminders and then we were off to watch the first entry. Afterwards, we gathered to “adjudicate” the adjudicators – they all got high marks from us – and then we were assigned shows to adjudicate ourselves. After each production one of us stood before the rest of the class and presented his or her adjudication. Then the entire class offered their opinions and suggestions to improve it. Everything was done in a friendly and collegiate manner so, even though we each had some nerves, the outcome was always positive and encouraging.

At the end of the festival, we met one last time and Mary Jo DeNolf, CTAM’s Administrator and an accomplished adjudicator herself, acted as an AACT Commissioner to lead us through a sample selection process to determine what awards we would give out and who our winners would be -- if we were the official adjudicators. I’m happy to report that our final rankings were very similar to the selections made by the official adjudicators of the festival.

All in all, the class was well worth the nominal price (\$50 for CTAM members) and the time invested. The best part of all was taking the class with a few old CTAM friends and making a couple of new ones who I’m sure we’ll soon see adjudicating a performance on their own!

*-- Dave Wahr, Monroe Community Players*

We understand that everyone is busy, deep in the throws of producing their current season. Remember that CTAM has trained adjudicators ready and eager to visit your group and adjudicate one of your shows. As a benefit of your CTAM annual affiliate dues, each member group gets one free adjudication per membership year. After that, your group pays a modest fee for additional adjudications.

AACT adjudication is two-fold: to accurately reflect to the performing company what has been successfully achieved, and to outline reasonable steps that might be taken to enhance interpretation of the story; As a director you will learn how to interpret your productions differently and, as an audience member, you will watch the productions with a different understanding.



Adjudicators are an independent second pair of eyes, looking at your production and seeing things you may not have noticed. Adjudications are not ‘re-directing’ or a pass/fail situation, but rather a starting point for improvement in future shows.

If you want to make arrangements for an adjudication yet this season, contact Adjudication Chair Betsy Willis at [ryonwillis915@gmail.com](mailto:ryonwillis915@gmail.com).





[Join CTAM on Tuesday, April 22 @ 7pm for our next Webinar](#)

# Volunteers: Ideas on Engaging, Acknowledging and Holding on to your valuable Volunteers



POINTS OF LIGHT

**NATIONAL  
VOLUNTEER  
WEEK**

APRIL 20-26, 2025



National Volunteer Week is April 20-26, so it's time to pause and recognize ... US! Most theatre-lovers that support community theatre are, indeed, volunteers. It takes time and understanding to successfully manage your volunteers. We want to help you engage, acknowledge and keep all your volunteers. Join us for a free Webinar on Tuesday, April 22, at 7:00 p.m. for a zoom webinar specifically directed toward those three aspects of volunteerism.

Your webinar leaders for the session are as follows:

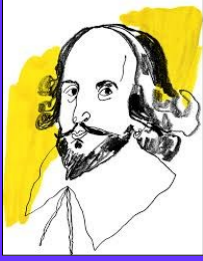
- ✓ **Mike Artis** Mike Artis is the Director of Volunteers for the Kalamazoo Civic Theatre and the former Production Stage Manager. Mike has over 20 years professional experience in theatre and has been involved both onstage and behind the scenes for over 40 years. Having started as a volunteer in theatre has given Mike an inside perspective on what it takes to make volunteers feel welcome and appreciated.
- ✓ **Mary Jo DeNolf** - Mary Jo also started as a volunteer with Grand Rapids Civic Theatre and moved into the staff position of Director of Volunteers and Operations for 23 years. Currently she is the Patron Services Manager at Circle Theatre Grand Rapids, as well as the Administrator for CTAM.



With this forum we hope to give you ways to acknowledge volunteers, help retain, and recruit many additional workers. From simple acts of acknowledgments, to those that may take some time and effort, we hope to give you ideas on how to recognize and keep your volunteers happy and sticking around for years. We welcome you all to join and share your stories as well.

Sign Up to attend and receive the Zoom link: <https://ctam.ludus.com/200480842>





## Playwright's Corner

# Using the Rule of Six in your Playwriting

Have you ever heard of "the Rule of Six"? It's a principle used by creative writers of all kinds. And in a nutshell, it says that anytime you're searching for something in your play--whether it's what to say in the next line, what should happen in the next scene, or how to end your play--you should always brainstorm at least six alternatives before you decide.

Why six? Because, the theory goes, that's how many alternatives you'll need to imagine before you can be sure that you're clear of cliché territory. If you always use the first idea that comes to your mind (whether it's the first line that pops into your head, the first idea for a scene, and so on), then you're probably using the most obvious idea. The most cliché, predictable idea. And as a result, you'll have a hard time surprising your audience.

But if you brainstorm at least six possibilities, then you'll be forcing yourself to come up with more creative alternatives. The first few possibilities that come to mind will probably be cliché. Predictable. But by the time you get to ideas #4, #5, and #6, you'll start to surprise yourself at some of them.

Here's an example: Let's say that in your play, Laura knows that her husband, Terry, has been cheating on her. And in the next scene of your play, you need her to reveal to him that she knows. So how do you do it? Well, let's brainstorm six ideas:

1. She could wait until he gets home and tell him in the kitchen.
2. She could show up at work and make a scene, embarrassing him in front of his coworkers.
3. She could call and tell him right away over the phone.
4. She could throw a surprise party for him and then, in front of all their friends and family, reveal the truth,
5. She could print out pictures of him with the other woman and insert them into one of his mother's photo albums, so that he comes across the photos while looking at old photos with his mother.
6. She could take him to the zoo and shove him into the lion enclosure, revealing the truth as the lions approach.

Now I'm not saying that these are the most amazing scene ideas ever. The point is to look at how much more progressively original they get.

Scene #1 doesn't sound particularly exciting. You've seen it before. Same with scene #2. And #3. But once you've exhausted all the overused cliché ideas, it gets harder to think of things. It forces you to be more creative, more original. Obviously you don't have to go with scene idea #6. Maybe you prefer idea #5. Or idea #25.

The point is that you should NOT just use the first idea that comes into your head because that's probably the most predictable idea there is. Instead, take time to really consider some of the more unexpected possibilities inherent in your play. If you do that, you're liable to end up writing a more dramatic and original play!



# Michigan Theatre -- Spring 2025

|                           |  |  |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| March 28 - April 13, 2025 | Stagecrafters, Royal Oak                 | <i>A Funny Thing Happened ... Forum</i>          |
| March 28 - April 6, 2025  | Kalamazoo Civic Theatre                  | <i>Dancing at Lughnasa</i>                       |
| March 28 - April 6, 2025  | Grosse Pointe Theatre                    | <i>Groundhog Day, The Musical</i>                |
| April 3 - 6, 2025         | The Sauk, Jonesville                     | <i>Small Mouth Sounds</i>                        |
| April 4 - 13, 2025        | Fenton Village Players                   | <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i>           |
| April 4 - 13, 2025        | Pit & Balcony                            | <i>Coyote on a Fence</i>                         |
| April 4 - 20, 2025        | Enter Stage Right                        | <i>Gutenberg The Musical</i>                     |
| April 5, 2025             | Audio Air Force                          | <i>Down Home Radio</i>                           |
| April 10 - 13, 2025       | Midland Center for the Arts              | <i>Matilda The Musical</i>                       |
| April 11 - 13, 2025       | Grosse Pointe Theatre                    | <i>Spongebob Musical **</i>                      |
| April 11 - 26, 2025       | Holland Community Theatre                | <i>Every Little Crook &amp; Nanny</i>            |
| April 18 - May 4, 2025    | Grand Rapids Civic Theatre               | <i>The Color Purple</i>                          |
| April 24 - 27, 2025       | The Sauk, Jonesville                     | <i>Sauk Shorts</i>                               |
| April 25 - May 10, 2025   | Rosedale Community Players               | <i>Mad Gravity</i>                               |
| April 25 - May 11, 2025   | Twin City Players, St. Joseph            | <i>Sense and Sensibility</i>                     |
| April 25 - May 17, 2025   | Old Town Playhouse                       | <i>A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder</i>    |
| April 25 - May 18, 2025   | Farmington Players                       | <i>Sister Act</i>                                |
| April 25 - May 3, 2025    | Southgate Community Players              | <i>Sylvia</i>                                    |
| April 25 - May 4, 2025    | Bay City Players                         | <i>Rodgers &amp; Hammerstein's Oklahoma!</i>     |
| April 25 - May 4, 2025    | Clio Cast & Crew                         | <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>                 |
| April 25 - May 4, 2025    | Kalamazoo Civic Theatre                  | <i>The Seussification of A Midsummer Night's</i> |
| April 25 - May 4, 2025    | Lebowsky Center Performing Arts, Owosso  | <i>The Cottage</i>                               |
| April 25 - May 4, 2025    | Manistee Civic Players                   | <i>The Odd Couple</i>                            |
| April 26-27, 2025         | Northern Lites Readers Theatre, Cadillac | <i>Is Murder Tax-Deductible?</i>                 |
| April 30 - May 4, 2025    | Thornapple Players                       | <i>Ruthless!</i>                                 |
| May 1 - 11, 2025          | Alpena Civic Theatre                     | <i>Once Upon a Mattress</i>                      |
| May 1 - 17, 2025          | Master Arts Theatre                      | <i>In His Steps</i>                              |
| May 1 - 4, 2025           | Muskegon Civic Theatre                   | <i>Guys and Dolls</i>                            |
| May 1 - 4, 2025           | Circle Theatre                           | <i>Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus</i>        |
| May 2 - 4, 2025           | Fowlerville Community Theatre            | <i>The Music Man</i>                             |
| May 2 - 10, 2025          | Players de Noc                           | <i>Alice In Wonderland</i>                       |
| May 2 - 11, 2025          | Flint Community Players                  | <i>Seussical</i>                                 |
| May 2 - 11, 2025          | Stagecrafters, Royal Oak                 | <i>Somewhere</i>                                 |
| May 2 - 11, 2025          | Grosse Pointe Theatre                    | <i>The Secret Garden, The Musical</i>            |

\* Indicates youth production. \*\* Second stage production

✓ If your information is incorrect or missing and you are an affiliate group of CTAM, please send the correct information to [CTAMthrives@gmail.com](mailto:CTAMthrives@gmail.com) to be included in the next issue.

