



# CTAM CALLBOARD

December 2023

## Meet our CTAM President and Administrator

So you think you know the CTAM board? Some of you do but they are a remarkable group of individuals who all have such vast backgrounds. We thought it would be interesting to really get to know them better.

### Board President - Michael Wilson.

We all know him as the Prop Master of all things....but do we really know Michael? Here are some interesting things you may not know about him and what makes him tick:

- For years he was an actor at the Festival of Strawberry Moon in Grand Haven MI
- He is a member of the Viking Club in Muskegon which as he says " Is a fun group and throws GREAT parties!
- He is a singer, mostly these days at mass as a cantor but he used to perform on stage and last show was "Cotton Patch Gospel" Grand Rapids Civic Theatre.
- Raised kids for 40 years....ask him how and why so long sometime
- He has 17 birds in his house
- Holds a degree in Landscape Architecture



### CTAM Administrator - Mary Jo DeNolf

After 23 years at Grand Rapids Civic Theatre, Mary Jo changed hats -- and now wears many hats

- In 2022 held 10 jobs in one year - and currently is working seven, one of which is at a Haunted House



- In a time span of five years hiked over 400 miles with 30# backpack
- Chef of cookery and whatever is at hand - love to bake and try new recipes whenever I can...or not use a recipe at all
- Loves her rescue fur babies

- Her husband calls her Master of Altruism - I just think I like to be there when needed.
- Was a latchkey kid before we called it that and, therefore, MJ is the person you want on your team for '60s, '70s and '80s TV trivia.

Because we attract such interesting people to serve on our Board, we plan to feature one or more each month until we run out of creative and interesting people. That should be about 2074!



**Community Theatre  
Association of Michigan**

### 23-24 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President - **Michael Wilson**  
Grand Rapids Civic  
[michaelwilsonprops@yahoo.com](mailto:michaelwilsonprops@yahoo.com)

Vice President - **JR Bornemann**  
Center Stage, Midland  
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Secretary -- **Keith Rikli**  
Southeastern Michigan Nomad  
[actingpilot@gmail.com](mailto:actingpilot@gmail.com)

Treasurer -- **Gary Walker**  
Grand Rapids Civic  
[grwalker61@comcast.net](mailto:grwalker61@comcast.net)

#### At-Large Members of the Board

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

**Amy Jo Brown**.....[amyjo@owossoplayers.com](mailto:amyjo@owossoplayers.com)  
Lebowsky Center, Owosso Community Players

**Heather Grimes**.....  
Escanaba Players de Noc

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

#### CTAM Administrator

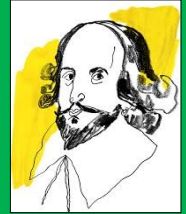
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### Callboard

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).*

## Playwright's Corner



### Ten-minute Play Festivals in Michigan

As announced in last month's newsletter, we will begin listing ten-minute play festivals around Michigan as hosted by CTAM members. These are festivals of original ten-minute plays, written by members and performed by members! Ten minute plays are a new wrinkle in community theatre that provides more opportunities for involvement for your members.

To be included in the listing, please send information about your upcoming festivals to [The Editor](#).

#### Upcoming Festivals in Michigan

- ✓ Ludington Area Center for the Arts.
  - \* Submission deadline: Feb.4, 2024
  - \* Festival date: May 17-19, 2024
  - \* [www.ludingtonartscenter.org/10-minute-play-festival](http://www.ludingtonartscenter.org/10-minute-play-festival)
- ✓ Grosse Pointe Theatre
  - \* Submission deadline: Dec. 31, 2023
  - \* Festival date: June 13-15, 2024
  - \* [Take Ten | Grosse Pointe Theatre \(gpt.org\)](http://Take Ten | Grosse Pointe Theatre (gpt.org)).



Midland Center for the Arts offered *Doubt* for their audiences recently and had great success. A beautiful set made this intriguing show more memorable.



## Meet your new CTAM Adjudication Chair

First and foremost, we want to thank Larry Nielsen who has served as the CTAM Adjudication Chair for the past several years. Larry invested a great deal of time and commitment to ensuring CTAM member groups received an adjudication if and when they wanted.

We are pleased to announce our new Adjudication Chair is Betsy Willis! Betsy is a past CTAM Board member and served as CTAM President for three years. Even better, Betsy is a State and Regional AACT Adjudicator who has taken the national workshop and traveled to several festivals over the years. Betsy is a true advocate of the adjudication process and can assist you in making this happen for your theatre. Contact Betsy

at: [ryonwillis915@gmail.com](mailto:ryonwillis915@gmail.com)



*New Chair Betsy Willis and outgoing Chair Larry Nielsen*

### What is adjudication?

Community Theatre adjudication is a response to a performance by your group. It is conducted by a trained adjudicator who experiences your production and shares his/her response to that experience with, typically, the director, cast and crew. The entire process is conducted in a friendly and supportive manner. It is a positive learning experience intended to offer ideas through which actors, directors, and technicians can learn and grow.

All CTAM adjudicators are experienced community theatre people who have taken an intensive training workshop in adjudication. CTAM offers this service, with a reasonable fee paid to the adjudicator, as a service to member groups.

If you are interested in having one of your productions adjudicated, please contact the Adjudication Committee Chair, Betsy Willis. Arrangements will be made for a trained adjudicator to

attend a performance of your group's show. Attempts will be made to honor requests for particular adjudicators based on availability or to find an adjudicator who lives in your area of the state. There is a \$50 fee paid directly to the adjudicator for time and travel. If you request an adjudicator who lives far from your location, please consider some additional gas money. On occasion, overnight accommodations need to fit into the negotiations, too.

One of the benefits of CTAM membership is that each affiliate group is entitled to one FREE adjudication each season, meaning that CTAM will pay \$50 towards an affiliate group's first adjudication each year.

So, contact Betsy as soon as possible to arrange your adjudication. It takes a while to get everyone lined up, so as much lead time as possible is greatly appreciated.

## GIVE THE GIFT OF GIVING TO CTAM

With the holidays upon us, it's time to think about how you can assist CTAM with a year-end gift.

The Community Theatre Association of Michigan is working hard at bringing quality educational opportunities to you, your theatre and our patrons. We do this by programming conferences, festivals and our new program "On the Road to You" which will bring a workshop directly to your theatre for your volunteers.

We hope you will support CTAM this year by sending a donation to help offset the costs of these educational programs. You can send a check to CTAM / 811 Crahen Ave NE / Grand Rapids MI 49525 or by following this link: <https://ctam.ludus.com/donate.php>



• Happy Holidays •



# AACTFest25 will soon be upon us!

Before you know it, we will be gearing up once again for AACTFest. If you are unfamiliar with this fabulous process, 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. Michigan belongs to AACT Region III, which includes Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Indiana and Illinois.

## Goals of AACTFest

- ◆ To provide learning experiences in artistic, technical, and management areas through performances, adjudication, workshops, and festival participation; thereby affirming, supporting, and nurturing community theatre companies.
- ◆ To stimulate and inspire community theatre companies to strive toward excellence in theatrical production and to recognize them for their achievement through an appropriate adjudication process.
- To develop enlightened and discerning audiences for community theatre.

Michigan has had great participation in the past and our members have done well at State, Regional and National levels. In 2025 Michigan will have the honor of hosting both the State Festival *and* the Regional Festival. Our first step, then, is to find two host theatres.



## Guidelines to host:

- ✓ Available theatre space for 3-4 days;
- ✓ Space for 2 or 3 (10x10) holding spaces for theatre companies sets/props;
- ✓ Dressing rooms, green rooms;
- ✓ Volunteers to assist with theatre productions, front of house and afterglows.

For the State Festival (late February/March) we normally have 3-7 groups participating; Regional Festival (generally April/very early May) has guaranteed 5 groups participating (one from each state) but could be 10.

Past theatres who have hosted: Owasso, Midland Center for the Arts, Grand Rapids Civic, Grosse Pointe Theatre, Kalamazoo Civic. We have used area high schools, as well.

If you are interested please let Mary Jo DeNolf ([maryjo@act.org](mailto:maryjo@act.org) or [ctamthrives@gmail.com](mailto:ctamthrives@gmail.com)) know and she will communicate with you some of the requirements and what is needed to bring this fabulous opportunity to your theatre. Not only do you have fun putting this together, but it showcases your theatre and your volunteers. No one ever goes away not making new friends.

Plus, with good planning, this can also be a money-maker for your group. The CTAM Board stands at the ready to help with the planning and organization to make this a successful event for your group.



**New in 2024:**

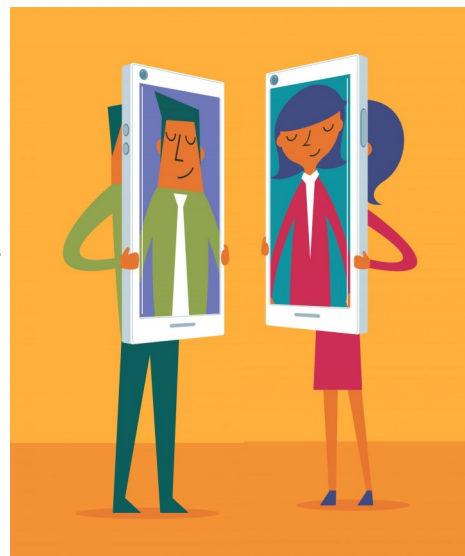
# CTAM presents Virtual Roundtables

The Board is dedicated to providing service to the community theatres in Michigan that they want and need. We've accomplished a great deal so far on this mission and we're proud to announce the next benefit for all our members -- that includes our precious Individual Members, as well as all members of our Affiliate member groups.

CTAM will be offering virtual Roundtables monthly that attendees will simply register for and join in, without the travel and overnight expenses. Learn from the comfort of your home, or gather everyone to watch in a group and then discuss later with your own people and your own set of issues!

Please watch our social media and our next Callboard for information on upcoming CTAM Roundtables:

- ☆ January - Thoughts on selecting your season
- ☆ February - On The Road to You: How to bring workshops to your theatre
- ☆ March - What you need to know about AACTFest and how to participate



### What's going on around town?

1. Left, *Players de Noc* in Escanaba presented the *Wizard of Oz*.
2. Left below, *Stagecrafters* in Royal Oak had a good time with *The Great American Trailer Park Musical* in November.
3. Bottom center, *Old Town Playhouse* in Traverse City retold the Robin Hood story in *Marian or the True Tale of Robin Hood*.
4. Bottom right, *Alpena Civic* did a great job with *Blithe Spirit*.
5. Right, *Beckwith Theatre* in Dowagiac brought *Second Samuel* to life.





# Year-end Theatre in Michigan

Nov 24 - Dec 9, 2023	HOLLAND COMMUNITY THEATRE	<i>The Rented Christmas</i>
Nov 24 - Dec 9, 2023	OLD TOWN PLAYHOUSE	<i>Christmas Schooner</i>
Nov 24 - Dec 17, 2023	KALAMAZOO CIVIC THEATRE	<i>Sound of Music</i>
Nov 30 - Dec 16, 2023	MASTER ARTS	<i>Seeking the Child</i>
Dec 1 - 10, 2023	CLIO CAST AND CREW	<i>12 days of Christmas</i>
Dec 1-10, 2023	OWOSSO COMMUNITY PLAYERS	<i>Holiday at Lebowsky</i>
Dec 1-12, 2023	TWIN CITY PLAYERS	<i>Parfumerie</i>
Dec 1 - 16, 2023	FARMINGTON PLAYERS	<i>A Nice Family Christmas</i>
Dec 6-10, 2023	THORNAPPLE PLAYERS	<i>A Good, Old-Fashioned Big Family Christmas</i>
Dec 7-10, 2023	VILLAGE PLAYERS OF BIRMINGHAM	<i>Disney's My Son Pinocchio Jr.</i>
Dec 7 - 17, 2023	THE SAUK	<i>Prancer</i>
Dec 8 & 9, 2023	PIT AND BALCONY	<i>The Eight Reindeer Monologues</i>
Dec 8-17, 2023	MIDLAND CENTER FOR THE ARTS	<i>Irving Berlin's White Christmas</i>
Dec 8-10, 2023	MONROE COMMUNITY PLAYERS	<i>The Best Christmas Pageant Ever</i>
Dec 10, 15-17, 2023	BAY CITY PLAYERS	<i>A Good, Old-Fashioned Big Family Christmas</i>
Dec 8-17, 2023	CENTRAL PARK PLAYERS	<i>Parfumerie</i>
December 12, 2023	TAWAS BAY PLAYERS	<i>Christmas Songs &amp; Stories</i>
Dec 14 - 17, 2023	STAGECRAFTERS	<i>Disney's Descendants, the Musical</i>
December 15, 2023	AUDIO AIR FORCE	<i>Audio Air Force Holiday Special</i>
Dec 15-17, 2023	GROSSE POINTE THEATRE	<i>Annie, Jr. *</i>
Dec 15-17, 2023	MONROE COMMUNITY PLAYERS	<i>The Christmas Carol</i>
Jan 7, 12-14, 2024	BAY CITY PLAYERS	<i>The Revolutionists</i>
Jan 12-27, 2024	CLARKSTON VILLAGE PLAYERS	<i>Office Hours</i>
Jan 12 - 21, 2024	STAGECRAFTERS	<i>Girls Weekend</i>
Jan 12 - 24, 2024	PIT AND BALCONY	<i>Romeo &amp; Juliet</i>
Jan 12-28, 2023	PLAYERS GUILD OF DEARBORN	<i>Blithe Spirit</i>
Jan 12-28, 2024	VILLAGE PLAYERS OF BIRMINGHAM	<i>The MouseTrap</i>
Jan 12 - 21, 2024	KALAMAZOO CIVIC THEATRE	<i>The Lion in the Winter</i>
Feb 16 - 25, 2024	KALAMAZOO CIVIC THEATRE	<i>Is There Life after High School?</i>
Jan 18 - 27, 2024	MASTER ARTS	<i>Spread Your Garment Over Me</i>
Jan 26-Feb4, 2024	GROSSE POINTE THEATRE	<i>9 to 5</i>
Jan 26 - Feb 4, 2024	KALAMAZOO CIVIC THEATRE	<i>Cats - young actors*</i>
Feb 1-17, 2024	HOLLAND COMMUNITY THEATRE	<i>Noises Off</i>
Feb 1-11, 2024	THE SAUK	<i>Criminal Mischief (AACT New Playfest)</i>
Feb 9 - 18, 2024	CLIO CAST AND CREW	<i>Hallelujah Girls</i>
Feb 9 - 25, 2024	STAGECRAFTERS	<i>Romeo &amp; Juliet</i>

*\* indicates youth productions; \*\* indicates second stage productions, if submitted.*

*If your information is incorrect or missing and you are an affiliate member of CTAM, please send the correct information to [The Editor](#) to be included in the next issue.*

# The Scoop on Scripts

By Tara Western



I hope you are working on a delightful Holiday production. This month, here's a musical addressing the joys of not dying and a witty, somewhat outrageous, political satire for you to consider:

Published by Concord Theatricals ©2007, 2010 *The Kids Left. The Dog Died. Now What?* is a musical comedy saluting the mid-life crises and challenges related to aging. Carole Caplan-Lonner has written an entertaining show with a minimum of two women, 40-50ish, and two men 50-60ish. The cast can be expanded to 36 actors.

Set requirements: a large framed empty screen for photos and one of two baby grand piano. Several set pieces are moved on and off quickly: a clothes rack filled with Armani woman's clothes, a beautifully set table, a Weber grill. Several sound effects and simple lighting.

The first song, "Now What?" introduces the theme: how fast time flies, how fast one is suddenly old, and the challenges of both. The play is written as a one act, although the appendix has a scene to be inserted between Scene 11 a 13, should you want to have an intermission. I advise it!

Among the scenes and songs, an answering machine voice over with messages from an 18-year-old daughter, an 80-year-old parent---welcome to the Sandwich Generation!

The themes will resonate with your baby boomer audience: keeping up with new technology, physical ailments, the grief of losing a spouse, the ambivalent feelings of grandchildren, and online and regular dating.

Some adult language with references to assholes, prostate, and "wanna piece?" Suitable for ages 14+

Next, *The Taming* by Lauren Gunderson, a 2015 Playscripts comedy is a very funny, perhaps controversial comedy dealing with America's current social and political issues. Wait! Don't run away. It's a hoot with a few caveats: lots of adult language, refer-

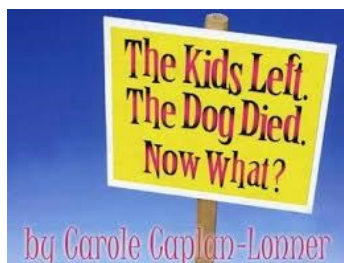
ences to homosexuality, radical feminism, and the disrespecting of A. Hamilton ... which I found most egregious! Definitely 16+.

Running 85-90 minutes, the cast of three women, 30+, set in a hotel room in present-day Georgia and July 1787 at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

The characters: Patricia is a conservative and a US Senator's aide. She also plays James Madison. Bianca is a liberal hipster activist blogger. She plays her twin sister, the INTERN (more later) and Charles Pinckney, a South Carolina politician; Katherine the youngest, 20s, is a true Georgia belle, a Miss America pageant winner, and a moving force in the plot. Her 1787 roles are George Washington, Martha Washington, and Dolly Madison.

Costumes: Katherine wears an all-American flag dress, which "explodes" into more flags. In 1787, the costumes for the men can be as simple as a wig and a frock coat. Depicting the 1787 women is done with two wigs.

"Special" lights and sound: cell phone sounds, plus an "America the Beautiful" ringtone, time travel effects as the scene goes from 2015 to 1787.



Lauren Gunderson

ACT I Katrina, the contestant locks Bianca and Patricia in her hotel room to recruit them to support her platform: the rewriting of the constitution. Many shouting battles ensue. Whatever your political leanings you will find much to laugh about.

ACT II: 1787 Constitutional convention where Patricia as James Madison and Katrina as George Washington hilariously

discuss the need to finish writing the Constitution. They deal with SO many issues that are still issues; the funniest line is "What is there to misinterpret?"

ACT III: Back in the Georgia hotel room, Katrina re-evaluates her stand on rewriting the Constitution. Other surprises: Bianca's twin sister is the INTERN that is having an affair with her Senator, the Liberal finds she has been supporting a Pro-Life National Rodent organization. The play ends in the future where Katrina is the President of the US, Patricia is the Chief of Staff and Bianca the Press Secretary. See, sometimes we can "just get along."