



CTAM
Community Theatre Association of Michigan

CALLBOARD

June 2024

2024 CTAM
Fall Conference
Saturday,
September 21
Midland Central
Auditorium
9am to 5 pm

Michigan
AACTfest 25
February 27-
March 2, 2025
Beautiful Bay City
See article inside!

HELPING COMMUNITY THEATRE *THRIVE* IN MICHIGAN SINCE 1951!



**Community Theatre
Association of Michigan**

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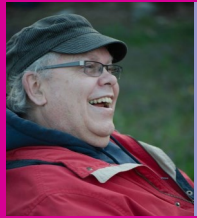
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Callboard

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. *Updated e-mail and postal addresses are maintained by the Administrator and should be sent to CTAMthrives@gmail.com.*



Out and About

*With Michael Wilson,
CTAM President*

We (Dirk Grasman, Mary Jo Denolf and I) had a wonderful evening on May 3rd when we drove over to Muskegon Civic Theatre and saw their performance of *Ragtime*. Once again Muskegon Civic Theatre delivered a great night of entertainment. We personally knew someone in the cast (shout out to David Hatter) but the whole cast was fantastic.

Director Kurt Wahamaki had taken each performer and allowed them to showcase themselves in so many scenes. His vision for the show was excellent and his direction allowed the show to flow with ease from one scene to the next.

Ragtime is one of my favorite shows! I love the music and there was great anticipation to see this production. We were not disappointed. It was performed on the Frauenthal Theatre stage and everything from the magnificent set still allowed us to still see the back wall of the theater with its rows of cast iron radiators still showing.

I especially appreciated the Model-T car that their volunteers Mike Pallasch and Pat Harker built for the show and the moving set pieces. There were more than 30 actors on stage for this production and the costumes were beautifully made and perfect for the period. They created a beautiful picture!

Congratulations, Muskegon Civic, on a terrific production of this classic show!



Are you going to enter AACTfest next year?

Is your theatre thinking of entering AACTFest 25? It's so much fun and the people you meet and the educational value is like having a master class on theatre, just for you and your theatre colleagues.

To help make the decision to enter, please follow this link and read over the AACTFest Handbook. It's all laid out and pretty simple to put together a show and travel to Bay City for our February 27 to March 2, 2025, Michigan Festival. The regional festival this year is also in Michigan -- at the Lebowsky Center for the Arts in Owosso. March 20 - 23, 2025.

<https://aact.org/2025-festival-handbook>

Questions on AACTFest? *Did you know that two of our CTAM members are also very involved with AACT and AACTfest?*

JR Bornemann (Midland and our CTAM Vice President) is the AACT National Festival Technical Director. JR joined the AACTfest staff in 2023 and will be the person behind the scenes assisting theatres from all ten regions of AACT with load in, technical meetings and general technical questions. jbornemann229@gmail.com

Mary Jo DeNolf (our CTAM administrator) has been with AACT since 2015 as their Festival and Engagement Coordinator. Mary Jo's job is assisting Festival Coordinators on the state, regional and national level with adjudication questions, commissioner assignments and handbook. At the National Festival she is seen running around with Intern coordination, silent auction and day-to-day activities. CTAMthrives@gmail.com

Reach out to either of them and they can answer your questions about AACTFest.

Scrooge props available for FREE!

Look at these wonderful properties from *Scrooge* that the Northland Players used in their recent production of this zany musical. The headstone lights up. Northland Players President Patricia Conway is offering these marvelous items to any CTAM group that can use them -- for FREE!

If you are interested, please contact Patricia (patc319@yahoo.com) for more information. They are located at 229 Backus Street in Cheboygan, MI.



In the true spirit of community theatre, Northland Players is offering anyone else interested the following: Ebenezer's headstone, left; his office safe, center; and safe (the outside) and his specially-built coffin! (The folding chairs and oak stools are not part of the deal!)



Inclusion has been the key to 50 years of success at Kalamazoo's Center Stage

It has often been said that Theater creates family. That statement rings true with Center Stage Theater in Kalamazoo. For the past five decades, Center Stage has committed to giving everyone with the desire the opportunity to be part of a production.

"It's truly a family theater," said former president Duwain Hunt. "We're very proud of our history. In recent years inclusion has become a big deal and we've been doing it for 50 years. We work out accommodations so everyone feels part of the cast and part of the show."

Their commitment to inclusion has manifested in ASL interpreted performances, sensory friendly shows, manipulatives such as sensory boards and many other initiatives. The most recent staff person hired is an inclusion coordinator that works with cast and audience members to ensure Center Stage is welcoming to everyone, no matter their situation. There is even a Disability Inclusion Committee in place with a mission of working within and alongside the Center Stage Theater Board of Directors to create an environment of inclusion and understanding by removing barriers in order to promote participation backstage, on stage and in the audience.

Each year, the summer production finds a place for everyone who auditions. This can lead to a few logistic questions such as how to fit 100 people onto the stage, but also leads to an engaged community, both on and off the stage.

"I completely believe in the change that can take place in lives because of theatre," explained Hunt. "That's what has kept me passionate about Center Stage."

The stories and maybe a few tears flow from both Hunt and current president, Deb Taylor, when they speak to the impact their inclusion initiatives have made over the decades.

"I was in Meijer and this 40-year-old woman threw her arms around me and said you've changed my life," shared Taylor. "If someone hadn't told her she could do it (theater), she wouldn't have even taken the chance."

Working with the parks and recreation department 50 years ago, Center Stage began as



Comstock Community Theatre with one summer family show and has grown to include a fall children's show and winter adult production. They have also partnered with Second Star from the Right Productions to produce musicals with local high school students who do not have a theatre program in their own schools.

Through the years, both Hunt and Taylor are certain the success of Center Stage is due to the dedicated volunteers who make each production come to life. To date, more than 4,000 volunteers have helped at Center Stage. Volunteers like Don Dillon who has been the musical director for many productions and first developed the idea of their cabaret shows. A special Cabaret event is planned for August to celebrate their 50th anniversary and will include 42 cast members who will share music and memories.

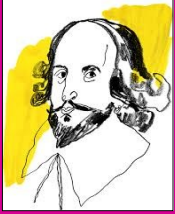
As for what the next years will hold, Hunt is certain that if Center Stage sticks to its mission and values of inclusion and family, that future is bright indeed.

"We will have another 50 years of family and inclusion," states Hunt with certainty. "That's not just lip service. It's your mission, vision and values that keeps you going. Inclusion has been more important than anything else."

Visit kzoocst.com to learn more about its 50-year celebration, its rich history, and much more.



Here's a recent picture of the three people without whom Comstock Community Theatre/Center Stage Theatre wouldn't be celebrating 50 years of great shows! Don Dillon, Duwain Hunt, and B.J. Mohberg. They are still close friends after all these years.



Scripts Worth Noting

Drop Dead!

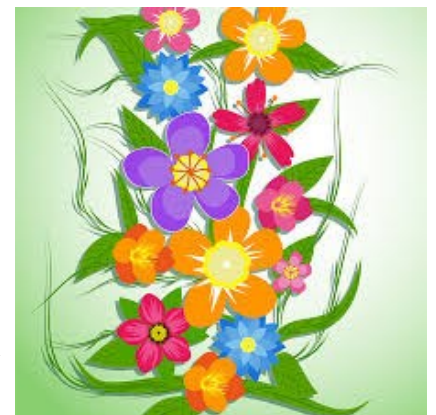
Available through Samuel French, Inc./Concord Theatricals (1991), *Drop Dead* is billed as a comedy murder mystery and it certainly is that, plus much more! Written by Billy VanZandt and Jane Milmore way before *The Play That Goes Wrong* went wrong, it bears a great resemblance, but with a simpler set! Ten delicious characters – all ripe with conventional stereotypes of community theatre folk – wind their way through two acts of hilarity!

The action of this play-within-a-play takes place on the set of a low-budget, very off-Broadway production. A washed-up megalomaniac director is trying to put on a career-saving play with a few has-been actors, hopeless no-names, and stand-ins. Even the producer's young girlfriend with no theatrical experience (but great knockers) is in the cast.

The first act is Dress Rehearsal and problems develop immediately: The set fails, there are dropped lines, missed cues, and missing furniture (with a hilarious chair *painted* on the set that people 'sit' in.)

The second act is the Opening Night performance of the play and the chaos continues. With actors chewing up the set with their overacting and egos continuing to run wild, there is an unexpected appearance by the playwright from the audience, a murder or two with bodies littering the stage, and all sorts of other mayhem you may or may not expect to happen. As the body count rises, the remaining thespians must save the show and their careers, solve the murder mystery and stay alive for curtain calls.

(A previous version of this script included a mock program for the second act show. The actors circulated in the audience at intermission and distributed the programs for the Act II 'real' production. Very funny touch and certainly unexpected! It was the director's decision to re-introduce that feature.)



The End of the Season in Michigan

June 6-8, 2024	GLEN ARBOR PLAYERS	<i>Bus Stop</i>
June 6 - 9, 2024	THE SAUK	<i>Icarus / Pandora and the Sickle Moon</i>
June 6 - 22, 2024	MASTER ARTS	<i>Twelve Angry Men</i>
June 7 - 15, 2024	SOUTHGATE COMMUNITY PLAYERS	<i>Laughter on the 23rd Floor</i>
June 7-30, 2024	TWIN CITY PLAYERS	<i>Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella</i>
June 7 - 30, 2024	GRAND RAPIDS CIVIC THEATRE	<i>Beautiful</i>
June 13-16, 2024	VILLAGE PLAYERS OF BIRMINGHAM	<i>Beauty and the Beast Jr. (youth)</i>
June 13 - 23, 2024	FLINT COMMUNITY PLAYERS	<i>Eurydice</i>
June 13 - 29, 2024	CIRCLE THEATRE	<i>You Can't Take It With You</i>
June 14-23, 2024	OWOSSO COMMUNITY PLAYERS	<i>Next to Normal</i>
June 21 - 23, 2024	PINCKNEY PLAYERS	<i>The Little Mermaid Jr.</i>
June 21 - 30, 2024	CLIO CAST AND CREW	<i>Big Fish</i>
June 26-28, 2024	MIDLAND CENTER FOR THE ARTS	<i>Newsies</i>
July 2024	CLIO CAST AND CREW	<i>Godspell</i>
July 5-13, 2024	HOLLAND COMMUNITY THEATRE	<i>Frozen Jr.</i>
July 11 - 27, 2024	CIRCLE THEATRE	<i>Spamalot</i>
July 12 - 21, 2024	TAWAS BAY PLAYERS	<i>Leaving Iowa</i>
July 12 - 28, 2024	FENTON VILLAGE PLAYERS	<i>Rock of Ages</i>
July 25 - 27, 2024	GLEN ARBOR PLAYERS	<i>The Dining Room</i>
August 1-10, 2024	HOLLAND COMMUNITY THEATRE	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>
August 8 - 24, 2024	CIRCLE THEATRE	<i>A Raisin In the Sun</i>
September 5 - 21, 2024	CIRCLE THEATRE	<i>Urinetown</i>
September 12 -14, 2024	GLEN ARBOR PLAYERS	<i>Private Lives</i>
Oct 31, Nov 1 & 2, 2024	GLEN ARBOR PLAYERS	<i>Sherlock Holmes & the Case of the Jersey Lily</i>

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



(Ed note: We are in the process of compiling the shows for next season as the dues renewals come in to the CTAM office. As you can see, we have a few, but as the seasons get confirmed and dues are paid, shows will be added to our list! Thanks for keeping us up-to-date!)

