



CTAM
Community Theatre Association of Michigan

CALLBOARD

June 2025

Start your season out right with good, basic training and workshops -- *at bargain prices!*

Through the CTAM On The Road to You workshop program, member groups have a wonderful opportunity to provide their members with educational, in-person workshops for next season.

CTAM has provided workshops across Michigan to the following theatres: Players deNoc, Lapeer Community, Circle Theatre, WE Players, and Tawas Bay Players. It's not too late to schedule one for your theatre!

CTAM will help bring in a quality workshop leader for whatever topic you and your members feel the need to work on. CTAM will pay the full stipend of \$200 and mileage for any workshop scheduled between now and September 30, 2025. Take advantage of this great opportunity. Bring to your theatre a workshop on intimacy, acting, sound or lights, directing, marketing/sponsors, board development and more.

For more information, please contact CTAM administrator Mary Jo Denolf at CTAMthrives@gmail.com.

"The most important thing about acting is honesty. If you can fake that, you've got it made."

-George Burns



HELPING COMMUNITY THEATRE *THRIVE* IN MICHIGAN SINCE 1951!



**Community Theatre
Association of Michigan**

2024-25 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Callboard

EditorMary 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.*



In My Opinion:

By Mary Lou Britton, Editor

I'm at a crossroad in my volunteering 'career.' so I've been doing a lot of thinking lately about the what and why of volunteering. I have three major volunteer involvements and all three have, within the last three weeks, come to a major turning point.

- ✓ Our theatre festival for writing and performing ten-minute plays is over;
- ✓ I'm no longer President of another non-theatre organization after eight years in that role; and
- ✓ My management committee responsibilities with a huge civic event are no longer fun!

So it's probably time to look around for some other involvement that can use my time and talents to help mankind! (You notice I didn't include money because I don't have any!)

But I'm getting fussy in my old age. I have some rules in picking my volunteer commitments:

1. I want some responsibility, but not too much. I don't want to stand at a gate and pass out flyers ... but I would like to help decide what the flyer says.
2. The Passion Factor must be present. I need to really agree with the goals of the organization and those goals need to coincide with my personal beliefs. Joining an organization because your sister-in-law wants someone to attend board meetings with her isn't proper motivation, in my mind!
3. I make it a rule to not give away what I can and did get paid for! In other words, I never serve on fundraising or marketing committees because that's what I did for a living.
4. My personal safety has become more important as I get older. I need to be able to get in and out of the main meeting space, it shouldn't be very far away from where I live, and the meetings need to be in safe spaces where I can park and walk to the building in relative safety.
5. I like meeting new people, but not too many at once.

So if an opportunity comes to mind, let me know and I'll contemplate your suggestion ... maybe!



Escanaba's Players de Noc performance space damaged by fire

Late in the night on Thursday, May 15, fire crews fought a blaze at the theater inside the Bonifas Arts Center in Escanaba. Players de Noc shares this space for their performances. In the midst of a thunderstorm, the sprinklers inside the Bonifas Theater were activated due to smoke that was filling the room. Multiple agencies quickly responded. The source of the fire was ultimately determined to be a lightning strike with the fire starting in the attic. As parts of the ceiling began to fall and visibility diminished, firefighters retreated and ventilated the theater from outside.

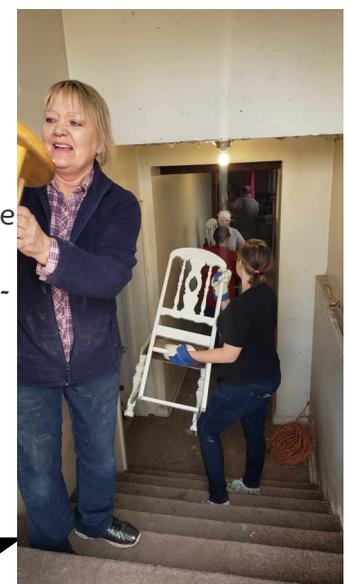
Jamie Peterson, past CTAM board member and a mainstay of Players de Noc, says the sprinklers and "mildly fire-retardant" insulation in the roof prevented the fire from spreading further than it did. Still, the effects are extensive, from water damage to the front of the stage to broken seats. The entirety of the inside of the theater will need to be cleaned and remodeled.

"I would estimate Players de Noc has lost in excess of \$100,000 worth of our equipment as far as sound, lighting, every single microphone we own, almost every single speaker," said Peterson. "We've lost four pianos in our orchestra pit, as well as other instruments. The damage is literally from the attic to our dressing rooms in the basement.

"The group's costumes remain intact. However, much of the rest of the magic that makes a Players show happen was destroyed.

"We've lost tools, our green room where we prepare for getting on stage," Peterson said. "There is damage to our operating booths. They'll have to be gutted and potentially rebuilt. All of our wiring infrastructure is gone."

[To donate CLICK HERE](#)





Mark Your Calendar

FALL CONFERENCE scheduled for
Saturday, September 27

In Midland

Registration: \$25

New source for odd, unusual set pieces

We'd like to introduce you to a new source for a wide range of unusual 'things' you might be able to use sometime! RepurposedMATERIALS is an outlet/resource for used and surplus materials for your upcoming theater projects. As America's largest "industrial thrift store," they deal in the castoffs and discards of American industry, many of which make great stage props. Buying expensive new materials for your production is not always necessary. In a surprising number of instances, a 'repurposed material' can be utilized to achieve a desired purpose. Particularly when creating sets that will only be used for a short time.

Using repurposed materials is the economic and environmentally-friendly way to go. Their theater-related customers range from high school drama departments to local theaters to major Hollywood film studios including Universal Studios, NBC, Netflix, and Paramount Pictures. Whether big or small, each of theatre is looking to find affordable, high-quality materials for their next production.

While their inventory is wide ranging, some of the staples that a lot of theater organizations purchase are retired advertising billboard vinyls, old large military cargo parachutes, etc. According to the company, "a popular one right now is our 58" x 108" heavy canvas sheets that can be painted to make stage backdrops. We can also provide stage props as diverse as fire hose, wine and whiskey barrels, and many other crazy and cool materials."

To get in touch, contact President Damon Carson (pictured) at damon@repurposedmaterialsinc.com





The Prez Sez...

BY CHUCK GODDEERIS
CTAM PRESIDENT

Summer is almost upon us and that means most theatres are wrapping up their current season and beginning to plan for their upcoming season. This means procuring rights, announcing the season's shows (if they haven't already) and hopefully taking time to reflect on the past season and how the organization can evolve and improve for their upcoming season.

First and foremost, I recommend planning and securing your following season's rights for shows prior to the opening of the last show of the current season. If this currently isn't happening with your organization, I highly encourage you to formulate a plan to do so. Don't forget to give yourself a little wiggle room on hearing back from the publishing houses as well. There's no better way to start securing funds and growing your season ticket patronage for your next season than by being able to promote your next season to the captive audience you already have in your seats.

It's also important to take time to reflect on the good and the bad from the previous season and apply those lessons to the coming season. Are there certain types of shows that did better? Did you gain new talent or lose talent? How or why did you attract that new talent or what caused you to lose that talent? How do you want your organization to grow, improve and evolve? Are there structural or technological improvements you can make to your facilities? If so, when can you allow for these changes with the least disruption to your normal schedule?

The list of questions can go on forever, but it's important that you take some time to look at some of these questions every year. We all know it's easy to get stuck in the daily grind of what's needed for the current show or the next show, but there is a litany of things you can do to improve processes for that next show/season if you plan accordingly as a group.

Document the successes as well as the woes. Potential successes could be which production teams brought in the most talent, what types of shows brought in the most patrons, what processes did you change that may have saved your organization some expenses, etc.

Just as important though, brainstorm solutions to avoid the pitfalls of previous seasons and get them written down where Board Members can easily refer to them

for years to come. We often take for granted that tribal or institutional knowledge of a group that many members just know inherently from experience. However, if it's not written down in a central location to be shared with future decision makers of your organization you are doing a disservice to your organization.

I could go on, but I will get off my soapbox and now call out a few great things I see happening to community theatre in this great state.

First and foremost, I want to applaud the wonderful community that Players de Noc (PdN) has established in Escanaba. As many of you know they recently suffered a hardship and a major fire damaged their building, but this has not slowed their resolve or resilience. PdN has been hard at work gathering volunteers from all around their community to help clean up and repair the damages. We've seen support come from all parts of the state to help this great organization. If you want to be part of that support and recovery effort, you can [donate here](#) or contact the organization to fill out the form on the bottom of that page to find out how you can help support them in other ways.

Secondly, our friends at Stagecrafters in Royal Oak are set to represent community theatre at National AACT-Fest at the end of June (in Des Moines, Iowa) with their production of *Silent Sky*. It's a wonderful production and we wish them many broken legs. It's still not too late to register to make the trip and see some great theatre from across the whole nation and partake in some fantastic workshops.

Thirdly, we are very close to announcing our workshops for this Fall's Conference, which will take place on Saturday, September 27th in Midland. We will be charging a small attendance fee of \$25 this year, but the cost will be worth it as we have several experienced and respected presenters lined up to teach us extremely valuable information to level up your theatre skills and knowledge.

Lastly, it's still not too late to reach out to us and take advantage of our On The Road Workshops. We still have opportunities left and with many theatres doing fewer shows in the Summer, this provides you a great opportunity to allow us to bring a vital workshop to your organization. You can email us at ctamthrives@gmail.com or visit our website at fill out our new [Help Center](#) form to let us know how we can help you. Remember, we are here to help you grow and improve theatre in your area!

Have a great summer and get ready for another terrific season of theatre in Michigan!!

