

Tawas Bay Players Newsletter

May/June 2016



Time Traveling Webbs by Michal Jacot

In mid-April some TBPers had a chance to go back in time when AuGres-Sims School's drama club presented *Tangled Webbs*. *Tangled Webbs* was one of the first scripts I wrote. It was shortly after I heard one of Vincent Weiler's many nuggets of theater wisdom: to have a really good farce, have a lot of doors and lots of quick entrances and exits. And, Vince added, preferably have people slam those doors every time they enter or exit.

So I went about writing a script with lots of doors, and I tried to make someone enter or exit on every page, if possible. It placed in the CTAM Playwriting Contest, and in 1986, the Tawas Bay Players put it on their season schedule. *Tangled Webbs* was the first full-length script of mine that was presented on stage; it was the Tawas Bay Players' first "world premiere" production and it was my first outing as director. As you can imagine, I was quite proud of the result, and it was especially satisfying to see the words I wrote performed onstage by my theater group, my friends.

Shortly afterwards, *Tangled Webbs* (and its sequels) was picked up by Eldridge Publishing and became officially published, which meant that it was performed all around the country. Whenever I got wind of a performance within a reasonable driving distance, I'd go see it. 1986. Thirty years ago.

Now fast forward to 2016. AuGres-Sims School presents *Tangled Webbs*. Of course, I want to go see it, but wouldn't it be fun, I thought, to get the original cast together and go see it as a group? Everybody was still around and available, so a few quick phone calls and emails, and we had a unique road trip planned, The Very First TW Cast and The Newest TW Cast! The first thing we noticed is that some of us are not as young as we looked back then. Man, 30 years will sure do a number on your body. I brought some photos of our original show to pass around, if anyone needed proof that we used to be young and fit. The only one who got away with the change was Keith Frank, who got into the spirit of things by graying his hair to look like Fenwick.

The kids did an admirable job. Some cast members were 7th grade, which puts them at, what, 13 years old? But they did a great job and our cast was amazed at how many lines they remembered after three decades. I think some of them could have prompted from the audience! We were treated like celebrities at the show; the director roped off a row of seats for us and made us look like rock stars. And after the show we had a real fun photo shoot (included here in this newsletter) with both versions of each character. The only one who didn't make it to our reunion trip was Mark Finnell (our Elwood).

It was a wonderful opportunity to watch a show and relive some of the fun with the old gang. AuGres-Sims is already begging their teacher to do *Tangled Webbs 2*. As for me, I'm thinking about another sequel ... what are the Webbs up to thirty years later....?



***The Marvelous Wonderettes* by Vickie Szatkowski**

29 lyrics, 29 musical scores, 29 dance movements . . . and you have the Marvelous Wonderettes. Along with four marvelous musicians in our pit, a marvelous crew, director, producer and vocal director. Wow, what a show. Thanks to Tara Western for recommending this show to Dennis. As soon as he looked it over, he knew it could be a hit. With a tremendous amount of work on everyone's part, this show proved to be a big success for the players. Everyone who saw the show loved it and some came back a second time. (The King family came back even more than twice). There isn't any way to thank everyone in this short article, but you all know who you are, and we appreciate all you did! Tah Dah!!

Spring Conference Round Up by Donna Thomas

Tawas Bay Players hosted the Spring Conference for the Community Theater Association of Michigan (CTAM) May 13-15. Over 30 attendees representing 12 theater groups throughout the state were in attendance. They were also able to attend a production of *The Marvelous Wonderettes*, by TBP.

Numerous local businesses helped to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere by donating items for the raffle and providing locations for workshops. Among those were Knights of Columbus, Brew Krew, Tawas Bay Art Gallery, Twisted Twinz Emporium, Witz End, Klenows Market, Bayview Cottages, Summer Sands Cottages, Always a Holiday Bed and Breakfast, Blue Bear Jewelry, Branham's Jewelry, North Country Embroidery, Village Chocolatier, and Freel's Market. The following businesses donated funds to help pay for the event: Tri County Insurance, Tawas Bay Insurance, Huron Community Bank, Tawas Women's Invitational Softball Tournament, Jay's RV, Seymour's Furniture, and Idzior Furniture.

We will never be able to thank all our TBP volunteers who made this event possible but a big shout out goes to new member Shelly Crossley for preparing snacks for both our meet and greet event and our morning workshops. TBP members also taught workshops, this included Tara Western, Carol Kushion, Pam Katona, Jeff Chadwick and Sue Duncan. Others volunteered to just help out, that would be Tina and Alan Dalton, Deb DeBois, June Hudgins, Stacy Perrot, and Donna Thomas. Photos were taken by volunteers Pam Frank and Beth Borowski, and Jane Mundy, Pam Frank and Craig Sayer did a fantastic job decorating the K of C Hall for our dinner on Saturday night.

We received nothing but praise for the event, everyone enjoying the diversity of the workshops and the topics! CTAM also presented TBP with a donation in the memory of CTAM Past President and TBP member Vincent Weiler. The TBP board has decided to use this to purchase a decorative shrub to be planted outside the playhouse. The weather held well and we danced to the wee hours on Saturday night at the Beach Resort. This was a great opportunity to show off our community and theater, we did just that with our production too!

Spring CTAM Conference by Tara Western

"Blocking the Herd" was presented by our very own Carol Kushion. Anyone who has directed a show with a chorus or even a crowd scene should talk to Carol about Chorus Camp. Better yet, let's have her do another workshop! Carol approaches the chorus as a distinct and important character of the show. Calling in the chorus for 3-5 rehearsals of focused rehearsal will pay off. If the director can't find the time perhaps an Assistant director, choreographer, or even a veteran chorus person can lead.

Day 1: Teach them the terminology of the stage left/right, full front, turns etc. And practice it!!! She even uses flash cards (No matter what you are directing, get a copy of this you can contact me at tarawestern@hotmail.com) Day 2: Backstory development. Day 3: Ensemble work with the actors on stage practicing movements, entrances, exits. All movements should be in "character" as determined by the actor's backstory. Also, assign people to groups of 3-5 and a "home" spot on the stage.

Ben Zylman **"Makes 'Em Laugh!"** Ben is a hoot! He thoroughly enjoyed harassing the kids from Witz End with a frequent "write this down"! The basic rule of comedy is that the actor is not there to get the audience to laugh, but to tell the story. Be honest and fearless.

Leeds Bird makes sure **“You Can Hear Me Now”** Basic: say the words slow (and enunciate the ends of words, along with the consonants), but make the spaces between the words fast. Make sense? No? See me! Both Ben and Leeds are available for workshops at our theatre!

Dine Around: Sharon Langley, Tara Western and Carol Kushion hosted at Barnacle Bill’s and we ended up with three new friends from Lapeer, Jan, Chris, and Richard, or as I like to call him, Robert! It was busy, but we had super food and great service and lots of fun, especially when Pam and Keith Frank, and Chris and Janie Mundy joined us.

High Notes: Refreshment coordinator, Michelle Crossley (from Tawas City Library Friends) was wonderful with her efficient help and friendly attitude. Did you know she did all the prep at home by herself!? Jeff Chadwick reunited with his high school drama teacher, Leeds Bird, at lunch at G’s on Saturday. They hadn’t seen each other in 37 years! Margaret Bird taught Jeff too! The Knights of Columbus’ décor and the centerpieces that Pam Frank, Janie Mundy, and Craig Sayer created were the bomb!

My CTAM Conference Experience by Pam Frank

I had the pleasure of attending my first CTAM Conference last month. I learned quite a lot from each workshop but Leeds Bird’s “Can You Hear Me Now” was especially memorable. He remarked that everyone under the age of 40 talks too fast. His explanation of being articulate is to allow all of the time necessary to pronounce each word but to make the spaces between the words short. I am now paying more attention when I speak (especially when I talk to older customers at work) and hopefully that will help with both acting and singing. Thanks Leeds.



Also memorable was Carrie Butler’s special effects makeup presentation. She showed us how to do amazing special effects with cotton ball, tissue paper and liquid latex. Carrie was fun and a great presenter. The photo shows how realistic the makeup application was and why one of the visitors to the Tawas Bay Art Gallery wanted to call 911. TBP may never do a show that requires such realism but it’s good to know that it is possible.



***Happy Birthday Dear Grandpa* by June Hudgins**

A cantankerous grandfather, ill tempered, and paranoid is determined to think that his Grandkids, 3 younger adults are trying to kill him for their inheritance (\$642 and a postcard collection). Grandpa doesn't mind shouting it down the halls of the apartment building to alert whatever neighbors he can. So when Grandpa suddenly slumps forward, face down into the birthday cake at his surprise party the grandkids realize it looks like murder and they are the suspects. This play is a prequel to *Merry Christmas, Dear Grandpa* which was presented as the fall show in 2014. Both plays were written by Michal Jacot

The Cast:

Grandpa Hartley.....George Robson
Abner Skaminisky.....Andy DeWilde
Frankie Hartly.....Christen Lutz
Keith Hartley.....Michael Jacot
Amber Hartley.....Barb Hunter
Mrs. Kelly.....Sue Dowell
Detective Macy.....Rodger Mcelveen

I still need 1 or 2 younger actors, to be the young officers. These are very small parts at the end of the play.

***Love, Loss and What I Wore* by Brenda Chadwick**

On Tuesday I got the go ahead from the Tawas Bay Players Board of Directors to move forward with a play called *Love, Loss and What I Wore*. This play will be put on in addition to the normal Players' season and will be billed as a "Tawas Bay Players After Hours" production. The concept of TBP After Hours is to bring different shows to our stage in order to appeal to a new audience. The After Hours shows will have more adult themes and language and that is the case with *Love, Loss and What I Wore*. I have the privilege to direct this first play in the new format and I am very excited. The play is for an all female cast and tells the stories of the characters' lives and how what they wore at a particular time in their life played a part. Most women I know can relate to buying their first bra, remember their brownie uniform or their all-time favorite "outfit", or remember what they were wearing when a life changing event happened to them. Ask me and I'll tell you about my white go go boots. One of the best things about this show is that there are 14 parts and some of them are only a paragraph long. So, for anyone who has limited or no stage experience, this is a perfect show to "dip your toe in the water" and try on a small part. It will be great fun and it's an exciting step for the Tawas Bay Players. The pressure is on for me to make this a success so I am counting on my friends to audition, volunteer for backstage or come to a performance. I'm honored by the Board's confidence in me and so excited to direct this fantastic show! Performance dates will be Friday and Saturday, September 9 & 10 and Thursday through Saturday September 15, 16 & 17. There will not be Sunday matinees. Auditions will be held Monday June 20th and Tuesday, June 21st from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. the Playhouse. Please come prepared to tell us about a piece of clothing or an outfit that is memorable to you and why. If you have questions you may call Brenda at 989-820-5174.

TBP at TAHS

Several members of the Tawas Bay Players made presentations to the Tawas Area High School Theater class taught by Miss Devan Bridget.

Pam Frank – "I talked about makeup and costumes and the part that they play in a production. I did a short demonstration, applying makeup on a couple of volunteers. The students were great and asked lots of questions. I was pleasantly surprised to find that 4 of them have been in TBP youth productions."

Michal Jacot – "I talked about how to conduct yourself as an actor throughout the audition/rehearsal/performance process. I advised them to come prepared for auditions with your calendar and how missing rehearsals impacts everyone else. I also talked about treating backstage crew with respect."

Sue Duncan – “Dinner theatre murder mysteries are a lot more than eating while you watch a live show. They involve more direct and close up audience participation, and a problem solver character, like a detective, cop, or wise person. The Tawas Bay Players style of presentation usually involves much improvisation by the characters. Some scripts are very memorization heavy and others are more narrator directed. Our audiences seem to like our style. Even though we doubled the number of performances this past year, we still had people asking for more!”

Diane Ray – “Suzan Dunham and I went on Monday, to talk about building and dressing the set. I took along cardboard roof shingles I had made for Huron Camp Cedar ridge's Oklahoma Set. Then I showed them what to do to prepare cardboard for painting, painted stone and brick work and the various ways one could do that with masking tape. I discussed looking at nature to find paint colors and ideas for backdrops, how to paint snow, and how to minimize the set with one important focal point using a single large set piece signifying the main focal point of a location like a ships' single focal point could be the mast of the ship instead of putting a whole ship on stage. (I stole that idea from Leeds Byrd at the fall conference in his workshop)”

Deb DeBois – “I went on Tuesday to visit the drama class at TAHS and discussed directing for 25 minutes. I first talked about how the director needed to read and go over the script many times to get a clear concept of the story, characters, costumes, props and how you might incorporate a set onto the stage of your theater space. We discussed the auditions and what you need to look for in a cast, then differences in directing small and large casts, and some of the types of theater that I had done (comedy, farce, drama, large scale and small scale musicals). We also talked about working with experienced and novice actors, amounts of rehearsal times and how they differ between a comedy, drama and a musical. The students asked questions throughout the presentation and I had a very nice time, enjoying their knowledge and enthusiasm.”

Raffle Time! Raffle Time! Sell! Sell! Sell! by Deb DeBois

The Annual Summer Raffle is about to get underway once again. You will be receiving your tickets, personally or in the mail shortly. The first outing is scheduled for Memorial Day Weekend at the Arts and Crafts show and we will continue to be at various events and locations throughout the summer. The drawing will be September 26th at 8:15 a.m. on WKJC Radio, 104.7. This year our ticket prices have been changed to \$5 each or 6 tickets for \$20 which is comparable to other raffles in the area. Please sell all of your tickets and then ask for more. We can make a lot of money for TBP if everyone does their part.

If you would like to help me sell tickets at the summer's events please give me a call at 362-6800. The events run sometimes 2-3 times a week from now until the drawing and I could use the help selling, driving to and from and settling up. Thanks to you all!

2016 Prizes

1st - John Deere D-130 Lawn Tractor with bagger

2nd - 42,000 BTU Weber Gas Grill with cover and utensils

3rd - \$300

4th - \$200

5th - \$100

6th - Two TBP Season tickets

Save the Date

The 2016 TBP Annual Meeting has been scheduled for Friday evening, August 12, 2016. It will be held at the Knights of Columbus Hall in East Tawas. This year the meeting won't interfere with weekend plans and we don't have to cook. Another plus is that every dinner provided by the K of C is delicious. Mark your calendar now and plan to attend this fun-filled event!

Murder Mystery Is Out Of This World! by Michal Jacot

The first year we tested the waters with one night of dinner theater. That was a huge success, so the next time (last January) we presented "Lost in the 60's" for two nights. That, too, was highly successful.

Our third annual Murder Mystery Dinner Theater, done in conjunction with the Knights of Columbus, is a go! The success we've had with the previous ones have helped us build this project, and each year we learn a little bit more about what we can do, what we shouldn't do, and how we can do it better.

And what is this year's murder mystery, you ask? Well, it's another Michal Jacot original, called "Murder At Roswell." It takes place in the Area 51 Diner. Is it murder, or is it an alien abduction? There is an assortment of wild and wacky people – your usual gang of crazy old ladies, conspiracy theorists, and guys in tinfoil hats. And it's all wrapped around an audience-interactive murder mystery. It promises to be a lot of fun and a lot of laughs.

It's not until January, but producer Sue Duncan and I, the director/writer, are already working on it. Spread the word, and be prepared for some out of this world fun at the Knights of Columbus on Friday and Saturday, January 27 & 28!



Happy Birthday



May	June	July	August
2 Diane King	4 Michal Jacot	2 Al Bixby	4 Brenda Chadwick
2 Patricia King	15 Lynn Phillips	2 Alan Dalton	4 Reesie Smith
5 Diane Brewer	21 Laurie Jacot	5 Buck Weaver	12 June Hudgins
7 Gregory Jacot	22 Pat Ruster	9 Feliwelyn Shuart	15 Jeff Chadwick
7 Charles Shuart Jr.	26 Kay Robson	13 Larry Van Wagoner	15 Brian Shmina
7 Joyce Hill	30 Mary Ann Michalski	15 Deb DeBois	20 Shirley Robson
9 Diane Teddy		18 Mary Henry	23 Bob Zacharias
13 Pam Frank		18 Betty DeWilde	23 Charleson Shuart
17 Suzan Dunham		21 Gatlyn Dunham	24 Jolene Grusecki
17 Warren Brewer		22 Janie Mundy	29 Pam Koepke
18 Paula Dery		27 Dee Bixby	30 Phyllis Spencer
24 Mike Merluzzi			
26 Tom LeClair			
30 Andre DeWilde			
30 Alan Kushion			



I Know a Guy Who Knows a Guy Who Can Save You Money at Home Depot by Michal Jacot

If you have a painting project coming up, here's a way you can save money. My friend Chuck Reddick passes this on to everyone in the TBP: He knows a construction guy named Mike Johnson who has an account at Home Depot. By supplying HD with Mike's special number, you can receive up to 20% off your paint supply purchases. Before you ask, Mr. Johnson is actually encouraging you all to use this number (it benefits his business in the long run; it's a win-win for all.) Anyone in the TBP, and any of your friends, are welcome to use this number to get a discount.

That discount number is #12317758685. Chuck tells me that if you ask to use this number at checkout, you type it into the keypad and shazam, your discount is automatically figured in. It is good for anyone to use, so if you purchase any paint supplies for TBP, for yourself, or for any of your friends, don't be afraid to use this number. Mr. Johnson will thank you for it, and you save some cash!

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The Marvelous Wonderettes

