

Tawas Bay Players Newsletter

May/June 2014



***The Women of Lockerbie* by Deb DeBois**

When I was asked to write about this show from the Director's point of view after working on the show, I thought of what made me want to direct this play in the first place. From the moment I read *The Women of Lockerbie*, I was drawn to the powerful story and to the feelings and emotions that it brought out. I thought about how wonderful it would be to present this to our audiences, to let them experience a different type of play. I wanted to let our patrons have the chance to grow and try new things, not to mention to let them see how many truly talented members of TBP there are, both on and off stage. From tryouts on, the effect this play has had on those watching the rehearsals and their reactions have given me a very proud feeling about this play. Because of this story's drama, the show will be done whole, without an intermission. It will run 80 to 90 minutes and we will have an afterglow reception following each performance, providing refreshments and an opportunity for the audience to talk with the cast.

This show has come with challenges too. Finding people to work on the crews, special effects problems, and special set requirements have kept things interesting. It has also been different staging this show since it is a different style of drama, new to our stage. *The Women of Lockerbie* is written in the style of a Greek tragedy with poetry and a chorus in telling the horrible story of what happened in Lockerbie, Scotland in a way that the audience can bear.

You may cry and laugh as you follow the story along. I hope that you will really feel part of these people's lives and that you will come away with the feeling that something good can come out of a hateful, vengeful act. Please join me, Diane Ray, Taura Williamson and our wonderful cast and crew for a performance of *The Women of Lockerbie*. We are sure that you will be moved by the play.

Cast members include Suzan Witt as Madeline Livingston, Ray Skiver as her husband, Bill Livingston, Sue Dowell as Olive Allison, June Hudgins as Hattie, Alan Dalton as George Jones and Tina Dalton, Stacy Perrot, Reesie Smith, and Donna Thomas as the women of Lockerbie, Scotland.

3rd Annual Park and Sell by Diane Ray

Don't miss being part of the big sale coming up in our parking lot on Saturday, May 24, 2014 from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. We need vendors for 25 spaces at the cost of \$10 per space. You can bring your gently used merchandise, household, clothing, lawn tools, or new plants, crafts, and anything of value to sell. You can also bring plants from your garden, handmade crafts or other items. This is a great way to make a little extra money without the time, effort and expense of holding your own garage sale; all of the advertising will be done for you. Please remember to bring your own chair for the sale.

If you don't have enough items to fill a space of your own consider sharing a space with someone or donating your items to be sold from the TBP table. We need volunteers to staff the donation table during the sale. You can also help TBP by bringing baked goods to be sold (by donation) and we will also offer coffee and donuts for sale. We will be at the theater Friday, May 23rd to take donated items from 5 - 6 p.m. If you can't make it then, call to make special arrangements. All of the money made from the sale (both in the rental fees and sale of donations) will go into a fund for tools and items needed for the theater. We ask that everyone join in and take your items that you don't sell back home. Thank-you!

To sign up for a space, to volunteer or for more information, contact Diane Ray, 305-6767 or Janie Mundy, 362-9199.

USO Show Gift Basket Raffle Fund Raiser

A gift basket raffle fund raiser is being planned for this summer's USO shows. One basket will be raffled at each of the seven performances. Tickets will be sold pre-show and during intermission with the drawing to take place during the second half of the show. We are hoping this will be a lot of fun for our patrons as well as raising a few extra dollars for TBP. We are asking for volunteers to help with this great fund raiser, if you can help please call Janie Mundy at 362-9199.



TBP Singers Update by Pat Casey

The TBP Singers are off and running again. We want to welcome our newest member Katie Hill to our group (you may remember her from *Sleeping Beauty*). We'll be singing for a Mother/Daughter get together at Tawas Village on May 9th. Then we move on to the Baptist Church in Tawas City, May 17th and then for our favorite group, The Women Bowlers Association on June 13th. We haven't decided on our summer schedule yet but keep us in mind when you hear of anyone who needs entertainment.

Good Times...And We Learned A Lot Too! By Tara Western

What a great weekend! Tawas Bay Players members Alan Dalton, Tina Dalton, Deb DeBois, Sue Duncan, June Hudgins, Sharon Langley, Reesie Smith, Vincent Weiler, Tara Western, and Suzan Witt journeyed to Bay City for the spring CTAM conference April 25-27. We ate, we drank, we were merry, we learned, and mostly we NETWORKED!



The Doubletree Hotel is beautiful. We were greeted with a large warm chocolate chip cookie. Several Players dined with the CTAM big wigs that first night. At the reception after dinner, we found out that I had won the "New Drink Recipe" contest with my Rum Nutz! (The recipe follows.) The winning prize was two drink tickets (they were selling them for \$5.95!) Next my "entourage" chose me for the Theater Jeopardy contest* and we all found out that Alan is afraid of magicians! (*I came in second, "with a little help from my friends"!)

Saturday we attended workshops on various topics (note articles by other attendees.) We had a lovely lunch at the Old City Hall (BRAG ALERT: the restaurant is co-owned by my former student David Dittenber from AuGres!) We met Leeds and Margaret Bird for dinner at a new Italian restaurant called Café Cremosi, where we pretty much filled the place. Showing off my new iphone voice text capability, I posted a photo of all of us entitled "The Taiwan Bay Players"! Suzan ventured to the bathroom first, returning much later with a fantastical story of going through a bowling alley, a bar and then she said you have to return through a magical door labeled PIZZA. It sounds like she may have had too much wine!

Sunday morning found us taking part in a group discussion on a variety of topics, followed by a lovely brunch served in the Bay City Players lobby. We met a lot of great people: The Birds, Joanne (conference chair) and Kerry Berry, Michael Wisniewski, Debra Monroe (her dad was Herb Escott, Tawas football coach for many years!). Nathan Cholger who played the title role in Saturday night's play, *The Final Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* also grew up in Tawas! As you can tell, we returned with knowledge, ideas, and renewed enthusiasm for our own beloved theatre.

Winner of the Bay City Players' Drink Recipe Contest

Rum Nutz

1.5 oz coconut rum

16 oz pineapple - coconut flavored water (you can find it at Walmart)

Optional: add pineapple juice to taste

Garnish with chunk of pineapple.

Serve over ice.



Why You Should Go to a CTAM Conference by Suzan Witt

Don't wait! Sign up for the fall conference now! The CTAM spring conference was refreshing, exhilarating, progressive, and fun – so much FUN! CTAM conferences offer an opportunity for *anyone* interested in theatre to learn how to enhance performances through knowledge and experience, whether it is on stage, behind the scenes or in the house. The Conference air is charged with excitement, ideas, and positive attitudes. Quality theater touches lives. The Conference affirms not only our value in the community but also the need for us to exist. From the moment you are greeted at the door until the lingering good-byes at the end, you will be surrounded by creative people that share a passion for theater. These people truly want each of us and our theatres to be successful. You will create a network of caring people that want you to reach your potential in theatre and life. What a wonderful way to spend a weekend!

Tina's Take by Tina Dalton

This was the first time Alan and I attended a conference and we had a great time. We learned a lot, finding good information that we didn't know was out there. We would love to attend some more in the future. I encourage anyone who has not gone to go!

One of the classes I attended was "Show Me the Money" led by Debra Monroe. In this class we talked about raising money to keep Community Theater growing. From Debra: Don't be afraid to ask for donation. We are not BEGGING for money! We are providing a service to the community. Consider providing things for them to look at. For example, include your annual reports in your newsletters, or give them a link where they can go to see this information. It helps for them to see where their money is going and what it is doing. This keeps your donors loyal.

CTAM Workshop Report by Deb DeBois

I attended the workshop titled **Photoshop Your Blocking: Making Stage Pictures Talk** taught by Leeds Bird of the Bay City Players. Leeds talked about blocking the actors to make the best possible stage pictures and how blocking can focus the attention of the audience to the characters that are the most important at any given moment during the production. He also explained how to keep the audience from being distracted by the actors on the outer edges of the action. Using handouts and demonstrations he showed us the strongest and weakest areas of the stage in which to place people and the importance of height and furniture placement in blocking. He also spoke about how the various positions of the actors own body can affect which characters are perceived as the important ones. Leeds gave us photographs of actual productions and had us analyze the focus of each and who the primary and secondary characters were in each. This workshop was very helpful, not only to directors but to actors as well.

What I Learned At the CTAM Conference by Sue Duncan

Communicate, Communicate!

In just a few minutes my group named thirty-two different jobs that were routinely needed to put a performance on stage. Looking back I see we missed actors! (And orchestra.) Thirty plus, Wow. That is a lot of people to communicate to and with. That was the basis for a workshop led by Tina Sills of Bay City Players that spelled out ways to get things done in a timely, responsible and respectful fashion.

It has been my experience that it is not always obvious who one should go to, or when, as situations arise during play production. The answer (in a nutshell) given in this workshop was that the director is the decider and boss of all things. A good director will plan and discuss everything possible with ALL of the cast and crew far ahead of rehearsals and then continue to meet as needed during rehearsals. Sounds simple. Time consuming up front, but how big a payoff is there at the end? Hmmmm...might be worth finding out!

Comedy Is Serious Business

This was another workshop attended by a non-actor, and first time conference attendee, me! It sounded like fun compared to the other two offered at that time. (After talking with others about those workshops it turned out that ANY of the workshops would've been helpful and interesting.) So, not needing to learn how comedy works I settled

back to just have a good time. Boy, was I wrong! I discovered I needed to know how complex this acting thing is. I had no idea there was so much going on in an actor's or directors head in preparation for a performance. I now have a new appreciation for the challenges and stresses of being on stage. It will make me a more understanding and patient backstage member. (No more grumbling about minor things like remaking a prop! It turns out I've got the cushy job.)

Where's The Money?

It is always the bottom line, isn't it? Wouldn't we love to have that bottom line be a half million raised in two and a half years? That is what volunteer Debra Monroe was able to do through sponsorships, grants and donations from members of Bay City Players and local business and groups. How? By asking. Proudly. Do we offer a unique and valuable service to our community? You bet! Are people offered quality performance that enriches life? Yes, ma'am! Can we be just as proud and just as proactive about getting out there and asking? Sure can!! It isn't easy and it takes time and commitment. Maybe you'd be willing to help. Talk to a Board Member about making a difference. You could be a donor, or the volunteer to organize the Players being recipients for lots of bucks!!! The electric, heating, water and rent bills keep on rolling in whether we have a show going on or not. So other money is always welcome. In conclusion, I sure am glad I went to CTAM this spring. I am looking forward to learning, enjoying and maybe even bringing back some useful information from the fall conference in September.

Future CTAM/AACT Conferences 2014-2015

Conference	When	Where	Synopsis
CTAM Fall Conference	September 26-28, 2014	McGuire's in Cadillac	Michigan workshops, etc.
State AACT festival	March 27-29, 2015	Owosso	Michigan only - One hour productions
Regional AACT festival	April 16-19, 2015	Midland	Winners of State festivals in Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin & Ohio
National AACT festival	June 22-28, 2015	Grand Rapids—Amway Grand	Winners of each regional festival, the best of the best

CTAM=Community Theater of Michigan

AACT=American Association of Community Theaters

From Our TBP Family

Barb Hunter's Retirement

Jolene Grusecki invites all TBP members to help Barb celebrate her retirement by stopping in to an open house. Since it is an open house, come and go as you please; there's no need to RSVP.

Saturday, June 14th

7:00p.m. – 9:00 p.m. or so

Back room of Barnacle Bill's on Newman Street in East Tawas

Cash bar & order from the menu

Witz End

Suzan wanted to share with TBP members that she has cast 44 young actors for her youth production of *Peter Pan and Wendy* and those are just the speaking parts. She is expecting many more young children to fill the roles of mermaids, Indians and pirates. The play will be August 8th and 9th in the auditorium at Oscoda High School. She is holding it there due to the technical requirements of the show, namely flying. Suzan also wants to make sure everyone is aware of the name change (from Tawas Bay Performing Arts to Witz End) and to invite all to check out her new website www.witzend.co

How to Be a Theater Ninja by Michal Jacot

Everybody knows that ninjas wear black. In fact, nothing screams "I'm a ninja!" better than your basic black pajamas. This is a misconception, since real ninjas tried to blend in with the groups they were trying to infiltrate, often wearing replicas of the opposing army's uniform and colors. (Hang on, here's where the theater connection comes in.) The all-black ninja garb can actually be traced back to Kabuki theater, where ninjas were popular characters in the 1700's. Kabuki stagehands always wore long black outfits to signify that the audience should ignore them. When directors wanted the audience to pretend that ninja characters were also invisible, they dressed those actors in the stagehands' black uniforms. So the next time you're working backstage and the director tells you to wear black, you are actually becoming a Theater Ninja! Use your power wisely.

Theater News by Pat Casey

Star Curtain

This winter we've made a couple of changes to our stage. The first was the Star Curtain. Dennis Szatkowski II put it together for the teen production of *Aida* and then it was stored up in the barn. Since many times we need a black backdrop, the curtain was brought out of retirement. Barry Schley and helper moved the supports to the back of the stage and then put it all back together and hung it. It can now be raised/lowered from the tech room and the different sections light up. The "light up" had a little help from Lyle Groff. Foolishly, when we had it all down, we forgot to see if everything lit. It didn't and Lyle came to the rescue. As of this writing, two of the three sections were working and I predict they all will be working if Lyle has anything to do with it! Thanks Lyle. You are da man!

Editor's note: It looks fantastic as evidenced by the collective gasp from the audience at the start of *The Women of Lockerbie*.

Sound System

We have had issues with some of our patrons being unable to hear the actors. Quota Club offered to help defray the cost of improving our sound system so we had a couple of different sound people come in and bid on the project. We decided to go with Ryan Rousseau Enterprises. The equipment was purchased through Guitar Center (Ask for Matt Rose) in Saginaw. They were wonderful to work with and gave us a nice discount on the equipment. I met Ryan, Rick, and "the ninja" (He was the little guy they made go up in the ceiling!) on a Sunday morning and almost 11 hours later the new sound system was in. If you ever need a sound system put in, these guys were great and fun to work with, too. We now have nine working microphones to cover our stage area. Six are directly over the stage and all nine can be individually adjusted. *The Women of Lockerbie* will be our first show with the new microphones and although they may need a little fine tuning the whole sound system is very simplified up in the tech room. Therefore, don't be afraid when someone calls and asked you to do sound. You can do it. Piece of cake! If you see a Quota Club member, remember to thank them for their support.

Theater Phone

Not a big deal but a heads up for everyone. You may not be aware that the phone at the theater does not have long distance included. Charter is our phone provider but we opted to not include long distance. As a result we get charged for any calls that aren't local or 800 numbers. Our last bill came in with a number of charges for calls in Michigan (Sixty Lakes, Prescott, Cadillac, Alpena, Traverse City, & Glennie) plus one to a number in Haddon Hts, New Jersey. If possible, please use your cell. If you must call for theater business and no other options are available, then there is no problem. Some of these may have been box office calls. I have no way of knowing but again, it's not a biggie, just wanted to make you aware. Thanks for your cooperation.

Outdoor Clean Up

We want to recognize Diane Ray, Mary Kiernan, Mary Ann Michalski and June Groff and thank them for their efforts raking and cleaning up outside around the theater. It looks great!



Term Limit Survey by Keith Frank

As you are all aware, at the annual meeting held last August at Tom Dillon Park, the subject of term limits for TBP board members was discussed. Many pros and cons were mentioned. Since attendance at the meeting was low, a vote on the issue was not taken. Instead, it was agreed the members present that the board would formulate and distribute a term limit survey to the membership. It was also agreed that if the majority of the members supported the idea of term limits, the topic would be placed on the agenda for the 2014 annual meeting and a vote would be taken. If however, the majority of the membership was opposed to term limits, the topic would become a dead issue and no further action would be taken.

Through the months of September thru December, emails and newsletter articles were sent to present and past members from 2013. Those articles and emails were intended to alert members that the surveys would be coming out soon and everyone was urged to renew their memberships for 2014 so they would be sure to receive one.

In January 2014, 139 surveys were mailed out to the adult members of the TBP. In order for the surveys to be counted, they had to be postmarked by February 15, 2014. Of the 139 surveys that were mailed out, 106 were returned (a percentage of 76.3%). One of the surveys returned was blank with a note that the sender had no opinion one way or the other. That left 105 surveys to be tabulated. Of those tabulated, 60% (63 surveys) were opposed to term limits. 40% (42 surveys) were in favor of term limits.

So, as agreed last August at the annual meeting, since the majority of TBP members are opposed to term limits, there will be no further action taken on the issue. I would like to thank all of our members who took the time to complete and return the survey.

TBP Board Contact Information

Keith Frank – President	362-8492	k.frank@charter.net
June Hudgins – Vice President/House Manager	362-8423	jhudgins8423@charter.net
Vickie Szatkowski – Secretary	362-6419	densden2@yahoo.com
Pat Casey – Treasurer/Singers	362-6012	pcasey@chartermi.net
Debra DeBois – Corresponding Secretary	362-6800	debois@charter.net
Chris Mundy	362-9199	daddoo10@hotmail.com
Penny Zacharias	739-1903	pzac7@yahoo.com
Judy Quarters	362-8463	judykq@hotmail.com
Sue Duncan	362-2522	smdunc@charter.net

Another One Bites The Dust by Michal Jacot

I just wanted to let my TBP family know that I have another play published as of this month! I was not going to say anything, but Jane Ruster demanded that I blow my own horn, and Jane is an unstoppable force of nature. So, here I am, blowing that horn.

This makes eight plays I've gotten published. They have been done in 41 of our 50 states and Canada. My very first published script is *Happy Birthday, Dear Grandpa*, a farce centering around a cantankerous senior citizen and his three adult grandchildren. There are a lot of sight gags, mistaken identities, and general foolishness. It was picked up by Eldridge Publishing way back in 1996. It is by far the most popular of my published works. It is produced the most often, and the one I get the most royalties on. In my computer room I have a map of the United States, with colored pushpins representing each place one of my plays has been done. *HBDG* is represented the most (with *You Know the Old Slaying* a close second, which TBP did when it was titled *Stages of Death*.)

So, I thought, why not do a sequel? Well, it's not really a sequel, it's more "the further adventures" of some of the characters, but I liked the characters and wanted to play around with them some more. So I came up with *Merry Christmas, Dear Grandpa*. *MCDG* still features the three adult grandchildren. Amber is a fussy neat freak, and she is determined to have the "perfect family Christmas" at her new home. She invites the family – her sister Frankie and

brother Keith, her doting parents, and, of course, crabby Grandpa – to spend the holidays. She’s getting ready to make the “perfect” traditional Christmas dinner, when she steps outside, slips, falls, and breaks both of her wrists. Hm. I wonder where I got that idea? ...

Anyway, now it’s up to the slothful siblings to pick up the slack for the dinner. Amber’s mom is a total train wreck in the kitchen (she once caused a house fire making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich), so dinner falls into the less-than-capable hands of Keith and Frankie. (Keith-Frankie? I never noticed that before. I must have been subconsciously naming characters for my friends.) It turned into a nice little holiday script with a lot of laughs. I sent it to Eldridge for their consideration, and they picked it up a month later, which is practically unheard of in this business (most scripts have a waiting time of six months to a year before you hear back from the publisher). Now the contracts are signed and it should appear in their next catalog, where it will be chosen by theatre groups everywhere and performed all over, and make me millions of dollars. (Well, okay, not millions.) And best of all, as I told Laurie, every time this play is done somewhere, it’s revenge for the miserable winter she had after her accident.

So if, in your travels, you ever see *Happy Birthday*, *Dear Grandpa* or *Merry Christmas, Dear Grandpa* being presented at some theatre, take a look at it and let me know how they did.



Happy Birthday



May	June	July
1 Bracha Roy	1 Virginia McCarthy	2 Al Bixby
2 Diane King	4 Michal Jacot	2 Alan Dalton
2 Patricia King	5 Howard Falker	5 Buck Weaver
5 Diane Brewer	14 Fred Zollner	6 Sandy Schorfhaar
7 Gregory Jacot	15 James Denney	9 Feliwelyn Shuart
7 Charles Shuart Jr.	15 Lynn Phillips	12 John Morris
7 Joyce Hill	16 Aria Williamson	13 Larry Van Wagoner
13 Pam Frank	21 Laurie Jacot	15 Deb DeBois
14 Taura Williamson	21 Will Williamson	18 Mary Henry
17 Suzan Witt	22 Pat Ruster	18 Betty DeWilde
17 Warren Brewer	26 Kay Robson	21 Gatlyn Dunham
17 Gabe Lentz	27 Craig Sayer	22 Janie Mundy
18 Paula Dery	30 Mary Ann Michalski	27 Dee Bixby
24 Mike Merluzzi		28 Karen Beard
26 Tom LeClair		
26 Anissa Emery		
30 Andre DeWilde		
30 Alan Kushion		



Guys on Ice



The Women of Lockerbie

