

Tawas Bay Players Newsletter

May/June 2017



Second Samuel by Donna Thomas

The cast includes:

B Flat	Carter Chrivia	Marcela	Amy Peterson*
U.S.	Curtis Davenport	Mansel.....	Terry Popielarz
Frisky	Eric Perrot	Mr. Mozel	Rodger McElveen
Omaha.....	Suzan Dunham	Doc	Alan Dalton
Ruby	Amanda Carpenter* and Tina Wells	June Cline	Dave Duda*
Jimmy DeeAnne	Hannah Towne*		

* denotes first time on TBP stage

Dress Rehearsal was Wednesday May 10, opening night was Friday May 12 and shows continue May 13, 14, 18, 19, 20 and 21. Rehearsals have been going on since March with a wonderfully marvelous cast. We have a few folks in this production who are new to our stage and we are thankful for them!

The story takes place in the late 1940s after World War II. We are in Second Samuel, a small southern Georgia town where the town matriarch has recently passed away. What follows is how the town folk deal with it. The show takes us on a beautiful journey through emotion, human nature, social norms, and love. There are dramatic aspects to it, and comedic aspects. But most of all it is a story of love and acceptance.

As a note from the director: I would just like to thank everyone who stepped up to help with this production. We have new people on stage, behind stage and in the tech booth. Please welcome them so they stay and help with more shows. New folks include Amanda Carpenter, Amy and Neal Peterson, Dave Duda, Melissa Street, Erin Toska and Karen Curtis. We also have younger volunteers helping out, who have worked on some shows before: Grant and Brenden Dehner, Carter Chrivia, and Zach Dalton. Valued crew and behind the scenes folks stepped up, they include Mike Merluzzi, Diane Ray, Alan Dalton, Jeff Chadwick, Bob O'Meara, Janie Mundy, Al and Dee Davis, Carol Kushion and Shelly Crossley. And I shan't forget my two right hands, Tina Dalton and Beth Borowski, it has been an absolute pleasure to work with the two of you. I will not be able to express to them the heartfelt thanks I feel in helping this show come about. Know that you are all valued and appreciated in your efforts and talents!

The 2017-18 Season Shows by Keith Frank

At the regular Board meeting held on March 28, 2017 the following plays, directors and performance dates were selected for the 2017-18 season:

Fall show (October 13-15 & 19-22)

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs – Directors are Pat Casey and June Hudgins.

Winter Show (February 9-11 & 15-18)

Weekend Comedy – Directed by Roger McElveen.

Spring Show (May 11-13 & 17-20)

And Then There Were None– Directed by Michal Jacot.

Summer Show (July 13-15 & 19-22)

Revival at Possum Creek Community Church – Directed by Beth Borowski.

Fall 2018 Show (October 12-14 & 18-21)

Bye, Bye Birdie – Directed by Barb Hunter & Craig Sayer.

AACTFest by Donna Thomas

The Tawas Bay Players cast of *Love, Loss and What I Wore* from the TPB After Hours production last fall competed February 11, 2017 in the American Association of Community Theatre state festival (AACT Fest). The festival happens every two years. Two winners from the state level go on to compete at the regional level. Those winners compete at a national level. The state level competition was held in Bay City, MI. The cast and crew participated in the weekend long festival and watched competitors from nine other community theater groups across Michigan. First place was captured by Midland Civic Theatre's production of *Venus in Fur*.



Our very own TBP member, Suzan Dunham received the well-deserved award for "Outstanding Actress in a Featured Role" for her portrayal of Geralyn, a breast cancer survivor in *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*. Suzan also won the "People's Choice" award for outstanding actress. Congratulations to Suzan and all those who took the time to participate in this theater event!

World Premiere to Be Held in Tawas Bay Playhouse by Keith Frank

This summer, the Tawas Bay Playhouse will be the site of another World Premiere production. However, this production was not written by our own Playwright, Michal Jacot.

Last summer during the Camp Cedar Ridge Intermezzo Concert at the Playhouse, I was approached by Jessica French. She said that they had just concluded a nationwide playwriting contest. This contest had judges from many avenues of the entertainment industry including Disney. She said that the winning playwright was from Michigan. One of the benefits of winning the contest was to see the play produced and performed. Jessica said that she thought it would be wonderful if it could be produced somewhere here in the playwright's home state of Michigan. She then hit me with the big question, "Would the Tawas Bay Players be interested in allowing the play to be performed on their stage?" Considering all of the theaters in Michigan that they could have chosen for this production, I felt it was an honor for Tawas Bay Players to be considered.

I took the request to the Board and since this summer's show *Greater Tuna* does not require a large set, the Board agreed to host the World Premiere. Jessica will be renting the theater in order to perform the production and has agreed to provide 10% of the gross ticket sales to TBP. At this point I can't tell you much about the show other than the title is *Queen E, The Story of a Reluctant Royal*. Performances will be held on June 23 and 24 at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are \$16.00 in advance, \$20.00 at the door. Student tickets will be \$10.00. So, if you find yourself free on one of those evenings, please try to plan to come out and see one of these shows.

Congratulations and Best Wishes

Congratulations are in order for Amanda Jungquist who has just graduated from the Actors Studio Drama School at Pace University, a three year graduate program in theater arts. Many of you will remember Amanda from numerous teen productions. She is one more in the long list of theater professionals who got their start on the TBP stage. Amanda will be spending the summer performing during the Williamstown Theatre Festival in Williamstown, Massachusetts in a new play titled *Once Upon a Time in the Berkshires*. Not only did Amanda have a big job with her final project but she is dealing with some health difficulties so we thought a little support from her TBP Family might be in order. I am including her address if you would like to send congratulations and get well wishes to Amanda.

Amanda Jungquist
960 Madison St. Apt 3
Brooklyn, NY 11221-4806

Thank You

Mike Merluzzi has been doing his best to make sure that those who are building sets have good tools to work with. He found us a good deal on a table saw and then started sorting through his own tools to see what he could donate. He owned a miter saw that needed work and he got a new one. Thanks to repairs made by Al Bixby, TBP now has a miter saw to use. Mike wasn't finished though and went on to bring a cordless set that includes a drill, reciprocating saw, flashlight, batteries, charger and a set of drill bits. Thank you Mike for your generosity and Al for your repairs. The tools will be very well used.



Surveys of TBP Audiences by Sue Duncan

What is the deal with the surveys? It is curiosity about what our members and audiences really want, who they are, where they come from, and what is liked or disliked about their theater experience with TBP. The Board and its committees want to be responsive to the needs and wants of the theatre community. Planning what shows to do, improvements in sound and lights technology, ticketing and building changes and so on, should not be based on the nine board members guesses, or even what those few people are told by another handful of folks. It is important to serve the whole arts community of our area, as much as is possible. Hopefully, the surveys will add to in-sight. It is hard to please everyone, but at least we can try to get a feeling for what the majority wants and will support

Thank you if you have filled out a survey. The data is being compiled and a full year of shows will be surveyed. Surveys will cease, at least this is the present plan, after the fall musical *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Here is a small sample of what was gathered from the performances of *The Spitfire Grill*. As more data is collected these numbers will change:

90% of TBP's audience members are return patrons

49% of our winter audience is age 65 or older

This winter the audience preferred comedies to musicals, 27% to 25%

99% are very happy with the price of the tickets and most people hear about the plays through "word of mouth" – friends, family, and co-workers which means you are the best advertisement available!! Keep talking up TBP!

Some of the comments included -

"Turn up the heat!!" That one came up about 5 times! Oops! Sorry about that, nobody thought to check the extra heat units. We will next time!

"I really enjoy our yearly season tickets and the variety of entertainment they provide. Everyone, from actors to workers to greeters is so friendly. Thank you."

"Best theatre performances north of Detroit." (Wow! That goes a long way to making the hours and hours of preparation more valued.)

"Tawas is lucky to have TBP!"

The conclusion: Our TBP family is lucky to have the audiences we have and the opportunity to be involved in live theater!

Strangers in the Seats by Sue Duncan

Did you attend the last dress rehearsal and wonder what all those teenagers were doing in 'OUR' seats? Hmm... they were experiencing, for some perhaps, their first taste of live theater, compliments of US! Life has shown us we are all replaceable even though we'd like to believe otherwise and we need to remember to train our replacements; whether they'll be audience members or one of the many cast and crew needed for every play. The students come to dress rehearsal at the Board's invitation with an adult accompanying them (even if they aren't sitting together) to not only enjoy but perhaps to learn and even discuss the play back in class or at home. This next play, *Second Samuel* has some cultural and social issues worthy of discussion just as did *The Spitfire Grill*. Who knows? There might be some enthusiastic new members for future plays sitting in "our" seats.

This column appeared in the May June issue of the CTAM Newsletter. It may help explain to our members why we work so hard to promote quality in our theater. It's nice to be recognized. Thanks to Sue Duncan for sharing.

The Prez Sez by Betsy Willis

Recently I asked our Adjudication Chair, Larry Nielsen, to adjudicate the show I directed at Old Town Playhouse in Traverse City. It was the first time our theatre had had anything adjudicated other than for AACTFest. I invited our Artistic Committee and all of the directors we have in our database to come and listen. It was well attended and much appreciated. Besides what I learned from Larry's evaluation, I learned that several people in my very own home theatre did not know that CTAM had an adjudication program. Do you know that CTAM has a "stable" of well-trained responders who will come to your productions and give you positive feedback and constructive solutions on how fully realized your production is as an audience member? Do you know that once a year CTAM will pay for one adjudication for any Affiliate Group in CTAM? Do you know that after that, it only costs your group \$50 to have one of our adjudicators come and provide feedback? Do you know that the adjudication is not meant to change your current show but to inform your future productions and help your actors grow. If you didn't know before, you do now. The Tawas Bay Players have every one of their shows adjudicated because the late Vince Weiler, CTAM Past President and longtime member at Tawas Bay, highly valued the adjudication program. The result is that I have personally witnessed the growth of the Tawas Bay Players program, including strong entries in the past two state AACTFest competitions and a move toward more challenging productions. I encourage you to contact Adjudication Chair Larry Nielsen and ask him to line up an adjudicator for an upcoming production. You won't be sorry and I promise your group will begin to grow in excellence.

Memorial Bench by Keith Frank

At the 2016 Annual Meeting, we discussed the possibility of putting a bench out between the Vincent Weiler bushes on the Lincoln Street side of the theater. There were many questions raised and discussion as to whether it would be a memorial bench for Vince, what kind of bench to get, etc. Eric Perrot graciously provided us with much information on different types of benches, costs, etc. It appears that one of the most durable types of benches would be one made out of recycled plastic.

Pat found out that we could get recycled benches from Treasures Forever down by AuGres. Engravings can be done right in the wood (or plastic). The Board thought that it would be better to put the benches on the north side of the building. Perhaps one by the parking lot and one by the flowering crab between the theater and the garage. We also thought that if the membership wanted the benches engraved, we would just have an engraving done that would honor all of the TBP members, past and present, who have given so much of their time.

If possible, please call me or send me an email and let me know what you think about these ideas. My email address is k.frank@charter.net and my home phone number is 989-362-8492. If you get the answering machine, please leave a message and be sure to leave your name. Thanks.

Some Theater Humor from Michal Jacot

Just in case you ever wondered if things go wrong on Broadway stages too, here's a funny story I found in Entertainment Weekly. The original Phantom of the Opera, Michael Crawford, tells about the perils of wearing a slew of prosthetics and makeup under the famous Phantom half-mask. When Crawford's costar Sarah Brightman went in for the show's big kiss, she left with the Phantom's lip. "It stuck to her face," he says with a laugh. "So I pulled her back for a second kiss to bite that lip back off her mouth, then touched my mouth, looking as though it was a wonderful, emotional thing. But I was trying to stick the lip back on before the audience could see what happened!"

Treasurers Forever Au Gres, MI 48703



4' Garden Bench (GB4800)
\$355.00

2' Chair (GB2400)
\$249.00

Engraving (etched right in the wood) same for both chairs

Letters/Numbers up to 20 = \$40 30 = \$50 40 = \$60

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Founders Plaque

Last year at the Annual Meeting there was a discussion about finding a way to honor those who have done so much to make TBP what it is today. The suggestion was made to hang a plaque in the Playhouse to commemorate our founding members. Pat Casey & Mary Ann Michalski designed it and had it engraved at Branham's Jewelry



TBP Featured in New York Blog by Keith Frank

For the past several years, Jessica French, through Camp Cedar Ridge has put on an acting camp in Oscoda for youth from all over the United States. Tawas Bay Players have been active in assisting in her productions through the loan of costumes, set pieces, etc. In fact, TBP member Suzan Dunham was the Director for one of their productions. Last year, Tawas Bay Players loaned the use of our theater for their annual Intermezzo Concert.

While working with Jessica last year on preparations for use of our theater, she informed me that she had just been hired to do weekly blog posts about Community Theater for a New York firm. She was so impressed with TBP that she said she wanted to feature TBP in her first ever blog post. Her blog appears below:

On the shores of Lake Huron, there lies East Tawas and Tawas City, Michigan. Home to a national forest and some of the most beautiful views you'll see in this lifetime, each summer it is flooded with vacationers but during the other seasons, they have a population of only about 4,800 people. I was shocked when I got a tour of their community theater, the Tawas Bay Players, which is why I have chosen to feature them on this new series, *Next Level Community Theatres*.

Conceived in 1978, the Tawas Bay Players has produced over 150 full scale productions. I think one of the most impressive factors of this organization is the space in which they operate. They meet in a refurbished church building right in downtown East Tawas. When I got a walk through tour, I was so blown away by how much genius and thought went into the design, giving this community a theater with a glorious space conducive to everything one should be.

They have a decent size stage in an auditorium that seats roughly 150 people. This size is so ideal because it allows the Tawas Bay Players the chance to make money on ticket sales while still giving the audience an intimate theater experience. They have a fully functional sound booth along with quality lighting. They also have beautiful dressing rooms equipped with proper lighting and ample bathrooms.

When you walk in, there is a box office and, as you can see from the photo, everything is handicap accessible with a ramp outside and in. They also have a meeting room and kitchen on the main floor, with an office off of that. This enables their administrative and creative teams to have much needed workspace along with the ability to host parties and gatherings. This theater is truly a place where the community can come together. I thoroughly enjoyed looking at

all of the picture collages that line the walls of the meeting room, chronicling the shows of past years. What wonderful memories and history the Tawas Bay Players have captured!

Perhaps the most genius element of the building itself is that they have a costume shop upstairs and storage space for all their props downstairs. Having space and constant access to these things is every director's dream! Even beyond that, when you walk outside, there is a scene shop with storage and workspace for set building. It's no wonder why TBP has been able to produce so many shows over the years! When I spoke with Board of Directors President, Keith Frank, he informed that he and several others came together years ago to apply for a grant to make the theater building possible. It was very apparent in speaking with him (and several volunteers who were currently working on painting a set the day visited), just how many people are involved to make their seasons happen. It's a wonderful group of people, each using their unique skills, to create something greater together.

Overall, if you're ever in town, it's worth stopping in for a show! They present a wide variety of repertoire from traditional musicals to brand new plays. Who wouldn't want to support such a wonderful theater that is a thread that has and will continue to weave a wonderful community together for so many generations? To find out more or to purchase tickets, visit: www.tawasbayplayers.com



Happy Birthday



May	June	July
2 Diane King 2 Patricia King 5 Diane Brewer 7 Gregory Jacot 7 Charles Shuart Jr. 7 Joyce Hill 9 Diane Teddy 13 Pam Frank 17 Suzan Dunham 17 Warren Brewer 18 Paula Dery 24 Mike Merluzzi 26 Tom LeClair 30 Andre DeWilde 30 Alan Kushion	4 Michal Jacot 15 Lynn Phillips 21 Laurie Jacot 22 Pat Ruster 26 Kay Robson 30 Mary Ann Michalski	2 Al Bixby 2 Alan Dalton 5 Buck Weaver 9 Feliwelyn Shuart 13 Larry Van Wagoner 18 Mary Henry 18 Betty DeWilde 21 Gatlyn Dunham 22 Janie Mundy 27 Dee Bixby

Second Samuel



