

Tawas Bay Players Newsletter

October/ November 2011



USO Show

The USO Show was a hit. We had a lot of fun performing and it was very well received. We were financially successful as well, sending \$2500 to the United Service Organization. Many nights the audience sang along with every song and really seemed to enjoy Michal's vintage jokes. One patron remarked that it felt like she was really back in the 1940s. Thanks to all involved: Barb Hunter, Pat Casey, Susan Rook, Judy Quarters, Pam Katona, Donna Dahlstrom, Michal Jacot, Craig Sayer, Traceé Lentz, Jeff Chadwick, Greg Dahlstrom, George Robson, Chris Mundy, Laurie Jacot, Penny Zacharias, Mendy Shmina, Pam Frank and Diane King with her sisters Pam Ronn & Robbie Engle.



It was an interesting show in so many ways. It was an easy show to do; the set was simple, there were no costume changes or tons of props. Rehearsals were informal and enjoyable. And we actually had a preshow cast party at Mendy's. That was a memorable party due to Mendy's pool, the unbelievably hot weather and Barb mistakenly taking her sleeping pill that morning. I didn't realize that it was possible to sleep on a pool float and not fall off, but Barb can do it. And some thought it was worth the price of admission just to see Pat in a dress with full makeup and her hair done. It was the kind of show that you could see over and over, in fact I'm not sure we ever did exactly the same show. But it was fun! Thanks to Barb for the great idea.

***Jack in the Beanstalk* by Suzan Witt**

The time goes by so fast. ***Jack and the Beanstalk*** has been over for a month and a half already. What an incredible experience. We all know that our area is filled with talented people and now I know that it is also filled with some very talented children. The age range was 8 to 12, the casting was based on three factors: 1) Positive Attitude, 2) Able to follow directions, and 3) Vocal projection. We met 2 nights a week for the first few weeks and then we upped the rehearsal schedule to 3 nights. I was very impressed with the vocal quality of the children and their eagerness to jump right in and help. We treated workcalls as workshops and invited the cast and their parents to help. It proved very successful. Two workshops were provided and it gave the children a chance to see how things go together, have some ownership in the project, and get hands on experience. It was amazing and we learned that they get things done very quickly so we have a lot for them to do!

The A and B casts combined had 35 members. The objective of doing ***Jack and the Beanstalk*** with children was to give them the opportunity to learn about theater, have fun, and have them want to do it again. We accomplished all three. During our Saturday afternoon cast party we brought both casts together and I asked the children to write their 3 favorite things about doing the production. I told them that it could be anything from auditions, rehearsals, production, etc. Number one favorite thing was making new friends, number two was being on stage, and number three was the food! They enjoyed the snack that was provided during intermission backstage. Other comments were how we became a family, singing and painting. Wonderfully exciting. As each one walked through the door on their last night, I heard comments like, I don't want it to be over...I am really sad...can we do the smurfs next?...when is the next kids show?... This group of children was truly amazing to work with and I really enjoyed this opportunity. We could not have done it

without all the wonderful people that helped out not only from Tawas Bay Players but also parents that donated their time and drove their the children to and from rehearsals. They need a standing ovation for such exceptional children. Pam Katona, Tina Dalton, and Janie Mundy really made this happen. We had a great team! Janie Mundy, you get me into the most interesting predicaments... Thank you!

Work Bee by Judy Quarters

As a member of the TBP board I am very proud of the all the help we had on Saturday in our cleaning work bee, and we got A LOT accomplished!! We filled almost 2 dumpsters, plus Lyle's Truck and Bob's trailer with scrap lumber! You can actually see items in the basement, workshop and office!!

Now the challenge will be to KEEP IT THAT WAY!! We all need to work together during and after shows to make sure things get put back where they belong, if it is a wood item, take it apart and put the pieces of wood back in their designated area in the workshop. Props go to the basement - where they belong. Wardrobe goes upstairs. If it is cardboard or disposable - DISPOSE OF IT THEN - don't stick it somewhere!! Everything has a place - and that's where it should go! This has to be a team effort!

Thanks to the following people: Bob & Penny Zacharias, Lyle Groff, Brian Crossnoe, Mary Ann Michalski, Pat Casey, Jake & Sharon Huitema, Dennis & Vickie Szatkowski, Diane Ray, Judy Quarters, Sue Duncan, Barb Hunter and Penny LeClair. A great big special THANK YOU to June Luv for organizing this and for her awesome family, Paula Brooks and her children - Shaun, Samantha, Justin & Jordan for all their help. These kids were a HUGE help with carrying stuff up and down the stairs. Thanks again to everyone - it was a job well done!!

2011 Raffle Wrap-Up By Debbie DeBois

The 12th Annual Raffle is over and once again TBP had a successful raffle. This year's raffle made a total of \$8486 profit for the group. The raffle grossed \$12,064, with costs of \$3578, which were considerably less than last years' costs (the ATV last year cost a lot more than our John Deere tractor). Total profit for the twelve years is now \$102,478. Tickets sold were 3393, with members selling 886 and selling 2527 during events. Thank you to the members who made an effort to sell this year.

I would like to thank my dedicated drivers and event workers for helping to make the sales a success.

Drivers – Chris Mundy, George & Kay Robson, Lyle Groff, Lynn Phillips, Chris Nunn, Jeff Chadwick, Keith Frank, Bob/Nadeen O'Meara, Bob & Penny Zacharias, Ray & Marie Girard, Mike Robson and Ken & Phyllis Spencer.

Workers – Sue Dowell, Mary Kiernan, Kay Robson, June Hudgins, Diane Ray, Sharon Langley, Mike Merluzzi, Chris & Jayme Nunn, Tara Western and June Groff.

I would also like to thank our sponsors – Mike from Card Equipment of Twining, Dan from Tawas Appliance and Supply, Tracee from Tawas Hardware for great deals on our prizes, Tim and John \ Connor for purchasing our raffle tickets for the past 8-10 years, John Carroll, Kevin Allen and WKJC who sponsor us with ads and allow the drawing live on air every year, and Norm and Marion Charters, who take our tickets into their store to sell, just because they like to support our group.

Here are Our Lucky Winners!!!

1st Prize – John Deere TractorJohn Henry of East Tawas (John/Mary are members)

2nd Prize – 50" TV w/BluRayBrenda Callahan of Montrose

3rd Prize – Weber GrillWayne Graham of Bridgeport and East Tawas

4th Prize – \$100 + 2 TicketsNancy Orrell of St. Clair (Nancy is a member)

***Escanaba In Love* To Open Friday October 14 By Tara Western**

My first solo directing effort! Not really alone; I have a great team. Thanks to Carol Kushion as assistant director, June Hudgins and Tim Haskins as producers and Vincent Weiler as a special consultant. But it is a totally different perspective to BE the director. I have learned a lot, not the least of which, the awe of and respect for the others of you who have directed!! It is a lot of work. Some physical, but mostly mental. Tons of decisions to be made, which can be as exhausting as any physical work!

Escanaba in Love is the story of how Albert Soady Jr., the father of Reuben and Remnar in ***Escanaba in Da Moonlight*** met the love of his life, Big Betty Ballou. We cast the show the first week of August with Greg Dahlstrom as Alphonse Soady, Keith Frank as Albert Soady Sr., Chris Mundy as Albert Soady Jr., Michael Denney as Salty Jim Negamane and Alicia Sgambelluri as Big Betty Ballou. Eleven men tried out for four roles. The one commodity that TBP directors never have enough of, we had plenty. Telling someone that I had not cast them was one of the most difficult things I've ever had to do in my TBP history, and that includes dancing!

I had never blocked a show! That is a whole different skill set. When I sat down, with my set design (scribbled on a piece of paper) and five coins (representing the five actors), I could feel new wheels turning in my brain. Might have been some rust, but mostly it felt like something I hadn't done in a long time, if ever. But it felt good!! Another surprise has been the amount of help you get and how appreciative you are. It is awesome that so many people work so hard to help our productions be successful. You really feel like they are giving you a gift! And I guess they are!

Tryouts for January Show by Deb DeBois

Tryouts for the January show, ***Over the River and Through the Woods*** by Joe Dipietro will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, Nov 1st and 2nd at the Playhouse at 6:30 pm. The play will be directed by Deb DeBois and produced by Phyllis Spencer. Deb is looking for three men and three women. Two women and two men must be able to play a set of Italian grandparents in their late 70's. The other man and woman in the show need to be able to play 25-30 year olds.

This is the story of Nick, an Italian-American guy from New Jersey. His parents retired and moved to Florida. But that doesn't mean his family isn't still in Jersey. In fact he still sees both sets of grandparents every Sunday for dinner. This is the routine until he has to tell them that he's been offered his dream job in Seattle far away from his beloved, but annoying grandparents. And the news does not sit well, at all. Thus begins a series of schemes to keep Nick around. Well, Frank, Aida, Nunzio, and Emma do their level best, and that includes bringing to dinner the lovely—and single—Caitlin O'Hare as bait.

As always, people are needed for many backstage jobs and Deb is currently looking for an Assistant Director. If you are interested in learning about directing please contact her directly at 362-6800. Hope to see you at tryouts! Show dates are January 20-22 and 26-29, 2012.

CTAM Fall Conference

Several of our members attended this year's fall conference at McGuire's Resort in Cadillac. Here are some highlights!?!

TBP Takes It All at CTAM by Tara Western

It was a big weekend for TBP at the Annual Fall CTAM conference at McGuire's in Cadillac.

- Vincent Weiler was re-elected president of CTAM.
- Debbie DeBois received the prestigious Dorothy Arnett Award for Volunteerism.
- Michal Jacot won second prize in the CTAM Playwriting contest.
- We were recognized for the "Each One, Reach One" program when Vincent signed up Tara and June as "individual" members.
- Tara Western received a certificate of completion for "Community Theater Adjudication."
- Tara also, adjudicated Friday night's entertainment, the first half of *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, Abridged*.
- And Debbie won free lodging for next year's conference!

Vincent and Debbie had to go early for various reasons. Sharon Langley, June Hudgins, and Tara Western drove together, making a pit stop at Alan and Carol Kushion's beautiful house just outside of Cadillac. The gracious couple showed us around their garden and orchard (!), served us wine and gin and tonics, cheese, venison sausage, and a homemade cake made by a friend of Carol's. We had a lovely time and fun talking.

Friday night we had a lovely meal in McGuire's Terrace room, then watched the aforementioned *Complete Works of Wm. Shakespeare Abridged*, which was a great deal of fun. (Very similar to *The Complete History of the America, Abridged*, which we did two summers ago!) June and Tara wandered down to the cocktail party and had a good time talking with two Players de Noc members (from Escanaba!) and the cast and crew of the show we saw.

Saturday morning, we all attended various workshops that you can read about in other places in this newsletter. It was at Saturday night's banquet where we received all the awards. That was followed by karaoke, where we heard some great singers and probably the most painful singing ever. The Sixties theme was personified by our dearly beloved Vincent Weiler who donned a long silver wig with appropriate headband, a tie-dyed t-shirt, sandals, and blue tinted round glasses. The rest of us had a hard enough time with our tattoos!

Sunday morning they served a delicious breakfast and raffled off the prizes. Vincent and June won stuff, Debbie won next year's lodging at McGuire's, and Sharon and I won nothing!! The food was superb, the company was exquisite, the weather was beautiful – just a super time and a great learning experience.

Thank You from Deb DeBois

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Taw s Bay Players Board and TBP Members for nominating me to the state Community Association of Michigan for the Dorothy Arnett Volunteer Service Award. I was tremendously honored when my name was called to receive the award at the State Convention in Cadillac. I am proud to be the next TBP representative. (June Hudgins was awarded the honor a few years ago). I would like to send an extra special thank you and hug out to Barb Hunter for writing the nomination letter to the state. It was a humbling tribute that brought tears to my eyes. Thank you to my TBP family.

A First Time Impression by Sharon Langley

As a first timer to the CTAM Conference my expectations were high and I was not disappointed. Tara, June, Deb, Vince and I had a great time. I'd like to tell you about two of the sessions I attended. **Fun with Tech Toys** was put on by John S Hyatt and Associates based out of Grand Rapids. Different lighting equipment and of

tech gadgets were explained and demonstrated. For someone who never heard of a "gobow" or what a "gel" can do it was very interesting. Also we learned a little about what Lasers and LEDS are being used for in theater productions. I wish we had a whole lot of money for some of the new stuff because the effects are amazing.

The Art of Comedic Acting was presented by Ben Zylman, actor and director from Kalamazoo. He stressed that you are an actor first and the comedy just happens. He suggested that you look at the script for clues to the character and make up a "Back Story" for the character that fills in the blanks. Ask yourself as the character "What do you want?" "How are you going to get it?" "How do you know when you have got what you want?" Remember to not ACT but REACT to make your performance honest. Your body reacts to thoughts so always be in the moment. "Dying is easy...comedy is hard." Ben's tips provided insight on how to overcome the challenge of doing good comedy. If you have never gone to a conference before I hope you will take the opportunity to go in the future because the practical tips and tools shared will change your attitude and perspective.

Marketing On A Shoestring By Tara Western

I attended this workshop thinking I could pick up a few pointers for not only TBP but for the District Library and my Tawas City Library Friends. It was very worthwhile, touching on the old, but tried and true ways to get your message out and some higher tech ways, such as Facebook, blogs, websites, and text messaging.

Pointers For All Members:

- Tell your family and friends about the present show and TBP in general. Face to face, phone, texts, Letters...they're all good. Best PR in the world is word of mouth!
- If you're on Facebook and in the cast or production crew, post something about the show daily or weekly.
- Make sure TBP is represented in a friendly, helpful, positive way.
- When people call for information, don't ignore them. Try to make them happy by either giving them the number of the person who has the information, or tell them you'll call them back.
- Try to make the disgruntled customer happy. A satisfied customer will come back and tell his or her friends about us. An unhappy customer will tell at least ten people how rotten we are!

Conference Report By June Hudgins

Hello all. I am very glad I went to the CTAM theater convention this fall along with Tara, Sharon, Debra, and Vincent. The workshops were really good, most about auditions or how to conduct auditions from a director's point of view. Some of the topics covered included: how to select your character for a role, the do's and don'ts of the presentation, relaxation and concentration on the part needed for the role.

The Dos & Don'ts for auditions included: dress comfortably, don't focus on your nervousness, don't mumble or look at the floor, make eye contact with those you are auditioning with, don't direct other actors, don't wander off - if the scene says "exit" do not leave stay in the scene. Look for ways to: find the humor, find the conflict, find the news, find the danger and so much more. These are some of the wonderful things that are taught in the workshops.

We all had a wonderful time with lots of laughs and meeting so many people who are all in the theater and all learning stuff to help us in our theater. I do hope we can get more folks to go next year and experience and learn more about Community Theater

Friday Night Entertainment at CTAM Convention by Debbie DeBois

When we all arrived at the convention headquarters at McQuire's Resort in Cadillac, we were excited to start the convention experience. So after a nice dinner and conversation with new and old friends, we the TBP conventioners (June, Tara, Deb Sharon, and Vince) went upstairs to our first welcome get together of the weekend.

After the opening speech, we learned we would be entertained that night by a production from the Gratiot Community Players of Alma's ***The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)***. If that sounds like something you might have heard before, think back to last summer's show called, ***The Complete History of America (Abridged)***. That's because it is by the same authors. We also learned that we, as an audience would learn about adjudication. We were given handouts on what an adjudicator looks for when responding to a production. It was a hilariously funny, irreverent, and a little naughty look at Shakespeare done by the three male cast. It had many of the same comedic stylings of our production, outlandish costuming, a rap trio of the dramas, and even a football game style frolic for Shakespeare's King plays. After the show we were presented with 3 adjudicators (new adjudicator Tara was the first up) thoughts about the production. A very fun way to be educated about theater.

Western Thumb Damaged in Bizarre Sweet Caroline Accident By Tara Western

Attending the CTAM fall conference, Tara Western got up too quickly to do the "touching hands, reaching out, touching me, touching you" part of Neil Diamond's Sweet Caroline, and pulled off her thumbnail. Quick thinking led her to plunge the thumb in her leftover gin and tonic, thusly, cauterizing the wound, Sharon Langley, another attendee, said.

Although, June "Luv" Hudgins only played Nurse in one play, she was able to bandage the wound with Kleenex and bright green duct tape. The resourceful duo, used tweezers to cut the tape, or Tara would have had to sleep with the tape roll in her hand.

In spite of all of this, the Fall CTAM conference in Cadillac the last weekend of September was a lot of fun, rarely dangerous, and you should all consider going.

Pam Frank Wins Founder's Award By Michal Jacot

Pam Frank is in the same awkward situation I would find myself in when I did the newsletter, where she would have to report news about her own accomplishments to TBP at large. After all, no one wants to look like they're blowing their own horn. And if I know Pam, she will mention her award briefly and humbly and be done with it. This is where I come in. Because I've known Pam for many years and I'm going to tell all of you a little about this year's winner. No editing here, Pam, just let me ramble on.

Pam has always been one of those people who do many of those "ninja" jobs in theater. We all know there are producers and stage managers and make up people and props people, but if their job is being done correctly, they are ninjas, invisible to everyone, doing what needs to be done and then hiding in the shadows. Once in a while I find someone who is genuinely surprised that there is a crew of tech people behind the scenes putting the actors out on stage, as though all those costumes and set pieces were brought in one evening by leprechauns. It is to our group's credit, and to people like Pam, that they think that way, that we can maintain that illusion.

Pam is one of the foremost ninja tech people. Over the years, she has done a wide variety of jobs, invisibly. Sometimes I'd read the tech list in the program and be surprised to find her name there. "Hey, Pam worked on

this show!", I'd think. "I never even saw her!" That was because she'd come in before the production, do what needed to be done, and moved on.

During the actual backstage productions, Pam has become our go-to woman for makeup, and when you have someone like me who knows nothing about applying makeup, that's a handy person to have around. I can't list all the jobs Pam has done simply because I don't know them all. Much of her work is uncredited. She simply does what needs to be done, and always seems to be there to help out, with little interest in seeing her name listed in the program.

That's not to say Pam is not an onstage presence. She currently sings with the Tawas Bay Players Singers, and has appeared in many of our productions. Let me tell you a story. Years ago we did "Flowers For Algernon," and I had a demanding part with a lot of lines and a lot of scene changes. I was constantly nervous because I was never 100% sure I was starting off in the right scene! But luckily I had a lot of scenes with Pam; I knew I could relax a little in those scenes, because I knew I was working with a pro, someone who could (and often did) bail me out when I came up short on a line. Those are the kind of people that make this theatre stuff so much fun.

Pam received the Founder's Award because she knows the spirit of the Tawas Bay Players: we are not a professional group, but we do what we can to present a professional show. If there is such a thing in amateur community theater, Pam Frank is a true professional at what she does. Congratulations to Pam on receiving the Founder's Award.

Editor's Note: Thank you to all who voted to give me the founder's Award, there is no greater honor in the group and I am very proud to be in such elite company.

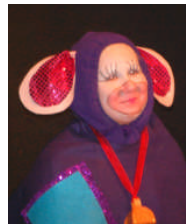


Happy Birthday

September	October	November
4 Jenny Zacharias	3 Judy Wenzel	2 Chris Mundy
17 Nancy Orrell	4 Nadeen O'Meara	8 Kayla Grusecki
21 Tara Western	4 Trisha Evans	13 Sharon Langley
24 Katelyn Good	7 Emily (Groff) Marciniak	13 Lyle Groff
24 Tina Brewer	13 Tom O'Malley	14 Tom Shmina
27 Tom King	16 June Wygant	18 Greg Dahlstrom
	18 Brady Jacot	18 Mendy Shmina
	18 Gail Morris	25 Les Mellen, Jr.
	21 Nate Rowell	28 Kyle Evans
	22 Jenae Evans	
	23 Annge Klinger	
	24 Jolene Grusecki	
	30 Autumn Norman	

Photos from the Summer's Productions Thanks to Keith Frank for the USO Photos





2011 – 2012 Season

Escanaba In Love (Comedy) by Jeff Daniels

October 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23

Over the River and Through the Woods (Comedy) by Joe DiPietro

January 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29

Snow Angel & A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Fifth Period (Teen Production)

March 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (Adult Musical) Music & Lyrics by William Finn

May 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20

Let's Play Crossroads! (Comedy) by Michal Jacot

July 13, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22 – Summer Show is not included in our Season Tickets