



Curtain Calls

February/March 2024

TBP's Spring Play Auditions:

THE SUBJECT WAS ROSES

Tryouts March 12-13

Directed by *Chris Mundy*



Needed: 1 woman, 2 men (mother, father and son;
18-to-24-year old to play the son)

SYNOPSIS:

It is May of 1946 and Timmy Cleary has come home from the war to his estranged parents, John and Nettie. As their reunion promises a return to life as it never was, John gives up a lucrative business opportunity. He attends a ball game with his son and grudgingly, at Timmy's request, returns with roses for Nettie in an insincere attempt at reconciliation. The three attempt to recapture the past but the ideal is shattered amidst recriminations. The next morning Timmy announces he is leaving once again, and husband and wife must face the reality of life with only their memories.

Chris is seeking a producer! Contact him for details!

It Was a Wonderful Party: *The Readers' Theatre Version*

by *Tara Western*

On Thursday, November 9, Tawas Bay Players hosted a table read of *It's a Wonderful Life*. The cast and crew of Tawas Chillers: Readers Theatre had so much fun together, they wanted to get together again and hopefully share the experience with others.

It was early November, but we quickly and simply decorated Hudgins Hall for Christmas—an early kickoff if you will. BYOB and snacks. Participants were: **Jolene Grusecki, Suzan Nemeth, Willow Newman, Juli Engle, Vickie Sanborn, Walter Sanborn, Tina Dalton, Alan Dalton, Tim Haskins, and Tara Western.** Annie Williams, her friend Sandra Palmer, and Juli's husband Jeff, made a terrific audience.

Under Tara's bossy direction, we simply went around the table reading the script. It was extra fun having the men reading the women's parts (especially Zuzu) and the women voicing Joseph—that's Angel Clarence's boss in heaven.

What you missed: the camaraderie, many laughs, Tim Haskin, the man of 50 voices, and Tara starting to read all of Joseph's lines. Best of all, near the end, Jolene read SFX as SEX. At that point, we all joined in; every time SFX appeared i.e., "SEX—a bell rings"; "SEX—a door opens".

Best of all, was Jeff's comment: "I love this movie. And I loved listening tonight. I could picture the scenes so clearly as you guys read." And that's what Readers Theatre is all about.

We hope to do more Readers Theatre in 2024. Stay tuned and please consider joining us.



**TBP
PRESENTS
PERCHVILLE
MURDER
MYSTERY**

As you read this, a band of Tawas Bay

Players are looking forward to presenting *Lost In The Sixties*, presented this coming weekend at Perchville. (Hopefully I'll have some pictures to share in the next issue!)

The groovy scene is The Aquarian Music Festival. Everyone is there for three days of peace, love, and music; but when somebody is killed (total bummer, man), the audience has to catch the culprit!

Appearing in the show are **Janie Mundy** as grungy rocker Joanie Buzz; **Adam Davis** as Benny Culpepper, Joanie's unscrupulous agent; **Chris Mundy** as Elmer Hatfield, the farmer who owns the land the festival is taking place on; **Penny Zacharias** as spacy hippie girl Sunshine Schwartz; **Barb Richardson** as music groupie Cindi Seeley; **Malcolm Davis** as musician Mellow Imperial; and **Michal Jacot** as Skeeter Calahan, festival attendee and amateur detective.

The sold-out evening promises to be a lot of fun as we all get in to the vibe of the Sixties with the-dye and love-bead costumes. Guests are encouraged to dress the part too, and there will be prizes for best costumes. And the Knights of Columbus will, as usual, offer a fine dinner beforehand. Should be a groovy time.

Leaving Iowa

Looking further down the road, *Leaving Iowa* is TBP's summer offering. It's a hilarious look at a family road trip, and is sure to bring up lots of memories of family vacations from your childhood.

This is a hilarious, family-friendly comedy that is a toast to the idealism and character of parents from the "greatest generation," and a little roast of their dedication to the family road trip. Don Browning, a middle-aged writer, returns home and decides to finally take his father's ashes to his childhood home. But when Don discovers Grandma's house is now a grocery store, he begins traveling across Iowa for a proper resting place for his father. This road trip shifts smoothly from the present to Don's memories of the annual, torturous vacations of his childhood. *Leaving Iowa* is guaranteed to have you laughing and remembering the childhood vacations you tried to forget.

Leaving Iowa is directed by **Ed Krebs**. While this is Ed's first time in the TBP director's chair, he is by no means a novice to the job as he has done directing work for other groups. **Laurie Jacot** is producing the show.

The script has a wide assortment of quirky characters and carries many possibilities for doubling. Ed tells us that the show can be done with a minimum of six people but he'd like to have many more involved. There are parts for all ages, from a few lines to many. There are some high school age parts available, in case some teens would like to join a fun project for the summer.

Tryouts for *Leaving Iowa* will be May 8 and 9, with mid-July performance dates.

Passings

This was a tough article to write. This winter we've lost a lot of people connected to our group.

Buck Weaver

Buck was one of our oldest members. Onstage, he was always an audience favorite. Behind the scenes, he was always a delight to be around. Always smiling, always a kind word. He will be missed.

Kenny MacDonald

While the name may not be familiar to some of us, Kenny was the husband of Diane (Meyer) MacDonald, who was active in TBP in several shows. Kenny passed away on Christmas Eve (11:55 p.m.) due to a heart attack. Please keep Diane in your thoughts; she has some challenging times ahead.

Elaine Shmina

Doris Elaine Shmina passed away following a battle with leukemia on November 28, 2023, in Bay City. She was 84. Elaine worked behind the scenes on many shows and was always a pure joy to be around. She always had time to listen to everyone, and made everyone around her feel special.

Sue Dowell

Sue Dowell has the distinction of having the longest non-broken run of stage appearances in the Tawas Bay Players. In her heyday you could count on seeing Sue onstage in a number of different characters (my personal favorite was Helga ten Dorp in *Deathtrap*, with her Boris-and-Natasha accent!). That's because she was a good and dependable actress. She also directed, produced, and did whatever was needed.

TBP ARCHIVE PROJECT CONTINUES

Thanks to everyone who contributed information for the Archive Project. My goal is to have information on casts and crews of all of TBP's plays. Old programs are the best source for these. If you have a program from any of the shows listed below, it would be very helpful in filling in the holes. If you want to donate the program, that's great; if you'd rather keep it, I can make copies of the pages I need. Contact me, Michal Jacot (email mljacot@sbcglobal.net; or call or text (989) 310-0244) if you can help. Thank you in advance!

1981 – 1982 (Season 3)
A Gentleman And A Scoundrel

1983 – 1984 (Season 5)
Who Dunnit?
Fiddler On The Roof

1984 – 1985 (Season 6)
Move Over Mrs. Markham

1985 – 1986 (Season 7)
Little Bear
On Golden Pond

1986 – 1987 (Season 8)
Tangled Webbs

1987 – 1988 (Season 9)
A Country Christmas Carol
Brighton Beach Memoirs
The Fishing Hat
Dutch Treat

1988 – 1989 (Season 10)
War Of The Worlds
Best Christmas Pageant Ever

1989 – 1990 (Season 11)
Tangled Webbs 2

1990 – 1991 (Season 12)
Steel Magnolias
Oklahoma!
Same Time Next Year
Fractured Mother Goose
Wonderful Worldful of Christmas

1991 – 1992 (Season 13)
Foxfire
Grease

1992 - 1993 (Season 14)
Rumors
Tangled Webbs 3
Pump Boys & Dinettes
Red Vs. the Wolf

1993 – 1994 (Season 15)
3 Murders & It's Only Monday
Saga of Dead Dog Gulch

1994 – 1995 (Season 16)
Kids One Acts

1996 – 1997 (Season 18)
Bye Bye Birdie
Best Christmas Pageant Ever

1997 – 1998 (Season 19)
West Side Story
Play On
Deadly Deal

1998 – 1999 (Season 20)
Marital Blitz
Something's Afoot
Camelot

1999 – 2000 (Season 21)
Natalie Needs A Nightie
Greater Tuna
Forever Plaid

2000 – 2001 (Season 22)
Musical Comedy Murders of 1940
The Chalk Garden
Annie
Stages of Death

2001 – 2002 (Season 23)
Nunsense II
Cinderella
You Can't Take It With You

2002 – 2003 (Season 24)
My Fair Lady
Kiss Me Kate
God's Favorite

2003 – 2004 (Season 25)
Hello Dolly
Barefoot In The Park

2004 – 2005 (Season 26)
Seven Brides For Seven Brothers

2007 – 2008 (Season 29)
Forever Plaid

2008 – 2009 (Season 30)
All Shook Up

2010-2011 (Season 32)
Ethan Claymore
USO Show
Jack And The Beanstalk

2011-2012 (Season 33)
Snow Angel
A Funny Thing / Fifth Period

2019-2020 (Season 41)
Virgil's Wedding

**Deadline for the next issue of
CURTAIN CALLS is
MARCH 27!**

***I look forward to seeing
your contributions!***

CTAM ROUNDTABLE: Selecting A Season

By *Laurie Jacot*

On January 23rd I attended a virtual roundtable presented by CTAM on selecting a season. The discussion among different groups brought forth fresh perspectives and different ideas that I found useful to the Tawas Bay Players.

Attending the roundtable were panelists from Ionia, Muskegon Civic, and Old Town Playhouse in Traverse City. Ionia was closest to our theatre situation. They rely on volunteers for all shows and positions. The other two groups are a mix of paid positions as well as volunteers.

All three groups seem to have play reading committees that rates plays and submits them to the board for approval. They each use a rubric to determine feasibility for their group (Hopefully I will receive some of these via email that I can pass on to our board).

After selecting the season they round up the directors. This assures that the season is balanced and, hopefully, successful.

One group had an artistic committee, which was elected by the membership. They stated that this committee wanted to be autonomous and not work with the board. This issue became problematic and needed to be addressed by their board and now seems to be working better.

Two of the groups do some Black Box shows throughout the season. These shows are usually more avant-garde and have proven to be not very profitable. The consensus was that people want to be entertained, not meant to think.

All three groups do at least three straight shows and one musical (or a musical revue). Depending on size of the show, they may rent separate venues to allow for larger audiences.

Ionia rents the high school auditorium.
Muskegon rents multiple spaces in their area.
Traverse City has its own playhouse but rents venues to do smaller black box presentations.

Plays that had been successful for these groups were:

Ionia: *Little Mermaid, Sweeney Todd, The Nerd, Noises Off*

Note on Musicals: Currently Ionia uses canned music.

Muskegon: *Disenchanted, Steel Magnolias (with a diverse cast), Mamma Mia*

Note on Musicals: Currently they use live orchestra. The musicians and musical director are paid for their time.

Traverse City: *The Play That Goes Wrong, Murder on the Orient Express, Something Rotten (large cast)*

Note on Musicals: They use live music at this time.

Two things that I took away from this are:

1) All groups stated audiences don't want to see anything heavy or too thought-provoking. People deal with these issues daily and want something light and entertaining.

2) Groups must try to balance the wants of the audience and the group (actors/crew want challenges too) in order to put butts in seats.

In my opinion, the plays we have chosen lately are not necessarily showing our strengths. We have always had great luck with musicals and comedies/farces. We need to get back to our strengths. Once in a while a heavier drama is okay; trying new things is okay. But play to what we know works.

The next CTAM Roundtable is on February 20 at 7:00 pm and the subject will be AACTFEST. The March roundtable is going to focus on sponsorships.