

Tawas Bay Players

Curtain Calls

October/November 2024

“THE 39 STEPS” CAST

By Michal Jacot and Tina Dalton

Tawas Bay Players has cast their fall production of *The 39 Steps*. Actors are **Melanie Bruno, Cheryl Colvin, Gabi Coon, Jody Coon, Mykel Michaud, Chris Mundy, Willow Newman, Neil Peterson and Dick Sloan.** The director is **Suzan Nemeth** and the producer is **Jolene Grusecki.**

Tina Dalton tells us the story of *The 39 Steps*: A man in London tries to help a counter-espionage agent, but when the agent is killed and the man stands accused, he must go on the run to save himself and stop a spy ring that is trying to steal top-secret information. The mysterious organization called “The 39 Steps” is hot on his trail in a nationwide manhunt that climaxes in a death-defying finale!

The show is a full on parody of the thriller genre, packed with hammy characterizations, amusing visual gags and plenty of cross dressing. One reviewer said “It creates its own storytelling visual language, revels in its theatricality and simplicity of the staging, and moves slickly through the multiple locations and characters. It



sweeps the audience along with a joyous sense of fun and silliness that is hard to resist.”

Part Hitchcock, part spy novel, and a bit of Monty Python make up *The 39 Steps*. Show dates are Oct. 11-13 and Oct. 17-20. All shows are at 7:00 p.m. except the Sunday shows, which are at 2:00 p.m.

Come Be a Part of Our 2024-25 TBP SEASON!

<i>The 39 Steps</i>	Oct 11-13, 17-20	directed by Suzan Nemeth
<i>Chillers Readers Theater</i>	Oct 25-26	(Performances at the Buckhorn Inn)
<i>Christmas Songs & Stories</i>	Dec. 10	directed by Pat Casey
<i>Squirrel Lake</i>	May 9-11, 15-18, 2025	directed by Ed Krebs
<i>I Take This Man</i>	July 11-13, 17-20, 2025	directed by Rodger McElveen
<i>Wonderettes: Dream On</i>	Oct 17-19, 23-26, 2025	directed by Dennis Szatkowski

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Your TBP Board of Directors and Officers for 2024-25:

Ed Krebs (President)

Keith Frank (Vice President)

Stacy Perrot (Secretary)

Pat Casey (Treasurer)

Judy Quarters (Trustee/Treasurer-in-Training)

Jolene Grusecki (Trustee)

Chris Mundy (Trustee)

Alan Dalton (Trustee)

Tracee' Lentz (Trustee)

The Board meets every fourth Tuesday of the month. Visitors are welcome; if you have something you wish to present to the board, contact the President before the meeting to get on the agenda.

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“Luv’s Pub” Grand Opening!

By Jolene Grusecki



Our favorite local Brit now has a pub named in her honor! During intermission of *The 39 Steps*, patrons will enjoy snacks and an

amazing atmosphere associated with the setting/plot of this fall's, hilarious production.



Tracee' Lentz, house manager, and **Suzan Nemeth**, director, recruited two fabulous and creative ladies to continue the play theme into Luv's Pub (aka Hudgins Hall). **Stephanie Anschuetz** and **Sue Geer** are putting their talents to work for decor and delicious offerings; they would happily accept any servers for the dates: October 11th-13th & 17th-20th. Should you wish to help, please contact Tracee' at tdlentz1@gmail.com.

Community Theatre in North/Northeast Michigan

by *Tara Western*

Show	Theatre	City	Dates
Young Frankenstein	Alpena Civic	Alpena	October 31-Nov. 3
Schoolhouse Rock LIVE! Jr.	Bay City Players	Bay City	Nov. 2,3,9,10
A Christmas Carol	Bay City Players	Bay City	Dec. 7, 8,13, 14, 15
A Christmas Carol	Footliters	Cadillac	Nov. 22-30
Holiday Shorts & Quotes & Jokes	Northern Lites Readers Theatre	Cadillac	Dec. 14 & 15
Steel Magnolias	Center for the Arts	Midland	Oct. 11-20
Underneath the Lintel	Rogers City Community Theatre	Rogers City	Oct. 25-November 3
The Addams Family	Shoreline Players	Oscoda	Oct 26, 27; Nov. 1, 2,3
Lend Me a Soprano	Old Town	Traverse City	Nov. 8-10; 14-17; 22-23
Puffs	WE Players (at TBP theatre)	East Tawas	Nov. 15-17, 22-23

Please Google the venue before making plans.....errors occur! Also, for times, ticket prices etc.

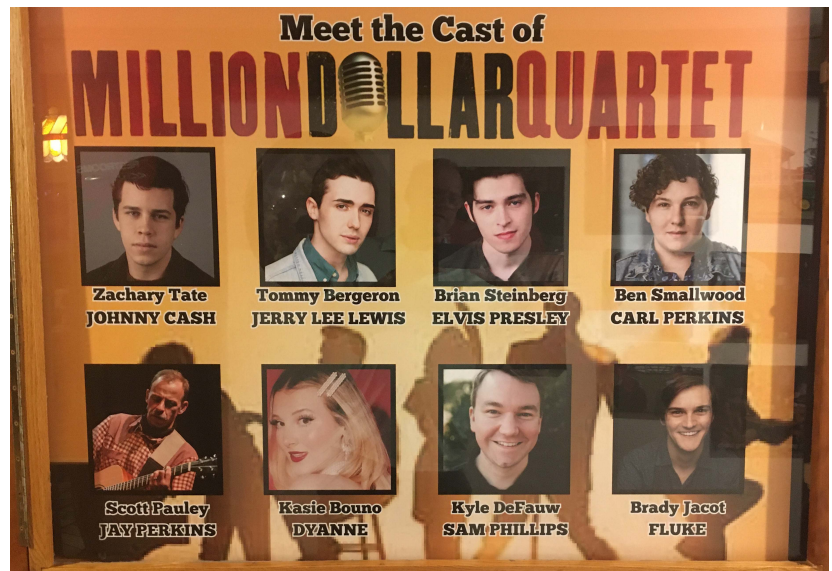
TBPer Rocks It in “Million Dollar Quartet”

Tawas Bay Players and WE Players have been fortunate to present the talents of **Brady Jacot** over the years. He has played musical accompaniment for TBP shows like our *Christmas Songs and Stories* programs, as well as *Brady Jacot’s Perfectly Normal Powerpoint Presentation*, a one-man comedy show written and performed by Brady to help get us out of the hole after the Covid shutdown. He also appeared in numerous WE Players productions and went on to do comic and dramatic roles at Oakland University and Meadow Brook Theater.

Brady is currently showcasing his percussion skills as the drummer in *Million Dollar Quartet*, playing in Marshall, Michigan. *MDQ* recounts a legendary one-night jam session between Carl Perkins, Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis and Johnny Cash. And as you might expect, it’s loaded with iconic songs.

It was great fun to see Brady (he is onstage with the performers) tear up the drums as we listened to classics like “Great Balls of Fire,” “Blue Suede Shoes,” “Folsom Prison Blues,” “Whole Lotta Shakin’ Goin’ On” and many more. Our man from Tawas represented us well with his drumming skills!

Congratulations to Brady for his terrific performance in *Million Dollar Quartet*!





Ed Sterling

TBP says goodbye to **Ed Sterling**, who passed away earlier this month. Ed was one of our original members, and he and his wife Gloria were part of TBP's formative years. Ed appeared onstage in (if my memory serves me well) *The Odd Couple*; he also produced a show or two and served on the Board of Directors. Rest in peace, Ed, and thank you for doing your part to get our fledgling group off the ground.

CTAM Fall Conference

By *Ed Krebs*

Sheila and I were able to attend the CTAM Fall Conference in Midland Saturday Sept. 21. The conference was free to members and included a free lunch funded in part by two sponsors – Ludus and Associated Controls (a sound, lighting and rigging firm in Michigan). It was somewhat less attended than I think they'd have liked, yet networking with other groups was interesting and productive.

Workshops included grant writing, design, playwriting, directing, board development, and a technical session on moving from analog to digital for sound and lighting. In addition, there were several roundtable sessions about community support, marketing, “where are all the young people”, and hits and misses (shows and other events that have gone well or bust).

While the discussions were inspiring, I found it difficult to translate some of the information to our theater since the next smallest community represented was Players De Noc from Escanaba – with a community and membership 3 times ours. Nevertheless, I know from my career that if you can take away one new contact and one new idea, it's a win. I made many new contacts (this group is exceptionally welcoming), and hope next year I can join some of them to take in a show after the conference.

It is difficult in a short article to capture a lot of lessons learned from an all day event. Here are a few tidbits we learned that may apply to our theater.

Design – starting very early provides the time needed to have a top notch show. Design includes Set, Lighting, Costumes and Sound at a minimum, and at least 2 pre-production meetings to work through design ideas is important to do well before casting even begins. Theaters should develop design talent in addition to directors and other roles, and those groups where the designer is not the director often have a true focus on design.

In the technology area, moving to LED lighting and digital controls can have a payoff in as little as 2-1/2 years when switching from incandescent. Making a move is often jumpstarted when the current aging technology begins to fail. Interestingly, groups that move from analog to digital sound find no improvement if they aren't first looking at their microphones (for groups that amplify their actors). The move to digital sound does make sense when (a) there is a desire to have operators run sound with little more than a “go” button instead of manipulating all the manual controls, (b) when finer equalization is needed on a per channel basis (a digital board can have 30+ EQ settings), and (c) your venue has multiple groups and shows working in the same space – each can save their show and not need

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CTAM FALL CONFERENCE *(continued)*

to depend on tape or diagrams to set the board up each day. However, a digital sound board does not simplify sound design – all the same talents and techniques apply.

The community engagement roundtable was primarily around soliciting funds and we discussed the subtle but important differences between sponsorships .vs. paid ads. One key to retain sponsorships was to not over-promise, and to keep any promises made. I also had a chat with the Ludus co-owner regarding their module for “campaigns” as a way to manage fundraisers.

For the “Where are all the young people” roundtable, a few things resonated regarding getting them to participate/audition. Facebook is old school, most of them use Instagram and/or TikTok (plus podcasts and YouTube). Younger people may be more apt to audition based on the reputation of the director as opposed to the show. Being able to submit an audition video when unable to attend the audition nights may help. Providing a list of audition songs is important to them, and if there is a dance portion, having a YouTube video of it in advance is a big help.

The Grant session was interesting in part because they discussed some positive changes to grant applications, especially the MACC (Michigan Arts

and Culture Council) application. A key recommendation was to get all the “cover” information together in a folder – who we are, structure, mission, etc. such that when a grant come up, you can focus on the specific request. They recommended asking for as much money as possible. Grantors may give you less, but will never offer more than asked for. Also, Ludus has features to manage volunteer hours, which are considered “in kind” contribution toward the project – very helpful for grants requiring the organization to have a stake in the project.

Certainly there was much more discussed than can be captured in a summary or newsletter article, and meeting like minded people struggling with (or finding solutions for) similar issues our group faces is why they put on these events. I urge everyone to consider attending the next event. It is well worth the drive (and a free lunch to boot!).

One last nugget – CTAM has an “on the road” program to bring training directly to an organization. Funding is shared between CTAM and the organization, and the workshop can be tailored to fit our theater’s specific needs. After all, they can tap the expertise of many member organizations! I can already think of a few things we might explore with them – perhaps you can too! Let a board member know what you’d like to see in the coming year.

Online Membership Now Available

By **Pat Casey**

There have been requests to be able to renew or take out a membership online. Well, it's now available from our website. It will cost you more (visa charge) but I guess you save the postage to mail it in! At any rate, go to our website (www.tawasbayplayers.com) and you'll find the link on the opening page or under membership.

You have to choose either Adult or Youth (18 and under). The link will take you to Ludus where you can pay for your membership. There's also the form to fill out about helping in some capacity.

You can still download the membership form from the website and mail it in. Whatever works for you!



TAWAS CHILLERS

Are Back!

By Jolene Grusecki

Yes, Readers Theatre is returning and hosting a funny and bone-tingling production offsite from the playhouse; it will be performed in the Antler's Room (back room of Buckhorn in Tawas City) on October 25th and 26th at 7:00 p.m. Doors open at 6:00.

Producer **Jolene Grusecki** and Director **Barb Hunter**, along with their Chillers' Sidekicks, **Adam Davis** and **Stacy Perrot**, are thrilled to be hosting this event at a local business. In Barb's words, "This is a win-win!"

Cast includes: **Alan Dalton**, **Eric Toth**, **Mindy Davis**, **Adam Davis**, **Keith del Rio**, **Bethany Gay**, **Sharon Langley**, **Amanda Jungquist Drumm**, **Bill**

Archer, **Tina Dalton**, **Sandy Lixey**, **Stacy Perrot**, **Chris Mundy**, and **Juli Engle**

Tickets may be purchased at the door or online (highly recommend) at tawasbayplayers.ludus.com.

Any questions can be directed to the G.O.A.T. (aka **Barb Hunter**) at barbhunter1961@gmail.com.

Team Effort Keeps Refreshment Table Running!

By Nadeen and Bob O'Meara

A huge THANK YOU to the following people who went above and beyond by donating cookies for *Leaving Iowa!*

Pam Frank • Diane Brewer • Beth Borowski • Sue Duncan • Kristine Dyke • Vickie Szatkowski • Sharon Langley • Debbie McCarley • Penny Zacharias • Vickie Sanborn • Judy Quarters • Michelle Crossley • Penny LeClair • Jane Ruster • Rose Burgess • Barb Hunter

The deadline for the December/January CURTAIN CALLS is **November 26th** (that's right, just before Thanksgiving!) Please have your articles in to Michal by then! Email to mljacot@sbcglobal.net Handwritten articles accepted too! (I'm not fussy!)