



# Curtain Calls

April / May 2025

## The Squirrels Are Loose!

## “Squirrel Lake” Cast

TBP’s spring play *Squirrel Lake* is in rehearsals. Director **Ed Krebs** has selected a cast of nuts to bring this farce to our stage!



*Squirrel Lake* revolves around a family of dysfunctional siblings who gather together at the family’s summer cabin for a reading of their mother’s will. Things quickly go off the rails and before you know it there are mistaken identities, eccentric characters, slamming doors, and men in dresses.

The cast consists of **Eric Toth** as lawyer Phillip Olsen; **Ray Skiver** as Phillip’s younger brother Patrick, an employee at “Captain Happy’s Burger Barge”; **Karyn Smith** as Sally, mom to four out-of-control kids; **Chris Mundy** as Bob, Sally’s husband and a sports writer who lives and dies by the Chicago Cubs; **Michal Jacot** as Lance, a slightly insane police detective; **Barb Richardson** as Sister Mary Elizabeth Catherine Theresa, a nun; and **Reesie Smith** as Joy, the daughter of “Captain Happy,” with **Rowyn Vorhees**

understudying the part of Joy.

Rehearsals are already underway for the show, which will hit the stage May 9-10-11 and May 15-16-17-18.

This show promises to be an audience pleaser with its zany characters and plot twists. Producer **Laurie Jacot** is busy filling out the production crew, so here’s your chance for some behind-the-scenes fun! Contact Laurie for details on what’s available.

# Leaving Iowa at AACTFest 2025

By Ed Krebs



- |                             |                              |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Janie Mundy (crew)       | 8. Rowyn Vorhees (crew)      | 15. Chris Mundy (crew)       |
| 2. Ray Skiver (crew)        | 9. Adam Davis (cast)         | 16. Unidentified adjudicator |
| 3. Michael Gay (crew)       | 10. Lily Toth (cast)         | 17. Sheila Krebs (crew)      |
| 4. Bethany Gay (crew)       | 11. Reesie Smith (cast)      | 18. Sue Duncan (crew)        |
| 5. Malcolm Davis (cast)     | 12. Eric Toth (cast)         | 19. Andrew Young (cast)      |
| 6. Mindy Davis (cast)       | 13. Unidentified adjudicator | 20. Ed Krebs (director)      |
| 7. Unidentified adjudicator | 14. Stacy Perrot (cast)      |                              |

Imagine if you will, signing up to do a light-hearted comedy for something fun to do over the summer months. Then the adjudicator says “you should take this on the road, and by that I mean AACTFest!”.

No, it wasn’t the Twilight Zone (and for trivia fans, Rod Serling never actually said “Imagine if you will”).

*Leaving Iowa*, last summer’s hit comedy, did “take it on the road” to AACTFest in Bay City Feb. 27th- Mar 2nd. The American Association of Community Theater holds a competition every two years. This year’s state level event was held at Bay City Players. Seven theater groups brought their best (or favorite) show – or at least a portion of it! The performance is limited to 1 hour (and timed), so groups not only had to rework their set design and



staging, they had to craft a version of their play that fit the time constraint and was approved by the publisher and/or the authors!

Not only is the performance itself timed, but the set must fit in a 10 foot by 10 foot space and be able to be set up within 10 minutes and struck in the same time limit! For *Leaving Iowa*, virtually every part of the set had to be adjusted in some way to either fit the hosting theater, or meet the strict timing requirements.



The adjudication is timed as well, with each of the 3 judges getting 5 minutes. Having 3 (sometimes) different perspectives is an additional learning experience, though I much prefer the regular show adjudication in our own space, where it can be a true dialog between the reviewer and the cast and crew.

Competition can drive you to up your game – if it doesn't get in your way of having fun and learning. Fortunately, this group that has been working towards the festival since July 2024 came together as

a family, and made entertaining the audience our number one goal. We met that goal easily – the audience began its applause as we set up our somewhat whimsical and complicated set, and that audience laughed every minute of the performance. Having other theater groups appreciate your work is quite uplifting!

Talking about being together for a while, this group has been together since May 7, 2024 when we had auditions! Not only did we rehearse several

times a week, but with **Sheila Krebs'** leadership, we rented two big VRBO houses and lived together for the 4 days! Sheila and **Janie Mundy** also took care of meal planning – so we broke bread together. The living room of the bigger house provided just enough room for team meetings and one final rehearsal on Friday during our “free time.” Can you imagine working on a show for ten months and then living together?!

There were some challenges, for sure – including a last minute, undocumented rule change on performance day. Stage manager **Adam Davis** handled it professionally, and I might add with a greater calm than I might

have mustered. There were other unacceptable challenges as well, yet we managed to rise above each and every one and perform magnificently.

Speaking of great performances, both our teen cast members **Lily Toth** and **Malcolm Davis** each won an “Outstanding Achievement in Cameo Role” award. I am so proud of the work that each and every cast and crew member did, and I know everyone will cherish the experience in many ways.

Our “Iowa Family” will always be family in my book! Now, on to *Squirrel Lake*!

## ***AACTFest: A View From Behind the Scenes***

*By Janie Mundy*

I would like to thank the TBP for sponsoring the cast and crew of *Leaving Iowa* to go to AACTFest. Seventeen of us had a wonderful time! It was a lot of work. You just don't know how much **Ed and Sheila Krebs** put into this project. They had to take a two-hour show and cut it down to one hour, get it approved, then shrink the set to fit a ten-by-ten foot square. The whole set had to be refigured. The cast had to relearn blocking and adjust cue lines for the play. That alone was mind blowing.

Competition was amazing. We saw seven shows in two days, and all seven theaters brought their best. We didn't make it to the next level but it's okay because our young actors took the stage to receive awards. **Malcolm Davis** and **Lily Toth** received Outstanding Achievement in Cameo Roles; they stole the show!

The fellowship we experienced over the weekend was so much fun. Sitting around the table eating and talking; it went on and on. Thank you, Sheila for finding us two beautiful AirBnB's, and for all your hard work pulling us all together.

I have to say Bay City Players did an awesome job with the after parties. Pizza, hot dogs, walking tacos, sandwiches, drinks, and ice cream. And karaoke! We had so much fun singing, networking, talking to all the other groups. I watched Suzan invite speakers for her fall workshop with ACTM in Midland. I watched our teens exchange numbers and make new friends.

All in all it was the best weekend I've had in a long time. Last note: thank you to all the TBP friends and family members who came down to support us and watch the shows.



## **Steve Kornexl**

**Steve Kornexl** passed away on February 17, 2025.

A resident of East Tawas, Steve volunteered his time generously to many causes and organizations around the community, and the Tawas Bay Players numbered among them. Steve worked on some of our shows behind the scenes and was always an easygoing, genuine person to work with. He will be missed.

A community theater thrives on – heck, *exists* because of volunteers. There are some amazing people who give their time and talent to Tawas Bay Players. Some you see on stage, others are back stage, and a few that seem to always be around helping with this, fixing that, and keeping our theater running. Yet this is a somewhat small percentage of our total membership. Certainly we've got a number of members who have been around for a long time, some since the beginning. They are a tad older now (as am I), and might not feel like they can do as much. While you might not be able to build a set these days, or jump up on stage, there are certainly things you can do.

Today's ask – help us build a robust and viable organization. Recruit new members. Bring your friends, neighbors, customers into the group. The current show *Squirrel Lake* is in production, and new volunteers as well as current members are welcome (and needed) to help us put on this zany production! Contact producer **Laurie Jacot** (lajacot88@gmail.com) to help or suggest someone to contact. We'll put anyone, everyone to work – makeup, ushers, there's lots of tasks that anyone young or not so young can do!

In November's column I put a survey link in the newsletter, challenging you to find one new area of interest to get involved with. As I write this, there hasn't been one response. Zero. Zip. That can't be the future of Tawas Bay Players. We need involved members. We need a growing organization. We need you and others you can bring into the magical world of live theater. Please be an active member of our theater family. Fill out the survey and find a way to get involved. (<https://s.surveyplanet.com/lifeynpo>).

And don't forget to support our amazing cast and crew of *Squirrel Lake*. Dress rehearsal for members is Wednesday May 7, and performances are May 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17 & 18. Let's help Tawas Bay Players have another sell-out audience!

## **TAKE THE TBP SURVEY!**

Copy and paste the address below and help the Players! The survey takes less than five minutes.  
No salesmen will call you about exciting changes to your Medicare plan  
(well, not from TBP, anyway).

**<https://s.surveyplanet.com/lifeynpo>**

# Community Theatre in North/Northeast Michigan

by *Tara Western*

| <b>Show</b>                                  | <b>Theatre</b>                  | <b>City</b>   | <b>Dates</b>         |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Once Upon a Mattress                         | Alpena Civic                    | Alpena        | May 1-11             |
| Oklahoma                                     | Bay City Players                | Bay City      | April 25-27; May 2-4 |
| Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat | Cadillac Footliters             | Cadillac      | April 4-12           |
| You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown             | Cadillac Footliters             | Cadillac      | June 13-21           |
| Is Murder Tax-Deductible?                    | Northern Lites Readers Theatre  | Cadillac      | April 26-27          |
| Lion King Jr.                                | Northland Players               | Cheboygan     | June 20-22           |
| Merrily We Roll Along                        | Center for the Arts             | Midland       | May 9-18             |
| Chitty Chitty Bang Bang                      | Rogers City Community Players A | Rogers City   | April 4-13           |
| Nunsense II                                  | Shoreline Players               | Oscoda        | May-11               |
| A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder       | Old Town Playhouse              | Traverse City | April 25-May 11      |
| A Midsummer's Night Dream **                 | WE Players                      | East Tawas    | June 27, 28, 29      |

\*\* This will be "Shakespeare in the Dewey Durant Park", inspired by Ann Arbor's "Shakespeare in the Arb". Our very own wunderkind, **Neil Peterson**, who has participated twice in the Arb, will be directing.

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

## ***A Note From Your Editor, Michal Jacot ...***

Just to let everyone know, I will be stepping down as TBP newsletter editor this year. I'll probably continue with the next couple of issues, up until our annual meeting in August. If you think you'd be interested in taking over TBP's newsletter, give me a shout at [mljacot@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mljacot@sbcglobal.net). Thanks!

**The deadline for the June/July issue of CURTAIN CALLS will be May 23rd! Send your articles to me at [mljacot@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mljacot@sbcglobal.net) by then!**

