



Curtain Calls

June/July 2025

“Squirrel Lake” Goes Nuts!

By Michal Jacot



Our spring production of the quirky comedy SQUIRREL LAKE was a big hit with our audiences! People were asking for a fun, silly farce, and we delivered!

The play centers around a sibling gathering at Squirrel Lake, Wisconsin for the reading of their mother's will. Seems simple enough, right? But in a place called Squirrel Lake, you're bound to meet a few nuts.

The three siblings played off each other with typical; brotherly/sisterly love and rivalry. **Ray Skiver** played aimless Patrick Olsen, First Mate - er, Assistant Manager at “Captain Happy's Burger Barge”; **Eric “I Can't Seem To Get Off The TBP Stage” Toth** played lawyer Phillip Olsen with shark-ish glee; and **Laurie Jacot** played snarky sister Sally Olsen King, and mother to a brood of savage children. **Chris Mundy**, as Sally's accident-prone husband Bob, stole the show by getting in progressively worse shape as the show went on until he ended up a bandaged, limping, blistered, hairless, bruised mess by the finale.

Adding to the mayhem was **Barb Richardson** as Sister Mary Elizabeth Catherine Theresa Hardy (nuns are always a great addition to a farce because, face it, nuns are funny) who, through miscommunications, ends up being mistaken for a prostitute ... her psychotic brother Lance, played by **Michal Jacot**, a trigger-happy loony who hates realtors and, as a standard rule for any farce, ends up wearing a dress ... and Joy, played by **Reesie Whitford** and **Rowyn Vorhees**, a ditzy free spirit who, as a psychic, makes contact with the family's deceased mother.

SQUIRREL LAKE, as is the case with many other shows, had to deal with behind-the-scenes issues. When our cast's female lead dropped out a week before opening night, director **Ed Krebs** scrambled to fill the spot. Producer **Laurie Jacot** reluctantly took on the role, memorizing 200 lines over a weekend in addition to her duties as producer. But she pulled it off, and we ended up with a wildly funny and fun show! Between an experienced cast who surrounded her and ace stage manager **Bethany Gay** to guide her backstage, Laurie made it with flying colors. Laurie said, “I'm glad I could help, but I never want to do that again.”

We had a special visit from SQUIRREL LAKE author **Brian Mitchell**, who made a special trip to northern Michigan just to see our show. While here, he was given the “tourist treatment” by Ed, Sheila, Laurie, and Michal with a delicious lunch at the Buckhorn and a tour of Lumbermen's Monument and Iargo Springs.

Congratulations to the cast and crew of SQUIRREL LAKE for delivering the laughs!

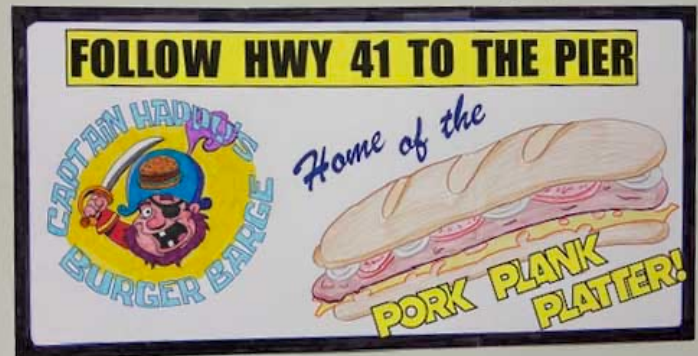


This logo was designed by Michal Jacot for a running gag in SQUIRREL LAKE.



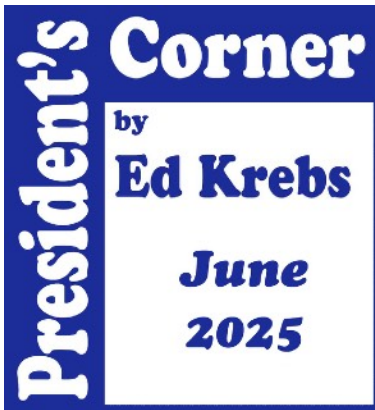
Scenes From **Squirrel Lake**

A sample of some of the decor and sight gags our audiences saw around the playhouse.



Laurie's "Family Tree" lobby display showed "how many nuts it takes" to put on a play, and it really impressed a lot of people!





As I write this, we just wrapped up a very successful run of *Squirrel Lake*. I hope you had a chance to see it. If you did, you probably noticed the tree on the wall with all the photos of our

nutty cast and crew. There were, as with every show, a lot of people that came together to put together some great entertainment. It speaks volumes to what it takes to have a successful organization like Tawas Bay Players.

The show was adjudicated by J. R. Spaulding, Jr. - a person with an extensive CV (resume) in and around theater. His biggest observation wasn't about any one actor's performance (though you all were fabulous!), nor the director's work or any other facet of the production. He was in awe about our organization and how they come together as a community, working together and in great harmony. He sensed it as he came into our playhouse, he saw it in action on stage (and backstage). He noted with all sincerity that what we have here at Tawas Bay Players isn't the case in all community theaters.

Without a doubt we have something special here. Some members have been involved for 40 or more years. Others, like Sheila and me, are relatively new

to the group. As Sheila noted to the adjudicator, we live up in Greenbush, a 35+ minute drive each way. We make the trip (sometimes in separate vehicles and sometimes more than once in a day!) because when we first were asked to get involved, we were welcomed, appreciated and our talents well utilized. **Ray Skiver** also pointed out that for each production, a new and close knit family is born. Every show's cast and crew come together and afterwards we stay connected. Tawas Bay Players is indeed family and lovingly puts "community" into community theater.

Special thanks goes to producer **Laurie Jacot**, not only for engaging many of you to help come together and build a successful production, but also stepping onto the stage again with a great performance as Sally. To do either job is admirable – to do both (and do them well) at the same time is heroic! (And perhaps a bit nutty, but with a place called Squirrel Lake, you've gotta expect a few nuts!)

If you haven't been involved in a show for a while, it's time to rekindle that camaraderie. There are dozens of tasks, big and small for every show. Maybe it's even time to try something new – lights, sound, props, maybe be part of our patron's positive experience by working the box office. As Lance says (while being possessed by Mom's spirit): "Open your wings and fly, son. The only thing keeping you on the ground is you."

THANKS, BAKERS!

A huge Thank You to all the bakers of *Squirrel Lake*. A first: we made the paper! Great job, everybody!

Nadeen O'Meara and Cheryl Provost

(Nadeen and Cheryl are right; the treats at the refreshment table got their own paragraph in the newspaper's review! And for a good reason ... the cookies were delicious!)

TBP's UPCOMING SEASON!

By *Ed Krebs*

There will be no summer show for 2025. Due to circumstances beyond our control, we had to cancel our summer show, *I Take This Man*. If you purchased season tickets or bought tickets online for *I Take This Man*, you will be receiving a refund. We will be doing renovations in the theater this summer. (Learn more about our projects at the Annual Meeting at the theater on August 8th!)

Fall 2025:

MARVELOUS WONDERETTES - DREAM ON

Written and created by Roger Bean; Directed by *Dennis Szatkowski*

Spring 2026:

Moonglow

Written by Kim Carney; Directed by *Brenda Chadwick*

Summer 2026:

CENTURY OF ENTERTAINMENT - A VARIETY SHOW

Directed by *Tracee Lentz*, Produced by *Jolene Grusecki*

Fall 2026:

My Summer at camp-O-che-Mo

Written by Carol Kushion and Richard Hingst
Directed by *Barb Hunter* and produced by *Judy Quarters*

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 continue with *Curtain Calls* 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. Thanks!

Between the Shows

by *Ed Krebs*

Did you know that there is a policy in place that states the stage will remain empty for one week following strike before the next show's construction? Typically set strike immediately follows a Sunday matinee. Then the stage is empty for a week, and construction often begins the following Saturday. But why is this? The simple answer is – to allow work to be done that can't occur once a set is in place! Maintenance, repairs, and upgrades all need an empty stage to get projects completed. Our Skyscraper ladder used for overhead work such as lighting or curtains takes up a lot of space, and once a platform or wall is up, that ladder simply can't be used. The floor also gets maintenance tasks such as painting and repairing or replacing a sheet



of masonite. The special floor paint we use takes up to three days to fully cure so it can stand up to the heavy use from set pieces and props.

One of the projects done right after Squirrel lake closed was to finally hem the bottom of the gray backdrop. When it was first hung during Disaster!, it just had the excess material laying all over the floor. And that's how it's been for a while, collecting dirt and getting in the way. Master seamstress Sheila Krebs worked diligently to cut the fabric down to size and sew in a proper hem that can hold weights. Sewing a 30 foot long hem is no easy task! Thank you Sheila!

Here's a tip for directors and producers – make sure if you even think you need special effects or lighting, that you have a production meeting with your designer and lighting designer to determine what you need. Do this before the preceding show closes. This way we can leverage the empty stage time to preset lights above the stage with the big ladder and create just the effect you are looking to accomplish. If you wait until after set construction has begun, you will be limited to what lighting can be hung and aimed, and quite possibly miss out on the effect you are looking to achieve!

Community Theatre in Northern and Northeast Michigan

by *Tara Western*

<i>Show</i>	<i>Theatre</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Dates</i>
You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown	Cadillac Footliters	Cadillac	June 13-21
Lion King Jr.	Northland Players	Cheboygan	June 20-22
Freaky Friday the Musical	Center for the Arts	Midland	June 25-27
Nunsense II	Shoreline Players	Oscoda	May 31-June 8
The Wizard of Oz-youth	Old Town Playhouse	Traverse City	June 6-14
Sapphire Soiree-65 years of theatre	Old Town Playhouse	Traverse City	June 19
A Midsummer's Night Dream	WE Players	East Tawas	June 27, 28, 29



The deadline for the August/September issue of CURTAIN CALLS will be July 25th!

Send your articles to me at mljacot@sbcglobal.net by then!