



Curtain Calls Newsletter

May/June 2026

Just pondering some things as I begin to gather items for this newsletter, and I realize I have a few people to thank who consistently provide me with pertinent information for our membership as well as some fun memories for us old timers.

Michal and Laurie Jacot

Judy Quarters

Pat Casey

Tara Western

Suzan Nemeth

Ed Krebs

Brenda Chadwick

If I missed you, my apologies. I don't keep tabs (maybe I should...?). Anyhow, I'd love to hear from more of you. If you go out to see a show with others, attend a function with your TBP buddies, have some exciting life news to share, I most ardently hope that you will take a minute and jot down the details. I will even write it for you..I just need the raw material. Don't worry about your writing style; I revise EVERYONE's copy somewhat...even if it's just to make it all fit! Old English teachers never die; they simply slide into new copy editing gigs.

I'd like to take a minute to thank my youngest daughter Katelyn Good for volunteering to help me on refreshments for **Moonglow**. We've been Sam's Club, Gordoning, and online ordering to make our tarts for the refreshments. The cream cheese/butter crust is courtesy of long time supporter **Millie Bloomer**. Many of you will remember her for her gifts in the kitchen.

So, I've been showing Katelyn how to "tart around," and we've had some fun doing it. Hopefully, audiences enjoy these treats and I remember to begin making these well before dress rehearsal day. ☹️Oops. Life, as usual, got in the way, but I think we managed to pull it off okay. As always, our time in the kitchen is full of laughs, "Wait, where did I set that down?" and "Can you get that timer, please?" And of course, "NOT those!"

President's Corner

May 2026

Whew! Your board has been busy, busy, busy! People outside our organization might expect that the board members spend a couple hours a month in a meeting, and little more. Not even close! Rarely a day goes by where we aren't discussing and working through a myriad of topics to move Tawas Bay Players forward.

Some of the work is on current efforts – facility business and improvements, the current show (*Moonglow* has been an amazing journey!) and executing our long term plans. And of course there's plenty of effort on the future – the next season, a 5 year plan, licensing – it could take up most of this newsletter to list everything in the works!

In her *Moonglow* Director speech at the beginning of the show, Brenda Chadwick mentions that while there are 7 people onstage, there are over 30 people involved in the production. That's a third of our membership – for one show!

Volunteerism is the lifeblood of our organization. Even when we aren't the actor or director, we pitch in on everything from cleaning the theater to manning the ticket booth to preparing and serving delicious offerings for intermission.

Shows aren't the only area we need volunteers. We need several people to step up to some important tasks. We are trying to form a Capital Campaign meeting – a leader and folks willing to work toward our goals. We have a professional fundraiser to guide us, so you don't have to have experience. You just need a willingness to help this organization move to the next level.

Another committee we'd like to form is a Membership Development and Engagement team. What do you think membership means to you? What should it look like 5 years from now? How can we attract and retain new members? There's plenty of opportunity here!

The bottom line is – while the board is working on many important tasks, we only have so much bandwidth. Creating a few key committees to expand effort in these important areas is the best way to move forward. And while some members cannot build sets, act in shows or give the time needed to produce a show, your wisdom and experience is vital for the future of Tawas Bay Players. Contact a board member today, and ask how you can best serve our group!

Ed Krebs
President



Spring Flowers...should be accurate by July?

The 2026-2027 Season will be Spectacular!

by Ed Krebs

Before I dive into announcing the upcoming season, please be sure to add Friday, August 14th to your calendar for a special fundraiser “An Evening with Mozart,” performed by pianist Scott Taylor. Check out the Tawas Bay Players’ website for time and tickets.

You may already be aware of our fall show “My Summer at Camp O-Che-Mo”, co-authored by our very own Carol Kushion along with Richard W. Hingst. It tells the poignant story of a retired schoolteacher and her diverse group of fellow patients navigating the challenges of chemotherapy treatments with humor, hope and camaraderie. (As a former chemo patient myself, I can assure you that laughter is indeed the best medicine!). Performances will be October 9-11 and 15-18.

Christmas Songs and Stories comes once a year, and this season it will be occurring on Tuesday, Dec. 8th. Don’t forget that this is our gift to the community, so there is no cost and we encourage you to invite everyone!

“After Hours” is our moniker for adult entertainment. *Sylvia* will be presented in January 2027. Considered a romantic comedy, *Sylvia* featured a stray dog (played by a woman) that main character Greg brings home. Naturally, it creates some friction in the household. Like “Dueling Pianos” this year, *Sylvia* will be performed offsite – probably at the American Legion. It’s an adult comedy with adult beverages (once tickets go on sale), so seats are likely to sell out fast!

Valentine’s Day is all about love (or candy, depending on your perspective). Jeff and Brenda Chadwick will be bringing *Love Letters* to our stage in February as a special fundraiser. Date(s) will be announced after they take a breather from presenting *Moonglow* this spring. More later, but for now don’t forget to congratulate Brenda and Jeff on a spectacular show!

Spring 2027 brings the comedy *A Little Murder Never Hurt Anybody*. It’s written by Ron Bernas, directed by Ed Krebs, and produced by Laurie Jacot. Imagine you are a well-to-do man whose best friend’s wife recently passed away. So your New Year’s resolution? It is to kill your wife so you can traipse around the world like your buddy. What’s she going to do? Declare her own resolution to stay alive, of course! As she sets about ensuring this outcome, their poor daughter needs to postpone her wedding because the invited guests keep mysteriously dying off! The clueless detective suspects everybody, while the butler is up to his own shenanigans. You’ll want to see this one a couple of times just to figure it all out. Bring your mom, your wife, and perhaps even your favorite butler! May 2-9 and 13-16, 2027.

Whether you are a Dungeons and Dragons fan or not, you will want to save the dates of the summer show *She Kills Monsters*, directed by Suzan Nemeth. . This dramatic comedy was one of the top 20 produced shows by high schools, colleges and community theaters in 2025. Its cross generational appeal is one of its greatest strengths. At its core, it is about facing what frightens us. And whether it is grief, misunderstanding, or the unknown, discovering our inner strength through confronting these issues head on is what makes the piece so memorable. Fast paced humor and action driven storytelling all within a Dungeons and Dragons framework, *She Kills Monsters* rightfully earned its reputation for being both entertaining and unexpectedly moving. It’s PG-13, so start booking your babysitter now for July 16-18 & 22-25, 2026.



Moonglow Finale **by Brenda Chadwick**

Well, this one is in the books. I had the absolute honor to work with an amazing cast and crew. When you finish a play you have two schools of thought. The first is, whew, thank goodness that's done, and then there is a sense of loss knowing that this family that you have been with three or more times a week for several months is now disbanded.

Our show was successful in many ways. We wish we had better attendance but the feedback we got was overwhelmingly positive and our adjudication was great. Many, many people came to me with tears in their eyes to say they loved the show. If you had tears then we did our job. Thank you to everyone who came to see it. I especially appreciate that the playwright came to see the show.

I did this in honor of my mom. The character of Diane says that her mom is a strong woman. That is my mom, or at least was my mom.

CAST LOOKING AT THE PROPS TABLE AS THE STAGE MANAGER WALKS AWAY.



Decades of Delight-fulness!

Tracee Lentz and Jolene Grusecki

Our summer show will be a departure from TBP's normal productions. The variety-show format, written and organized by us (Director Tracee and Producer Jolene), has attracted performers from the Tawas, Au Gres, Standish, and Prescott areas. During auditions, many displayed their talents that fit into the decades of 1920s-2010s; both of us were thrilled with the array of entertainment! We truly feel that the summer audiences will enjoy the "walk down memory lane" via songs, instrumental, dances, and skits.

Another community bonus will be our partnership with the Tawas Bay Art Gallery. Lori Bayn will be our liaison and curator, and artists from the gallery will display/sell their decades-designed artwork in Hudgins Hall during the productions' pre-show, intermission, and post-show times.

As always, if you wish to be involved, we will find a place for you to join our fun-loving team!

Tawas Bay Players

DECADES OF DELIGHT

Three Ways to Be Impactful:

- \$500 SPONSORSHIP**
 - SCREEN TIME DURING INTERMISSION
 - NAME IN THE PROGRAM
 - DIGITAL & PRE-SHOW ADVERTISING
 - FOUR (4) TICKETS FOR OPENING NIGHT (FRIDAY, JULY 10, 2026)
- \$250 SPONSORSHIP**
 - NAME IN THE PROGRAM
 - DIGITAL & PRE-SHOW ADVERTISING
 - TWO (2) TICKETS FOR OPENING NIGHT (FRIDAY, JULY 10, 2026)
- DELIGHTFUL DONOR \$100 +**
 - 8x10 matted picture displayed in playhouse entrance
 - Be creative!
 - Girl or Guy Groups
 - Family Pictures
 - Etc.

VARIETY SHOW
Join us!

Decades of Delight 20
Variety Show - 100 Decades of Entertainment
TAWAS BAY PLAYERS
July 10th-12th & 23rd-26th
7:00pm
Online tickets:
www.tawasbayplayers.com
Questions? (989) 342-8272

Contact:
Producer Jolene Grusecki
jgrusecki@gmail.com

TBP Our Community Theatre Appreciates YOU!

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

by **Judy Quarters**

TBP was very fortunate to have three financial supporters of our May show *Moonglow*.

Due to the topic of the show, we had contacted several care providers in our area and were fortunate to get sponsors from the Iosco Commission on Aging, Iosco Medical Care Facility and Lakeview Manor.

We live in a great community that is so supportive of all our efforts; it is nice to be noticed and financially aided! If you know anyone affiliated with any of these area businesses, please make sure you acknowledge how much they were appreciated!

If you missed the show *Moonglow* - so sad for you. One of our founding fathers, Vince Weiler would have been extremely proud of the exquisite story and acting by our cast. Brenda Chadwick took a difficult subject that is near and dear to her, and educated us all. Kudos to the entire cast and crew! And if you weren't there...sorry you also missed Barb and Katelyn's awesome tarts at intermission!

From **TD Haskin**

What a wonderful moving production of *Moonglow*! Everyone was spot on in their role. The play moved smoothly and certainly kept one's attention. It was moving, sad, inspirational and timely. I just wish more of our viewing public would have attended this A+ production. Director Brenda Chadwick did a marvelous job casting, motivating and encouraging this talented cast. You all rocked the theatre world with this production. Thanks to all of you who were part of this superb production. Bravo, and a standing O!!!!

Tim





DEAR DRAMA DIVA:

I love plays and I would like to be a better “consumer” of live theatre. I have heard some adjudications of shows, and I love how the adjudicators review the set, music, costumes, lighting, and the acting etc. Would you have some tips on becoming more aware of what I am experiencing?

Thank you,

Aspiring Theatre Patron

Dear ATP:

Great question! Foremost, adjudicators reflect elements of the production, bringing attention to the choices the producer, director and cast have made.

It will help if you realize pretty much everything except the script itself is a CHOICE.

I have heard some directors say, “all you have to do is follow the script.” Actually, stage directions most likely were written by the stage manager of the first group who produced the show. Sometimes those directions don’t make sense as they contradict a previous move!

Let’s start with The Set:

Does what you see appear to be what it is: a young person’s apartment, a NYC mansion, a rustic cabin in the woods (or on a lake? You should be able to determine if a lake or the forest is outside by looking at the set dressing!)

Set designers and set decorators do their best to communicate the setting of the play. As soon as the curtains open, you should have an inkling about where you are and who inhabits this space. Then, ask yourself, does this place look lived in? By the character?

The very best set dressers delve deep into the psyche of the character whose space it is. Small details add up. Look at the art work/wall hangings, the age of the furniture, the tchotchkes sitting around.

I hope this helps. The more live theatre you see the easier this “study” becomes. See “Community Theatre in Northern and NE Michigan” article for some theatres near you.

Theatrically yours,

Drama Diva



Jacot's for the Win!

By Judy Quarters

Last fall Michal & Laurie Jacot pledged to donate \$3000 for the Sound Booth Renovation Project. They began last fall with two Murder Mysteries at the Buckhorn called Trouble in Long Branch at the Short Branch Saloon, where both nights quickly sold out! Then in December, they took their gang to the Tawas Bay Beach Resort to put on another entertaining murder mystery for the Gold Bond Building Products Christmas party.

Bringing us into April, the Jacots were again into murders at the Buckhorn! This was Shake, Murder & Roll, set in the 50's. Two sold out shows were well received by some new and generous theater patrons.

They had such excellent casts and they did a great job spreading the word about the needs of TBP. Between Michal and President Ed's passing the hat, donations received, and the show income, Michal and Laurie have donated over \$4500, well over their pledged amount! With Michal's writing skills and Laurie's knack for producing - TBP is forever grateful!

To express the group's appreciation (and awe!) President Ed Krebs presented the Jacot's with a card to thank them for their support and as a show of our gratitude. Well done all around.

BOB O'MEARA'S BRAKE DRUM APPEARS ON MEADOW BROOK THEATER STAGE!

By Michal Jacot

Meadow Brook Theater's production of *Million Dollar Quartet* was a spectacular, fun musical romp through an amazing array of music from the 50's. It centers around the legendary night in December 1956 when Jerry Lee Lewis, Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins and Johnny Cash gathered at Sun Records for an impromptu recording session.

The quartet of stars play their own guitars and pianos, and the music is enhanced with an on-stage drummer; in this case, the Tawas Bay Players' own **Brady Jacot**, who has lent his percussion talents to this show several times at different theaters. This time Brady had extra help from another Tawas Bay Player.

Brady was looking for a brake drum to use with his drum set. It had to be a Ford brake drum, and an old rusty one, and a certain type of drum, because it yields the best tone. (Don't ask me why; it's a musician thing, far beyond my scope of knowledge.) Leave it to **Bob O'Meara** to go on the search for this item. And he found one! Brady got his brake drum, and added it to his percussion repertoire.

And there it was, appearing on the stage at Meadow Brook Theater, this old rusty brake drum from Dean Arbour or Bob's back yard or somewhere in East Tawas. Brady used it during the Johnny Cash song "Sixteen Tons," and man, it sounded good!

Thanks, Bob! Who knows what piece of Tawas junk will show up on someone else's stage next? Me, I can't wait to see that old broken toilet sitting in my garage to show up on Broadway!

Community Theatre in Northern and Northeast Michigan
 Compiled by **Tara Western**

Show	Theatre	City	Dates
Jekyll and Hyde: the musical	Bay City Players	Bay City	July 24-26; July 31- August 2
25 th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee	Cadillac Footliters	Cadillac	June 12-20
The Lightning Thief	Cadillac Footliters	Cadillac	July 24-August 1
Midsummer Night's Dream	Center for the Arts	Midland	June 4-14
The Drowsy Chaperone	Center for the Arts	Midland	June 5-14
Moana Jr.	Northland Players	Cheboygan	June 18,19,20
Once Upon a Mattress	Old Town Playhouse	Traverse City	June 5-13
Mary Poppins Jr.	Rogers City Community Theatre	Rogers City	July 30-31; August 1-2
Jekyll And Hyde: the Musical	Shoreline Players	Oscoda	June 20-21; June 26-28

*Please Google the venue before making plans.....errors occur!

Also, for times, ticket prices etc.





Did you know?
by Laurie Jacot

TRIVIA QUIZ!!!

This photo fell out of a box while we were cleaning the attic. Can you identify the actors? And can you name the show (which one?)



The answer to the trivia questions:

Yes, it's a "Tangled Webbs" show, but which one? Different actors played the character of Donald in each one - Ray Skiver in the first one, Nick Warner in the second, and John Brock in the third installment. That's him in the center, flanked by Keith Frank as Fenwick and Dennis Szatkowski as Alex in "Tangled Webbs 3: The Final Nightmare". (It's published by Eldridge Publishing under the name "Going For Broke.")



TBP does Murder Mysteries to Die For! A SEASON OF MURDER AND FUNDRAISING By Michal Jacot

TBP did three murder mystery evenings throughout this last season to raise funds for our Capital Campaign. I wrote and directed all three, and Laurie Jacot produced them. It was my personal goal to raise \$3000 from this trio of projects, which would go towards some much-needed repairs, replacements and renovations.

We started the season back in September with "Trouble in Long Branch in the Short Branch Saloon," a Wild-West-themed murder mystery evening presented over two consecutive Saturdays. The Buckhorn Inn hosted us and gave our guests a delicious dinner before the show. Then the fun began.

When the sheriff is gunned down, Deputy Dan Dogood (Michal Jacot) took over the investigation to nail the varmint. Suspects were bartender Rufus Chambers (Ed Krebs); madam of the "upstairs girls" Sagebrush Sophie Collins (Barb Richardson); prospector Klondike Charlie Skinner (Eric Toth); schoolmarm Winifred Thompson (Penny Zacharias); land baron Diamond Jim Dalton (Chris Mundy); and sharpshooter Ellie Madison (Bethany Gay).

Many audience members dressed for the evening in their best cowboy getup, everyone had fun, and we made some money to work towards that \$3000 goal.

Next up was "The Speakeasy Murder." Done at the Tawas Bay Beach Resort for Gold Bond's employee Christmas party, we took the audience back to the Roaring 20's to involve them in a dastardly murder. Among the possible culprits were mob boss Ross "The Boss" Valentini (Chad Bondie); his flapper girlfriend Suzette DeVine (Shannon Bondie); Prohibition crusader "Big Bertha" Cannon (Barb Hunter); speakeasy owner Lucky Gilroy (Ed Krebs); silent movie actress Kathryn Kreslin (Lily Toth); and sleazy mobster "Flappy Lips" Flanagan (Eric Toth). Detective Scott Reasoner (Michal Jacot) led the audience to solving the murder, although he never deduced why Ed Krebs always got cast as a bartender. More fun, more money in the coffers.

Finally, we returned to the Buckhorn Inn in April and moved to the rock 'n' roll 1950's to present "Shake, Murder and Roll!" We played to full houses for two Saturday evenings. With no bartender role available, Ed Krebs played malt-shop owner Flip Ferguson (who got to do a dramatic dying scene before the audience). The shady characters involved were sexy starlet Norma Jean

Malone (Barb Richardson); bandleader Mickey Manardo (Eric Toth - this guy's a chameleon. He went from grizzled prospector to sleazy gangster to suave bandleader, as well as having parts in our regular shows! Who knows what role he'll be playing next!); his ditzy wife Lillyann Bell (Penny Zacharias); sweet wholesome actress (Mindy Davis); and king of rock 'n' roll Pelvis Lustley (Adam Davis, who augmented his role with some pretty awesome guitar playing and singing). Even more fun and money.

At these shows we had a routine where Ed would step out of character to make a short speech about our needs, then I'd trot out my "We ain't too proud to beg" line. We'd pass a hat and humbly ask for donations. (On top of the \$30 they already paid for their ticket). Our last audience was extremely generous; instead of the \$40 or \$50 we were expecting, we took in a little over \$500 in cash donations!

Some people threw in fifties and even hundred dollar bills! We were overwhelmed at the generosity and support of our community. So, more fun, more money. After "Shake, Murder and Roll!", we got the final tally, hoping to get to that \$3000 goal. All told, we raked in over \$4578! Hopefully, that will help put a dent in some of those renovation expenses.

Speaking of expenses, we kept them to a bare minimum, and part of that is because of the dedication of the actors. Many of them purchased their own costumes to help defray costs. Their efforts were very much appreciated, and if I do these shows again, now I know who to go to because, after all, they already have their costume!

I wrote and directed all three of the murder mysteries, but they were by no means a one-man operation. I'm grateful to the talented actors who gave of their talents (a couple of these heroes appeared in all three shows!). Many thanks to our small but dedicated crew of backstage helpers: Cheryl Fortner, cake-cutter extraordinaire ... Jody Provost, collector and scraper of dishes ... and Judy Quarters, keeper of the checkbook. I hope I didn't forget anyone.

The biggest thank you of all goes to Laurie Jacot, who acted as producer for all three shows ("producer" being defined as doing all the stuff I didn't want to do). Laurie secured props and decor, acted as liaison with host sites, bussed tables, hauled furniture, ordered cakes, and did a hundred other things to keep us on track. It was her eye for detail and knack for getting quality items on a budget that took our final total over the top; she takes final credit for all that money we made. Laurie is a top-notch producer, and TBP is lucky to have her.

Just because I use the same people for these things doesn't mean you can't be involved yourself. I'm always looking for new people willing to take on a challenge. These murder mysteries have all the fun of working on a regular play, but without having to learn lines or go to rehearsals. And we always have a blast with them. So if you're interested, just let me know and you may be in the next one we do.

Thanks once again to everyone involved in these three projects!



Yee-Ha! The Wild West rode again with "Trouble in Long Branch in the Short Branch Saloon" in September 2025.





"The Speakeasy Murder" played at the Tawas Bay Beach Resort to an enthusiastic audience. Gangsters, flappers and movie starlets made the show a hit.



Finally, it was back to the 50's for "Shake, Murder and Roll!"

More Kudos for *Moonglow!*

By **Jolene Grusecki**

Last night was simply amazing! Tracee and I dined with adjudicator, David Wahr (who lives near the MI/OH border). We later sat beside him during the production, too. Yes, he admitted to being weepy at the end; the cast was just so fantastic. David's mother has dementia, and he completely related to the script and actors. His feedback to everyone was great!

One statement that was profound:

“Not all productions need to be commercial successes. We are here for art and education.”

Good reminder to all of us.

BTW-

He and few others have a community theatre podcast; he will be discussing this production in June/July. The podcast is "The Art and Business of Community Theater"

Oh, nightly bonus:

Author Kim Carney and family attended! They came north from metro Detroit for the night... Leaving today...She absolutely loved the way the actors brought her script alive!

She and David did connect, too. Whew! That's all from me.



Hopefully you got your fill of all things TBP for now!

Thanks for reading and thanks to this edition's many contributors.

