



Curtain Calls

August/September 2024

“Leaving Iowa” Leaves Audiences Laughing!



Leaving Iowa, our summer production, played to full houses and delighted audiences throughout its run. Director **Ed Krebs** and Assistant Director **Ray Skiver**, along with Co-Producers **Michal and Laurie Jacot**, put together a hit show with laughs, lots of heart, and tech wizardry never seen before on our stage!

The show follows Don Browning and his efforts to place his father’s ashes in some meaningful place; along the way, he reminisces about the family vacations of his youth and his relationship with his dad. Those looks back in time provided some of the most hilarious moments of the show; everyone in the audience could relate to those cringe-inducing car

trips with the family.

And what a cast! The show starred **Eric Toth** as Don Browning ... **Andrew Young** as Dad ... **Mindy Davis** as Mom ... **Stacy Perrot** as Sis ... **Adam Davis** as Uncle Phil, Joe Hoefingers, Hotel Clerk, Grandpa, Jack Singer, Amish Guy, and Bob ... **Malcolm Davis** as Fruit Cart Guy, Cart Chaser, Civil War Guy, Wayne, and Fred ... **Lily Toth** as Judy, Shopping Lady, Museum Assistant, and Jessie ... and **Reese Whitford** as Aunt Phyllis, Grandma, Amish Woman, Jaime, and Drunk Lady. The cast members who took on multiple roles easily convinced the audience that we had a cast of dozens, with their dramatic change from character to character.

Leaving Iowa is looking at taking part in the AACTFest competition in February. More details on that elsewhere in this issue of *Curtain Calls*!

Congratulations to the cast and crew of *Leaving Iowa*!

“The 39 Steps” Slated for Fall

by **Tara Western**

Although autumn is not our current season, there are those who are already filling up their fall schedules. *The 39 Steps* is a parody adapted from John Buchan’s 1915 novel and Alfred Hitchcock’s 1935 movie. Since we cannot summarize it better than Stageagent.com, we’ll simply share their synopsis: “Mix a Hitchcock masterpiece with a juicy spy novel, add a dash of Monty Python, and you have the intriguing, thrilling, righteous, and unmissable comedy.” (For a few more details on this unique play, see **Tina Dalton’s** article following this one.)

The four cast members will play multiple characters and answer the question, “Will they save Britain from a den of devious spies?”

You will not want to miss out on these highly entertaining adventures, as Producer **Jolene Grusecki** and Director **Suzan Nemeth** weave their “Crazy Lady” ways into this production.

Auditions are set for August 14th & 15th at 6:30 in Hudgins Hall, and performances will be October 11th-13th and 17th-20th.

Should you wish to be involved in any aspect, contact Jolene at jgrusecki@gmail.com

... And What is *The 39 Steps* About?

Let’s hear about it from **Tina Dalton!**

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!

Review by *West End Best Friend*: it is a full on parody of the thriller genre, packed with hammy characterizations, amusing visual gags and plenty of cross dressing. 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.

Audition dates are August 14th and 15th at Tawas Bay Playhouse at 6:30 pm. Needed are 1 Man and 1 Woman along with 7 more parts that can be either men or women. Ages are 18 and older. Come join a wonderfully funny show.

Take a Look at Our

2024–25 SEASON!

The 39 Steps (Drama) Oct. 11-13, 17-20, 2024

Directed by *Suzan Nemeth*

Christmas Songs & Stories (Music) December 10, 2024

Directed by *Pat Casey*

Squirrel Lake (Comedy) May 9-11; 15-18 2025

Directed by *Ed Krebs*

I Take This Man (Romantic Comedy) July 11-13; 17-20 2025

Directed by *Rodger McElveen*

Monster Bats, Flying Witches, and ... AACTFest!

Our production of *Leaving Iowa* may be competing at AACTFest this February!

Sponsored by the American Association of Community Theatre, AACTFest presents a forum for community theaters from AACT's 10 regions to present a show for adjudication and advancement from the state level to regional and national levels.

Here's how it works. Competing teams will have a 10x10 foot box on the stage. In each box is everything that can be used for a show: set, props, and costumes. A signal is given, and the first show is off and running. Actors and production crew must set up their show in exactly 10 minutes. From there, the show must be no longer than 60 minutes. Finally, they have exactly ten minutes to put it all back in their box and leave the stage. In addition to the high pressure of the timed setup and teardown, the performers have to re-learn a condensed version of the script.

The state level is hosted by the Bay City Players from February 27 to March 2, 2025. If successful, the show would move to the regional level, which takes place in March 2025 in Owosso. And then if all goes well, we would go to the national level in June 2025, which takes place, ironically, in DesMoines, Iowa!

There are still some hoops to jump through and fundraising to be done. That said, hopefully we will move forward with this project. *Curtain Calls* will keep you informed of our progress at AACTFest!

Community Theatre in North/Northeast Michigan

by Tara Western

<i>Show</i>	<i>Theatre</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Dates</i>
<i>Nunsense</i>	Bay City Players	Bay City	Sept. 5-8
<i>Junie B Jones Jr. the Musical</i>	Footlighters	Cadillac	Sept. 28-Oct. 1
<i>Spellbinding Suspense - 3 Radio Thrillers</i>	Northern Lites Readers Theatre	Cadillac	Sept 14-15
<i>Rock of Ages</i>	Center for the Arts	Midland	August 7-16
<i>Dr. Doolittle Jr.</i>	Rogers City Community Theatre	Rogers City	August 15-18
<i>Back to the Summer</i>	Shoreline Players youth group	Oscoda	August 13-14
<i>The Wedding Singer</i>	Pit and Balcony	Saginaw	Sept. 27-29; Oct 4-12
<i>Waitress</i>	Old Town Playhouse	Traverse City	August 20-29
<i>A Thousand Cranes</i>	WE Players (at TBP theatre)	East Tawas	August 9-11

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

LEAVING IOWA RECEIVES KUDOS FROM ADJUDICATOR

By **Tara Western**

When **Ed Krebs**, *Leaving Iowa*'s director, requested an adjudicator, I knew exactly who I wanted. Jamie Peterson, is a creative genius/technical maven who would totally understand and appreciate Ed's vision.

Jamie has been with Players de Noc in Escanaba for 32 years. I met Jamie in 2015 at Midland's AACTFest* and have seen his work at several other festivals. A man of many talents, he has won awards for acting, technology and set design. At the national event in 2021 he was named Technical Director of the Year.

Jamie loved the show. First, he gave the cast and crew permission to embrace their personal performance vision and "let it go" if his assessment just didn't fit with their perception. Whether you are backstage, acting, directing or producing, honor your choices. Then, he told each actor what he liked about their performance and some suggestions. He applauded the set, sound and lighting design, hair and make-up, props, and Ed's creative use of the projection scene. Sue Duncan (she came at the end of the show just to hear the adjudication!) said, "I don't think I've heard a better adjudication ever. Every word was so carefully chosen."

Jamie said that *Leaving Iowa* would be a wonderful vehicle for AACTFest* so he and I extolled the wonders of AACTFest to a very interested group.

After six years on Community Theater of Michigan's Board, Jamie is now on the AACT Board along with being the Michigan representative and the Region 3 representative. Region 3 is Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Ohio. Jamie is an excellent resource for all community theatres in Michigan including us! You have a question, ask him. If he doesn't have the answer, he will find someone who does.

*AACT stands for the American Association of Community Theatre. Held in odd years, AACTFest is play competition that takes place in each state, followed by a regional competition and then, national. Go to www.aact.org for more information, including the "AACTFest Handbook".

Our AACTFest History

In 2015, Tawas Bay Players' first entered AACTFest with *The Women of Lockerbie* directed by **Debbie DeBois**. In 2017, *Love, Loss and What I Wore* directed by **Brenda Chadwick** was our second entry. That same year, the WE Players performed *The Book of Everything* directed by **Suzan Nemeth**.

TBP'S ELOQUENT EVENING

Shortly after *Leaving Iowa* was cast the Tawas Bay Players hosted *An Eloquent Evening*.

The event, presented on May 13, was put together by **Ed Krebs** and focused on the art of elocution; clear and expressive speech, especially of distinct pronunciation and articulation.

Eloquent Evening was open to members, guests and aspiring actors of Tawas Bay Players, WE Players, and Shoreline Players; in short, anyone who was interested in polishing their stage performance.

Our special guest was Deb Michaels, a familiar voice to anyone who listens to HITS FM 103.3 FM. Deb's experience as a radio personality made the night a special one as she engaged in a casual Q & A session with attendees. We all got great tips on enunciation and how to make ourselves heard on stage without losing the clarity of our words. (After all, no one is going to laugh at that funny line you said if they don't understand you!)

Deb also entertained us with stories from her line of work, such as dealing with unpredictable on-air callers. She was a delightful guest host, and the evening was well worth attending!

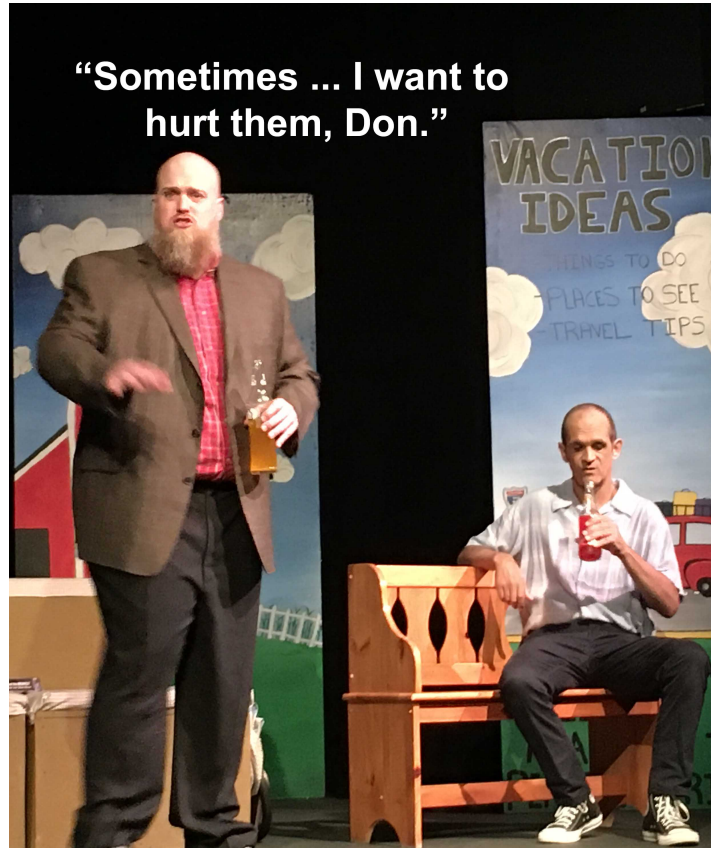
Thank you to Ed for putting this event together; I hope we can do more things like this!

Scenes from *“Leaving Iowa”*

And some lines I will never get out of my head



**“IT UNFOLDED LIKE A
CRIME OF PASSION ...”**



“You betcha, big guy. You betcha.”





“I’ll show YOU what’s fair and what’s not fair! You know what’s not fair? Fair’s not fair!”





“Soldiers!
Ah SAID ...”



“Just some trucker
nodding off at
the wheel.
Go back to sleep,
Sweet Pea.”

**“MADE FROM
PETRIFIED APACHE
TOENAILS.”**



“I don’t
waaaaana ...”

“But
Mooooomm...”



“Look Grandma, no worms!”

**“Okay? Okay? Okay?
Okay? Okay? Okay?
Okay? Okay? ...”**



“Sheriously
cute.”

Come to **AUDITIONS** for

“The 39 Steps”

Directed by **Suzan Nemeth**

Produced by **Jolene Grusecki**

Wednesday, August 14th &

Thursday, August 15th

6:30 pm

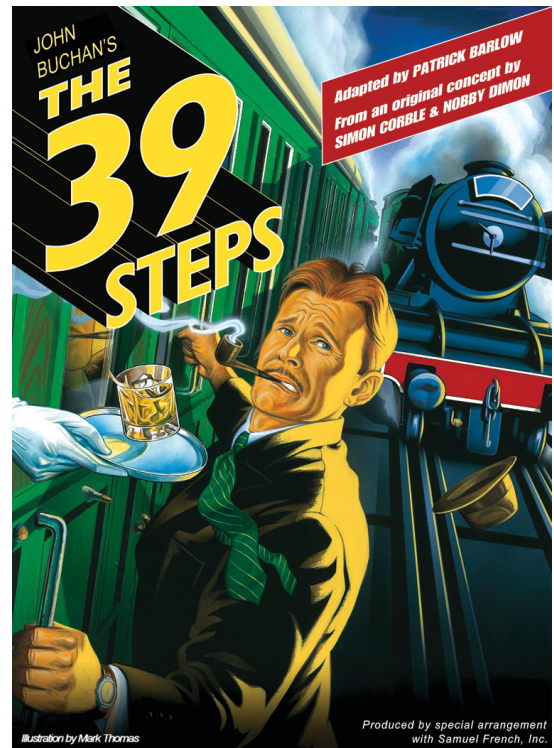
At the Tawas Bay Playhouse

Parts available for:

1 Man - 1 Woman - 7 parts of either gender

Ages 18 and older are welcome!

Performances will be October 11th-13th and 17th-20th



TBP ANNUAL MEETING

Friday, August 9th

Social Hour/Voting beginning at 5:00 • Dinner at 6:00 • Business Meeting to follow

At The Collective (formerly known as Fr. Rushman Hall), 821 Newman, East Tawas

\$10 per paid member / \$15 for guests

Hope to see you there!

Just as this issue was ready to be sent out I received word that **Tom O'Malley** had passed away. Tom and his wife Maripat were quite active in TBP and Shoreline Players years ago. He was in Shoreline's cast of *Damn Yankees*, and his rendition of "You Gotta Have Heart" in his distinctive voice became *his* song. On our stage, he stole the show as Pseudolus in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, among other shows. Tom, you will forever be in our hearts and memories.

Deadline for the October/November CURTAIN CALLS is

September 23rd!

Have your contributions to Michal by then! The next CC will be in your mailbox by Sept. 30th!

E-mail to mljacot@sbcglobal.net