

**Community Circle Players, Riverwalk Theatre**

**Annual Report to the Membership by the President of the Board**

**June 18, 2016**

**Mission of the Community Circle Players as adopted on July 11, 1958 –**

**“To provide the community with a total theatrical experience through the presentation of dramas, comedies, musicals, and children’s shows; to further develop & explore associated performing & creative arts.”**

Season 27 at Riverwalk Theatre was a very successful year for the Community Circle Players. We produced a well-received season on our main stage, in our Black Box and hosted or produced multiple events.

**Board Transitions**-I’d like to start this report by recognizing two members that are leaving our Board-Joe Baumann and Tom Ferris. Mr. Baumann has been an important member onstage and off. His temperament, expertise, humor and professionalism have been great assets to the Board and we will miss him as he is pursuing a new career opportunity in Cadillac, MI. Mr. Ferris has served as president of the Board twice over many years as a member. His leadership was particularly crucial as president during the time that the organization raised funds and moved homes form the Okemos Barn to Riverwalk Theatre in the late 1980’s. As many of you know, Tom is a consummate man of action. He simply does not stop contributing of his time and talents with a smile. Personally, he has been a role model to me for many years. Please join me in thanking these two for their service to our organization.

**Diversity-**During our Board strategic retreat last fall, the Board began conversation around our need for an organization that is as diverse as our community. In 2016/17, we will once again engage a committee on improving our diversity, both onstage and off. It is critical for the future of Riverwalk Theatre that we engage new members in diverse and creative ways.

**Succession-**Another key initiative is to identify the talents and potential of multiple members to contribute to the organization. As we have aggressively grown our organization over the past 20 years, we have become consistently dependent upon the contributions of a small number of staff, members and volunteers. As a board, we have agreed upon the need to identify functions that are critical for our continued success and wish to develop a pipeline of talent and processes to ensure sustainability. We will have a committee focused on this important issue again in 2016/17.

**Operations-**As CCP has incorporated a Black Box theater, a furniture and prop warehouse, a costume shop and have as many as three shows in various stages of production at any given moment, the board recognizes the need for more clear communication, processes and procedures to ensure that we are fiscally responsible, have a comfortable and safe environment, as well as minimizing disruption to the hard work needed for successful productions. This important area will again have a committee focus in 2016/17.

**Community Collaboration**-This past year, Riverwalk Theatre has continued to be a leader in local arts organizations in the mid-Michigan community. We have had many partnerships and major support from Jackson, The Pentecost Foundation, Congregation Shaarey Zedek, Lansing Area Aids Network, the Arts Council of Greater Lansing, MCACA, All-of-Us Express Children’s Theater, the Irish Dancers, Impression 5 and RE Olds Transportation Museum. We will continue to seek grants, build partnerships and discover ways for Riverwalk Theatre to be an important part of a vibrant metro-Lansing community. In October 2016, we will help unveil significant new public art at the top of Museum Drive on Michigan Avenue.

**Capital Campaign**-It is once again time for the organization to rally around specific fundraising goals. We have had incredibly generous giving throughout our history that has allowed us to invest in the sustainability of Riverwalk Theatre. We have used major funds to improve the comfort of our building, the safety and security for members, volunteers and patrons and the technology required to produce quality shows. We recognize the need to identify new priorities that are meaningful to our members and seek new support.

**Parking-**The continued revitalization of downtown Lansing has created new traffic and new challenges to park a vehicle, particularly during times when the Lansing Center, Impression 5 Science Center and Riverwalk Theatre have a high-demand event. The Board recognizes that members and guests sometimes find this challenging and frustrating, at times delaying curtain times for Riverwalk productions. We are committed to our 27 years of investment in our current home at Riverwalk Theatre and need to partner with the City of Lansing, LEPFA, Impression 5, RE Olds Transportation Museum, The Lansing Parks Department and the nearby restaurants and bars to come up with communication plans and traffic management options to ensure an enjoyable, predictable, comfortable and fun evening in downtown Lansing for all guests. At the end of the day, every one of us will benefit from a busy downtown entertainment experience.

I am grateful for the many contributions each of you have made to support Riverwalk Theatre. It is an honor to serve as the president of an organization that has made significant contributions to the arts and culture in the Lansing area for over 50 years. I look forward to another year of engaging and delighting audiences.



Jeff Magnuson

President