



**Community Circle Players, Riverwalk Theatre**

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

**June 24, 2017**

**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 28 at Riverwalk Theatre was another successful year for the Community Circle Players. We closed the season with a hit show, “Catch Me If You Can”. We are well under way with auditions and production meetings for our 29<sup>th</sup> season at Riverwalk. It is time to start the discussion about how we will make our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary a celebration of three decades of Community Circle Players in downtown Lansing.

**Board Transitions-**As we continue to mature as organization, Board Members are facing choices that ask them to balance their love for our organization and their lives outside the theater. We are saying goodbye to three dynamic and generous Board Members this week-Michael Schacherbauer, Diane Cooke and Leroy Cupp. Thankfully, they are not leaving the Riverwalk family. We are truly fortunate to have so many amazing volunteers that give of their time, talents and money. These three have earned a very special place in our organization for years of leadership and hard work.

**Operations-** The Board and committees have continued to focus time and attention to the topics of succession, diversity and communication. We have added new Board Members and organizational members that have brought new perspectives and new energy to important conversation.

Riverwalk has an excellent addition to our team. Tim Smith joined us in the role of part-time building custodian. He is doing an outstanding job of meeting our cleaning and maintenance needs.

We added a season ticket promotion to Catch Me If You Can and sold over 100 season tickets in two weekends. This concept was a result of suggestion and hard work from Jane Falion, Michele Booher-Puroskey and Mike Siracuse.

The Board has continued the conversation of the need to present shows and engage volunteers that are as diverse in age, ethnicity and background as the community we serve. Actions this year have included participation in the Gaslight Project event hosted by Peppermint Creek Theatre and community outreach to cast young African-Americans for our upcoming production of “Bud, Not Buddy”. We have a lot of work to do to move from our ideas to action.

**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, strategic discussions and major support from Jackson, the Arts Council of Greater Lansing, LEAP, the City of Lansing, MCACA, All-of-Us Express Children's Theater, Happendance Dancers, Impression 5, RE Olds Transportation Museum, Lansing City Market, the Nuthouse, McLaren Hospital, Capital Region International Airport, the University Club of MSU, Downtown Lansing, Inc. and Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Lansing. 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.

**Capital Campaign**-The Board has gone through the process of identifying capital priorities for the theater. Tom Ferris and Darrin Fowler are in the process of engaging individuals to join a Capital Campaign Committee with a focus on individual gifts, corporate gifts and foundation opportunities. Our current plan is to kick off a campaign beginning in January 2018.

**Parking**-The continued revitalization of downtown Lansing has created new traffic and continuing 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 theater has a process of communication with LEPPA, the City of Lansing, Impression 5, Doug Johns (owner of Knight Cap and the parking lot north of the theater), RE Olds Transportation Museum to frequently share information about dates and times that may create parking challenges.

Downtown Lansing will continue to change and evolve with an upcoming mayoral election, a proposed casino adjacent to the Lansing Center and proposals for new hotel development. Riverwalk Theatre will be at the table advocating for improvements to parking availability and proximity to the arts and cultural destinations on Museum Drive.

**Season Selection**-The Board has asked the Season Selection Committee to consider options for refining the season selection process to allow for more show titles that will attract ticket buyers, members and donors. This week the Board authorized the Committee to prenominate up to 4 shows that will be announced publicly as a part of the Director Solicitation. The Board has asked that the shows that are recommended for prenomination be selected for being popular with audiences, have a title that is well known and has the potential for excellent word of mouth. We are polling members to learn what show you might wish to see on this list for the Season Selection Committee's consideration. There will be electronic polling over the next few weeks soliciting further input on titles that would be popular with our members.

It is a privilege to serve you and this organization that is important to our community and to my family.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Magnuson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeff Magnuson

President