

We live in a time when technology sets parameters around how we communicate, with whom we communicate, and the topics about which we communicate. Though it is great fun to share our favorite music or movies, and photos of gatherings of family and friends, the mobile technology we rely on to mark the passage of our lives does not advance our shared connection to the places we love. Don't get me wrong - the connections to one another generated by shared social media are a really cool thing. But those social connections are so much stronger when they are rooted in a shared connection to place.



That's why the theatre has never been more important. Whether as audience members or as part of the performance, when we experience music, dance and drama together, emotions are evoked and shared feelings are revealed. When we share stories through the performing arts, our sense of community is strengthened. What's more those stories that come from the places we love do more than connect us in the here and now. They allow us to reach back to connect with family and friends who came before us, and forward to the formation of relationships with friends and family we may not even know yet. Now that's cool! ✍️

BRUCE GREENHILL, *Managing Director*



Part of the challenge of keeping a historic theatre such as ours going is to continually address this question: How do we insure that going to the theatre remains important to you in these changing times?

We are aware of your many choices for entertainment, so we keep our focus on what we've learned about what matters to you. We know that you love watching local talent and we offer as much of it as we can. We also know that you work hard for your money and in response we offer high quality programming that will delight you at a reasonable cost. We are convinced by your attendance that you share our passion for promoting opportunities for area youth to perform. With that in mind, we offer HIT Idol, Prairie Fire Children's Theatre, band and choral concerts and performances by the Awkward Stage Drama Club. Lastly, we recognize that you appreciate feeling relaxed when you go out and we are intentional about creating a comfortable environment for all to enjoy.

As a part of our effort to bring you excellent entertainment, one of our goals is to offer two traveling shows each year that involve a significant investment on our part. In the upcoming months, those two shows include Jessica Meuse and Michael Londra. We encourage you to learn more about them as we think you'll agree that these are acts well worth marking your calendar for!

Whether you're a performer, a donor, a theatre-go-er, a volunteer or have multiple roles, we thank you! It's our great pleasure to partner with you on keeping the Historic Ironwood Theatre relevant in today's ever changing world. ✍️

BETSY WESSELHOFT, *President, Board of Directors*

WALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Three volunteers we recently recognized for their contributions to the Theatre. Honors were bestowed On Saturday October 1, prior to the Superior Horns show. Board President Betsy Wesselhoft highlighted Jim Wahner's contributions to planning and fundraising, and his support for handicap accessible bathrooms. Managing Director Bruce Greenhill commented that formal recognition of Annette Burchell's numerous contributions over so many years was long overdue, and drew attention to Annette's commitment to area youth through productions like Seussical the Musical and HIT Idol. Wesselhoft noted that Tom Williams is a long serving board member where he has occupied the President's chair multiple times. She reminded the audience that Tom was involved in the 80s restoration effort, led the board that helped return the organization to a state of financial health, - and regularly shows up to haul trash to the transfer station! Thank you and congrats to all three on your induction onto our wall of fame! ✍️



JIM WAHNER, ANNETTE BURCHELL, AND TOM WILLIAMS

Sat. Nov. 26 @ 7:30 PM
WARREN MILLER'S
HERE THERE & EVERYWHERE

Ski-film pioneer Warren Miller's 67th celebration of all things snowsports. Experience the adventure, humor, and beauty that is skiing. This film premier is promoted by the Snow Country Ski Club, formerly the Ironwood Ski Devils, our local High School Ski Racing Team. The club is no longer funded by the school system. Racers, parents of racers, and volunteers fundraise to help keep local youth skiers active, engaged, and competitive on the racing circuit that covers Upper and Lower Michigan and Northern Wisconsin.

A Sleigh Ride with the Claudettes



Dec. 8, 9, 10 @ 7:00 PM
 Sun. Dec. 11 @ 2:00 PM

Once again the Claudettes will kick off the holidays with a variety show extravaganza. Singers, dancers, choirs and bands will join the Claudettes for a celebration of holiday cheer. Santa and Mrs. Clause will be there to create some holiday magic which will delight both young and old alike. Ho, ho, ho!

Fri. Dec. 30 @ 7:30 PM
EIRA



The band **EIRA**, meaning "snow" in Welsh, will play holiday music from across the world. The band's lineup will include Russian songs, Norwegian songs and even some "Star Wars."

Ed Willett, Cheryl Leah, Jim Ofsthun, Sue Spencer, and Liesel Wilson makeup the five-piece band with voice, strings, and Irish drum.

Sat. Feb. 25 @ 7:00 PM
THE BIG HIT WINE & BEER FEST



Includes:
 Samplings of Fine wines
 Michigan-made craft beers
 Delicious Hors d'oeuvres
 Live Music
 Raffles & Silent Auction

Tickets can be purchased at:
 HIT box office: Wed - Fri 12-4:30
 or online: www.ironwoodtheatre.net
 Z Place Gallery & Gifts
 Cherry Ridge Framing & Home Decor
 Leather & Gift Shop - Bessemer

Mon. March 13 @ 7:00 PM
MICHAEL LONDRA



One of Ireland's leading tenors brings you an evening of songs, stories, tunes and dance, from the heart of the Emerald Isle. Michael Londra's *Celtic Fire* now travels the world. With 100% live music, dance and song, the show generates an electric atmosphere that sweeps audiences away to Ireland, its culture, its land, its pubs, its music and its soul. Includes local youth vocalists.

Fri. Mar 31 & Sat. Apr.1, 2017
SUPERIOR HORNS & BLUE ICE



A triumphant return to the HIT stage! Our own area super group returns with an evening of the music of Chicago, Blood Sweat & Tears, Chuck Mangione, Steely Dan, Van Morrison, and many others.

Bringing together members of the Lowell Street Band, Keweenaw Rhythm & Blues Band, Gogebic Range Band, local school band directors, and top young musicians from the area, this group will bring an exciting concert line-up to the HIT stage.

LOOKING FORWARD TO LOOKING BACK



Wonder if back in 1936, a young girl named Gloria Larson looked forward to a day more than 80 years later and imagined that as a 90 year old, she would share memories of performing on the Ironwood stage. It happened recently when Gloria Larson Vesper and a couple of members of her family stopped by the theatre to visit and reminisce.

Pictured are Gloria with HIT managing director Bruce Greenhill and Gloria and her friends at curtain call after the 1936 Leatha Hillis Kiddie Review. "One of the great joys of my job" said

Greenhill, "is getting to meet delightful people like Gloria who have such wonderful stories to share."

Not only did Gloria perform on the HIT stage – she also helped save it. Back in the 1980s, Gloria and her late husband, Robert Vesper, were one of the many couples and individuals who contributed to the restoration of the theatre. Without people like Gloria, today's young performers might not have this grand stage on which to perform. "I wonder" mused Greenhill, "if 70 or 80 years from now, one or two of this year's young HIT Idol performers will, like Gloria, venture into the theatre with their children and grandchildren and share stories of their own moment in the spotlight".

REWIND TO FAST FORWARD

People involved in historic theatres spend a lot of time hitting the *Rewind* button. Looking back into past shows; reusing sets, props and costumes from dusty basement storage spaces; restoring buildings to their former glory; and in a time when contemporary movies are full of CGI-generated special effects, historic theatres hearken back to earlier times by showing classic silent movies accompanied by skilled organists playing restored theatre organs. HIT is no different, but in this issue of the Griffin we'd like to hit the *Fast Forward* button, but first...



The program for the 1928 opening of the theatre included a message that read in part: "We welcome this beautiful new theatre to Ironwood, and congratulate the men of sufficient vision and courage and with sufficient foresight for Ironwood's future to construct this beautiful building..."

succeed into the future providing arts events and cultural entertainment for your community"

Your theatre's current board and management are, like their predecessors, planning some significant projects that will ensure the future of HIT. These include a facelift for the front entrance, renovation of the men's and women's bathrooms, roof replacement, and upgrading the sound system. Commenting on the planned improvements, theatre managing director Bruce Greenhill stated "performers today expect presenting houses to offer more sophisticated production capacity than we can currently provide". He also noted that it is 30 years since the restoration took place so many of the improvements that were made at that time now require attention.

Similarly, during the early days of the 1980s restoration project, an article in one of the first Griffin newsletters included the following plea: "Our ancestors built the theatre, and it is our privilege and responsibility to preserve it - we want the Ironwood theatre to be part of your plans for the future. Please help preserve it so that it may

The Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) offers a Capital Improvements grant on a \$1:\$1 match. "Over the next year or two, we hope to raise sufficient funds to secure a \$100,000 MCACA grant to tackle these planned improvements" explained Greenhill. "Everyone associated with the theatre is invited to be part of securing our future".

Volunteers don't just do the work ~ they make it work.

FOR TICKETS & OTHER INFO

THEATRE BOX OFFICE

Open: Wed - Friday Noon - 4:30 PM
906-932-0618

DAY OF SHOW

Available in the Concourse one hour before showtime

ONLINE: www.ironwoodtheatre.net



EMAIL: info@ironwoodtheatre.net



IRONWOOD THEATRE, INC.
PO Box 187
IRONWOOD MI 49938
Return Address Requested

To enter a theatre for a performance is to be inducted into a magical space, to be ushered into the sacred arena of the imagination.
Simon Callow, Charles Dickens and the Great Theatre of the World



LEAPIN' LEPRECHAUNS ... IT'S MICHAEL LONDRA!

This little green-clad goblin ventured into the box office recently to help spread the word about next year's performance by Irish tenor Michael Londra. As the photo indicates, our board members will stop at nothing to help advance the successful operation of HIT. Board member and part-time leprechaun Candy Pogliano was happy to dress up in shamrocks to draw attention to the March 2017 program. "With singers and dancers and Londra's amazing tenor voice, it is going to be a great show" enthused Pogliano. "This will be something special we are proud to offer to the people of our area."

Michael Londra's *Celtic Fire* features live musicians, dancers and singers, including participation of some of 2016's HIT Idol finalists. Stay tuned to the HIT website for more details. 🍀

SHOP HIT GIFTS

If you love your theatre, show off that pride by getting out in public with attractive yet functional HIT merchandise. Among the items we have on sale are stainless steel water bottles - perfect for the theatre-going bicyclist; LED flashlight key chains, coverlets, recipe books, coffee cups, and gift certificates. Theatre souvenirs make great Christmas gifts for that musically or theatrically inclined person in your life. Stop by the box office or visit the HIT website. 🍀



Snap this QR code to stay connected to the HIT's website and upcoming Winter performances.

