

# THE GRIFFIN

NEWSLETTER OF THE HISTORIC IRONWOOD THEATRE

SUMMER 2023

## SOMETIMES HIT NEEDS YOU ... AND SOMETIMES YOU NEED HIT

by Mark Silver Grachek

In my 40+ years around the Ironwood Theatre, I've become aware there is something about the H.I.T. that attracts just the right person at just the right time.

Sometimes the theatre needs the person.



Sometimes the person needs the theatre. Take for instance Randy. He showed up one day to volunteer for clean up and fix up, making popcorn and selling sodas. After awhile we realized Randy had a love affair with alcohol and, as much we loved having him, (and he loved being a part of the theatre family), this addiction affected his theatre

work, his life, his friends. We told Randy the drinking could cost him, among other things, his place in the theatre. He chose to get help and "clean up his act." His theatre friends had become a family he did not want to lose. You could say the theatre was a life saver for Randy. This is just one story, one person.

There are many others: retirees who discovered meaningful ways to invest their new found "free time", young people who acquired skills that took them to college and into careers, kids who found a place to belong.

Our Historic Ironwood Theatre is more than a building and a stage and sound and lights. Keeping it alive and well helps our community continue to be alive and well. Every person who comes through the door has something to offer or something to gain. Which is it for you? I don't know. Why not come in and find out for yourself?

Your welcome will be a warm one. 🐾

## *A Tribute to Joan*

The Historic Ironwood Theatre mourns the loss of our dear friend and staunch supporter **Joan Borchardt** who passed away in February.



JOAN BORCHARDT

Joan spearheaded the acquisition and restoration of HIT starting in 1982 when Ironwood Theatre owner Thomas Renn gave the Theatre to the City of Ironwood through the Downtown Ironwood Development Authority (DIDA). Restoration efforts began at that time under the direction of Joan and the newly formed Ironwood Theatre Preservation Committee. On January 11, 1985, the Ironwood Theatre was placed on the National Registry of Historic Places.

In 1986, the City of Ironwood was awarded a grant by the State of Michigan, to begin the extensive renovation program under Joan's leadership that was on-going for nearly 10 years. Renovations completed in the early phase included the seats in the main auditorium and balcony, lobby and mezzanine carpeting, restoration of the ceiling mural, wall and beam decorations, a new stage floor, updated heating system, and upgraded sound system. Later restoration efforts include custom-made organ vent curtains funded by a grant from the Albert W. Cherne Foundation, and ventilation system improvements partly funded by the Michigan Council of the Arts and Cultural Affairs.

Joan continued to support the theatre by both volunteering her time and generous financial support until the end. *We will miss her.* 🐾



Sat. July 29 @ 7 PM

## Song of the Lakes



**Song of the Lakes** is a band not afraid to show their emotions as they belt out sea shanties, seduce you with a sultry Brazilian melody, or break your heart with a bittersweet ballad. They've delved into acoustic rock, Latin, jazz, and what they call Great Lakes World Music - live the good life and sing the praises of the gorgeous Great Lakes.

Sun. Aug 13 @ 7 PM



North America's #1 Moody Blues Tribute **TIME TRAVELLER** highlights over 30 years of material from the legendary group The Moody Blues, performing a full rock concert.

Sun. Sept 10 @ 7 PM



**SIXTIESMANIA**, a sixties tribute band, covers everything from the Beatles British invasion to the music of Woodstock and everything in between, and after: Stones, CCR, Doors, Monkees, Beach Boys, Kinks, Free, Cream, the Vietnam anthem songs, and Summer of Love.

## HIT 100 Year Anniversary

The Ironwood Theatre opened its doors on June 28, 1928. That means in less than five years HIT will celebrate its 100th anniversary.

We are gathering interested community members to form a **100th year anniversary team** and will be starting monthly meetings to assure we are prepared for the big event. We want to assure our building is in tip top shape, order merchandise items and schedule programming. We also want to spend time on researching what has happened during these past 100 years and present them in pictures, films or other formats.

If you are interested in joining this team please email Zona at [president@ironwoodtheatre.net](mailto:president@ironwoodtheatre.net).



## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

### TOM & SHARON RAVELLI

Tom retired in 2018 and Sharon in 2020. They both keep active and volunteer for the Klassic Kruisers and the Historic Ironwood Theatre. Tom enjoys tech, artist load in and out, and ticket scanning and Sharon enjoys concessions, ushering and ticket scanning. Sharon states, "Volunteering at the beautiful Historic Ironwood Theatre is a great way to make a positive difference in our community. It has given us the opportunity to meet new people, gain new skills and experiences, and have fun. Volunteering allows us to use our time and talents and give us a sense of pride in helping the theatre meet their goals."

*Thank you Tom and Sharon for your dedication and hard work!*



If you have insurance or investments with Thrivent you can help HIT. Thrivent wants to help members make a difference in the community and has funds available. Simply gather a team of friends, family or neighbors to put on a fundraiser, educational event or service activity. Thrivent provides the resources you need to get started - including up to \$250 in seed money. Then you and your team, including HIT volunteers, can get busy bringing your project to life. Ask your Thrivent representative or Zona Wick, President for more details.

Griffin layout/design by



SHARP GRAPHIC DESIGN



Sat. Oct 14 @ 7 PM

# FLEETWOOD MACKED



The Ultimate Fleetwood Mac Tribute Band in the U.S.



Sat. Oct 21 @ 7 PM



Get ready to head back to the golden age of big-band Rock and Roll because the Duluth Transit Authority is in the house, and everyone loves a bad-ass horn section! The Midwest's largest Chicago tribute band plays the best of Chicago classics and deep cuts!



Wed. Dec 13 @ 7 PM

# THE WIZARDS OF WINTER



A fun-filled Christmas Holiday Rock Experience for the whole family. Featuring world class musicians with former members of The Trans Siberian Orchestra, Blue Oyster Cult, Rainbow, Trixter, and the Ted Nugent Band. This 11 member ensemble boasts soaring vocal harmonies, precision string instrumentation, powerful percussion and stunning keyboard work, *Celebrate the season with The Wizards!*

## Tech Talk by Bruce Greenhill, Theatre Manager

Our commitment to improve the audience experience continues with the recent addition of two computers in the tech booth. Audio and lighting cues can now pre-programmed – a nice enhancement, especially for movies screenings. And anyone who attended recent shows noticed the wonderful improvement to our upstage lighting. Three new digital light bars replace six antiquated, "Scoop Lights" and allow us wash the rear drape in any of dozens of colors. No more climbing ladders to change color gels – color setting and other effects are all done from the lighting board. At last year's Emberlight program Arlene Schneller and an anonymous donor who were so impressed by the enhanced lighting due to rented instruments, they offered



to help us acquire the new lights. It is that sort of support from local businesses and individuals that allows us to offer outstanding theatre experiences to our community.

That experience will be further enhanced in 2024 when we upgrade our entire lighting system. With help from a Michigan Arts and Culture Council grant we plan to replace our lighting control console and 36 stage lights. Most touring acts assume that we have digital controls into which can simply upload their lighting plot. Our old analog board relies on a 3 ½ inch floppy disk drive – most traveling lighting techs have never seen a 3½ inch floppy, let alone worked with one - it is definitely time to upgrade! 🐼

## BRIEFINGS FROM THE BEER TEAM

Our Building, Equipment & Electrical Repair (BEER) Team is as busy as ever. Recent projects include enlarging the tech booth, the installation of safety treads on the basement stairs and lots of work constructing shelves in the costume room as clean out and reorganization of that space continues. The guys also made a significant contribution to the success of the touring, Broadway Ruth Bader Ginsburg show, investing

more than 100 hours of labor into set construction and assembly. They are a great crew who just show up and get things done. If you're a bit of a handy-person with some time on your hands, please consider joining the BEER team. Help us maintain our beautiful theatre – and enjoy a beer when work is done. 🐼

## CLEAN UP IN THE COSTUME VAULT

If anyone reading this copy of the Griffin ever set foot inside our costume vault, you know that moving around in there and finding costumes and accessories could be a bit of a challenge. Not anymore. Thanks to the organizational skills (and a LOT of time) from volunteer *Carol Decker*, the costume room is now as neat as pin!

Our thanks to Carol for her commitment and the guys from the BEER team for shelving construction and storage bin enhancements. As Mark said in his article on the front page of third newsletter; sometimes the right people just show up at the right time. We are thrilled to announce that Carol is our new Costume Queen. 🐼



# TICKETS & OTHER INFO

## THEATRE BOX OFFICE

Open: Monday - Friday Noon - 4PM

906-932-0618

Tickets online at [IronwoodTheatre.net](http://IronwoodTheatre.net)



[reception@ironwoodtheatre.net](mailto:reception@ironwoodtheatre.net)

Theatre location: 113 E. Aurora St., Ironwood, MI

Theatre office: 109 E. Aurora St., Ironwood, MI

IRONWOOD THEATRE, INC.

PO Box 187

IRONWOOD MI 49938

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**VISION:** The vision of the Historic Ironwood Theatre is all generations personally experience the joy of theatre community.  
**MISSION:** To preserve and provide an iconic facility where everyone is invited to discover and enjoy the performing arts.

## WIZARDS AT HISTORIC IRONWOOD THEATRE

This November 11th join Harry and friends at the Historic Ironwood Theatre as we transfigure it into all things magical at our new fundraiser! Enjoy an immersive experience with games, raffles, and treats all in wizarding fashion. There may even be a "potions" class for wizards 21 and older! Be on the lookout for more information coming soon! 🐉



Response to our twice-monthly movie screenings has been very positive so we re-signed a one year contract with our movie distributor.

Family-friendly Sunday matinees and First Friday movies for the grown-ups will continue. We are looking for new sponsors – please contact Julie at [movies@ironwoodtheatre.net](mailto:movies@ironwoodtheatre.net) for more information. *See you at the movies!*

## HIT WELCOMES BACK EMBERLIGHT SHOWSTOPPERS Festival The Emberlight Grand Finale

Sat. August 26 @ 7:30 PM

Emberlight wraps up the 2023 season with the biggest night of the summer! Celebrate the close of the festival with award presentations, prizes, and sensational performances.



Operation of the Historic Ironwood Theatre is supported in part by a grant from the Michigan Arts & Culture Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.

As an inclusive and welcoming organization, it is the policy and commitment of Ironwood Theatre, Inc. also known as the Historic Ironwood Theatre, that it does not and will not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, military status, national origin, physical or mental disability, or religion in any of its activities or operations.

