

## **The Pandemic Story-Thornapple Players Style**

March 5, 2020-Early auditions for the spring musical comedy, Young Frankenstein by Mel Brooks. March 10,2020-open auditions for Young Frankenstein. There was a great turnout and lots of new people auditioning. Wednesday, March 11 the cast list is posted, March 12 was the first and only read through. March 14, 2020 the Thornapple Players Board of Directors announced the postponement of Young Frankenstein and rescheduled for fall. Auditions August 3, 2020. May 13, 2020. Summer Youth Drama Camp was canceled. By late summer it was completely obvious that the Fall Show was out of the question. Young Frankenstein is scheduled for Spring 2021. A bright spot came in early September when we learned that the Barry Community Foundation Board granted us rent forgiveness for the Covid-19 period through the rest of the year.

During this time, all decisions we have made have had full board support and were made with the health and safety of our volunteers, building partners, and the community as our top priorities. We do not pretend this was easy or that we were alone. Tough decisions were made everywhere. Since March we have put our energies into helping those in our community with the most basic needs-food, shelter, clothing, and electricity and gas for heating or cooling among other things. People did this in various ways as individuals or through churches, work, businesses, community groups, and local nonprofit organization each giving in the way that they could.

However, while there were many basic needs having to be met we became increasingly aware of our role in the community for both children and adults as an outlet for the arts-acting, singing, music, dancing, set building and designing, lights, sound, props, costumes, and the camaraderie that comes with working together on a shared goal. Thornapple Players provides a much-needed service in this community beyond entertainment and education which of course we value highly. We are a “family” in many ways and represents a connection and social interaction for many that is an integral part of both mental health and a sense of community. I

believe that we work hard collectively to provide this in Barry County. I would like to share the following from Mental Health Resources: <https://www.resetbrainandbody.com/>

## **5 Ways the Performing Arts Benefit Mental Health**

**Creativity increases happiness.**

**Encourages real life interactions.**

**Builds confidence.**

**Safe space to share emotions.**

**The arts help us all.**

We as a board have not felt like this was good timing to ask for more or even the same from our various and supportive patrons and advertisers when the future is unclear. We as a board have spent this time discussing on chat or through email the many ways we can stay connected to our volunteers, youth, and community. We have explored some virtual opportunities including a full-length musical murder mystery done virtually, **A Killer Party** is being looked at currently. See the information below.

**MTI's licensable version of the online show is a 90-minute, single piece designed to be pre-recorded and edited together for a streaming production on the showtix4u.com platform. All the materials for the show will be delivered digitally and include assets and additional content to help organizations put on their best show possible. The digitally delivered materials include:**

**- Actor Script**

**- Director's Guide (This includes how to tips on filming, cues, edits, presentation etc.)**

**- Piano Vocal Score**

**- Logo Pack**

**- Guide Vocal / Underscoring / Performance Accompaniment Tracks**

**- Props Assets**

**- Credits Video**

We also want to return to engaging our youth whether it be virtually or in small groups easily social distanced. We will need to hire someone to help us with the technical aspects of at least the musical if not the youth program. I would like to remind or perhaps inform everyone that we are a volunteer board and group with only a few professionals occasionally being paid an

honorarium as well as the instructors of youth club/theatre activities. We also provide an honorarium to our youth interns who have aged out of our children's programming and assist our instructors. This has been and continues to be a mutually beneficial arrangement particularly for resume building, references, and scholarships. These are our intentions if BCF chooses us as a worthy recipient. We are grateful for the opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,

Norma Jean Acker

Thornapple Player, President