CARYL CRANE CHILDREN'S THEATRE

A STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

A Thesis

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty of The University of Akron

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study will seek to examine and evaluate the past and current structure of Bowling Green State University’s Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre, including its business model, programming, and participation levels. It will also present a feasibility study for the creation of a new play festival as an element of a strategic plan for the future of the company. Elements of this analysis include research into comparable models and current trends in youth programming. Recommendations of this research can be offered to the artistic staff, the governing Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre Advisory Board and to like organizations with whom a change in direction is being sought.
CHAPTER II

THE ANALYSIS: THE HISTORY OF CARYL CRANE CHILDREN’S THEATRE

Ms. Caryl Crane

Caryl Crane was a prominent figure in both the theatrical and fashion circles of Northeast Ohio. Born Fannie Shiff in 1908 to Russian immigrants, she was a graduate of The University of Michigan and Ohio State University, earning degrees in education and music. After serving as the public school music supervisor in Lorain, Ohio for several years, she moved to New York to pursue a career as a professional singer in the mid-1930s.

Soon after arriving, she had found not only a job singing on stage at Radio City Music Hall, but had acquired a new name, Caryl Crane, courtesy of her vocal coach Estelle Liebling (Allen). During her nine years in Manhattan, Caryl was a soloist at Radio City Music Hall, a featured contralto soloist on the General Motors radio broadcast from Carnegie Hall, and played the ingénue opposite Ed Wynne in Hurray for What on Broadway.

After her successes in professional theatre, Ms. Crane returned to Sandusky, Ohio in 1946 to start the Caryl Crane women’s clothing store with her youngest brother, B. Robert Shiff. “I didn’t want to go to bed anymore when everyone else gets up,” said
Miss Crane (Allen). The Caryl Crane Store, a women’s fashion shop in Sandusky, operated from 1946 until 1982 when Ms. Crane retired. It was with her clothing line that she earned the nickname of "Sandusky’s First Lady of Fashion" (Ball). Caryl Crane, using her shop as a base of operations, also coordinated the fashions of the Miss Ohio and Miss America pageants.

Though she left her professional singing and theatrical career behind, Caryl Crane never gave up the theatre. Within a year of returning, she helped acquire The Coach House Theatre, the permanent home of the Harlequins Little Theatre in Sandusky, Ohio. This theatre, which still stages productions, is the oldest continuously operating community theatre in Ohio (Ball). For forty-five years Caryl Crane was an active member of Harlequins Little Theatre, acting in, and directing, many plays.

In 1985, Ms. Crane established the Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre Foundation, a theatrical workshop program for area children. The primary elements of the original mission statement of Caryl Crane Children's Theatre Foundation, still in effect today, are:

- To encourage more participation in children’s theatre in Erie and Huron counties of Ohio
- To teach children the wonders of the art of theatre
- To excite and energize children about the theatrical arts
- To perform high quality children’s plays for the public
- To promote a love for the theatre

Temporarily occupying a variety of venues - the Tiffin Avenue Fire Station, Adams Junior High, and Harlequin’s Little Theatre - for it’s first five years, the program was designed for children ages ten through eighteen and provided instruction in voice,
dialogue, mime, clowning, makeup and stage movement. In 1986, the first fully realized production, “Motley Tales,” was performed at the Coach House Theatre in Sandusky. Ms. Crane continued to stay active with the program, as well as establishing two scholarship foundations – one at Ohio State University and on at Bowling Green State University - until her death in 1999.

Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre at BGSU Firelands College

In 1989, Ronald Ruble, BGSU Firelands Director of Theatre and one of the founding instructors at the Caryl Crane Children's Theatre Foundation, proposed collaboration of The Caryl Crane Children's Theatre Foundation programs and the Firelands College Theatre. Firelands College is the satellite campus of Bowling Green State University (B.G.S.U.) in Huron, Ohio. With a newly built auditorium, Firelands College was in the beginning stages of establishing a department of theatre that would produce several productions a year, using students and community talent. The proposed designation of a merger between these two organizations would result in the title “Caryl Crane Children's Theatre at Firelands College.” The proposed benefits of this merger included: stabilization of a base of operations for Caryl Crane Children's Theatre, which would include use of theatre and classroom facilities at Firelands College, a Firelands College staff member to be appointed Artistic Director of program and placed in charge of the production aspects of operation, and a new program/focus for Bowling Green State University, creating the first university-based children’s theatre program in Ohio.
The proposed funding for the creation of Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre at Firelands College came in the form of an academic challenge grant of $4,000 over a two-year period (renewable for two additional bienniums or a total of six years) supplied by the Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre Foundation. The proposed agreement called for the program to be self-sustaining upon conclusion of the six-year period. Firelands College was to provide the facilities and staff for the program, and would act as employer of all persons employed in the carrying out of the agreement.

The proposal included a three-year “phase-in” plan, which was designed to incorporate Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre (C.C.C.T.) into the plans of the existing theatre department’s programming and schedule. As stated in the “Feb, 20th (1989) notes of meeting between Ms. Caryl Crane and Dr. Ron Ruble of Firelands College” (APPENDIX A) it was to function in the following way:

A. First year (of first biennium) - -
   - Offer a C.C.C.T. production in the spring of 1990.
   - Production staff (director, technical director/designer, crew heads) would come from Firelands College Theatre [faculty] staff.
   - C.C.C.T. staff would promote and publicize the production.

B. Second year (of first biennium) - -
   - Begin to teach the non-credit classes for children at Firelands College on Saturday mornings.
   - Possible seasonal play production in early December to establish a C.C.C.T. tradition.
   - Provide the theatrical element for the area schools summer arts programs.
C. Third year (first year of second biennium) - -

- Finalize plans for summer arts programs (to include the exploration of offering potential for college credit).
- Increase C.C.C.T. productions to two per year and explore the possibility of touring the spring play to area schools.
- Have both the non-credit classes (for children) and the credit classes (for Firelands College students) scheduled and staffed.

On January 31, 1990, a Memorandum of Agreement was signed between Caryl Crane and BGSU Firelands Dean, Robert DeBard, to promote theatrical arts for the benefit of children in the area served by Firelands, i.e., Erie, Ottawa and Huron Counties. The seven-sectioned agreement (APPENDIX B) established a six-year contract between The University and Caryl Crane Children's Theatre Foundation for a joint venture in cross promotion, facility sharing, and the institution of The Caryl Crane Children's Theatre Fund.

The Caryl Crane Children's Theatre Fund would be created as a restricted fund within the University for the financial administration of the C.C.C.T. program. Into this fund would be deposited all income earned from productions, as well as tuition income generated by non-credit instruction. Expenses of the program, including personnel costs, professional fees such as royalties, rentals, and production supplies, would be paid from the same restricted fund. The University was charged with allocating not less than $2,000 per year for six years into the Fund, and Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre Foundation was responsible for an initial $7,500 deposit, as well as a $2,000 per year contribution into the same Fund for years one through six.
Also stipulated within the terms of the Memorandum was the naming of the theatre and the classes to carry the “Caryl Crane” name, and the appropriate, prominent and public display and utilized of the name in connection with the Children’s Theatre and the non-credit instructional class program.

At the conclusion of year six, a C.C.C.T. advisory committee, made up of at least one Firelands College Theatre staff member, would be required to submit to the C.C.C.T. Foundation an external grant request for the following year, for continuing this agreement. If the grant request is neither submitted, nor approved, the joint venture is to terminate at the end of the current year. The Memorandum of Agreement (see APPENDIX B) concludes confirming that this is a mutually beneficial joint venture, not a partnership, which Firelands College and Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre have entered into upon agreement.

The production budget set in 1990 totaled $11,813, and included all personnel and operating costs of producing Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre’s first season at Firelands College. The season consisted of a single production as well as establishing C.C.C.T. workshops. The budget also included the salary and benefits of the three Firelands College Faculty members, who would function as director, musical director and design director.

The joint venture of Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre at Firelands College began under these terms, and with the following mission statement established in 1990:

Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre enriches our community and the appreciation of the arts by developing theatrical skills for those ages 10 and up. Through live performances, rehearsals, workshops, and other programs, the theatre uses the
magic of the stage to broaden the dreams and build character among community youth and adults (Ruble).

The University appointed Ronald M. Ruble, Director of Theatre at Firelands College, as Artistic Director of Caryl Crane Children's Theatre, as well as established a C.C.C.T. Advisory Committee, comprised of a mix of Firelands College faculty, local business people and parents of C.C.C.T. students to advise the university faculty and staff. Caryl Crane Children's Theatre has never been a 501(c)(3) corporation independent of Bowling Green State University.

Gentlemen’s Agreement

On April 25, 1994, the Caryl Crane Children's Theatre Foundation was officially dissolved under the condition that Caryl Crane Children's Theatre at Firelands College would continue its residency as long as deemed financially feasible to do so. By dissolving the Foundation, Caryl Crane Children's Theatre became entirely an entity of Bowling Green State University, which bears responsibility of its future. The remaining $9,000 balance from the Foundation was transferred to the restricted funds account of Bowling State University, creating a $25,000 corpus (non interest-bearing) account carrying the Caryl Crane Children's Theatre name.

On August 31, 2000, after the death Ms. Caryl Crane, brothers Solomon and Robert Shiff entered into a ten-year, $100,000 agreement with Bowling Green State University to maintain the Caryl Crane Children's Theatre as a viable part of the University. Their proposal called for preserving the name Caryl Crane Children's Theatre
at Firelands College, as well as sustaining a two-show season, the continuation of the workshop program, program membership in regional and national professional theatre organizations, and the retention of qualified staff. They also called upon Bowling Green State University to assist in raising additional support for Caryl Crane Children's Theatre at Firelands College to insure its future and to maintain and nurture a Caryl Crane Children's Theatre Advisory group to guide the program. The $100,000, given to the Caryl Crane Restricted Fund account in the Bowling Green State University Foundation, ensured a continuing partnership between the two organizations and established a model for growth and development.

Programming and Numbers

Traditionally the Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre program produces two productions each year, although during various transition periods in C.C.C.T. history only one production has taken place. To date, forty productions have been presented by Caryl Crane Children's Theatre, with 142 performances, and involving 975 cast members. The winter production traditionally has been a musical, while the fall play is typically non-musical. One production each year relates to the First Book Program at BGSU Firelands. This program, coordinated with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Erie and Huron counties, links classic literature with its’ staged version. The productions have included *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* (2000), *Charlotte’s Web* (2006), and *Alice in Wonderland* (2007). Since 2005, musical numbers have been incorporated into
the fall play in an effort to attract participants with musical, as well as non-musical, interests.

By The Numbers

While no formal recordkeeping is available before 2001, a ten-year review of box office sales demonstrates the attendance trends at C.C.C.T. (Table 2:1, Graph 2:1). Factors influencing box office sales include weather (Children’s Letters to God, 2011), economy, personal recommendations, marketing efforts, the correlation between recognizable titles and ticket sales (Winnie-The-Pooh, 2006), timing of a feature film of similar title (Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, 2005), and the number and enthusiasm of cast members. Box office sales peaked in the 2005-2006 season and declined through 2009. Some factors influencing the decline may be the revival of previously produced plays (Raggedy Ann and Andy, 2008), the resurgence of other youth programming with similar titles in the area (The Wizard of Oz, at C.C.C.T., Bellevue Society for the Arts, Perkins High School, 2008), and the decline in number of active student participants. The increase in tickets sales for the 2010-2011 season might be attributed to a change in leadership, development of new programming, an increase in participation levels, the addition of a second weekend of performances, and double-casting (casting two students to rotate in the same role at various performances) of the actors.
Table 2.1 - Production Attendance Relative to Capacity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Production Title</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>% Of House</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Yankee Doodle</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>1028 (4 performances)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>My Father’s Father</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>771 (3 performances)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Gollywhoppers</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Pinocchio</td>
<td>849</td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Ice Wolf</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>771</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Snow Queen</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Tom Sawyer</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>771</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Tales…Anderson</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Charlie…Factory</td>
<td>771</td>
<td>771</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Charlotte’s Web</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Winnie-the-Pooh</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>771</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Emperor’s Clothes</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Alice In Wonderland</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>771</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Stuart Little</td>
<td>872</td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>The Wizard of Oz</td>
<td>605</td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Snow White…Dwarfs</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Raggedy Ann &amp; Andy</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>771</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Cinderella’s…Slipper</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Hood: Robin Hood</td>
<td>642</td>
<td>771</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Children’s…God</td>
<td>1230</td>
<td>1542 (6 performances)</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.1 - Production Attendance Relative to Capacity
Student participation and program awareness is probably best expressed through the number of students auditioning for various plays. Since 2001, records of those auditioning have been kept to identify participation levels and trends. The following table (Table 2:2, Graph 2:2) identifies audition numbers for individual shows, as well as overall participation on an annual basis. It should be noted that feature films of the same titles were released just prior to/following the auditions for both *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (2005) and *Charlotte’s Web* (2006) which may have contributed to the high number of students auditioning for these shows.
Table 2.2 - Student Participation: Production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Production Title</th>
<th># Auditioning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Yankee Doodle</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>My Father's Father</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Gollywhoppers</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Pinocchio</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Ice Wolf</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Snow Queen</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Tom Sawyer</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Tales...Anderson</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Charlie...Factory</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Charlotte's Web</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Winnie-the-Pooh</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Emperor’s Clothes</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Alice In Wonderland</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Stuart Little</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>The Wizard of Oz</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Snow White...Dwarfs</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Raggedy Ann &amp; Andy</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Cinderella's...Slipper</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Hood: Robin Hood</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Children’s...God</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.2 – Student Participation: Production
Audition attendance peaked in 2005-06 and has been on a decline ever since. Factors influencing weakening audition levels may include the revival of previously produced show titles (*Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, 2009), reduction of marketing budgets which resulted in less newspaper visibility to notify students of audition dates, lack of coordination with area school calendars, and the growth in popularity of other area children’s theatre programming. The jump in audition numbers for 2010-2011 may have been affected by the change in leadership, newer show titles that coincide with pop-culture, additional performance date opportunities, the assistance of the Teen Board (Caryl Crane Children's Theatre’s newly established outreach entity) in marketing at area middle and high schools, and double-casting (rotating lead performers for various dates) for the productions.

Workshops

Theatre workshops are offered spring and fall to students ages ten through eighteen. Traditionally, these workshops have been held on Saturday mornings for six consecutive weeks in two-hour sessions. Subjects covered in these workshops included: techniques of acting, stagecraft, voice, mime, make-up and auditioning. Beginning in 2003, attendance has diminished to the point where various workshops have been canceled due to lack of participation and interest. Reasons for lack of participation as cited in student evaluations in 2007 (Appendix C), included: repeat workshop themes and instructors, unable to commit to the length of the workshop weeks, lack of excitement, and loss of peer interest. From 2004-2007 the average age of workshop
participants was eleven. Less than 30% of workshop participants were above the age of fourteen. In 2008, workshops were offered for the first time as four consecutive-week sessions. Registration increased enough to hold workshops as scheduled. In 2009, however, a repeat of the 2008 workshop offerings had to be cancelled due to lack of registrants.

In fall 2010, five workshops were offered. Subjects for the workshops were new to C.C.C.T. and included: Musical Theatre Jam, Showtime/StoryTime, The Disney Experience, and The Puppet Master. Four of the workshops featured a one-day, five-hour commitment and one (The Senior Showcase) was specifically geared toward high school students interested in pursuing theatre and musical theatre at the collegiate level. All five workshops were held, with average attendance at 75% of the twenty-four-student capacity. When asked through a post-workshop evaluation, why they signed up for the Fall 2010 workshops, reasons included new and exciting subject material, more challenging concepts, and relevance to their post high school careers (The Senior Showcase).

Workshop subjects and timeslots remain in transitional phase, while the Artistic Director and C.C.C.T. Advisory Board try to develop a balance of exciting and relevant subjects and coordinate them with the school and extra-curricular calendars.

Current model of Caryl Crane Children's Theatre

Upon the retirement of founding Artistic Director Ronald M. Ruble in 2008, a committee was formed by B.G.S.U. Firelands College to find a suitable replacement and
to create a detailed job description for the open position. In summer 2010, the committee chose a new head to the program under the title Artistic Director/Business Manager. Hired as a part-time staff member within the Department of Humanities at BGSU Firelands, the Caryl Crane Children's Theatre Artistic Director/Business Manager position is charged with developing programs, increasing participation, setting new standards of excellence, and representing the original goals and values set forth by Caryl Crane. The person holding this position is scheduled to be re-evaluated and renewed in July of each calendar year.

The following section of “Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre, A Strategic Analysis” provides a detailed look into the current business structure of C.C.C.T., how it has evolved, and its’ plan for the future.

The Artistic Director

APPENDIX C contains the complete description of the duties and responsibilities of the C.C.C.T. Artistic Director/Business Manager. In brief, the Artistic Director/Business Manager of Caryl Crane Children's Theatre is to be hired as an employee of BGSU Firelands. The responsibilities of the Artistic Director are divided into three categories:

(1) Production: The Artistic Director/Business Manager of C.C.C.T administers the budgets; selects the plays for production; hires the production staff; facilitates the casting of all plays; conducts all rehearsals; and oversees all aspects of each production.
(2) Education: The Artistic Director/Business Manager of C.C.C.T selects workshop subjects and courses; teaches a minimum of two sets of workshops per calendar year; further develops the workshop program.

(3) Advisory Board: The Artistic Director/Business Manager of C.C.C.T serves as ex-officio of C.C.C.T. Advisory Board; attends all meetings and submits status reports; works in conjunction with the Advisory Board president and the department chair of Humanities on C.C.C.T. theatre matters/concerns.

The Advisory Board

In 2001, a number of parents whose children were involved in C.C.C.T. suggested the formation of a parental support group called the Caryl Crane Children's Theatre Advisory Group. That group, composed of six interested adults, worked to offer advice and support to further the efforts of the C.C.C.T. programming. They were not a governing board, but functioned to supplement the efforts set forth by the Artistic Director to sustain program development and growth. Throughout the next five years, the Advisory Group worked to build participation levels and secure financial donations that were used to support the play production and workshop aspects of C.C.C.T.

In May 2006, the Caryl Crane Children's Theatre Advisory Group began the process of converting to the Caryl Crane Children's Theatre Advisory Board. With the inclusion of B.G.S.U. faculty, this Board would endeavor to establish administrative assistance to the Artistic Director/Business Manager. An Advisory Board with voting privileges was instituted to provide more stability and accountability than the informal
group structure that was the C.C.C.T. Advisory Group. The self-appointing C.C.C.T. Advisory Board would consist of parents, program supporters and members of the B.G.S.U. Firelands faculty. The purpose in its creation was to provide guidance and recommendations to assist in further developing the Caryl Crane Children's Theatre program. The C.C.C.T Advisory Board was considered essential to maintaining the quality instructional programs and theatrical opportunities set in place at Caryl Crane Children's Theatre. Functions of the twelve-member Advisory Board were defined as:

1. ASSISTING WITH MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS – The CCCT Advisory Board assists the C.C.C.T. Artistic Director and Firelands College Office of College Relations with promoting the CCCT program and opportunities to community members.

2. ASSISTING WITH PROGRAM PLANNING AND EVALUATION – The C.C.C.T. Advisory Board provides input and ideas for generating new C.C.C.T. experiences and helps evaluate existing programs.

3. SOLICITING SPONSORSHIPS AND COORDINATES FUNDRAISING – The C.C.C.T. Advisory Board coordinates annual fundraising activities and pursues new venues for generating program funds.

4. FOSTERING COMMUNITY RELATIONS – The C.C.C.T. Advisory Board serves as a link to the community. The Board helps promote public support for the CCCT program and the college by fostering a favorable image.

5. PARTICIPATING IN COLLEGE ACTIVITIES – C.C.C.T. Advisory Board members are encouraged to take part in various C.C.C.T. program and college activities.
As set up in the Caryl Crane Children's Theatre Advisory Board Guidelines for Organization and Operation, it is expected that members will serve for a minimum of three years. Members may be re-appointed for a second term upon completion of a first term. C.C.C.T. Advisory Board officers include a chair and a secretary. The secretary shall write and maintain C.C.C.T. Advisory Board minutes. The secretary and chair are to be assisted by the C.C.C.T. Artistic Director/Business Manager in coordinating agenda preparation and board correspondence. The C.C.C.T. Advisory Board chair and secretary are to be nominated by the C.C.C.T. Advisory Board membership and their nomination approved by the C.C.C.T. Artistic Director.

Three standing committees were created to actively participate in the main functions of the C.C.C.T. Advisory Board.

1. **FUNDRAISING** – Coordinate annual donation drive. Maintain mailing list and records of contribution.

2. **PROGRAM SALES** – Coordinate sales of advertising for playbill. Coordinate artwork and follow up correspondence with advertisers.

3. **MARKETING/PUBLIC RELATIONS** – Develop annual promotional strategy, with the assistance of the BGSU Firelands Office of College Relations staff. And to assist staff with implementation of these strategies.

Chairs shall be elected by the C.C.C.T. Advisory Board membership and approved by the C.C.C.T. Artistic Director. Ad hoc committees can be formed as necessary to fulfill C.C.C.T. program goals and objectives.

The C.C.C.T. Advisory Board is to be self-evaluated informally each calendar year. The objective of the evaluation is to ascertain how well the Board is succeeding in attaining its objectives. Developing a plan for evaluation of the Board is one of the...
responsibilities of the Board in conjunction with the professional leadership of Caryl Crane Children's Theatre. Discussion and analysis of the results of the evaluative process are meant to result in positive follow-up and a stronger program.

Financing Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre

Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre currently operates out of two separate accounts at BGSU Firelands. The monies in the Caryl Crane restricted fund (administered by BGSU Foundation) is used to pay half of the Artistic Director’s salary (the other half coming as a BGSU Firelands staff member.) All personal contributions to the Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre are put into the corpus. The second account is the BGSU Firelands Theatre Account. Any production profit, including program advertisers, is deposited into, and all production expenses come from, this account. An annual appeal campaign is launched in the late autumn of each year for donations, and program advertisers are sought at the beginning of each calendar year.

Salaries for music directors, choreographers, musicians, scenic artists, and costumers are derived from funds in the BGSU Firelands Theatre Account. Such things as office space and the cost of the theatre itself, as well as the salary of the Artistic Director/Business Manager is provided as part of the arrangement between C.C.C.T. and B.G.S.U. Firelands College.
CHAPTER III
THE CALL TO ACTION

The SWOT Analysis

The following section of “Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre, A Strategic Analysis” will serve to provide a comprehensive look into the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as they pertain to the areas of Governance and Administration, Marketing and Public Awareness, Financial Stability, and Programming Development.

Strengths

1. Governance/Administration
   • C.C.C.T. exhibits strong leadership in the form of dedication of an Artistic Director/Business Manager with academic training, professional experience, and regional reputation.
   • C.C.C.T. employs a professional production staff that maintains professional standards.
   • C.C.C.T. enjoys a sound working relationship with, and the support of, B.G.S.U. Firelands.
• C.C.C.T. boasts a professional staff of directors, musicians, and instructors dedicated to teaching the principles of theatre, music and dance performance.

• C.C.C.T. actively involves parents of students.

• The C.C.C.T. Advisory Board is set in place to provide guidance, support and strength to the program.

• C.C.C.T. has office space and theatre facilities available at no cost.

• An in-house network computer is provided to C.C.C.T. with no administrative printing and paper supply costs.

• The establishment of a C.C.C.T. Teen Board provides a leadership outlet and encourages teenage participation.

2. Marketing and Public Awareness

• C.C.C.T maintains solid name recognition in the community, due to longevity (24 completed seasons).

• C.C.C.T. is provided with marketing assistance, in the form of paid advertisements and issuing of press releases, from BGSU Firelands.

• An aggressive Facebook and Twitter promotional campaign has been launched to inform the community youth of C.C.C.T. events and activities.

• Volunteers, in the form of parents and program participants, assist in promoting productions and programs with strong word of mouth.

3. Financial Development

• Existence of C.C.C.T. corpus in BGSU Foundation ($94,348 as of 3/1/11).
4. Programming

(Strengths: Theatre Productions)

- C.C.C.T. delivers quality education and instruction, evident by the longevity of students involved in the program.
- The continuation of theatre education at the collegiate level by a significant majority of C.C.C.T. alumni bodes well for programming structure.
- C.C.C.T. produces quality plays, as evident by returning patrons.
- C.C.C.T. production participation is offered tuition-free for all students.
- C.C.C.T. productions involve of actors from many schools and school districts.
- High artistic value compliments the low tuition costs of the C.C.C.T. workshops and classes.
- C.C.C.T. draws a broad talent base of actors for all play productions.
- C.C.C.T. introduces the arts to underserved students, partnering with the local Boys and Girls Clubs of Sandusky and Huron.
- C.C.C.T. workshops and shows are valued by the community, as proven by the repeat participation of students.
- The growing attendance numbers at recent productions suggests the C.C.C.T. reputation is climbing.
- C.C.C.T. has a tradition of actively involving families of participants through a variety of programs and activities.
(Strengths: Workshops)

• C.C.C.T. students displayed a willingness to try different formats of workshops in Fall 2010 by filling new workshops to capacity.

• C.C.C.T. students, in both 2007 and 2010 participation surveys, indicate their enthusiasm for and commitment to C.C.C.T. programming.

(School: Community Outreach)

• The use of the C.C.C.T. Teen Board as an outreach instrument into area schools and community centers is exhibited through recently instituted events and activities, such as *I'm Dreaming of a Broadway Christmas*.

Weaknesses

1. Governance/Administration

• C.C.C.T. has no administrative support staff, limiting the C.C.C.T. programming viability to dependency on the Artistic Director/Business Manager.

• Retaining a quality Artistic Director may be difficult at the current salary.

• The unclear relationship between B.G.S.U. Firelands and C.C.C.T. prohibits clarity in authoritative structure and decision-making.

• A lack of consistent record keeping exhibits an unclear sense of C.C.C.T. programming direction.

2. Marketing and Public Awareness

• C.C.C.T. experiences insufficiently effective press coverage, possibly due to administrative structure or agenda.
• C.C.C.T. has a problem of reaching beyond present boundaries of community awareness by relying upon traditional small ads in newspapers.

• The perception of C.C.C.T. being limited to “children” hinders efforts to reach older youth.

• The lack of middle school and high school ticket sales for productions demonstrates a lack of interest in past seasons’ offerings.

• The C.C.C.T. website location is difficult to find without going thru the B.G.S.U. website.

• The C.C.C.T. website does not generate excitement, as it currently houses an academic format.

• C.C.C.T. is reliant upon already busy volunteers to assist in the community outreach of all programs and productions.

• The name Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre implies children only, and may be limiting to the growth of teenage involvement.

3. Financial Development

• C.C.C.T. fundraising is non-aggressive, with only one donation letter campaign each year appealing to less than 300 arts patrons.

• Funding for the Artistic Director/Business Manager position is reliant upon B.G.S.U. Firelands budget, and, thus, is only able to be offered as a part-time position.

• All financial contributions are placed into the non-interest bearing restricted fund.

• New ways to fund the general operating account are needed, as C.C.C.T. programming budget is currently only able to rely upon box office receipts.
4. Programming

- C.C.C.T. workshop programming has developed a reputation for being stale and outdated, and many workshops in the past five years have been cancelled due to lack of participation.
- C.C.C.T. play selection has a reputation of being “the same” each season, and participation, as well as audience attendance, is struggling.
- A present lack of options for more mature themes and issues drives older students to seek theatre arts education involvement elsewhere.
- A small stage and auditorium limit the spectrum of available plays and size of casts.
- The policy of charging no tuition for student participation in productions, makes the C.C.C.T. budget reliant to ticket sales and ad sales.
- A failure to attract new volunteers in past years has C.C.C.T. dependent upon the same volunteering parents whose children may no longer be interested in the program.
- Current C.C.C.T. programming is inefficient at developing and maintaining older youth involvement.
- A lack of exploration into popular trends in plays for children and young adults has resulted in loss of interest and participation.
- C.C.C.T. has a strong need to revitalize and revamp the workshop program to make it more relevant to today’s youth.
Opportunities

1. Governance/Administration

• New C.C.C.T. leadership is charged by B.G.S.U. to revitalize programming and production.

• Current C.C.C.T. leadership is committed to exploring and establishing more collaborative opportunities with B.G.S.U. Firelands.

• The formation of the C.C.C.T. Teen Board has given representation and a voice to older youth participants who may have become disinterested in C.C.C.T.

• Community outreach ideas are being initiated through both C.C.C.T. main stage programming and Teen Board activities.

• C.C.C.T. now falls under the governance of the B.G.S.U. Firelands Humanities Department, and should explore opportunities for collaboration with the Department Chair.

2. Marketing and Public Awareness

• As area schools continue to cut arts education budgets, there are new opportunities to engage the community in alternative arts educational and production programs.

• Facebook and Twitter allow for instant and constant communication with patrons and students of C.C.C.T., and create opportunities to link with potential students and audiences at virtually no cost.

• Teen Board programming and outreach provide increased connections to the community.
• The use of existing C.C.C.T. students and C.C.C.T. Teen Board Members to recruit new audience members can boost box office sales.

• Using new C.C.C.T. programming to increase opportunities for visibility within the community and the regional arts markets.

3. Financial Development

• Foundation and corporate support of the arts, such as The Ruth Parker Foundation and The George Mylander Foundation, is strong in the local community.

• Developing a subscription-based audience by combine C.C.C.T. and Firelands College Theatre patrons can build attendance of both entities.

4. Programming

• The administration of C.C.C.T., the Advisory Board, the Teen Board, and the university itself have expressed a commitment to choosing family-friendly, popular shows for teens and youth can help boost attractiveness in participation and audience.

• Coordinating the scheduling of plays and programs to not conflict with school calendars or other programs can lead to increased participation.

• Emphasizing the social aspects of the programming (i.e. Teen Board) can help encourage students and parents to participate in C.C.C.T.

• Restructuring workshop programs to shorter, more concentrated lessons in subjects that today’s students find most appealing (i.e. musical theatre, dance, integration of pop music and theatre) can help boost participation.

• Collaboration with schools and other organizations (including Ackerman Family Theatre, Bellevue Society for the Arts, and Harlequin’s Kids Kompany) will lead to a strengthening of arts education throughout the area.
• Using C.C.C.T. alumni to mentor, visit and instruct current C.C.C.T. students will strengthen commitment of programming.

• Blending performance and education elements to fortify relationships with local school systems by developing curriculum/activity guides for educators that address key state-mandated learning objectives.

• Implementing a CAPPIES chapter (a teenage awards program similar to the “Tony Awards” for the local high school community to celebrate excellence in the arts) to encourage community collaboration.

• Discovering new programming that will add local, regional and national visibility to the C.C.C.T. program.

• Discovering new programming that will add participation and new performance opportunities for C.C.C.T. students.

Threats

1. Governance. Administration

   • Potential budget cuts in B.G.S.U.’s operational budget could leave C.C.C.T. without a home.

2. Marketing and Public Awareness

   • The de-emphasis being placed on arts-in-print publications has eliminated most forms of free publicity in print media.

   • Ad rates continue to climb, while visibility and readership in local papers is on a steady decline.
3. Financial

- The current recessionary climate may continue to impact contribution levels and participation in program due to family income status, attendance, etc.
- The recessionary climate may cause unanticipated expenses, or a steep reduction of donations and monetary support.
- Competition for participation from other theatres in local community forces students to choose between programming.
- Competition for the entertainment dollar forces audience to choose between local programming.

4. Programming

- Other area children’s theatre programs, such as Harlequin’s Kids Kompany and Bellevue Society for the Arts program, have developed a strong following in recent years.
- The new State Theatre Ackerman’s Family Theatre opened in November 2010 with a million-dollar budget and high community visibility.
- The creation of Teen Boards at both Bellevue Society for the Arts and Harlequin’s Kid Kompany may take away C.C.C.T. teens who are geographically closer to either location.
- Over-involvement of students in extracurricular activities means loss in C.C.C.T. workshop participants, as well as unavailability to attend rehearsals and auditions.
- Rising travel costs and gas prices may impact student participation and audience attendance from outlying areas.
The C.C.C.T. Community

Caryl Crane Children's Theatre's at Firelands College sits in the heart of Erie County in between the cities of Sandusky and Huron. The population of Erie County is 80,000 with over 31,000 households that include residents under eighteen years old (www.ohio.gov). With a mailing list of 275 households and yearly attendance averaging 850 patrons, Caryl Crane Children's Theatre is reaching one percent of the Erie County population. The following section of “Caryl Crane Children's Theatre, A Strategic Analysis” will provide an insight into the current community view of Caryl Crane Children's Theatre and its neighboring youth theatre programs in Erie and Huron County. Interviews with various stakeholders were conducted by the researcher.

Community Perception of C.C.C.T. – Expansions on Opportunities and Threats

Academic – William K. Balzer, Ph.D., Dean, BGSU Firelands College

William Balzer has been involved with Caryl Crane Children's Theatre for twelve years in different forms of leadership within the Bowling Green State University Faculty and Administration. In a recent email dialogue, Balzer expressed comfort with the planned actions and growth strategy set forth by the C.C.C.T. Advisory Board. It should be noted that those actions included: the hiring of a new Artistic Director to replace
retiring Artistic Director Ronald Ruble (complete), establishing itself as its own 501(c)3 organization (incomplete) and discovering ways to grow C.C.C.T. programming (in process). With regard to the future of Caryl Crane Children's Theatre at Firelands College he said:

Generally, I would like to see the continued integration of CCCT with the academic mission of the College and its theatre offerings, a sustainable business model that allows CCCT to thrive with the financial support of (but not heavy dependence on) the College, and strong performances and workshops that enrich the educational development of the community's youth. (Balzer, William. Email interview. 14 March 2011.)

Business Leader – Glenn Hares, Publisher, Sandusky Register

In a recent conversation with C.C.C.T. board members, prominent Sandusky businessman and recent patron of Caryl Crane Children's Theatre, Glenn Hares, expressed concern about the low visibility and lack of excitement level associated with the current C.C.C.T. program. He communicated that all local arts education press time has been focused on the new Ackerman Family Theatre at the Sandusky State Theatre. He worries that their large budget, impressive performance venue, and high-profile media coverage, will wipe out any hold Caryl Crane Children's Theatre still has on the community. (Hares, Glenn. Personal interview. 7 March 2011.)
Community Leader – Anne McGokey, President, Kiwanis Sandusky Chapter

Through a series of phone conversations, McGokey, who attended the C.C.C.T. 25th Anniversary Gala in February 2011, was amazed to have only recently heard of Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre, despite having lived in the area her entire life.

It’s shocking to think that this organization has been around half of my life, and this is the first time I have stepped foot in The McBride Auditorium (the C.C.C.T. performance venue). I think what you have here is an amazing program that very few people are aware of. And that is a problem. (McGokey, Anne. Phone interview. 12 March 2011.)

She went on to indicate that she felt the C.C.C.T. Teen Board might be one of the most exciting new educational leadership ideas in the area. “Giving a voice to your teenagers is such an important step towards growth. Not many organizations, even educational ones, take a sincere interest in what their students have to say.”

Neighboring Youth Theatres

Four area youth theatre programs operate within a twenty-five mile radius of Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre. They are: Harlequin’s Kid Kompany, Fremont Community Teen Theatre, Bellevue Society for the Arts, and The Sandusky State Theatre’s newly formed Ackerman Family Children’s Theatre. With varying missions and goals, each organization is set in place to assist in the arts education of the community in which they serve.
Harlequin’s Kid Kompany

Harlequin’s Kid Kompany (H.K.K.), the children’s theatre of Harlequin’s Little Theatre in Sandusky, has been an ongoing part of the company’s line up since the early 1990s. H.K.K. is guilded, as is its parent company, by volunteers. In recent years H.K.K. programming has been inconsistent. In fact, it has been on hiatus since 2006. With no professional leadership and no specific mission related to it’s programming, shows have been generally chosen based upon participant availability and interest. To participate in Kid Kompany, one must be between the ages of nine and twenty. In 2011, Kid Kompany, which has always produced one play per year in a summer slot, will mount a yet-to-be-announced musical.

Harlequin’s Kid Kompany announced in March of 2011, that it would initiate Kid Board, the governing body of Kid Kompany, to assist the governing of its H.K.K. programming. Youth ages fourteen to twenty are eligible to participate in the Kid Board. According to its web site, Kid Board members will take leading roles in the production aspects of the summer production -- including performing such tasks as directing, designing sets and costumes, marketing, setting fundraising goals, and performing other duties related to the operation of the company. (http://harlequinstheatre.org/childrens_theatre).
Fremont Community Theatre Teen Theatre

Fremont Community Theatre (F.C.T.) Teen Theatre has been in operation at the Fremont Community Theatre venue since 1981, performing one musical a year. Participation requires membership, which is open to any teenager, regardless of experience. Membership dues are $5.00 per year, and each member is granted voting rights on summer production possibilities. The top four musicals in contention for 2011 are: *Hairspray, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Fiddler on the Roof,* and *High School Musical.* Members vote for their top choice and the musical with the most votes at the March meeting is chosen for summer production. The F.C.T. Teen Theatre, currently with twenty-eight active members, is advised by members of the F.C.T. Volunteer Board, and is responsible for one fundraising event each year to aid in the production budget (http://fremontcommunitytheatre.org/teen/). The Fremont Community Theatre Teen Theatre does not offer any educational workshops or other productions throughout the year, although teen participation is encouraged for all main stage season productions.

Bellevue Society for the Arts

The Bellevue Society for the Arts states that its mission “to promote the arts through appreciation, education and participation” (http://bellevuesocietyforthearts.com). The youngest of the community theatres in the area, founded in 1994, Bellevue Society for the Arts is housed in a converted concrete
mixing plant and facilitates a full season of plays, musicals and children’s theatre. Three productions each year are planned for their children’s theatre slot, one specifically for teens, with the other two offered to children of any age. All three productions are typically musicals. Participation numbers vary and teen theatre membership ($10 per year) is currently at eighteen (Robinson).

Unique to the Bellevue Society for the Arts programming is their *Play In A Day* program, in which a mix of teens and adults put together a never-before-seen fifteen-minute play in just under 24 hours each spring, complete with sets, costumes, props, and sometimes musical numbers. This annual event is one of the highlights of their season, and the public, family-friendly performance is always well attended (http://bellevuesocietyforthearts.com).

The newest addition to the Bellevue Society for the Arts is their School for the Arts, partnering with nearby Terra Community College. A wide range of classes is offered for all ages and skill levels. Music classes are offered under the Terra Music Academy and include: voice, instrument instruction, composition, and music theory. Nine-week classes are offered for $125. A free lecture series called “Conversations with the Artist” is presented at Bellevue Society for the Arts and offers a range of topics for local and regional professionals in the arts.

The Ackerman Family Children’s Theatre

The Ackerman Family Children’s Theatre is the newest addition to the production schedule of the Sandusky State Theatre. Created in November 2010, with a $1 million
sponsorship from Gary and Diane Ackerman, the new program will feature student matinees, public performances, workshops, and youth performances (Demres). Under the leadership of State Theatre Executive Director Thomas Kazmierczak, the Ackerman Family Children’s Theatre premiered *The Best Little Christmas Pageant Ever* in December 2010. The production was presented at two public performances. Participants were charged a fee of $165. Tickets to attend the 1,500 seat State Theatre production ranged from $10 to $30.

No formal workshop or class schedule has been announced, but two weeklong summer camps are being offered for children and teens. The children’s camp will culminate with a production of Disney's *Aladdin*, and is available for children between the ages of seven and ten. Disney's *Camp Rock* is the production announced for the teen camp. Participants in both camps will be charged a tuition fee of $165 per student. Each production will be performed once for the public (http://sanduskystatetheatre.com).

The four area programs present a unique challenge to Caryl Crane Children's Theatre to identify and communicate its niche among the growing competition. While none of the other programs carries the same mission and goals of C.C.C.T., each seeks students from the same population and demographics. Without aggressive strategic planning and capitalizing on every available opportunity, such as new programming, increased performances, and additional curriculum geared towards older youth, Caryl Crane Children's Theatre could fall behind the “new” and currently higher-profile
organizations in the area and lose any stronghold it maintains on children’s theatre education.

Current Trends

At the 2010 One Theatre World Conference, an annual conference held by the national Theatre for Young Audiences Association (TYA/USA) an open forum was held on current trends in children’s and youth theatre (Guehring). Melissa Gildenharg, Associate Director of Communications for TYA/USA, led a discussion that touched on the following points:

• adjusting programming to correspond to the limited extracurricular activity “time” of students,
• the relevance of offering intensive short-term classes to students,
• the integration of school In-Reach
• the benefits of new play development.

Each topic, while not entirely foreign to children’s and youth theatre current programming, was identified in a list of the top trends in a 2009-10 nextusa.com survey of youth theatre directors across the country (Guehring). Other trends that have been covered in great detail include: the need for embracing the non-traditional in terms of programming and curriculum as well as the value of the internet as a learning, communicating and producing tool (Blackwell). In the following paragraphs, each topic will be dissected in detail as it relates to the programming vision of C.C.C.T.
As schools continue to cut arts budgets one might assume that children’s theatres and other community arts educational organizations would reap the benefits by filling a void created by disappearing programming. But in fact, there is evidence that as more and more art subjects are converted to extracurricular or pay-to-play activities, there is less time available for students to pursue out of school activities (Ortmann). Children's and youth theatres, as with other arts organizations such as youth orchestras and dance studios, have had to adjust scheduling to fit the restricted time available to the students. Shorter sessions, more intense classes, and more individually focused attention are ways that arts organizations are adjusting. Caryl Crane Children's Theatre is not immune to this trend but has done little in the past few years to compensate, another factor that might be influencing low participation numbers. Shortened workshop sessions and specialized classes might aid in attracting and maintaining students for current and future growth.

The concept of “School In-Reach” is the idea that schools are most likely to participate in outside arts programs if those programs are brought to the schools. Field trips, like all other “optional” activities, have become increasingly difficult to fund and manage for school districts; and administrators are seeking new ways of bring arts, identified in mandated learning guidelines, to students (Ortmann). At present, Caryl Crane Children's Theatre, with its limited funds and administration staff, is not in position to create an “in-reach” component, but such a program should definitely be strategically considered for future seasons.

New play development is a growing trend among the budget-conscious children’s and youth theatres in the country (Greig). Developing new works in-house not only offers an excitement and adds energy to programming, it can save tremendously on
tight budgets. Using the myriad stories and tales available in the public domain, theatre companies are able to develop programming ideas unique to their organizations.

Another example of new play development is the increasing number of children’s theatres hosting festivals that celebrate and showcase new works. Becoming a launch pad for new works as part of an annual festival also encourages community participation and enhances visibility of the organization. The idea of creating a new play festival has been discussed by CCCT stakeholders, and the first annual Ronald M. Ruble New Play Festival will take place in May, 2011. It is the hope of the Advisory Board that this event will catch the imagination of both participants and the community at large, and will aid in creating a stimulating and unique element to the CCCT brand.

Embracing non-traditional programming and curriculum and utilizing the internet as a tool for growth are two other ways that Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre can make use of to increase participation, visibility and enthusiasm. Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre, whose goals include exciting and energizing young people about the art of theatre, has done little in the way of adjusting its programming to embrace new developments, such as the integration of pop culture into youth theatre and the arts. Social media and the internet play an ever-increasing role in the marketing of arts programming to students. Over 70% of pre-teens and teenagers use social media sites (such as Facebook) to learn about events, activities and opportunities (Greig).
CHAPTER IV
PLANS FOR CONTINUED GROWTH

The following section of “Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre, A Strategic Analysis” will explore information derived from the SWOT analysis as well as current, local, and national development trends in children’s theatre in order to strategically develop some recommendations for the future of the organization.

Marketing and Public Awareness

In reviewing the SWOT Analysis, several specific goals emerge that would enhance the effects of marketing and developing public awareness and allow for a more positive public perception of C.C.C.T. The overall target must be to develop marketing and outreach strategies to reach the youth market more effectively. The first goal is to make use of the Teen Board, to understand their perceptions of the mission of this organization, and to develop ideas for a more engaging and consistent message to communicate to this target group—in essence to re-examine the C.C.C.T. brand. The second goal is to determine the best methods of communicating the critical messages to potential participants. These will undoubtedly involve an increased use of interactive social media marketing such as Facebook and Twitter, and developing graphic
representations of a redefined C.C.C.T. brand that will provide a coherence to all printed and web-based material. A third goal is to develop in Teen Board members and other teens currently involved in CCCT, a missionary sense of advocacy. This can be done by making sure that youth involved have a clear picture of the C.C.C.T. brand, can tell the story of the organization with enthusiasm, and are energized to be liaisons with their local schools, specifically their drama, choir, band, and arts departments. Of course this goal pre-supposes that programming and personal experiences are appropriate and positive for the students involved.

The fourth goal deals with a different target market. It is to enhance communication with current C.C.C.T. supporters and show attendees. Audience and participant surveys, the collection of email addresses, and electronic newsletters are ways of achieving this increased communication. Having this information is essential to making sure that these people can be actively engaged and can be developed into advocates as well. The specific outcomes of these goals should include increased audition participation, increased workshop participation, and increased box office revenues, particularly in the area of children and youth ticket sales—both individual and group sales.

Governance and Administration

The SWOT analysis indicates that increased effectiveness and efficiency of all programs and outreach, and the increased understanding by C.C.C.T. Advisory Board members of their roles and responsibilities are necessary outcomes for the development
and success of C.C.C.T. By ensuring that the Artistic Director has adequate support staff and a firm understanding of the relationship between C.C.C.T. and Bowling Green State University, the staff and Advisory Board will be able to develop a plan for appropriate growth for C.C.C.T. programming. Effective use of the C.C.C.T. Advisory Board committees could be a valuable asset to the improvement of the Caryl Crane Children's Theatre mission.

Financial Stability

Goals in regard to the financial stability of Caryl Crane Children's Theatre might include: securing of a 501(c)3 status for C.C.C.T. separate from that of BGSU; and pursuing funding that might include individual solicitations, foundation funding, or sponsorship outside the University development structure. The advantage of separate incorporation is that the dedicated efforts for developing funds would not fall into the general pool of university staff responsibilities. One additional goal, also dependent on the ability of CCCT to raise designated funds, would be explore converting the current fund into an interest bearing endowment account, creating less dependency on BGSU Firelands.
Program Development

The area of program development is arguably in need of the most immediate and most aggressive examination. Elements that must be explored include the following: exploring more contemporary theatre repertoire to attract additional participants and audiences, developing programming that will retain participants past the eighth grade, and exploring the development of new programs and/or workshops that embrace all elements of theatre from inception to performance, rather than focusing entirely on performance.

The development of the Caryl Crane Children's Theatre Teen Board in fall 2010 has been a meaningful step towards accomplishing these goals, by giving students beyond eighth grade a voice and an additional reason to maintain connection with C.C.C.T. The Teen Board now sponsors its own programming, fundraising, and outreach, and is given a seat at the monthly C.C.C.T. Advisory Board meeting to discuss programming desires and goals. Since its inception, the C.C.C.T. Teen Board has produced one event, *I'm Dreaming of a BROADWAY Christmas* (December 8 & 9, 2010) and is preparing to launch *The Senior Recital*, an annual farewell concert performed by the graduating C.C.C.T. high school seniors. *I'm Dreaming of a BROADWAY Christmas*, with performance proceeds, raffle baskets and concessions, raised over $3,500 for the organization. Both productions have been successful at maintaining involvement of the high school students that C.C.C.T. has trouble retaining.
The Proposal

The next project C.C.C.T. Teen Board project (co-produced with the C.C.C.T. Advisory Board) will be the inauguration of The Ronald M. Ruble New Play Festival. It is hoped that this initiative will enhance both the programming goals of exploring more contemporary theatre productions and attracting additional audiences and participants, as well as developing new programs that embrace all elements of theatre from inception to performance. This festival, which could ideally identify the “next big hit” in children’s and youth theatre, should result in more visibility within the community as well as attracting new students, new audiences, and new support. Details on the proposed plan for The Ronald M. Ruble New Play Festival are in the following section can be found in Appendix D.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This evaluation of the Bowling Green State University’s Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre has included an analysis of the history of the organization, the strengths and weakness of the organization as it currently exists, and the opportunities and threats inherent in its larger environment. A number of comparable models for youth theatres are examined, as is a brief survey current trends in youth theatre programming. With these things in mind recommendations for future development are presented, as well as a description of steps that have been taken recently to implement strategic change. These steps include the formalization of a Teen Board, a plan for evaluating the current C.C.C.T. brand with an eye to modifying it to speak more clearly to targeted stakeholders, and the initial efforts to establish a new play festival named for C.C.C.T.’s long-time artistic director, Ronald M. Ruble.

The Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre has a long history, and has affected the lives of hundreds of children in Northwestern Ohio. As is the case with all non-profit organizations—which are by definition mission driven—changes in environment, changes in preferences, even changes in technology require institutional adaptation. At twenty-five years old, C.C.C.T. is poised to make those changes, creating an organization that will succeed, if not for the next twenty-five years, at least for the foreseeable future.
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APPENDIX A: FEB. 20\textsuperscript{th} (1989) NOTES OF MEETING BETWEEN MS. CARYL CRANE AND DR. RON RUBLE OF FIRELANDS COLLEGE

Feb. 20\textsuperscript{th}, (1989) notes of meeting between Ms. Caryl Crane and Dr. Ron Ruble of Firelands College.

I. ACADEMIC CHALLENGE GRANT FUNDING (potential):

A. $4,000.00 to 7,000.00 for a two-year biennium (renewable for three bienniums or a total of six years).
B. Grant can be modified, to some extent, with each renewal request (every two years).
C. Grant monies must be used to enhance the existing program of the Firelands College Theatre (a new development, or change in concept, etc.).
D. The enhanced program must be able to sustain itself once the grant monies have run-out (usually at the end of a six year period).

II. A MERGER OF: The Caryl Crane Children's Theatre with the Firelands College Theatre

A. It is important that Caryl not lose control over the C.C.C.T. (as she now has it established).
B. Best to form a kind of alliance (this was suggested after conferring with Caryl's lawyer (Mr. Melvin Stauffer) between the two programs.
C. Letter(s) of Agreement could be issued which both responsible parties could sign; articulating the necessary requirements, needs, and responsibilities.
D. Proposed designation: The Caryl Crane Children's Theatre at Firelands College.

III. WHAT WOULD FIRELANDS COLLEGE NEED?

A. A F.C.T. (Firelands College Theatre) staff member would have to serve as a voting member on the C.C.C.T. (Caryl Crane Children's Theatre) Board of Directors.
B. A F.C.T. staff member would have to serve as the Artistic Director (in charge of the production phase of the operation).
C. A commitment from Caryl Crane, to be accomplished through her estate planning, to continue to underwrite the expenses of the C.C.C.T. after the six-year period of the Academic Challenge Grant funding terminates.
D. A commitment from Caryl Crane to subsidize the expenses for the "teaching/courses" phase of the program, (non-credit classes for children).
E. The C.C.C.T. Board of Directors would have to accept the notion of "open casting" for some productions (mixing adults and children for a production, or casting students at Firelands into a play to be performed for children).

IV. WHAT WOULD CARYL CRANE CHILDREN'S THEATRE NEED?

A. The stability of having a "home-base" to operate from (the theatre and classroom facilities at Firelands College).
B. A quality production program where theatrical standards are closely monitored and supervised. (The Firelands College Theatre staff would be in charge of the production demands for each play)
C. To maintain responsibility for determining the "instruction/teaching" phase of the classes for children (non-credit) -- to include staffing demands, what topics to be offered, etc. Any college credit offerings would have to be staffed by approved Firelands College full-time or part-time faculty.
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APPENDIX B. MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

THE CARYL CRANE CHILDREN'S THEATER PROGRAM AT FIRELANDS COLLEGE
MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

This Memorandum of Agreement is entered into as of September 21, 1990 between Bowling Green State University (the "University"), Bowling Green, Ohio and The Caryl Crane Children's Theater Foundation (the "Foundation"), Sandusky, Ohio.

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, the Foundation was formed and exists to promote theatrical arts for children by providing professional instruction in all aspects of the theater; to promote interest in the study of the arts and drama; and to advance knowledge and appreciation of drama and the arts through individual instruction and actual experience with all respects of theatrical production; and

WHEREAS, one of the Colleges of the University is Firelands College ("Firelands"), at Huron, in Erie County, Ohio;

WHEREAS, the University and the Foundation desire to enter into this agreement to promote theatrical arts for the benefit of children in the area served by Firelands, i.e., Erie, Ottawa and Huron Counties.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is agreed:

Section 1. Caryl Crane Children's Theater and Classes. The University shall establish and maintain, for at least six (6) fiscal years i.e., July 1, 1990 through June 30, 1996 and from year-to-year thereafter, subject to funding, as provided in Section 4, (a) the Caryl Crane Children's Theater at Firelands College, with suitable facilities, program and staff and (b) a program for teaching non-credit theatrical arts classes for children.

The University shall provide the facilities and staff for the Theater and for the non-credit Class program and will be the employer of all persons employed in carrying out this Agreement. The University will provide appropriate insurance to protect the University from all risks incident to this Agreement.

Section 2. The Caryl Crane Children's Theater Program Fund. The University shall establish and maintain an account within the Restricted Fund of the University for the financial administration of the Program provided for in this Agreement. The account shall be credited with the contributions required hereunder to be made by the University and by the Foundation, together with the revenue earned and all revenue attributable to the Caryl Crane Children's Theater Program and to the aforesaid non-credit Class program in the theatrical arts. The expenses provided for herein shall be paid from the Restricted Fund account.

Section 3. Financial Reporting. Not later than ninety (90) days after the end of each fiscal year of the University, i.e., September 30. the fiscal officer designated by the University shall submit a financial report of the Program respecting such fiscal year to the Foundation. Said financial report shall show both cash and "in-kind" contributions, i.e., proportional share of salaries/wages and applicable fringe benefits.
APPENDIX B. MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Section 4. Funding — First Six Years. Prior to September 30 in each of the fiscal years 1991 through 1996, the University shall transfer not less than $50,000 to the Restricted Fund account provided for in Section 2 above. In addition, the University shall allocate all applicable "in-kind" expenses to the Restricted Fund account so as to report the total costs assignable to the Theater and non-credit Class program in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Prior to September 30, 1990, the Foundation will deposit $7,500 with Bowling Green State University for deposit in the Restricted Fund account provided for in Section 2 above. In addition, the Foundation will contribute not less than $2,000 to the credit of such Restricted Fund account not later than March 31 in each of the fiscal years 1991 through 1996.

The Theater facilities and productions shall be as permitted by available funding and as determined by the Firelands College Theater Program tenured faculty in consultation with the Foundation.

The non-credit Class program and instruction shall be as determined by the Director of Personal and Professional Development (Firelands College) in consultation with the Foundation.

Section 5. Funding — Seventh and Later Years. At least ninety (90) days prior to the beginning of the seventh fiscal year (July 1, 1996) and each subsequent year of this Agreement, the Firelands Theater Program tenured faculty, may submit to the Foundation a Grant Request for the ensuing year, for funds not otherwise available, for continuing this Agreement for such year. Not later than the first day of each such ensuing year, the Foundation may advise the University that such Grant Request has been granted and that the same will be paid by September 30 of such ensuing year.

Continuation of the Agreement rests with the spirit of cooperation and mutual interest established between the Firelands College Theater Program and the Foundation. It is agreed, however, that this Agreement may be terminated by either party within ninety (90) days of the award year, from and after September 30, 1996.

Section 6. Naming of the Theater and the Classes. Throughout the term of this Agreement, the name "Caryl Crane" shall be appropriately, prominently and publicly displayed and utilized in connection with the Children's Theater and the non-credit instructional Class program provided for herein.

Section 7. Miscellaneous. This Agreement is not a partnership agreement.

This Agreement is signed on behalf of the University and Foundation.
APPENDIX B. MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Memorandum of Agreement in duplicate as of the day and year first above written.

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY.
By: Eloise E. Clark 9/23/90
Title: Vice President for Academic Affairs

THE CARYL CRANE CHILDREN’S THEATER FOUNDATION.
By: Caryl Crane
Title: President
APPENDIX C. THE ROLE OF THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR/BUSINESS MANAGER

The Primary purpose of the Artistic Director/Business Manager of Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre is divided into three main categories:

(1) Production: Administer the budgets; select plays for production; hire the production staff; cast the play; conduct rehearsals; oversee production crews and volunteers; coordinate box office schedules; and oversee all aspects of the performance process including the pre-performance, performance, and post performance activities.

(2) Education: Design, plan and facilitate educational workshops for CCCT Teen and pre-Teen students (no less than 2 teen and 1 pre-teen workshop per semester – held Saturday mornings in 4-5 hour blocks); design and organize the circulation of information in the form of flyers, press releases, handouts and assignments; hire additional instructors (musical director/instructor) when necessary; oversee and serve as Advisor to Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre’s Teen Board (meeting once per week for 1.5 hour blocks); producing, directing and advising any and all outreach projects as decided upon by the CCCT Teen Board

(3) Administration: Prepare and present contractual requests for production staff; process contracts from leasing and royalty companies; order scripts and music necessary for each production; process all production bills for payment; monitor and audit monthly budget accounts; monitor and audit monthly BGSU Foundation, Inc. corpus account; process all purchasing paper work; prepare purchase order requests for local vendors which require them; prepare daily deposits; keep up-to-date records of all deposit requests; monitor daily lines of communication (postal letter inquiries/requests, phone, and email); serve as liaison between Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre Advisory Board and BGSU Firelands Humanities Dept; attend Advisory Board meetings and submit status reports; consult with the Advisory Board president and the Department Chair of Humanities on children’s theatre matters/concerns.
• Additional Duties include, but are not limited to:
  o Program Management: facilitate all aspects of securing location, team and materials for each production in terms of selecting production staff, submitting space requests for rehearsals and performances, submitting work requests for ticket printing and publicity materials, preparing and submitting all press releases, announcements, handouts and feedback forms.
  o Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre Advisory Board: Serve as ex-officio member; prepare Artistic Director report for submission at each meeting; assist in the coordination of the playbill advertising campaign; assist in the coordination of the annual contribution campaign including writing donation request letter.

Hired as a part-time staff member within the Department of Humanities at BGSU Firelands, the Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre Artistic Director/Business Manager position is to be re-evaluated and renewed in July of each calendar year.
APPENDIX D. THE PROPOSAL

The Ronald M. Ruble New Play Festival Proposal
Submitted by Brian Marshall, Artistic Director, CCCT
Approved by Dean William Balzer. 9 October, 2010.

Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre proposes to host an annual national playwriting festival showcasing unproduced plays for young adults and children beginning in May 2011. A national search will commence in October of 2010, looking for the best and most promising theatrical works relevant to youth today. The weekend-long festival will consist of 5-6 staged readings of previously unseen theatrical works, and will take place in the McBride Auditorium on the BGSU Firelands campus. A winner will be chosen through committee/audience voting and will receive a fully staged production during the following CCCT season.

Hosting such a festival allows Caryl Crane Children’s Theatre to fulfill and enhance its mission of enriching the community and the appreciation of the arts through live performance. By utilizing the talented CCCT students, Firelands College students, and additional regional artists, the festival would further our efforts of using the magic of the stage to broaden dreams and build character among community youth and adults. The CCCT festival will join the ranks of Penn State, the University of Iowa and the Yale School of Drama as platforms for unproduced works, while maintaining the distinction of hosting the only New Play Festival in the Mid-West solely dedicated to new
theatrical works for Children and Young Adults. Finally, using the annual festival as a launch pad for such unproduced theatrical works will distinguish CCCT from other area organizations and promote the programming at CCCT to a nationally recognized level.

Process

On November 1 of each year, CCCT will begin taking hard-copy submissions of new plays and musicals. The Artistic Director will ensure that the submitted material follows specified criteria (see below) and will pass the play onto a seven-person panel that will judge the merits of the work. Panel members will include CCCT Artistic Director, a member of the CCCT Advisory Board, a member of the BGSU Firelands Humanities Department, an additional BGSU faculty member, a playwriting scholar, and a CCCT Teen Board representative. Through a grading process, the submissions will be narrowed down to a selection of 5-6 plays and musicals deemed worthy of a reading. All playwrights will be notified of the status of their submission in March, and promotion about the chosen material will begin thereafter. The festival will take place on a Saturday and Sunday in May. Three productions will be showcased in a reader’s theatre format open to the public on Saturday and two will be showcased on Sunday. The winner will be chosen by the selection panel, with consideration given to the audience favorite, and announced at a reception upon conclusion of the festival. The winner of each season’s new Playwriting Festival will receive a fully developed and produced show as part of the following CCCT season. A cash prize may or may not be awarded to the winner dependent upon funding.
Criteria

- There is no submission fee for the CCCT New Play Festival
- Submission deadline is January 15 of each calendar year. Scripts received after that date will be considered the following year. 5-6 finalists will be selected on March 1 of that year and their names will be posted to the CCCT website at that time.
- Must be a full-length play/musical for children or young adults without a prior production
- A brief synopsis must be sent together with a bound complete manuscript. Submission must include a contact phone number and e-mail address on the play’s title page. No electronic submissions will be accepted.
- The play must be at least 1 hour and no longer than 90 minutes.
- The play must be appropriate for audiences of all ages
- Dramas, comedies and farces (with or without music) are all welcome.
- Cast size limited to no less than 5 or more than 28.
- The plays selected will be performed by our student actors with a mix of regional artists where necessary. Plays that can be effectively cast within our market will be considered favorably.

Playwrights who are questioning whether or not their play is a good match for CCCT are strongly encouraged to contact Artistic Director Brian Marshall at mbrian@bgsu.edu before submitting.

- All plays that are not selected for the festival will be recycled. Please do not include any type of return postage.
All serious submissions will be read by at least three readers. Be advised that the following are not considered serious submissions:

- Screenplays submitted as theatrical plays
- Plays with multiple typos and spelling errors
- Plays that are not formatted according to industry standards
- Plays with excessive profanity or violence or are inappropriate for child audience members

**Timeline**

- October 1 – Playwriting selection panel invitations sent out
- November 1 – Begin accepting submissions
- March 15 – Submission deadline
- Jan./Feb – Auditions for Playwriting Festival actors and musicians
- April 15 – Play/Musical finalists selected
- April 15 – Casts announced for selected plays
- May 1 – Rehearsals for selected play begin
- Mid-May – Annual CCCT New Play Festival

**BGSU Firelands Commitment**

With the exception of playing host to the CCCT Playwriting Festival and the building operational costs a two-day festival in the McBride Auditorium might incur, BGSU Firelands is under no financial obligations to the production of the festival. All monies to fund the annual event will be allocated directly from the CCCT Foundation
Account and from CCCT and CCCT Teen Board fundraising efforts particular to the festival as well as the admission from ticket and concessions sales during the festival. BGSU Firelands and BGSU may pursue the inclusion of publishing rights of selected finalists into the festival should either party have interest.