



Fall 2011 is Thunder Bay Theatre's 67th season (there are three seasons a year - Summer, Fall, Spring.) Located at 400 North Second Avenue in Old Town, Alpena, Thunder Bay Theatre (TBT) occupies a turn of the 20th-century building that has had a number of different tenants. This historic facility was originally known as Spens Drug and Wallpaper, and then as Alpena Candy and Cigar Company. The cigar humidor remains intact in the lobby and is used as a storage closet. TBT purchased the building in 1983 and converted it to provide the proper setting for the theatre's activities. In addition to the lobby and stage are areas not seen by most theatre patrons. These important components of the facility include a modest but complete set shop which is used for constructing the various sets used in the plays. Downstairs in the basement is a very large costume and prop storage area. The extensive costume collection has been put together painstakingly over the years, and is maintained with care to protect the many valuable period pieces included in the inventory. Numerous donations have complemented the costumes made by theatre employees and volunteers. In addition to using the wide variety of costumes in its productions, TBT loans many of them to other local theatre groups, and rents many of them to area residents year round, especially at Halloween. Attached to the back of the theatre is another large warehouse where building materials and furniture are located between uses. This part of the facility also serves as a set construction site and an additional rehearsal area. A critical part of the building is the upstairs where five apartments are located for use by the resident professional company. Housing is provided as part of the compensation for working at TBT and is a very important incentive for actors to live in Alpena which is so far away from most theatre markets. TBT is a 501 (c) (3) non profit corporation, and is the only year round professional theatre in Northern Michigan. TBT provides a very valuable theatre opportunity to many young people who are actively pursuing a career on stage. It also creates wonderful learning experiences for local performers and volunteers who get a chance to work closely with the resident professional company. In addition to its many stage productions, TBT has drama programs for area youth and develops traveling programs for schools throughout Northeast Michigan. While TBT is a professional theatre, it is run by members of a local volunteer Board of Directors who oversee the direction of the theatre and work diligently to find funding and ways to promote this valuable asset to the community.