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PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Published monthly by Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society, a non-profit organization
furthering the appreciation, preservation and use of the Theatre Pipe Organs of yesteryear

Vol. 14, No 3

March 2003

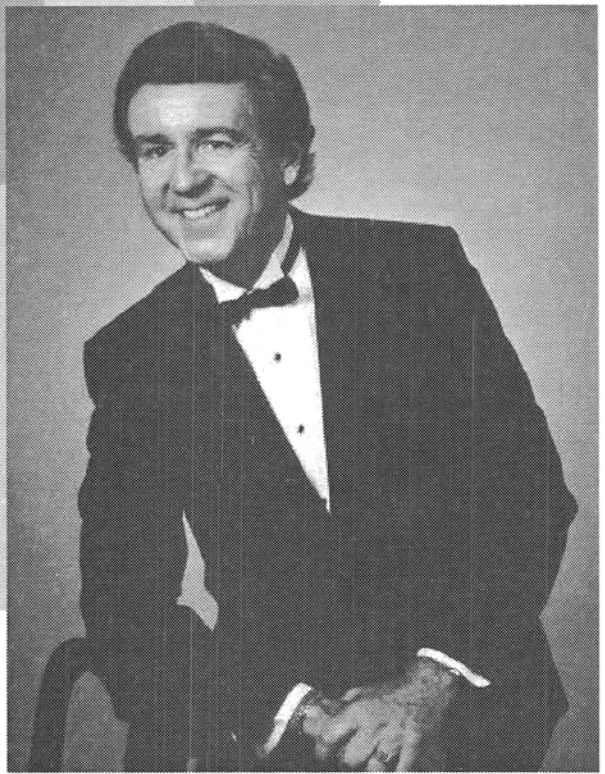
**It's coming fast!
If you don't have
tickets for yourself
and your friends,,
ORDER NOW!**

*The Lawrence Welk
Orchestra's*
BOB RALSTON
Presents

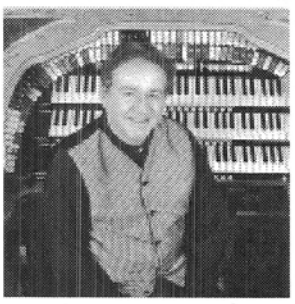
"Music and Memories"
On The Paramount's Mighty Wurlitzer

*BOB RALSTON, the Lawrence Welk Orchestra's pianist,
organist and arranger for 39 years, celebrates the 75th
anniversary of Seattle's Historic Paramount Theatre
with an afternoon of*
"Music and Memories."

*Bob will feature the thrilling sounds of the Paramount's
Mighty Wurlitzer Pipe Organ as it was enjoyed by theatre
patrons on opening day in 1928.*



Sunday, March 16 – 2:30 PM



Tickets \$15 • \$20 • \$25

Available through Ticketmaster (Ticketmaster adds a ticketing fee)
Or direct from the Paramount box office at 206-467-5510.

**For group ticketing, phone Angela, 206-315-8015.
Ten or more tickets on one transaction, 10% discount,
PLUS one FREE ticket with every 15 tickets purchased.**

Presented by Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society and Seattle Theatre Group

Sincere thanks to **Prosser Piano & Organ** for being an Official Sponsor of this event.



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Published monthly by

Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society
6521 N.E. 191st St.
Kenmore, WA 98028-3453

Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society is a non-profit organization furthering the appreciation, restoration, and use of the historic Theatre Pipe Organs of the 1920s, through education.

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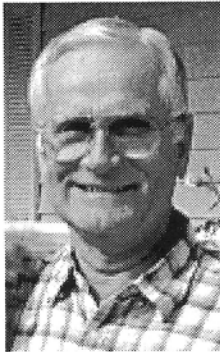
Listing of non-PSTOS events in the Pipeline

PSTOS, upon request, will list non-conflicting non-PSTOS theatre organ events in the "Other Events" column of the two Pipelines immediately preceding the event, providing Pipeline editors receive sufficient prior written notification. Venue, artist, type of event, date, and contact information will comprise the included information.

Advertising in the Pipeline

Classified-type ads for member-owned electronic, electric, or pipe organs, and/or pipe organ parts, will be published at no charge. Please limit copy to include brief description, contact name and phone number. Prices will not be listed. Ads may be edited for content and length. Mail ad copy to address above. Other advertising is not accepted.

President's Message



for the last four years which showed we are non-profit, for sure, but making ends meet. Long and short of it—no dues increase! This price stability is only possible because of the huge amount of volunteer time invested in the club.

Thanks to those who contribute so much.

Dennis James, the Paramount's house organist, asked us to make a presentation about the Bob Ralston program at the Silent Movie Mondays in January. Many thanks to the volunteers who did this and took care of the PSTOS lobby table. A number of good contacts were made as a result of their efforts. And thanks for the invitation, Dennis.

Speaking of the Paramount, due to the good efforts of Tom Blackwell, PSTOS has been asked to care for their Wurlitzer once again. The club restored the organ to playing condition in the 1960s and took care of it until the theater was remodeled in 1995. Several members have been working on the organ for the past week as this is written. So far they have repaired all the dead notes in two chambers and installed a playback device. The organ can now be played without an organist for the weekly public tours of the theater. The staff of the theater have asked to have it playing when they are working in the auditorium. Talk about "background" music!

Finally, the Bob Ralston program is here. Bob will use the newly installed playback system to accompany some of his piano solos. There may even be a community sing-a-long with words projected on the screen. Get a group of ten or more together, get your 10% discount, enjoy the show and stop for dinner on your way home. It will make a great afternoon!

DUES INCREASE?
What dues increase?
Your Board has discussed this off and on for the last several months. Last month our Treasurer, Norman Miller, gave us an analysis of income and outgo

PSTOS Coming Events

Bob Ralston at the Paramount Theatre

Biggest PSTOS event of 2003! In fact, it's the biggest since we hosted the National Convention in 1981. Don't miss it!
Order your tickets NOW!
Sunday, March 16, 2:30 PM

Home party!

Carl & Halie Dodrill home, Mercer Island. Lots of interesting instruments to see, hear and play!
Saturday, April 5th

Tentative major concert coming in May

News coming very soon on this one!

Home party!

Bill Keller home near Olympia. Enjoy hearing and playing Bill's spectacular Custom Allen Theatre Organ while you socialize with your PSTOS friends.
Saturday, June 21st

Summer Social & Concert

Jack & Mary Lou Becvar home in Kent. A concert on their 3-manual Wurlitzer. Artist to be announced.
Sunday, July 20

Home party!

Ray & Muriel Whelpley home, Bellevue. Another opportunity to hear and play a beautifully restored Wurlitzer!
Saturday, Aug. 9

AMICA Convention

(Automatic Musical Instrument Collectors' Association) This will be a fun time. Let's charter a bus or even a train car! Hear Jonas Nordwall at the Oaks Park Rink and many other wonderful programs.
August 20-24—Stay tuned for more details!

Big Autumn Event at Haller Lake Community Club

Possibly another Oktoberfest!
Sunday, October 19

Holiday Party at Haller Lake Sunday, Dec. 7

OTHER Events of Interest

**HOKUM HALL means
Good Times**

The Hokum Show

Celebrates vaudeville and flickers with chanteuse Lori Eger, original Mouseketeer Ginny (Tyler), Buster Keaton in COPS (1922) and more.
Fri., Sat., March 7-8, 8PM

Around A California Piano

Piano variety at its best with Leslie Harlib, Dr. Jim Purcell, Randy Craig and Doug Mckechnie
Fri.-Sat. March 21-22, 8PM

7904 35th Avenue SW
(206) 937-3613 www.hokumhall.org

Jelani Eddington at Salem's Elsinore Theatre

Jelani is an outstanding theatre organist. This is one not to miss. CROC event.
Sunday, April 6, 2PM

England's Simon Gledhill at Portland's Cleveland H.S.

Another outstanding theatre organist from England. Sponsored by Portland Chapter, ATOS.
Friday, May 2, 7:30 PM

LOST

A treasured Cross pen— Please help us return it.

Those who attended the Valentine's Day event are asked to check their pockets and purses for a silver Cross pen with a small emblem that is an OP.

The "OP" stands for "Outstanding Proposal," and the pen was an award presented to Norman Miller, PSTOS Treasurer. He has enjoyed and treasured the pen for many years and is very hopeful that it will be found and returned.

If you discover it tucked in a pocket purse, please phone or email any Board member (see page 2 for list) or Norman directly at **206-784-7154**, or colmiller@attbi.com

He will be eternally grateful!

Pipe Organ Terminology

PRESET PISTONS and the COMBINATION ACTION

Found on virtually all pipe organs, preset pistons are the dime-size round buttons appearing in rows beneath the keys of each manual (keyboard), and are switches for a wonderful under-the-hood stop control system called the Combination Action. Pushing a piston instantly sets up a new combination of voices or tabs pre-selected by the organist.



When an organist agrees to play a concert on a well equipped organ, the first request is for a list of voices (remember our discussion of "ranks"), percussions, and other resources. The organist will then plan the program based upon specifications of the organ—voices, percussions, sound effects, and preset pistons available on the instrument.

Once the program is selected, the organist will determine exactly what combinations of sounds will be best suited for the music planned, and set the Combination Action accordingly.

During the performance, rather than tediously hand-setting stop changes, the organist can, with just one push of a piston, completely reset the organ for a new section, or a new song.

Next time you attend a theatre pipe organ concert, notice how frequently tabs will flip up and down as though done by an invisible hand. Preset pistons in action!

HERE ARE ANSWERS TO MANY QUESTIONS about the RALSTON CONCERT...

Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society and Seattle Theatre Group celebrate the 75th anniversary of Seattle's Paramount Theatre with one performance only of *Bob Ralston presents "Music and Memories"* featuring the mighty Wurlitzer at Seattle's Paramount Theatre, 901 Pine St. on Sunday, March 16, 2003 at 2:30 in the afternoon. (Show will end about 5 PM).

TICKET PRICES

Tickets are \$20 for the First Mezzanine (front 8 rows of the balcony, 414 seats), \$25 for the Orchestra (front 7 rows of the center sections of the main floor, 190 seats) and \$15 for the other 2,203 seats.

HOW TO ORDER TICKETS

Tickets can be purchased from the Paramount box office in person or at 206-467-5510; through Ticketmaster (per ticket processing fee is charged in addition to ticket price); or from PSTOS by leaving a message with Clint Meadway (toll-free voice mail 877-843-0953).

GROUP DISCOUNTS

There are group discounts available as follows: 10% off for ten or more tickets paid with one check, credit card or cash transaction. In addition, there is one free ticket given with every 15 purchased on the group discount plan. Group tickets can only be purchased through the Paramount by contacting Angela at 206-315-8015.

The contract between PSTOS and the Paramount does not allow us to sell our tickets at a discount.

WHERE TO PARK

Parking is available at the Trade & Convention Center, 9th and Pike for \$6 for Paramount patrons. Keep your Theatre ticket stub and present it to the parking cashier for this special rate.

If you have additional questions, please leave a message with Clint Meadway toll-free at **1-877-843-0953**. He'll return your call.

Pages From The Past...

The following story appeared in *Puget Sound Journey*, and was written by Andrew Engelson. Photos by Alex Hayden. The article was shared by PSTOS Charter Member Bob Jones. Many thanks...

The Show Goes ON...

Restored theaters raise the curtain on a new generation of performances

THE EARLY STAGES

Washington's first theaters were nothing more than bawdy dance halls where piano playing, comedy, and burlesque were staged with one goal in mind: to sell large quantities of liquor. Seattle's Theatre Comique, which opened in 1876, served up both loud entertainment and strong whiskey. But Squire's Opera House, which opened in 1879 and is generally considered Seattle's first theater, offered more genteel amateur productions that included opera, plays, and magic shows.

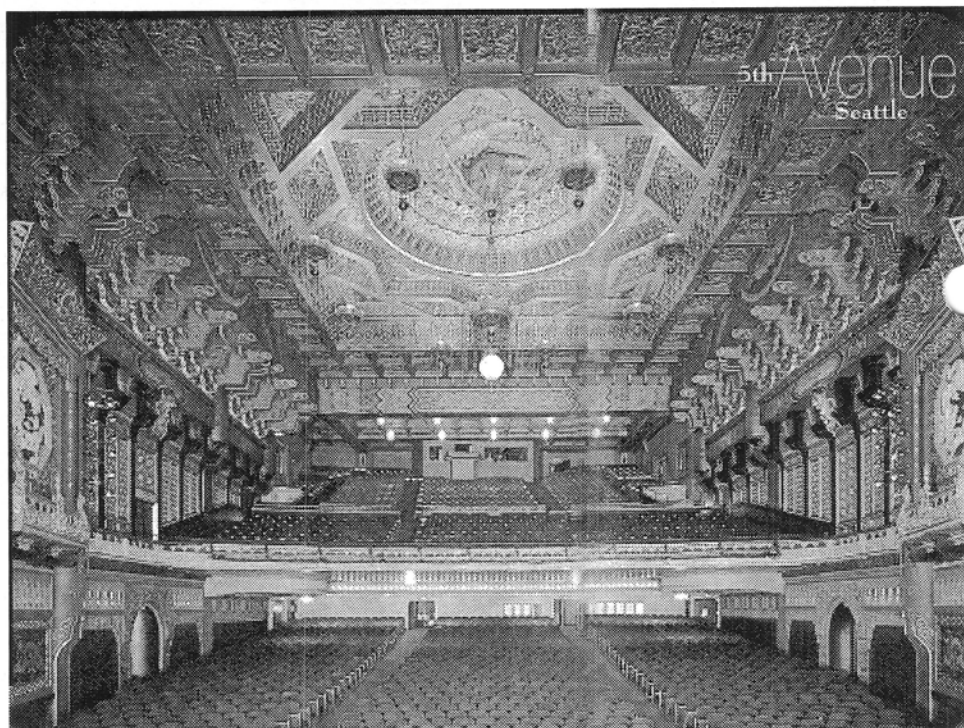
With the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1883, the situation changed rapidly. Touring productions of melodrama, opera, Shakespeare, farce, and musical comedies began appearing in abundance in the northwest. Three enterprising promoters—John Cort, John Considine, and Alexander Pantages—began building theaters throughout the state and promoting their brand of “respectable” alcohol-free halls. For 10 cents, a patron could get a balcony seat and watch vaudeville performances that might include magicians, jugglers, unicyclists, or even a dancing bear.

The Klondike Gold Rush brought new prosperity and even more theater-building. By 1914, Seattle had scores of theaters, and Spokane, Tacoma, Bellingham, Yakima, and Walla Walla were all stops on the vaudeville circuit. As travel to the Northwest became easier, the region hosted many of the nation's prominent performers, including Sarah Bernhardt, W.C. Fields, and a young comedian named Charlie Chaplin, who performed in Seattle in 1912 as part of an English comedy troupe.

In 1894, a new form of entertainment made its debut in the state. A short Edison kinoscope was screened at Seattle's Pioneer Square, and the Northwest's motion picture era was under way. The state's first movie house opened in Seattle in 1902, and within a few years nearly all the region's vaudeville theaters had added silent movies to their performances. As movies captured the regions' imagination, live theater began to decline. By the 1950s, movies and TV were booming at the expense of theater. And cinemas were quickly popping up in the suburbs—while the Northwest's grand theaters sat empty.

BRINGING BACK THE PAST

Staged plays and musicals began a slow resurgence in the 1960s and '70s, and with it came a need for performance spaces. Washington's old vaudeville theaters and silent movie palaces seemed to fit the bill. Unfortunately, most of the region's grand old halls were in disrepair and many awaited the wrecking ball. But starting in the late 1970s and continuing into the '90s, a grassroots movement of theater lovers and businesspeople stepped forward to rescue the doomed buildings.



One of the first theaters in the region to undergo a major restoration was the 5th Avenue. Built in 1926, it sat vacant by 1978. Its pipe organ had been sold to a pizza parlor and there was talk of razing the theater to build a Chinese restaurant or a mall. Instead, the 5th Avenue Theatre Association was formed to save the aging structure, and in 1979 the theater underwent a \$2.6 million rehab that returned its gilded interior to its former glory.

The 5th Avenue is the brainchild of architect Robert C. Reamer, who also designed the Mount Baker Theatre. In Bellingham he chose a Moorish Spain motif, but for his Seattle masterpiece he was inspired by ancient China. He wanted audiences to feel as if they'd stepped into a jeweled Chinese palace. The tasseled chandeliers, red-lacquer pillars,

Pages From The Past... continued

licate golden relief carvings, and the giant coiled dragon have all been restored to their original splendor. In fact, the ceiling dome is an exact replica of the dome in the throne room of Beijing's Forbidden City—except that in Seattle, it's twice the size of the original.

In Bellingham, a community organization known simply as "A Concerned Group of Citizens" rallied to restore the Mount Baker in 1995. Spanish-style thrones and couches in the lobby now invite theatergoers to sit a spell. Inside the cavernous auditorium, the repainted ceiling looks like the arched wood timbers inside a galleon. There are also hundreds of gilded figures: "Each face is individual," Burdick says. "Nobody knows who they represent—probably family and friends of the artisans who carved them." During Mount Baker's recent 75th anniversary celebration, the theater's original pipe organ literally rose to the occasion as hydraulic supports lifted it from below the stage while 3,000 pipes blasted sound ranging from a clarinet to a car horn.



Across the state, at the Met in Spokane, fly wires and an electronic Tinkerbell are evidence of a just-finished community production of *Peter Pan*. Local acts make up about half of the performances here. "Before we opened, the local opera company had to hold performances in a restaurant," says manager Michael Smith.

After a \$1.5 million restoration in 1988, the Met now boasts a domed lobby, a refurbished stage, and restored murals in its auditorium. Above the stage, a huge proscenium arch fans out in a pattern of interlocked hexagons; at one time the hexagons served as speaker ports for the 3,000-pipe organ that accompanied silent movies.

You don't have to look far to find a historic theater. A number of Washington's cities are home to at least one grand cinema or vaudeville hall, many of which have been revamped. Here's a sampling:

Longview's *Columbia Theatre for the Performing Arts* was saved by a volcano. It was scheduled to be torn down in 1980, but the eruption of Mount St. Helens halted demolition work. Citizens came together to save the 1925 vaudeville theater, and it reopened in 1983 as a community performing arts center.

The Palace of Versailles was the model for Tacoma's opulent *Pantages Theater*, completed in 1918. The 1,186-seat theater was transformed into a venue for music, dance, and drama in 1983, while its sister, the smaller 742-seat *Rialto Theater*, was refurbished in 1991.

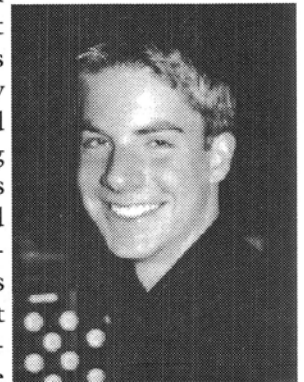
The *Everett Theatre*, a grand opera house built in 1901, was leveled by fire in 1923. One year later it rose from the ashes as a vaudeville and cinema house. The downtown landmark is operating as a nonprofit community theater.

Fire gutted Yakima's *Capitol Theatre* in 1975. Relying on archival drawings and photographs, the 1920-built Capitol was painstakingly reconstructed and reopened in 1978 as a home for symphony, drama, and dance.

In addition to *The Met*, Spokane's other grand old theater is the art deco *Fox Theater*, which was constructed in 1931 for the then princely sum of \$1 million. This opulent building was purchased by the Spokane Symphony in 2000 and is scheduled to reopen in 2004 as the symphony's new concert hall and regional performing arts center.

Daniel Goltz awarded PSTOS Scholarship for Organ Study

Daniel began organ study in Moses Lake at age ten, but became dissatisfied with his progress. His parents felt a new teacher was needed, and arranged for an audition with Dr. Kraig Scott in Walla Walla. (Dr. Scott was Owen Cannon's instructor, and recommended Daniel as a scholarship candidate.) Daniel says his lessons with Dr. Scott are the most inspiring thing he has ever experienced, and playing on the College Church organ is amazing. "Dr. Scott inspires me to want to excel, and it is a joy to work for him."



The family recently moved to Walla Walla to enable Daniel's continued study. His father, a rheumatoid arthritis victim for 10 years, has high medical bills and without expensive drugs, could not work. Daniel helps with school expenses as a paid accompanist for the school choirs.

The PSTOS Board is pleased that we will be able to help yet another very promising young organist to afford top-notch training. We look forward to meeting Daniel in person at an upcoming event, possibly at Gig Harbor.

Drive directions to the Dodrill home—

From Seattle— Go east on I-90 over the floating bridge in the regular (not Express) lanes to Mercer Island. Take first exit (#6--West Mercer Way). Turn right (south) at the end of the off ramp. Proceed south on West Mercer Way 2.6 miles and you will see our house on the left at 4488 West Mercer Way. You can park on the left side of the street on the long parking strip and come up the stairs. Or, if steps are difficult, go south past our house but immediately turn left up a paved drive, then left again and pull up to the concrete wall. Our garage is directly ahead, and you may walk around the right (east) end and up to our front door.

Directions from the Bellevue side— Proceed west on I-90 to Mercer Island. Get off on exit #7 (Island Crest Way). Turn left on Island Crest Way and proceed south 1.5 miles without making any turns. Turn right on Merrimount Drive when Island Crest Way curves up and to the left. We are at the end of the fourth driveway on the left (look for the sign), and you can park on the lane or in our driveway.

PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Russ & Jo Ann Evans, Newsletter Editors
6521 N.E. 191st
Kenmore, WA 98028-3453



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Coming in April... Another enjoyable

HOME PARTY

Saturday, April 5, 2-5PM

Home of Dr. Carl & Halie Dodrill

4488 W. Mercer Way • Mercer Island

Reservations
not required.

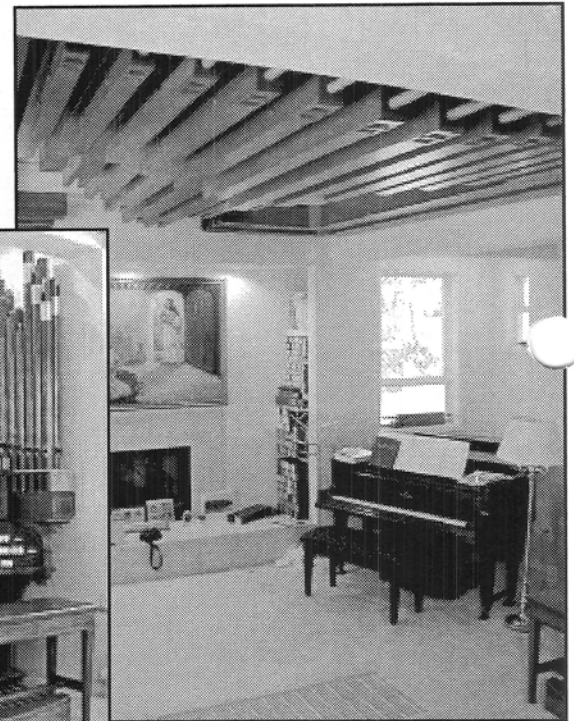
There's no charge, but please bring a small plate of finger food to share. Beverages furnished.

At these events members may play the organ, listen, socialize, nibble, and have fun together. There will be no featured artist. For those who wish to play, the organ is easy to register and quite straightforward to play. So practice up and give it a try.

There's a most interesting collection of pumper organs and pianos, and lots of rolls at the Dodrill home. If you don't play in the usual manner, you can certainly play here!

You may also visit the Pipe Organ Foundation workroom over their garage, and view a Wicks organ restoration presently under way.

RIGHT: The Dodrill's Aeolian Player pipe organ.



ABOVE: Notice the wood pipes installed on the ceiling of the listening area .

Valentine's Day Party another huge success!

Nearly 130 folks enjoyed a fun Valentine Party at Haller Lake. DON WALLIN did an outstanding job of accompanying several silent comedies, not to mention the beautiful background music he provided throughout the afternoon. Thanks, Don!

ELLEN SULLIVAN and son JAMES once again decorated the hall beautifully, changing it from "plain-jane" to beautiful. BARBARA GRAHAM, MARILYN

SCHRUM, LORETTA MOORE and BETTY CHANG turned food service into a smooth operation. Barbara and Marilyn planned all the food, not a small task. BOB ZAT and RUSS EVANS arrived very early Sunday morning to set up all the tables, and organize the technical equipment to show the movies and video, and "unwrapped" the organ console, normally hidden within its box in the corner.

HENRY CANNON spent several weeks editing and re-editing the many hours of videos he took at the National ATOS Convention in San Diego last

November, to produce a 30-minute overview of that great event. Wonderful show, Henry!

One highlight of the day was the special award given to Barbara Graham in appreciation of her three years as President. The Board arranged with Bill Keller and his "Creative Images Embroidery" company to produce a very special sports jacket embroidered with an impressive theatre organ console on the back, and specially personalized on the front. It was a complete surprise! Thanks, Barbara, for your dedicated work the past three years.