



Visit our web site at www.pstos.org

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. PSTOS is a Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society.

Volume 21 No. 5

MAY 2010

A Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society

**RESERVE
TODAY!**

Direct from Walt Disney's ★ ★ ★
El Capitan Theatre in Hollywood



JOHN LEDWON

 ★ ★ ★

John Ledwon, a native Californian, has been playing the organ since he was twelve years old. His parents purchased him a three-manual Wurlitzer when he was fifteen and this sparked a life-long interest in the theatre pipe organ. John has toured the United States, Australia, and Europe on several occasions as a concert artist. In the past several years he has released eight recordings from his personally designed 4-manual 52-rank Wurlitzer theatre organ formerly installed in his Agoura, California home. John has since donated his home instrument to the Nethercutt Collection and moved to Henderson, Nevada, a southern suburb of Las Vegas. His latest recording, "MAGIC! The Music of the Mouse," includes many of the Disney selections that John uses in his position as staff organist at Disney's EL Capitan Theatre in Hollywood, California. John is currently celebrating 10 years on the staff at the El Capitan where he plays the former San Francisco Fox 4/37 Wurlitzer. While he performs music from all periods, he favors music that has been composed in the past 30 years. Plan now to attend this fun event, a tribute to the late Fr. Terrence Wager.

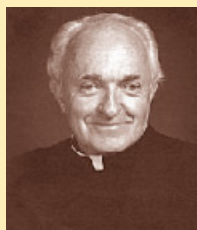
John will thrill you with a program of great pop music on the terrific 3/16 Robert Morton pipe organ. Refreshments will follow. Plan to stay and chat with John about his interesting experiences at the El Capitan.

Saturday, May 22, 1:30PM
St. Columban Social Hall • Yelm, WA

ADMISSION – \$20

Age 16 and under free with adult.

Reserve by Monday, May 17
with Ray Harris at **206-546-8959**
or by email at rayh@prosserpiano.com



This is a benefit event...

This concert is dedicated to the memory of Fr. Terrence Wager, whose love of the theatre pipe organ led to his installation of the 3/16 Robert Morton in the social hall of Yelm's St. Columban Church. He passed away February 22 following a long battle with cancer.

PSTOS members have enjoyed numerous events at St. Columban over the past many years. Proceeds from this benefit event will go to a fund dedicated to continued maintenance and upkeep of the organ.



Driving directions are on page 6.

PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Vol. 21, No. 5—May 2010
Published monthly by
Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society
6521 NE 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.

OFFICERS

President—Jamie Snell, 206-525-4521
Past Pres.—Dave Luttinen, 206-963-3283
Vice President—Tom Roughton, 253-946-4400
Secretary—Joani Roughton, 253-946-4400
Acting Treasurer—Clint Meadway, 360-805-9794

BOARD MEMBERS

Tom Blackwell, 206-784-9203 • Phil Hargiss, 206-524-8799
Jon Beveridge, 425-337-6840 • Don Wallin, 253-318-2724

COMMITTEES

Development & Grant Writing—Barbara Graham
History & Archives—Tom Blackwell
Organ Restoration & Maintenance—Bob Zat
Program Coordinating—Ray Harris & Barbara Graham
Promotions & Media Relations—Dave Luttinen
Scholarship—Carl Dodrill & Norman Miller
Volunteer Coordination—Tom Blackwell
New member processing—Doug Owen, 253-566-6734
Haller Lake keys—Bob Zat
Sunshine—Joani Roughton, 253-946-4400
Hospitality HLCC—Ellen Sullivan, 206-365-7554

NEWSLETTER & WEBSITE

Pipeline Editors—Russ & Jo Ann Evans, 425-485-5465
Pipeline Online Website—Tom Blackwell, 206-784-9203
Nat'l Magazine Reporter—Jo Ann Evans

LIAISONS

AMICA & POF—Carl Dodrill • Haller Lake Comm. Club—Bob Zat
Paramount Theatre—Tom Blackwell • Wash. Center—Andy Crow

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.

Joining Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society is quick and easy! For a one year membership, send a \$20 check payable to PSTOS together with your name(s) as you would like them to appear on your name badges, your address with complete 9-digit ZIP code, and your email address (optional) to:

Clint Meadway Acting Treasurer, PSTOS,
9594 1st Ave. NE #453,
Seattle WA 98115-2012

PRESIDENT'S Message

Picture This...

Picture this...the Paramount Theatre with an audience of Seattle school children, including many who are taking music lessons, along with some teachers and a few parents. At stage right is the Wurlitzer console, and at center a gigantic wide projection screen. Projected on the right half you see a close-up of the console with a clear view of the manuals and pedals; on the left half you see – what are those things, pipes? The house lights dim, the M.C. appears under a spotlight, welcomes you, and introduces the artist, who takes a bow, settles into the console, and plays an upbeat number. Pretty normal so far. But then rather than continuing with a concert, the artist introduces someone else, a scruffy-looking guy wearing a hands-free mini-camera, so that whichever way he turns, what he sees appears on the left half of the projection screen...even you, out in the audience!

After a brief explanation the fun starts. Camera Guy is established as the "straight man" and heads backstage. On the screen you see what he sees...he's coming to a ladder, now he's climbing the ladder, and the next thing we see is a mass of pipes. A conversation begins between the artist and Camera Guy...

Organist: Why don't we start with the Vox Humana, that's a fun stop. [presses the stop tab and plays a few notes and chords, everything visible on the right half of the screen]

Camera Guy: What does that mean, anyway, "Vox Humana"?

Organist: Well, it's Latin for "human voice." See if you think it sounds like a person singing.

Camera Guy: OK, I'm heading to the Vox Humana rank now. [screen shows assorted pipes and finally settles on one group]. Here we are...

Organist: All right, I'm playing middle-C on the Vox Humana. [screen shows Camera Guy's arm reaching out and removing a pipe, and the sound stops] Hey, what did you do!?

Camera Guy: Ha ha, I just pulled out middle-C! [he puts the pipe back and the sound resumes; then he detunes it]

Organist: Whoa! What did you do now!?

Camera Guy: Just thought I'd do some fine tuning... [corrects the pitch] ...there. Hey, what if I switch two pipes? [he swaps C and C# pipes] Try playing something now...

Organist: [plays Mary Had a Little Lamb, with C# replacing C] That's an interesting scale! [Camera Guy puts C and C# where they belong, artist plays same tune] Oh, that's better.

Camera Guy: Hey, play that an octave



PSTOS Coming Events

◆ Wichita's BRETT VALLIANT at Calvary Christian Church

Second annual CCA Concert and Outdoor Cinema Event with Brett Valiant at the Wurlitzer-Kimball theatre pipe organ. Then at dusk, the movie, "Singin' in the Rain," will be shown in the CCA parking lot. Movie is free! Concert proceeds will benefit the CCA organ maintenance fund.

Saturday evening, Aug. 21

higher... [artist plays] ...where do I find those pipes?

Organist: Just go twelve pipes toward the smaller end.

Camera Guy: [camera moves there, Camera Guy removes C, D, and E, music stops one pitch at a time] Ha ha!

Organist: Hey, quit doing that! [Camera Guy puts them back and music resumes]

There follows a discussion and demonstration of the Vox Humana, which leads naturally into the topic of tremulants, with the artist demonstrating and Camera Guy showing a trem box, making adjustments that change the effect, etc. Then the artist demonstrates the Marimba stop while Camera Guy gets a well-placed shot of the mallets as they hit the bars. Next it's the Viol d'Orchestra and other strings, then some reeds with close-ups of the lowest notes where the vibrating tongue is visible. Then a few flue ranks including the Tibia, again visiting the largest pipes (played on the pedals, of course), then another tuned percussion stop, and then on to the Toy Counter, with plenty of action for the camera...then a tour of the blower, regulators, a demonstration of the swell shades, and finally playing on different manuals and what the pistons do...in short, a basic tour of the organ's mechanism and the console. The program ends with the artist playing another piece showing off the variety of sounds. Finally, Camera Guy and the artist take bows, and the audience is invited to visit the PSTOS website and find out about venues in the region, upcoming concerts, and the scholarship fund.

Now, put yourself in the mindset of a grade-schooler and imagine what you might think and feel about this little demonstration. I wouldn't expect many of the kids to be especially excited. But some might be interested enough to visit the website and tell their parents about the visit. And just possibly a few might be awestruck by the sheer magic of it all – enough to ask their parents about joining the chapter and even learning to play. This is what we need: a few members of the younger generation to keep theatre organs and their music alive.

Is this picture only a fantasy, or do you think it could become reality? I'd like to hear your thoughts...email me at jamie@pstos.org.

2010 Convention Countdown



By the time you read this, there will be just

59 days

 until the Convention!

Special Convention Pricing for PSTOS Members!

ATOS has approved a special extension of the Super Early Bird prices for Convention registration for PSTOS members only! This means that you can still get the special \$295 price for the convention (that's \$70 less than the standard pricing in effect May 1).

A special "no-bus/no-meal" package at \$195 is also available for PSTOS members who would like to drive themselves.

If you would like to register for one of these special packages, send an email to convention@pstos.org for instructions for online or mail-in ordering.

Convention Volunteer Helpers Needed! Earn Complimentary Tickets! Get Reserved Seating!

*BUS CAPTAINS - 8 to 10 needed each day Sign up for all days or any days!

What you'll do – Work with the convention transportation coordinator, Dave Luttinen, to load and unload buses. Ride the bus, wear identifying convention hat or shirt, assist with disabled boarding, assist bus driver with directions, distribute snacks, read prepared historical/geographical interest comments from script (prepared by Tom & Joani Roughton, our expert National Park Service Amtrak Guides). Cell phone required.

Your reward! – Your event admission with reserved seating is included for the journey(s) you work, *along with your transportation to/from the headquarters hotel.*

BUS JOURNEYS NEEDING BUS CAPTAINS –

- **Monday, June 28, to Spokane and Wenatchee**
Early morning departure, evening return
Dave Wickerham, Spokane, Mark Andersen, Wenatchee
- **Wed. June 30, to Everett and Bellingham**
Afternoon and evening
Nathan Avakian – Everett, Lew Williams – Bellingham
- **Thurs. July 1, to Portland**
Early morning departure, evening return
Oaks Park Rink demo, Donna Parker, Jonas Nordwall

- **Fri, July 2, to Yelm, then Olympia**
Afternoon and evening
Chris Gorsuch, Yelm, Simon Gledhill, Olympia
Second itinerary to Olympia, only
Evening
Simon Gledhill – Olympia
- **Saturday, July 3, Seattle and Kenmore**
Morning and afternoon
Scott Foppiano, Calvary Church, Jelani Eddington, Bastyr
- **Sunday, July 4, Gig Harbor and Maple Valley**
Richard Hills, Gig Harbor, Walt Strongy, Maple Valley

*HELP WITH ARTIST TRANSPORTATION

What you'll do – Help transport artists from the headquarters hotel to the venues for their rehearsal and performance. You'll need to have a car in good/reliable shape with functioning air conditioning, and a cell phone. Mileage is reimbursed.

Your reward – Complimentary admission to the event(s), with reserved seating, commensurate with your time.

Contact Tom Blackwell at tom@pstos.org or by phone at (206) 778-2724. Don't delay!

Other NW Theatre Organ Events

◆ Kenyon Hall in West Seattle

Latest news can be found on the web at www.kenyonhall.org or by email at kenyonhall@earthlink.net

◆ Lincoln Theatre in Mt. Vernon

Hear the Wurlitzer every Mon/Tue at 7PM & Fri/Sat/Sun at 5PM.

◆ Columbia River Theatre Organ Society

For info and latest news go to www.croonline.org

◆ Bellingham's Mt Baker Theatre

Back by popular request, Mt. Baker Theatre Organ Society again presents ATOS 2009 Young Organist Competition winner NATHAN AVAKIAN in concert. A great Sunday activity! \$10 suggested donation.

Sunday, April 11th, 2:00 pm.

◆ Spokane's First Nazarene Theatre Organ Society

Next meeting is Thursday, June, 7PM, and features the historic and newly refurbished 1914 Seattle Liberty Theatre Wurlitzer. For up-to-the-minute news and events calendar, go to www.sfnatos.org

Pages From The Past..1938, 1920

This chatty article about Sandy Balcom's latest organ job appeared in *The Seattle Daily Times* April 12, 1938

The Seattle Daily Times

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 1938.

Strolling Around the Town

C.M. Balcom is back home at 114 E. 51st St., and glad to be there. He and his partner, E.L. Vaughan, are organ builders and installers, which calls for one or the other being "on the road" about 50 percent of the

time; Balcom installing organs in Washington, Oregon and California; Vaughan in Idaho and Montana, generally.

They used to have quite a business in Alaska and Canada, but the organ business up north isn't what it used to be.

The job just completed by Balcom was installing a \$22,000 organ in a new broadcasting studio in Hollywood, and it was some

chore, taking three weeks of preparation and five weeks of actual installing. Balcom and his partner were quite elated at having won the job. "Big shots bid for it, but Balcom says he was glad it was landed by "just a little bunch of peanuts 'way up here."

Most of the organ installing done these days by the firm is in churches, chapels, schools and private homes. About twelve or fifteen jobs a year is good business. And they have to travel a lot. Home now with his wife and 17-year-old son, Robert, Balcom will have to be off to California again at the end of the month, just to see that his newest job is "okay" when the studio opening is held.



The Hollywood KNX console in "Art Moderne" style, after remodeling for electric tablets.

Pages From The Past...continued

And from a Portland newspaper on July 18, 1920, comes this humorous story about organists, musicians' unions and strikes!

TODAY' FILM FEATURES

- **Columbia** — William S. Hart, "Sand!"
- **Majestic** — Miriam Cooper, "The Deep Purple."
- **Rivoli** — Corinne Griffith, "The Garter Girl."
- **Liberty** — Katherine McDonald, "Playthings of Passion."
- **Peoples** — Emma Dunn, "Old Lady 31."
- **Star** — Tom Mix, "Desert Love."
- **Circle** — William S. Hart, "The Toll Gate."

TODAY'S MUSICAL FEATURES

- **Liberty** — Organ concert at 12:30 o'clock noon, by Henri Keates.
- **Rivoli** — Orchestra concert at 12:30 o'clock noon, under direction of Mischa Guterson
- **Majestic** — Organ concert at 1:30 PM by Cecil Teague.

AMERICAN PLAN of open shop is now actually in effect in Portland.

Victory for exhibitors [movie house operators] was spelled when pickets were recalled from in front of the Liberty, Columbia, Majestic, Peoples and Star theatres on Thursday evening as the result of a temporary injunction gotten out by Jensen & Von Herberg. The petition for the injunction contended picketing is illegal when it was not a case of employee against his employer, as in the case of a sympathetic strike. The suit was based on the fact that only 25 per cent of the stock is owned by the firm of Jensen & Von Herberg.

When organists of the Jensen & Von Herberg houses defied the local theatrical association of Portland and vicinity by returning, some of them on the very day on which the strike was supposed to have commenced, the tide turned in favor of the exhibitors. Love Davis, less than 20 years of age and now playing first relief at the Liberty, was the one who first broke the ice and returned to work. By Monday all the regular places were filled. When the injunction was put into effect Thursday

each house had its usual quota of operators, electricians, stage hands and other employees. In addition a list of 25 applicants for positions as operators was on file.

Orders for a three manual Wurlitzer organ to cost \$25,000 or more and to be installed in the Columbia Theatre within the next 60 days was also another effect of the injunction. The policy of installing expensive orchestral organs in their houses and of employing the finest musicians obtainable was inaugurated by the firm of Jensen & Von Herberg and is a strictly western cinema characteristic. When the unions forced orchestras of stipulated sizes in the larger houses it made it impossible for money also to be invested in instruments as expensive as a huge organ. Six months' experience of operating orchestras has not proved successful for the reason that managers declare enough really trained and skilled artists cannot be found at this time in the northwest.

Therefore the orders for a new organ at the Columbia and for remodeling the Peoples organ have been given and search has already commenced for men who will command high salaries but who will be able to furnish real music.

The Columbia organ will be three manuals, as the size of the house will not allow a "giant" four-manual instrument, such as that of the Liberty. It will resemble in many ways the Majestic orchestral organ, which is also as large as can possibly be installed in a house of that size.

SOME HUMOROUS HAPPENINGS

Interesting side lights of the strike were brought out during the picketing. Mrs. Bruce, wife of the Peoples manager, crossed the street as if to enter the theatre, then apparently for the first time noticed the union girl and her huge banner.

"Why are you picketing this theatre?" asked Mrs. Bruce.

"Well, it's—there's a strike," was the uncertain answer.

"What's the strike about?" queried Mrs. Bruce.

"I don't know," the girl replied. "All I know is that I am making some extra money." Further questioning brought out the fact that the girl was in the employ of a local laundry in which she worked eight hours. To eke out her pay she was putting in from four to six hours in addition to her regular day's work, earning more money

but putting in days of from 12 to 14 hours.

Several of the employees called out did not know why their own unions were acting against the theatre. Members of the Peoples and Columbia orchestras volunteered to come back, but were told that the unions had put the orchestras in against the firm's will, had ordered them out in defiance of the theatre owners, and now the unions could put them in again. So far the unions have failed to do this.

The strike had its funny features. A.C. Raleigh, manager of the Columbia theatre, furnished amusement to several newsboys late one night while he pasted up his huge posters in the lobby. When he had finished, so he alleges, there was enough paste in that vicinity to have attached posters on any of the surrounding buildings.

A NEW ORGANIST APPLIES

During the early hours of the Saturday morning when the strike was called, no musician had appeared for the Columbia Theatre. Mr. Raleigh began to be worried and about 15 minutes before the house was scheduled he went down to the organ and tried out his own skill. Just at that moment a negro opened the door.

"I see your ad for musicians," he volunteered. He was received with open arms and before he knew just what had happened he was sitting at the console.

"Ah don' know nothing about organs—ah plays the piano," he objected as Mr. Raleigh proceeded to explain intricate stops, pedals and keys. "Ah don' know that ah wants this job."

"You've already got this job," was the answer as Mr. Raleigh literally forced him back onto the bench and again began explaining the mechanism of the organ.

At 11 o'clock the Columbia doors were opened and simultaneously the programme flashed on the screen accompanied by organ music. At 3 o'clock that afternoon an experienced organist appeared at the Columbia ready for duty. "Say, don' you folks have a reg'lar musician?" demanded the first substitute.

"Why, yes, ordinarily, but the boys went out on a little strike today" Mr. Raleigh explained.

"Strike! Ma goodness, why didn't you say so?" and shaking his wooly head the man dived into his pocket and brought out his union card.

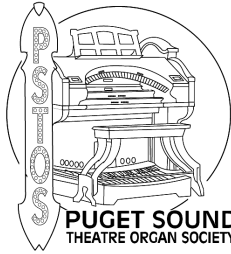


**Donate Your
No-Longer-Used
Organ-Related Items
to the Convention
Record Shop!**

PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Russ & Jo Ann Evans, Newsletter Editors
6521 NE 191st ST
Kenmore, WA 98028-3453

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Bothell, WA
Permit #287



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

CDs

**Cassette Tapes
Organ Sheet Music**

LPS 78s

**Organ Memorabilia
T.V. Magazines**

All proceeds will benefit PSTOS organ restoration!

Do you have surplus organ-related items suitable for sale at the Convention Record Shop? If so, please consider donating them to benefit PSTOS. Items such as LP or 78 records, cassette tapes, CDs, organ sheet music, surplus THEATRE ORGAN magazines, Theatre Historical Society MARQUEE magazines, miscellaneous theatre organ memorabilia, small theatre pipe organ parts (nothing larger than what could be packed in luggage or carried on an airplane). You'd be surprised what convention attendees are interested in buying! So please consider donating your surplus theatre organ items.

Contact Convention Record Shop Manager, Joani Roughton at 253-946-4400, or by email at joani@pstos.org

**Drive directions to
St. Columban Church and Social Hall**

I-5 SOUTHBOUND:

- Take exit #111/MARVIN RD/YELM - go 0.3 mi
- Turn Left on MARVIN RD, follow signs to Yelm
- Continue to round-about, turn left and follow WA-510 - go 11.4 mi
- Turn right on 1st St. S, drive 2 blocks. Church and parking lot on the left.

I-5 NORTHBOUND:

- Take exit #88A/TENINO - go 0.2 mi
- Turn Right on OLD HWY 99 - go 7.4 mi
- Continue on 6TH AVE W - go 0.2 mi
- Continue on WA-507 - go 0.5 mi
- Turn Right on SUSSEX AVE W (WA-507) - go 0.2 mi
- Bear Left on WA-507 - go 14. mi Church and parking lot on the right.

