



On the web at [www.pstos.org](http://www.pstos.org) • Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/pstos](http://www.facebook.com/pstos)

# 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 23 No. 10

October, 2012

A Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society

*Save the date!*



## Holidays at Haller

### MIKE BRYANT at the Wurlitzer



MIKE BRYANT has been a performing organist for over 50 years. A product of the San Francisco Bay Area, he had the opportunity to hear some of the premier theatre organs when they still existed in their original homes – the San Francisco Fox, Oakland Paramount, Oakland Fox, and the San Francisco Orpheum – along with some of the organ world's greatest names: Ann Leaf, Tom Hazleton, Larry Vannucci, George Wright, Gus Farney, and more. This exposure kindled his interest in adding theatre stylings to his classical repertoire, and as a teenager he became a student and friend of the late Tom Hazleton.

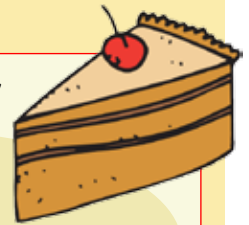
During the early pizza-and-pipes years he played at the original Capn's Galley in Santa Clara, California.

Moving to Nevada in the late 1960s, Mike worked for a Baldwin / Conn dealer, and often performed for home organ clubs in the area.

He lived in Seattle in the '90s and was involved with the installation of the 3/16 Kimball at the Historic Everett Theatre. Moving to Colorado in 2002, he again began performing on theatre organs, which he continues to this day.

Although now semi-retired and living in Vancouver, WA, he plays the occasional program and silent film, works on pipe organ restorations, repairs, installations of Uniflex Relay Systems, and integrations of pipes with sampled voices. He is also co-Editor of *Theatre Organ*, the Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society.

*Holiday refreshments!*



**Cheesecake,  
Punch, Coffee, Tea**

**Sunday, December 2, 2:00 PM**

Haller Lake Community Club  
12579 Densmore Ave. N., Seattle

**16 and under free**

**Members \$5 • Guests \$10**

Admission covers artist, food, and venue costs

**16 and under free**

***Drive directions and  
reservation instructions will be  
published in the November Pipeline.***

***Watch for them!***

A brief business meeting and election of 2012 officers will precede the festivities.

## PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Vol. 23, No. 10 – October 2012  
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—Jon Beveridge, jon@pstos.org  
Past Pres.—Bob Zat, bob@pstos.org  
Vice President—Russ Evans, russ@pstos.org  
Secretary—Joani Roughton, joani@pstos.org  
Treasurer—Clint Meadway, clint@pstos.org

### DIRECTORS

Micah Bisson, micah@pstos.org • Bob Buchholz, bobb@pstos.org  
Jeff Snyder, jeff@pstos.org • Alain Rhone, alain@pstos.org

### COMMITTEES

**Organ Restoration & Maintenance**—Bob Zat  
**Program Coordinating**

Jo Ann Evans, joann@pstos.org • Barb Graham, barbara@pstos.org  
Ray Harris, ray@pstos.org • Jamie Snell, jamie@pstos.org  
Bob Zat, bob@pstos.org • Geri Cooper, geri@pstos.org

**Scholarships**—Carl Dodrill, carl@pstos.org

**Paramount Theatre 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, tom@pstos.org

### LIAISONS

**AMICA & POF**—Carl Dodrill

**Haller Lake Community Club**—Bob Zat

**Paramount Theatre**—Tom Blackwell

**Washington Center**—Andy Crow

**Calvary Christian Assembly**—Jeff Snyder

**AGO**—David Locke

### 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:

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

## PRESIDENT'S Message

It has been a busy summer for PSTOS. The June *Pizza and Pipes Experience* with Sharon Stearnes was a real success with 184 people attending.

In July there were a number of events including the Nathan Avakian concert at Merlyn Johnson's home and the *Jim Riggs Rocks the Paramount* benefit concert. Thank you to all of you who gave generous donations to the Paramount Wurlitzer restoration fund. The organ, ably maintained by Tom Blackwell and his team, worked well for Jim Riggs and the silent movies at the Paramount.

August concluded with the open console event at the Paramount, the first such event for a number of years.

Everyone had a good time at the Jonas Nordwall workshop and concert on Bill Keller's 5/60 Allen organ in Olympia September 15th.

Our long time secretary, Joani Roughton has resigned from the board. Joani and her late husband Tom were part of the group of early planners of the 2010 ATOS convention hosted by PSTOS. Joani continued with management of the convention record shop even under the most difficult circumstance and did a wonderful job. We all owe Joani our gratitude for a job well done and wish that she has many fun activities ahead.

The board has received notice from Treasurer Clint Meadway that he will be leaving the area and moving to Georgetown, Texas. Clint has supported PSTOS in many capacities over the years including President and Past President. We will miss Clint's knowledge of things organ and his willingness to do things PSTOS.

Carl Dodrill and the scholarship team have been providing PSTOS support to Jesse Zylstra, a student from Waterville, WA to obtain music lessons to support his growing interest in Theatre organ. Jesse is now attending the University of Idaho majoring in music. That younger people are becoming interested in theatre organ is an encouraging sign.

The next event will be the Christmas concert featuring Mike Bryant at the Wurlitzer. The PSTOS annual meeting will take place immediately prior to the concert. I hope to see you there.

Jon Beveridge, President



## PSTOS Coming Events

### ► Annual PSTOS HOLIDAY PARTY with Portland's MIKE BRYANT at Haller Lake

Our annual holiday extravaganza!  
*Music! Food! Fun! A great time for all.*  
**Sunday, December 2, 2012**

## Other NW Theatre Organ Events

**Kenyon Hall in West Seattle**  
www.kenyonhall.org or email  
kenyonhall@earthlink.net

**Lincoln Theatre in Mt. Vernon**  
lincolnthatre.org

**Columbia River Theatre Organ Society**  
www.croconline.org

**Spokane's First Nazarene Theatre Organ  
Society** — www.sfnatos.org

**Oregon Chapter ATOS, Portland**  
http://www.theatreorgans.com/oregon/  
ocatos/ocatos2.htm

### In Memoriam

#### Frances Skewis, 1921–2012



Frances and husband Jim came to Seattle after World War II, and were married 55 years when Jim passed away. Frances was a friend of PSTOS member Norm Sammons, pictured with her above, for seven years. They attended nearly all PSTOS events together.

Frances belonged to the International Poetry Society. She and Norm attended two conventions in Las Vegas at which Frances read her poetry to the 3,000 people attending. Norm says he is so proud of her for doing that.

Frances was a supporter of the PSTOS Scholarship Fund, wanting to help young people learn to play the organ.

Frances suffered from congestive heart failure and died September 1.

# From The MAILBOX

News from our PSTOS scholarship recipient, Jesse Zylstra

Hello Carl [Dodrill],

I thought you might like to know I am now at the University of Idaho. I arrived last week on the 16th and am finding campus life very enjoyable.

I have played all three organs on campus now, they are all great! I have 24/7 access to the music building so can use the practice organ whenever I want, and I can use the concert organ (the 3/26 Casavant) any

time that the hall is not in use. I also have been able to arrange access on Monday and Friday afternoons to the 2/6 Robert Morton theater organ. Currently, the console is buried back stage -- a fire sprinkler leak caused them to move all equipment around the organ console so I practice from behind the stage. They are moving this equipment soon so that I can wheel the console out and hear it in its fullness.

All three organs are good. I especially like the Casavant. The Morton needs a lot of work... both the financial and general interest in the organ are low at the moment. The tympani isn't working, the chrysoglott has inconsistency in volume, second-touch is not usable, the combination action (which is some sort of digital system from

the '80s) isn't quite operating correctly, the tremors stall when too many notes are played (and the 16 foot pipes are on tremors too...) and the instrument is not getting enough wind to operate at full organ. Yet, it's still a ton of fun to play! I am hoping that work is done on this instrument before I leave, and I intend to do as much as I can to get that going.

I started attending the Lutheran Church here in Moscow. They are currently in need of an organist, and I am hoping this will lead to good possibilities. I am very excited about this. My plans are to spend Christmas in Western Washington and look forward to seeing you and all of the PSTOS members then!

Best, Jesse Zylstra

## Tom Blackwell leaves post of Paramount Organ Crew Chief

Turns leadership over to longtime helper, Phil Hargiss

Hi folks,

This December marks 10 years that I've officially led the Paramount organ crew and 15 years that I've served as PSTOS liaison to the theatre. With work demands heating up and a growing desire to spend more time with family, not to mention getting my home Wurlitzer playing(!), I think it's a good time to pass the baton.

Over the last couple years, Phil has been the top contributor in terms of number of hours and I'd like to transition the Publix crew leadership duties to him over the next few months. I have spoken with Phil about this and know that he will continue to lead the team forward with a similar sense of craftsmanship and thoughtfulness that has guided our restoration efforts over the last 10 years. It's important to me that the Paramount Wurlitzer be treated with the

utmost care and respect and I know Phil fully embraces this.

I do plan to continue as a member of the Publix team and participate in planning and work sessions as I am able. I'd also like to be involved in the November Artisan system upgrade, help finish up some of the remaining Upper Main & String chamber projects, and contribute in my home shop on special projects when called upon to support the effort.

I've discussed the logistics with Bob Zat in his capacity as Chair of the Organ Restoration & Maintenance Committee, and he is supportive of my plan to start transitioning the Publix crew lead duties over to Phil beginning October 1, with full handover by January 1, 2013. Phil already has full command of the technical aspects and an excellent rapport with the theatre execs and

stage crew so I expect things will be just fine in those areas. It's mainly the liaison duties we'll need to cover and introductions that need to take place with the various STG departments including: finance, fundraising, programming, education and the volunteer council.

For nearly 50 years, maintaining the Paramount's Wurlitzer has been an important part of "who we are" as an ATOS chapter. I'm happy to be "retiring" when the state of our relationship with the Paramount is on such a solid footing. The Wurlitzer is operating very well, we enjoy great support throughout the ranks at STG and the restoration fund has a healthy balance.

Thanks to the Board and everyone on the Publix crew for trusting me with this important responsibility over the last 15 years and please join me in wishing Phil all the best in his new role.

Most appreciatively, Tom

## Gig Harbor's Wurlitzer Manor listed for sale, as reported in a Tacoma area newspaper

Do you love classic organs, water views and have more than \$5 million? Then do we have a house for you. After a decade of being "stewards" of the historic Wurlitzer Manor, Barbara Hammerman and Raymond Lavine are ready to pass on the stewardship to a new owner.

The six-bedroom, five-bath home, listed for \$5,950,000, is located at 215 27th Ave. N.W. in south Gig Harbor. The couple originally bought the house for \$2.35 million, according to The Wall Street Journal.

Real estate broker Karen Vincent, who represents Morrison House Sotheby's International Realty in University Place, said Hammerman and Lavine don't consider themselves owners. Instead, they are caretakers of the legendary organ that sits

inside the 25-year-old mansion.

According to the Wurlitzer Manor website, it houses one of the finest theater organs built for the silent-movie era in the 1920s at the Brooklyn Fox Theater in New York. The instrument holds more than 3,000 pipes and has attracted numerous musicians from around the country.

Vincent said the organ is being sold with the home, and it is up to the buyer to decide what to do with the instrument.

The nearly 13 acres of land includes the Wurlitzer Manor and two guesthouses that overlook the Narrows Waterway and Mt. Rainier.

In addition, it boasts a five-car garage, three fireplaces and a sauna.

While no one has stepped up to make an

offer since the home went on sale 20 days ago, the manor has garnered plenty of attention from the media.

On Thursday, the home was featured as the "House of the Day" in The Wall Street Journal.

Vincent said HGTV has also contacted her about featuring the Wurlitzer Manor on the show Million Dollar Rooms. The TV show spotlights some of the most unique and luxury rooms from around the world.

Despite the current health of the economy, Vincent said the Gig Harbor real estate market of \$2 million and more has seen a recent resurgence.

"It's hard to say when a collector will come along, it could be two weeks or two years," she said.

# Pages From The Past..1910

Exactly 102 years ago, Robert Hope-Jones, one of the most remarkable innovators ever to come along in the field of pipe organs, addressed the National Association of Organists at their national convention. He puts forth a strong argument for abandoning the old and accepting the new, while at the same time admitting that change is difficult. Part 3 of his lecture is reproduced here.

## Recent Developments of Organ Building

By ROBERT HOPE-JONES

A lecture delivered before the National Association of Organists at the Auditorium, Ocean Grove, New Jersey, August 6th, 1910

Continued from the September Pipeline—



Hope-Jones, front row left, with his employees at the Elmira factory

### UNIT ORGAN (Patent)

This Ocean Grove instrument is a "Unit Organ," though from the limitation in funds, necessarily a skeleton one. Months before its completion the "Unit Organ" had developed on the following published lines.

The old departments of Pedal, Great, Swell, Choir and Solo are abandoned in favor of Foundation, String, Woodwind, Brass and Percussion departments. Each of these latter is enclosed in its own independent cement swell box. The whole organ is treated as a unit. Practically any of the stops may be drawn upon any of the manuals (or on the pedal) at any pitch.

The Foundation department contains the Diaphone, Tibias, and two or three Diapasons.

The String department contains a couple of mild and robust Gambas, two or three very keen Viol d'Orchestres, a Quintaton Flute for furnishing the deep body tone often heard in strings, a Vox Humana Celeste, and perhaps my new Vox Viola—in fact any stops that go to make up a thrilling mass of "live" string tone.

The Woodwind department contains the Oboe, Orchestral Oboe, Clarinet, Cor Anglais, Kinura Concert Flutes, etc.

The Brass department contains the Trombones, Trumpets and Tubas.

The Percussion department embraces the Tympani, Drums, Triangle, Glockenspiel, Chimes, etc.

A set of stop keys representing all or most of these stops, at various pitches, is provided

in connection with the great manual. Another set is provided in connection with the swell; another in connection with the choir, another with the solo, and another with the pedal. By their means any selection of the stops from the various departments may be freely drawn and mixed on any keyboard quite independently of what may at the same time be in use on the other keyboards.

By means of this radical departure from the old and accepted style of organ building we gain immensely in flexibility and in tonal resources, and we save much money.

Because of limited funds this organ has but 14 stops. It is easily the most powerful instrument in the world, and I fancy it would be difficult to find any fifty stop organ giving equal variety of effect (applause). Far otherwise would it have been had those 14 stops been distributed in the usual way, say 3 on the great, 3 on swell, 3 on choir, 3 on solo, and 2 on the pedal. How could recitals have been given on such an instrument as this?

This auditorium seats ten thousand people and is a mere shell made of thin matchboarding. The greater part of the organ tone immediately passes through and is lost. Had the few thousand dollars available been expended upon obtaining say thirty stops of the type used in ordinary organs of larger dimensions, a complete failure would have resulted. It was felt that very large scales, great weight, and heavy wind were essential. Such stops are of course expensive. The small funds provided furnished only fourteen of them. Electric switches for transferring stops from one manual to another do not cost five dollars apiece, so at the cost of less than \$500 we were able to adopt the "Unit Organ" principle. As a result we have from these fourteen stops a four manual organ upon which several of the greatest organists have given most enjoyable recitals (applause). The "Unit Organ" is the simplest possible form of instrument and the least costly when judged by results.

It may not be fool proof but in the hands of an organist of any musical feeling, its tones will always be well balanced. For instance, if the large 8 foot Diapason be drawn on the great, and a 16 foot or 4 foot Diapason is to be added, one will naturally select one or both

# Pages From The Past...continued

of the smaller diapasons for the purpose. The relative strength of 16, 8, 4 and 2 foot tone can be graded to suit the particular effect it is desired to produce etc., etc.

## SUITABLE BASS (Patent)

A performer on the organ has so much more to think of and do than he can accomplish without distracting his attention from the music he is rendering, that no chance of helping him should be ignored. He should always have pistons or pedals giving him independent control of the pedal organ stops and couplers, but the automatic "Suitable Bass" attachment in addition to these will save him an immense amount of thought and unnecessary work.



On each keyboard there is provided a double touch tablet or piston labeled "Suitable Bass." Upon touching this piston the pedal stops and couplers instantly so group themselves as to provide a bass that is suitable to the stops at the moment in use upon that particular manual. If the piston be pressed much more firmly it will become locked down and then the pedal stops and couplers will continue to move automatically so as to keep the bass suited to that particular manual, whatever changes may be made in registration. This locked suitable bass piston will release itself the moment the performer touches any of the pedal stops or couplers by hand or touches the suitable bass piston belonging to any other manual.

All the combination pistons in the Unit Organ are provided with double touch. The first touch moves the manual stops only, but a much firmer touch will provide the suitable bass for the particular combination in use. (Patent) This Suitable Bass device is condemned by the writer in *New Music Review*, but is described by your President, who has used it for years, as "the greatest help given to the organist since the introduction of combination pedals." (Applause.)

## DOUBLE TOUCH

In the Unit Organ all keys and pedals are provided with double touch. The first touch is an ordinary or normal one and the key is

brought to rest against an apparently solid bottom in the usual way. When, however, great extra pressure is used the key will suddenly give way again about a sixteenth of an inch and a strengthening of tone, either of the same or of another quality, will be brought into play. The second touch on the pedal organ is used to control the tympani, drums, triangle, etc. Second touch can be shut off from both manuals and pedals when not required.

## COMBINATION CONTROL

Whether the stops of an organ should be under the control of combination pistons placed below the manual they affect, or of combination keys placed just above the manual, is much debated. The thumb has a longer range than the fingers and can readily reach pistons placed underneath; but it has to grope in the dark, as it were, for these pistons are not so easily seen as are the combination keys. An expression of opinion from you, ladies and gentlemen, upon this point will be appreciated.

It is my practice to fit ten combination keys or pistons to each manual, whether the organ be large or small. Seven of these are arranged to be "graded" from pp to fff, and three of them are "free" for special combinations. All these combination keys or pistons are adjustable from the keyboards so that the organist can alter his combinations at a moment's notice—even whilst playing. All the combination keys or pistons have double touch, so that a suitable bass can be obtained when desired, simply by pressing the movement much more firmly. Five toe pistons are provided for giving independent control of the pedal organ and five for governing the entire organ including couplers and tremulants.

All these contrivances of course visibly move the stop keys and stop knobs. It is hoped that the absurd plan of altering the tone without moving the stop knobs is at death's door.

## TEMPERATURE TROUBLES

In the organs I build all pipes are enclosed in cement boxes and thermostats and tiny electric radiators insure temperatures always being equal. The organs are in tune at all times, whether the church be warm or cold.

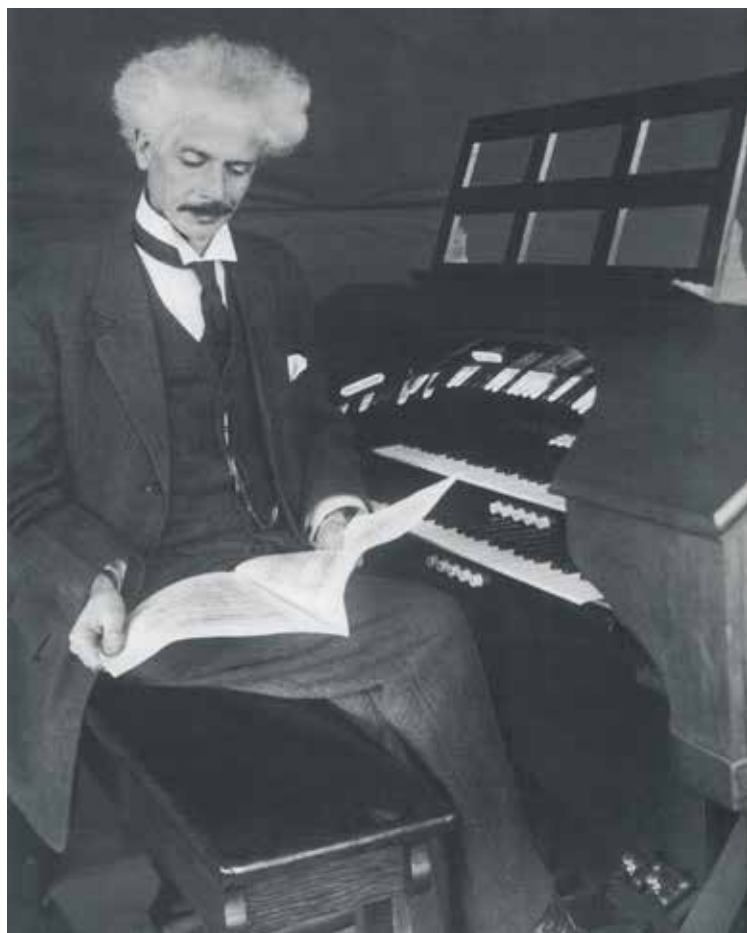
## SLANTING KEYBOARDS

You will notice that the great organ keys are level, because in playing upon them the forearm is level. But when playing on the swell the forearm inclines upward, therefore the swell keys are made to slope upward at the same angle. For a similar reason the solo keys slope at a greater angle, and the stop keys at a greater still. On the other hand, the choir keys incline slightly in the other direction. This is without question the natural arrangement and in the opinion of the great majority of you, will become universally adopted—despite the opposition to be expected from those who cannot shake off old methods. (Applause.)

—Final installment will appear next month.

FAR LEFT—Suitable Bass pistons as seen on a Wurlitzer console

BELOW—Robert Hope-Jones at one of his smaller creations c. 1910, about the time of this lecture.



## Jonas Nordwall and Bill Keller's 5/60 Allen—what a combination!

Reviewed by Ray Harris; photos by Bob McCutchin

Jonas began the morning workshop with a handout entitled “Selecting Where and What to Use When,” a methodical list of check-off’s invaluable when choosing registrations at a theatre organ. He stressed that in setting registration, it is often more important to identify stops not as much by the name on the tab, but rather by their sound quality.

He then explored the piston-setting formulas used by George Wright, sharing how these basic foundations can be easily transformed into whatever is needed. It was a great workshop with an abundance to think about.

The afternoon concert was a complete treat! Opening with an exciting arrangement of “Chitty Chitty Bang Bang,” the program ran the gamut from “Joy to the World” ala Three Dog Night, all the way to George Wright! Other tunes included “Unchained Melody,” “I Can’t Stop Loving You,” “Funiculi-Funicula” and many more.

Jonas vowed to use all that Bill’s Allen TO-5Q has to offer, and did so in spades.

From the rhapsodic “Czardas,” show-

## 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**

ing off the ‘best use of ten ranks of strings’ (should you happen to have such a problem!), to a not-so-subtle pizza-parlor arrangement of “Chattanooga Choo-Choo,” featuring not only the Allen’s train whistle, but all the steam as well.

Having recently returned from a 6-week

Australian tour, Jonas was simply in fantastic form and delivered an out of this world afternoon program. There is only one “Jonas,” and we’re especially fortunate to have him here in the Northwest!

Sincere thanks to Bill Keller for opening his home for this terrific day.



Bill Keller welcomes the guests



Reina, Bill’s dog, tried to steal the show



Clyde Hunnicutt and Andy Crow—old chums!



Jonas introduces a number to the appreciative audience



Ray Harris, event coordinator; Bill Keller, host; Kat Brightwell, former PSTOS scholarship recipient, visiting from Canada; and Jonas