

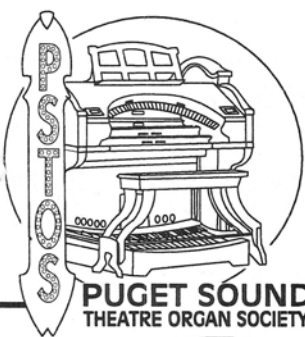
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PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

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

Volume 12 No. 8

SEPT.
August 2001

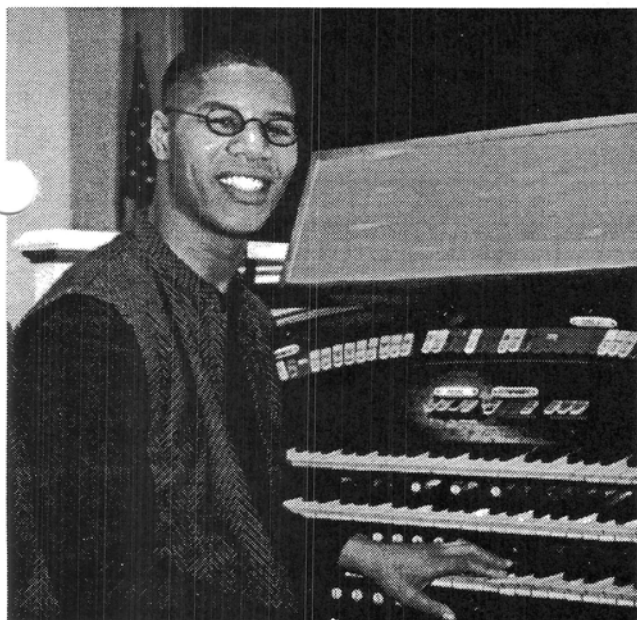


**Sept. 8th is the
absolute deadline
for reservations.
Order NOW!**

**Reserve NOW for another
famous Buffet Lunch
and Concert at Yelm!**

Featuring

Tedde Gibson



**Playing the beautiful
3/16 Robert Morton
Theatre Pipe Organ**

Saturday Sept. 15th

**Lunch at 1:00
with concert following**

**St. Columban Church Social Hall
Yelm, WA**

TEDDE GIBSON cut his professional organ teeth playing at Tacoma Pizza & Pipes and is well-known in theatre organ circles around the Seattle area. He is regarded as the 'Official PSTOS Organist' at Franklin High School. He studied organ performance at the University of Washington and plays regularly for a local church. He has performed for PSTOS at Haller Lake Community Club, always receiving high praise.

This is a chance to once again enjoy the fabulous luncheon buffet prepared and served by the ladies of St. Columban Church, as well as hear Tedde in a full concert on this outstanding organ!

— \$10 per person includes buffet lunch & concert —

Ticket orders MUST be received by Sept. 8th to plan for food.

**Map, driving instructions, and ticket order form are on page 6.
Order your tickets today!**

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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**

Autumn is approaching fast. Fall is in the air. Personally, I'll be glad to see the rain when it comes! I guess my webbed feet need more moisture.

Have you ordered your tickets for our Buffet Lunch and Concert at Yelm on Saturday, September 15th? We'll hear Tedde Gibson play the 3/10 Robert Morton Theatre Pipe Organ installed in the St. Columban Church Hall. We'll also partake of the 'Church Ladies' famous Luncheon Buffet. Use the ticket order form provided in this Pipeline. It promises to be a fun time.

Mark your calendars for our annual Halloween and Christmas Parties, too. Sunday, October 21st we'll gather in the saints for a Halloween get-together—will we finally have that visit from a renowned artist from the past??? Then on Sunday, December 2nd we've lined up some wonderful entertainment for our Christmas Party.

Be there or be square!

- Barbara Graham

**Mystery Tour of seven Haller
Lake area homes to benefit
HLCC elevator fund**

Do your part to help improve the "home of the PSTOS pipe organ!" Be at the Club, 12579 Densmore North, at noon and see landmark homes and gardens, waterfront homes, a log home, an owner-built home with owner-designed and crafted furniture. **Sunday, September 9, between noon and 5:00.** \$10 for adults, \$5 for children.

**PSTOS
Coming Events****Tedde Gibson at the
3/16 Robert Morton,
plus the famous
Yelm Luncheon Buffet**

Hurry and mail your reservation for another memorable day at Yelm, with TEDDE GIBSON at the pipe organ, and the famous buffet lunch served by the ladies at St. Columban Church. For tickets—page 6.

September 15th, 1 pm

**Another fun PSTOS
Halloween Party**

Plan now to be at Haller Lake Community Club for this event. More details later.

Sunday, Oct. 21, 2 pm

**Annual PSTOS
Christmas Party**

Another happy holiday event with great entertainment and marvelous food. Haller Lake Community Club.

Sun., Dec. 2, 2 pm

**The PSTOS
Nominating Committee
needs YOU!**

It's that time again! Time to plan for officers and Board members for 2002.

The Nominating Committee this year is chaired by Marilyn Schrum, with Jackie Cedarholm and Clint Meadway.

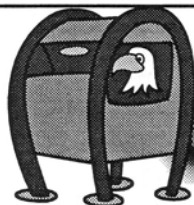
The office of President, as well as two seats on the Board of Directors must be filled, all two-year positions.

Candidates must be willing to attend regular monthly Board meetings. Attendance at events is important, as well. "Idea persons" are always welcome!!

If you are interested in serving on the Board in any capacity, if you are interested in learning more about serving, or if you know someone you feel would be a good candidate, please email Marilyn at marilynschrum@hotmail.com or phone her at 206-364-5542.

Deadline for nominations is Oct. 20th.

OTHER Events of Interest



From the Mailbox



**Hokum Hall reopens in
September with lotsa' music!**

**Andy Crow plays for a
Laurel & Hardy Laughathon**

Andy at the Hokum Hall Wurlitzer, plus
"Way Out West"...a full-length talkie.
Fri. & Sat., Sept. 7 & 8, 8 PM

Planomania

Hokum Hall's signature show with Louis
Magor, Hokum Jeebs, Keith Terhune,
Connie Corrick.
Fri. & Sat., Sept. 14, 15, 8 PM

Silent film & the Wurlitzer

Andy Crow accompanies "Tarzan of the
Apes." PLUS...astounding magical show
with Toby Wessel....LIVE!

Fri. & Sat., Sept. 21, 22, 8 PM
7904 35th Ave. SW, in West Seattle

For more info and ticket prices,
www.hokumhall.org
or 206-937-3613

Chris Elliott at Everett Theatre

PRE-SALE ONLY reduced price tickets
to PSTOS members, just \$8. Order by
mail or phone, 425-258-6766, identify
yourself as a PSTOS member.
2911 Colby Ave., Everett, WA 98201
Saturday, Sept. 22, 8 PM

Eric Shoemaker at Wenatchee Valley Museum

Eric will play a special program on the
former Wenatchee Liberty Theatre
Wurlitzer. The museum is located in
downtown Wenatchee at 127 So.
Mission. Phone 509-664-3340 for
information.

Saturday, Sept. 22, 7-9 pm

Paramount Silent Series will feature International films

Oct 29, Nossferatu, Germany, 1922
Nov 5, Blackmail, Hitchcock, 1929
Nov 12, Man With Movie Camera, 1929
Nov 19, Madame Dubarry, 1919
All accompanied by Dennis James.

Former member Harry Harkness, now living in San Francisco, has just rejoined PSTOS. He recently sent the following comments and memories.

Dear Pipeline Editors,

Surprise, I have been wanting to get a letter off to you for ever so long. Back in March or April of 2000 you presented a program at the Haller Lake Community Club...of course it was about the pipe organ. HLCC's monthly newsletter shortly thereafter published the entire text of your presentation. You kindly gave credit to Doris Harkness and me as well as Dick and Betty Chang. I was thrilled to see that.

Doris sends me copies of the Pipeline and has taken a real interest in the club and organs. I finally decided to rejoin the chapter which I recently did. I am a member of the Norcal Chapter but not very active at all.

It was great of the club and Andy Crow to support Haller Lake and their new building elevator. Believe me they really need that now that us "old timers" have trouble with many stairs. Nice going. My sons, Ed and Randy, also attended. Sure wish I had been there. Doris also enjoyed your home visit recently.

There have been so many coincidences for me of late, i.e., I had not belonged to National [ATOS] for a number of years and so rejoined a few months ago. Lo and behold, here was a great article on Dick Simonton. [Editor note: see more on Dick Simonton on page 5.] When I left Seattle to take that California job way back when, I was able to go to Dick's home and play the Wurlitzer. Boy, was I nervous 'cause the

lower level theater was full of Saturday night organ and movie buffs. My daughter Cindy even went with me there one time. Then the story about Loren Whitney, one of my favorites. I met him in Rahway, N.J., back in 1967 at the New York soiree [ATOS convention]. And now the pictures [in the Pipeline] of Eddie Clifford and also the 5th Avenue and Paramount theatre organs with the models publicizing them. I made copies of the 5th and rushed them down to the Redwood City Pizza and Pipes for their organists to have. I played that in the theatre several times on Saturday mornings back in the '50s. Eddie Clifford's father was the pastor of our First Presbyterian Church in Bremerton when I was a teenager. This church's 2 manual 6 ranker was built and installed by Balcom and Vaughn in 1940. It is still going as I heard it just last Christmas morning. A third manual was added and a few more ranks, I believe. I played that for a radio broadcast on several occasions when I came back from WWII.

After playing evening church services for nearly 25 years down here, I'm retiring. The organ is a 2/4 baroque style built by the Newton Organ Co. in San Jose. Built for a home and then the church picked it up. Has a lot of power but far from a Wurlitzer.

'Til we meet again,

Harry Harkness, PSTOS member in San Francisco

A warm welcome to these new PSTOS members

- Donald Auguston
Seattle
- Margaret Powell
Seattle
- Norman Knaack
Edmonds
- Les Van Horn
Ellensburg

Pages From The Past...

Rudolph Wurlitzer, 1853-1914

From a penniless immigrant to a household word



When Rudolph Wurlitzer immigrated to the United States in 1853, he brought with him a 200-year family history of association with musical arts and crafts. In his homeland, Saxony, Germany, the Wurlitzer family had been making musical instruments since Nicholas Wurlitzer, born during the 17th century, became a lute maker.

In keeping with the family tradition, Rudolph Wurlitzer, born January 30, 1831, grew up watching the craft of instrument making. As a young man, Wurlitzer dreamed of traveling to America, while his father hoped he would stay in Saxony. But in 1853, Wurlitzer left Saxony and arrived in Hoboken, New Jersey, with no money and a feeble command of the English

language. He made his way to Cincinnati where he took a job as a porter in a dry-goods store for \$4 a week. Intent on saving money, he slept on the premises and socked away \$1 each week.

The next year he took a job for \$8 a week at a banking firm and worked out a similar living arrangement with his boss.

Close to the banking office was a retail music store that fascinated the young Wurlitzer. Upon his many visits to the shop, he was amazed by the high prices of the European-made instruments. He quickly realized the reason behind the high prices—the retailer was forced to purchase instruments from Europe through a series of middlemen. Realizing that if he could eliminate the need for middlemen, he could offer fine European instruments for a lower price, he sent his father his entire savings of \$700 in exchange for certain instruments and sold them to American retailers at a reduced price.

The Wurlitzer Co. was thus launched in 1856, and American music retailing was forever altered. Musical instruments which had been available only to the privileged few were now accessible to the average American.

Wurlitzer continued wholesaling instruments to retailers until 1861 when he had enough money for a manufacturing plant in Cincinnati.

He soon opened a retail shop in Cincinnati, and expanded his wholesale business to a national level. By this

time, all of America was marching to the beat of Wurlitzer drums and bugles—in just four years, Wurlitzer had emerged as the largest outlet for band instruments in the U.S.

Eventually, The Wurlitzer Co. began branching out to include other instruments. In 1880 came the creation of the first Wurlitzer piano, with a price that allowed middle-class Americans to buy pianos.

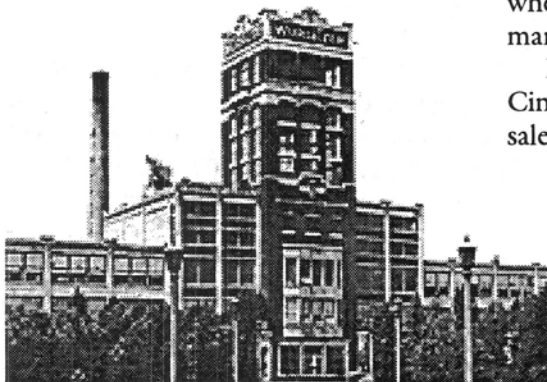
When motion pictures exploded on the entertainment scene nationwide, Wurlitzer quickly became the dominant name in theatre pipe organs built specifically to accompany the silents.



The "Debutant"—an early Wurlitzer juke box

In 1934 the company developed the first automatic jukebox, the Wurlitzer Simplex.

Rudolph Wurlitzer died in 1914, just about the time the very first successful Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ was installed in the Seattle Liberty Theatre. This organ launched a 15- to 16-year frenzy of organ building activity, which lasted until the introduction of "talkies", heralding the end of the theatre pipe organ era!



The North Tonawanda, N.Y., factory, home of Wurlitzer theatre pipe organs.

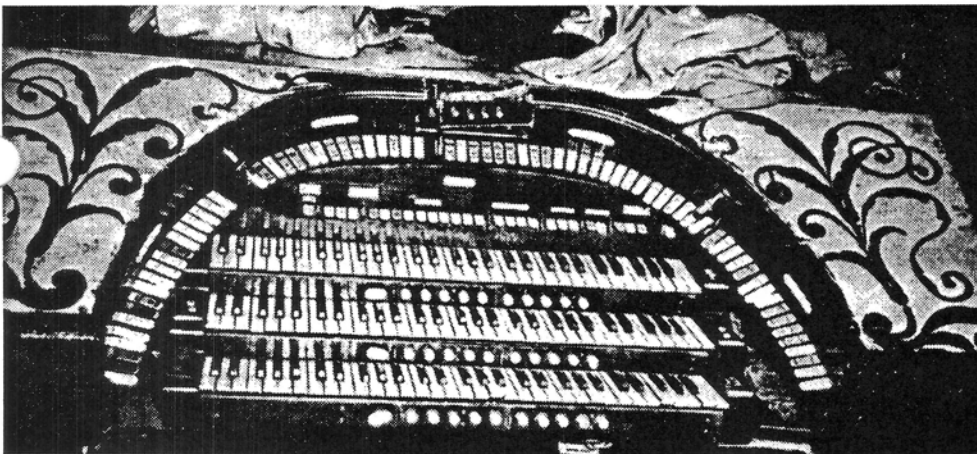
A letter from the past... part 1

The September 1965 issue of *Console* magazine carried a lengthy article entitled, "Seattle, Cradle of the American Theatre Pipe Organ." Former Seattleite Dick Simonton, one of the founders of ATOE [now ATOS], immediately upon reading the article, wrote a fascinating 12-page letter to the *Console* editor in which he shared numerous recollections of and interesting trivia about Seattle theatres and organs during the early years.

Segments from his letter will be reproduced over the next few months for your enjoyment. The following segment is about the Seattle Liberty Theatre and Wurlitzer.

"...The Liberty Wurlitzer had a soul all its own and that organ should have been heard, as it was unique among organs. Never has any other organ had the affect upon me of that one. It was an understood fact around Seattle that Ollie Wallace could make women cry by his use of the Tibia. Something about the organ, the theater and the combination

demonstrated the importance of the properly designed building to make a successful organ installation. The screen was only a few inches behind the drape above the console. There was no stage and the screen was a metallic substance painted on a plastered wall, which was the exterior wall of the building. This was the way the theatre looked during



of instrument and acoustics gave it a uniqueness which has never been equalled and it had an emotional impact on the listeners which was absolutely phenomenal. Incidentally, it was the Liberty Theatre which had the ramps to the balcony, a great innovation at the time, and not the Coliseum.

The description [in the *Console* article] of the Liberty Theatre is especially interesting to those of us who had the privilege of actually being in there and the part which that theatre and organ played in establishing the theatre organ as an instrument cannot be over-emphasized. Providing the Wurlitzer organ with the proper acoustical setting, designing the building especially for the instrument, made the difference and created a successful installation, really the first one for a Wurlitzer. It certainly

the entire life span of silent films with organ accompaniment.

When the theatre reopened with sound films in 1929, it was necessary to push the stage forward, not necessarily for gaining a larger screen, but to gain a space to put the loudspeakers. This was the entire reason for pushing the stage forward, as in the old arrangement there was no possible place to put the very bulky stage horns then in use.

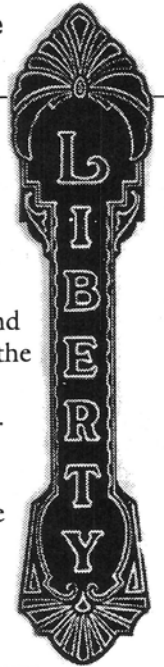
The acoustical excellence of the Liberty Theatre further paid off during the talking picture days, as it was a magnificent installation from a sound quality standpoint and the Western Electric people used it as a show case. The theatre had the finest sound equipment then available and it was further enhanced by the wonderful acoustics of the building itself.

The organ was installed in the proscenium and spoke through a lattice grille. On each side of the auditorium there were two arched grilles, and behind these were placed the tuned percussions such as xylophones and marimbas. These percussion instruments were superb and probably the largest I have ever seen. They were of Deagan manufacture and at that time they did not build special instruments for organ use, but these were regular percussion instruments designed to be hand played, and arranged chromatically, with the bars representing the white keys of a piano on the lower row and the groups of two and threes representing the black keys on the upper row. Wurlitzer had then built a special action to fit this configuration. It was not until there was sufficient demand for the alternate arrangement that Deagan began manufacturing them that way especially for organ builders.

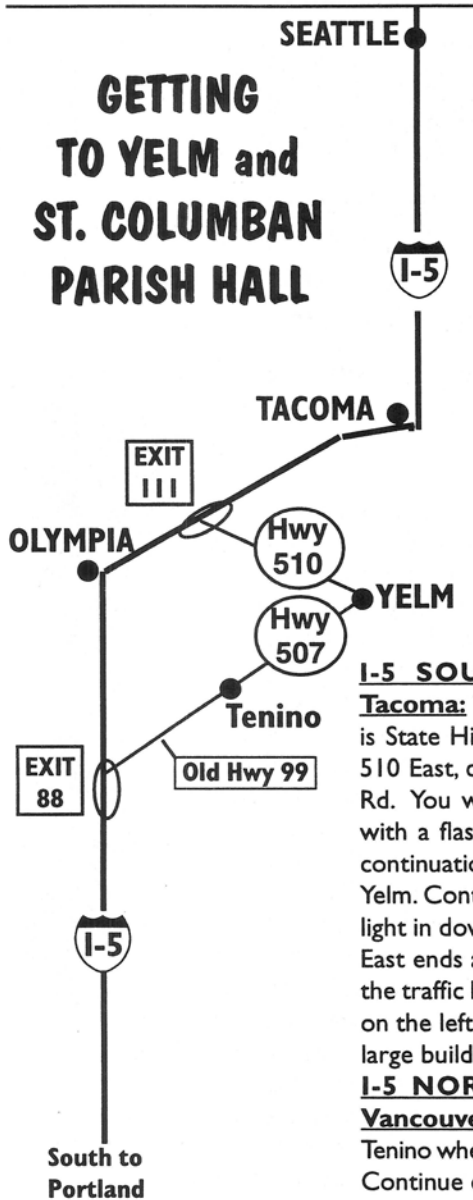
Bear in mind also that these organs, and any Wurlitzer organ prior to late 1921 was built at the old pitch of A-435."

Editor note: The Seattle Liberty Wurlitzer was removed from the theatre prior to its being razed and in 1955 was acquired by Pacific Lutheran University in Parkland, Washington, where it was installed in the gymnasium.

In 1974, PLU sold the organ to First Nazarene Church in Spokane, where it has been used continuously since. It has recently undergone a complete refurbishment and is the pride of the church's large congregation.



GETTING TO YELM and ST. COLUMBAN PARISH HALL



I-5 SOUTHBOUND from Seattle/ Tacoma:

Take Exit 111 onto Marvin Rd. which is State Highway 510 East. Drive 1.5 miles on 510 East, crossing Martin Way and Steilacoom Rd. You will reach a 4-way stop intersection with a flashing light—TURN LEFT. This is the continuation of Hwy 510 which takes you to Yelm. Continue on Hwy 510 East to the traffic light in downtown Yelm. At this point Hwy 510 East ends and becomes Hwy 507. Turn right at the traffic light onto Hwy 507. The Parish Hall is on the left 0.3 mi. from the traffic light. It is the large building set back from the highway.

I-5 NORTHBOUND from Portland/ Vancouver:

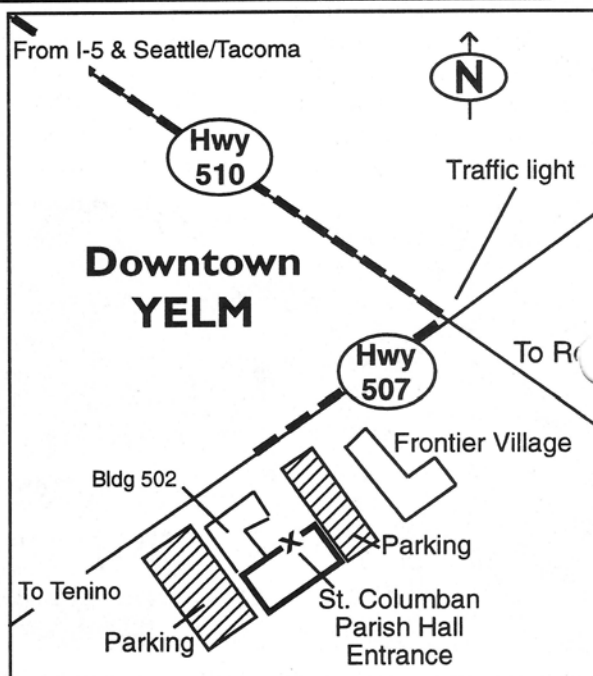
Take Exit 88 onto Old Hwy 99 to Tenino where it becomes Hwy 507 Northbound. Continue on Hwy 507 through Rainier and on to Yelm, approximately 20 miles. Just before the intersection with Hwy 510 in Yelm, the Parish Hall will be on your right.

PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

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

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



TICKET ORDER FORM • Lunch & Tedde Gibson Concert • Sat. Sept. 15

Admission \$10 per person

PLEASE CHECK ONE

- A stamped self-addressed envelope is enclosed—
Please mail my tickets
- I will pick up my tickets at the door—please hold them for me there.

HERE'S MY ORDER FOR:

_____ Event tickets @ \$10 \$_____

Total amt. enclosed: \$_____

Make checks payable to: **PSTOS**

Mail your order to:
PSTOS Tickets
c/o Norman Miller
2644 N.W. Esplanade
Seattle, WA 98117-2527

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____

Email address _____

IMPORTANT

Orders MUST be received by Sept. 8. We're unable to process phone orders. Orders received without a self-addressed stamped envelope will be held to be picked up at the door. Thanks!