

# Relay Chatter

The Official Newsletter of the Joliet Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts



WWW.JATOE.org

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January/February 2008

**Our next social will take place at the Rialto Theatre on Sunday, January 6, 2008 and will feature the 2007 winner of the American Theatre Organ Society Young Organist Competition, Donnie Rankin. Doors will open at 1:30pm and the program will begin at 2:00pm.**

**Join us on Sunday, February 10, 2008 as we welcome back young organist David Rhodes to the Rialto Theatre, Joliet, IL. Doors will open at 1:30pm and the program will begin at 2:00pm.**

**This is your official notice! Pursuant to our bylaws, January 6 will be our annual membership meeting. All members are encouraged to attend!**

## President's Message from Jim Patak

The Holiday Season is upon us, and we are all running around shopping, visiting friends and relatives, eating too much and hoping to lose weight in 2008. I hope you all have a great time in the next few weeks.

The theatre is about finished with its cleaning and new carpets start coming in on December 17. The auditorium floor will also be painted.

Another exciting event at the Rialto is the converting of old offices off the balcony into a beautiful banquet/meeting room. Don Walker played for that fund raising event. There will also be an elevator located somewhere behind the bar area. This will be a wonderful addition to the Rialto complex. The store fronts on the ground floor have been converted to art studios and galleries. Things are looking up for downtown Joliet. The theatre has many good shows coming in and if you are on the internet, check (rialtosquare.com) for details

The Pipe Organ Extravaganza scheduled for April 26, 2008 will be a great event. The artists this year are: Jim Riggs, Ken Double, Jelani Eddington, Chris Gorsuch, Chris Elliot and Clark Wilson. We are also very excited this year for we are using the National Championship Joliet American Legion Band as the onstage orchestra.

We are also excited about getting back to the Krughoff residence on the Saturday afternoon of April 26. Friday night (April 25) we will again be at the Vandermolen Home. Sunday we will be at the Victorian Palace. This will be an exciting weekend. I will have tickets for all events.

The organ relay has been settling in very well. We just have a few more items to adjust and we will be perfect.

Have a Wonderful Holiday Season!

Jim Patak

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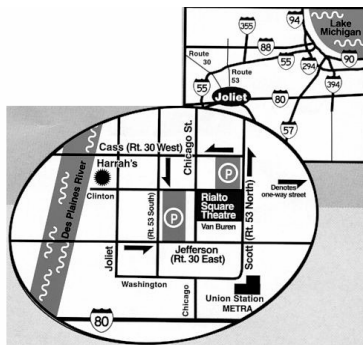
## 2007 Young Organist Competition Winner Donnie Rankin appears at the Rialto!

When Donnie Rankin was three, a trip to the Akron Civic Theatre introduced him to the sounds of the mighty theatre organ. He would often try playing music on his great grandfather's home organ and around 2000, his own instrument was purchased and lessons began. Donnie took two years of home organ lessons and was told classical piano training would be a good idea, so classical piano lessons began in 2005. The two years that Donnie has studied piano have helped him win several organ competitions including the title of 'The American Theatre Organ Society's Young Theatre Organist of the Year' in 2007. He began studying with Jelani Eddington in September 2007. Donnie has performed on the theatre organ in Sarasota, Florida, Allen, Texas, Foxburg, Pennsylvania, Mundelein, Illinois, Cleveland, Warren, Mansfield and Lorain, Ohio.

Donnie was also very active with the high school band receiving the Melissa Strasser First Chair award in 2005 and 2006 and the John Phillip Sousa award in 2007. He held the position of drum line captain, and was Senior Lieutenant in the high school band council. He played lead pan and drum set for three years in Ravenna High School's steel band and played the drum set four years in the Jazz band. During high school, Donnie took 6 solo and ensemble events on instruments including piano, xylophone and steel drum receiving superior ratings each time.

When he has free time, he enjoys: boating, bowling, cinematography, cycling, archery, marksmanship, and assorted backyard sports. Some more productive hands-on activities he's been involved with include re-soldering PC boards for home organs, and restoring antique tractors, his latest a 1966 John Deere.

**Doors to the Rialto Theatre will open at 1:30pm, and the program begins at 2:00pm. Please enter at the rear of the theatre, stage door entrance on Scott Street. Please bring refreshments. Open console will follow Donnie's performance.**



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## Young Organist David Rhodes returns to the Rialto!

David Rhodes is 22 years old, and is a native of Lisle, Illinois. He started taking piano lessons at age 7, and classical organ training at age 12. His organ instructor for 8 years was Fr. John Palmer C.S.V., a professor at Benedictine University, and director for the Royal Conservatory of Music. Fr. Palmer has degrees from the U.S., Canada, and England, and was a student of Jean Langlais in Paris, France. Having heard the theatre organ interludes at the Tivoli Theatre at the age of 14, he was hooked. David has played for various types of programs and special events at the Arcada, Tivoli, Rialto, Coronado, and York Theatres. He is one of three organists at the Tivoli Theatre and for the past 6 years has played pre-program music at Downers Grove North High School. He is also on the Board of Directors of the Chicago Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts, and is on the crew for many of the organs that they maintain. He also has the honor of both maintaining and performing on the Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ in the George Cardinal Mundelein Auditorium. David has attended Concordia University River Forest, and is Director of Music at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church LCMS in Des Plaines.

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