

Relay Chatter



The Official Newsletter of the Joliet Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts

WWW.JATOE.org

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October/November 2014

Please join us at the Rialto Theatre, Joliet on Sunday, October 19 at 2:00 pm as we feature young organist from Kokomo, IN, Matt Gerhard. Matt just made his theatre organ debut for the Central Indiana Chapter of ATOS, and we are pleased to welcome him to Joliet for his first JATOE appearance. The doors will open at 1:30 pm and Matt's program begins at 2:00 pm. Please bring refreshments to share. Open console will follow Matt's performance.

Please join us at the Rialto Theatre, Joliet on Sunday, November 16th at 2:00 pm as we welcome our dynamic duo, members Stan Zimmerman and Lenny Perretta. They are planning a very special program. The doors will open at 1:30 pm and the program begins at 2:00 pm. Please bring refreshments to share. Open console will follow the performance.

President's Message from Jim Patak

Well, I'm already getting inquiries about our upcoming Extravaganza. It will take place April 25th at the Rialto and April 26th once again at the Sanfilippo's Mansion in Barrington. I repeat again, that if you have not been to the Mansion, you are missing a great experience.

Coming this year, Jelani Eddington, Pierre Fracalanza, Jerry Nagano, Clark Wilson and also returning the Joliet Symphony. A few surprises are also in store for the Saturday evening. Tickets are remaining the same, \$30 for The Rialto and \$65 for the Mansion. We had 285 attendees at the Mansion last year and hope to exceed this in 2015.

We are really proud to have Glenn Tallar as our crew chief. I'm sure you have noticed that the Barton is sounding very well. He is very talented both as a technician and also as an organist. Thanks, Glenn.

Dolores and I have just returned from our lake house in Wisconsin, and if you have noticed, the colors are changing. You all know what comes after this fall. Good news is that I have heard that the winter is going to be mild. I hope the prediction is on the level.

I have noticed that while attending the ATOS Conventions that all the theatres I have visited are extremely proud of their pipe organs. I sometimes do not get that feeling here at the Rialto. They may be proud of the organ but they rarely show it. All I can say is that all of you have to keep asking the management why the organ is not used more often. This can be done by letter or by email. I know that when one of us plays preshow music, we get a great applause. This should say something to the management. Two shows have already gone by this last week of September with no organ used. They also had a Chamber Gala where the organ should have been shown off. I'm sorry if I get upset about this, but we used to use the organ a great deal more in the past. We have probably the largest and one of the best sounding Bartons in the USA.

I hope that our members that are having health problems are on the mend. Keep them in your thoughts.

Emails--- Randy Green – General Manager – rgreen@rialtosquare.com

Lori Carmine – Production – lcarmine@rialtosquare.com

Support The Rialto - Festival Of Trees coming up during the Thanksgiving Week.

Thanks – Jim Patak

Matt Gerhard makes his Rialto debut!

Matt Gerhard currently serves as Director of Music at Kokomo Zion United Methodist Church. Matt earned a Bachelor's in Church Music from Olivet Nazarene University and a Master's in Choral Conducting from California Baptist University. As a church musician, Matt is fluent in a variety of styles.

Matt's interest in the theatre organ was sparked at a young age by his first organ CD; *It's a Grand Old Flag* recorded by Melissa Ambrose on the Detroit Senate Theater's 4-34 Wurlitzer. Matt is a self-taught theatre organist, with some coaching from Mark Herman and Bob Salisbury.

As an artist, Matt has performed for a number of organizations across the country. His programs have included gospel piano, theatre organ, classical organ, and silent film accompaniment. Matt has released one CD; *It Is Well with My Soul: Favorite Hymns and Classics* recorded on the organ at Zion Church. A new CD is in the works.

The stage door to the Rialto Theatre will open at 1:30 pm and Matt's program begins at 2:00 pm. Please bring refreshments to share. Open console will follow the program.



Dynamic duo of Stan and Lenny in November!

Stan Zimmerman was born in 1940 and is originally from Moline, IL. He took piano lessons, but craved organ. His church had a 12 rank Stannke pipe organ, but unless someone was studying some with God, couldn't use it. The Davenport 3000 seat Masonic Temple had a 3/30 Austin. On inquiry, the building supervisor Mr. Arthur Pierce said: "Want to use the organ, eh? 25c an hour kid, knock yourself out." Keep in mind, Stan was still riding a bike (early teens), the '49 Ford Wood Wagon comes later. So where did Stan pick up the "pop" stuff? Playing Hammond in grocery stores as part of the merchandising plan, can you envision it, a 19 year old playing Five Foot Two between the lettuce and cabbage at the A&P? Stan played 11 years at Biasetti's Steak House in Chicago beginning in 1995 and periodically played 6 years at the Polo Café in Chicago on the Rodgers 360. In addition, he played approximately 3 years (weeknights) at Beggar's Pizza in Lansing, IL on the 3/17 Barton Hybrid, which Stan assisted in removing from the Oriental Theatre, Milwaukee during the early 1960's. He worked for the Aragon Ballroom, Chicago and played their 3/10 Wurlitzer from 1970-1976. He has also played organ for the Chicago Cougars Hockey, and International Amphitheatre for approximately 9000 people per game.

Len Perretta's biography and photo were not available as of publishing time, but suffice it to say that he has been a professional keyboard entertainer for over 50 years! Len has graced restaurants, supper clubs and other venues with his inimitable jazz style to the delight of audience members.

Any recordings made during the program are for personal use only! Posting material on YouTube or any other internet vehicle, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Chat Lists, etc. are strictly forbidden, no exceptions!

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JAN'S JOLIET JOTTINGS

Justin Stahl, from Indiana, is on staff at the Warren Central High School in Indianapolis and has access to the beautiful 3/18 Barton in their Warren Performing Arts Center. The August Social began with "Old Friends," written by Stephen Sondheim for the musical "Merrily We Roll Along."

A member of the Indiana National Guard for 12 years, Justin played a march entitled "America We." Justin was inspired by Ashley Miller's arrangement of "Poinciana." This Latin flavor, also known as "The Song of the Tree" was written in 1936 and based on a Cuban folk tune.

He certainly doesn't look like he was born in 1982! (more like 1992). Justin attempted to explain that organists must play more current music to attract a younger audience so this special art form continues on for years to come. With this in mind, he played "Don't Stop Believing" and "Open Arms" as recorded by the band Journey, followed by "Africa," released in 1982 by the rock band Toto. His registration was "spot on" from what I have heard on the radio. Next, from 1967, "Happy Together" by The Turtles.

Justin got hooked when Grandpa played a recording made at Paramount Music Palace in Indy and then took him to see and hear their pipe organ. Of course, Justin was hooked! (The Palace was razed in 1995 to make room for a Don Pablo's Restaurant which did not make the grade!)

From 1930 came a pretty "With The Wind and The Rain In Your Hair" recorded by Pat Boone. Next some tunes from "Guys and Dolls." He feels that "Rainbow Connection" from The Muppets was as meaningful as "Over The Rainbow" was from The Wizard of Oz.

Just call me "un-American" for I have never seen "Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory" but, after hearing the following selections, I'm hooked....."I've Got a Golden Ticket," "Cheer Up Charlie," "The Candy Man Can," "The Rowing Song," "Oompa Loompa (violet) Doompety Doo?" "Augustus Gloop Song," and "Pure Imagination." I must scan the Comcast Guide and stay home one night to see this flick.

This fine young man and good organist played a rousing "Cabaret" for an Encore. Now, after perusing my review, aren't you glad you went? Or.....don't you wish you would have?

Musically yours, Jan

JAN'S JOLIET JOTTINGS

CATOE Pres, David Rhodes, had us on our feet for the 200th Birthday of "The Star-Spangled Banner," our national anthem, and Mark Demmin's vintage voice gave us goosebumps. Wish I had worn red, white, and blue. Darn!

David was fortunate to play in the U.K. so he began the program with their rousing "I Do Like To Be Beside The Seaside," British music-hall song written in 1907 by John A. Glover-Kind and used as signature tune by Reginald Dixon MBE, the resident organist at the Tower Ballroom, Blackpool,

between 1930 and 1970. It is more popular than the U.K.'s national anthem "God Save The Queen."

Written in 1926 and included in the silent film of the same name, "Valencia," was one of the biggest hits topping the charts back then and first selection to be played on the Barton Organ.

"Huckleberry Duck" is a catchy ditty by Raymond Scott from 1937, a whimsical creation about a duck who ate huckleberries and got into troublesome situations. "Procession of The Grand Poobah" is an exotic piece that was a lantern parade procession up Liverpool St., Hobart, Tasmania, to the "Beltane Masquerade Ball" held at The Grand Poobah. "Come Sweet Death" was a very fitting name for this composition by J.S. Bach.

We all recognized "My Heart Belongs To Daddy" and "It's All Right With Me" by Cole Porter. David played the lovely ballad "Deep Knight," sung by Sinatra, that Kay McAbee was known for playing---with all the stops down! Nice arrangement, David.

"French Toccata in B Minor," by Eugene Gigout (from Italian toccare "to touch") was of great importance in the French romantic organ. Another well-known organist in the area was Tony Tahlman/aka/Tallman. From Tony's album David played "Green Door" that had us all bouncing and wishing we were roller skating (and I don't skate!).

Another change of pace came from the 80's: "Take The Long Way Home" and "Breakfast in America" by the English Rock Band "Supertramp." His Encore: "Honky Tonk Train." David is well versed in theatre as well as classical organ and always presents an entertaining and imaginative program. Well Done!

Musically yours, Jan