

The Organ Spiel

NEWSLETTER FOR THE SIERRA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

THEATRE ORGAN CONCERT



JANUARY 2013

KEN DOUBLE AT HUNTER HALL

218 CALIFORNIA ST. RIO VISTA

SATURDAY, JAN. 12TH



It is not often that one gets paid to have fun for a living. It is rarer still when having fun, and getting paid for it professionally, happens twice in life. Such has been the good professional fortune of **Ken Double**, the President and CEO of the American Theatre Organ Society.

Ken's parents made sure all six of the boys were introduced to some kind of music, and for Ken, it was organ lessons starting at age eight. About the time he was getting bored with that, and a high school radio station was providing broadcast opportunities, a school field trip took him to the Pickwick Theatre in Park Ridge, IL and a chance to play the Wurlitzer theatre organ, and it was for him as it is for so many, that "WOW!" moment.

Several weeks later, the same teacher who guided students on the field trip took a group to hear Gaylord Carter at Chicago's famed Oriental Theatre and Ken was truly hooked. He steered lessons



in the theatre organ direction, including one year of studies with legendary organist Al Melgard, where Ken took his lessons on Wednesday afternoons at the Melgard studio, and then met his teacher later that night for the Blackhawks hockey game at the old Chicago Stadium. Talk about careers coming full circle.

Ken Double has been the Master of Ceremonies for no fewer than 18 ATOS annual and regional conventions. He has performed concerts at nine annual and regional convention events. He has toured Australia and New Zealand four times. And in addition to his hundreds of concerts since his debut in Ft. Wayne, IN in 1978, he has 17 recordings to his credit, including - **TRIBUTE**, which features Ken at the 3/66 Dickinson Kimball with trumpet soloist Skip Stine - a much-heralded, widely acclaimed recording; and **TEACH ME TONIGHT**, recorded on the EMCATOS Babson College four-manual Wurlitzer.

He accepted the top post at ATOS in the summer of 2007, and a year later, the Board of Directors asked Ken to accept the newly created position of President and CEO. He has been working diligently to raise funds, raise awareness, create new and exciting programs, and help steer the 56-year-old organization in a new direction to ensure its growth and existence for another 50 years and more.

Broadcaster, musician, entertainer, MC, administrator, PR man, and even "crooner" occasionally, Ken Double has enjoyed "having fun and getting paid for it, not once, but twice!" As the song says, "*Nice work if you can get it.*"

Directions: Take I-5 towards Lodi and exit at Hwy 12 West towards Rio Vista. When you cross over the Rio Vista Bridge (the big drawbridge) take the first off ramp, keep to the right and go under the bridge and head south (along the river on Front Street). You will come to a 4-way stop sign (Main St.). Keep going south two more blocks to California Street, turn right and go one block. The Hall is on the right, at the corner of California and Second Street. Hunter Hall is the L shaped building. Parking is on the street. Allow about 1 1/2 hr. from the Sacramento area.

Scenic Route: Take I-5 towards Lodi and exit at Twin Cities Road (west). Drive past the TV towers, and turn left (south) onto Hwy 160 (River Road). Continue on Hwy 160 to Hwy 12 and turn right onto the Rio Vista Bridge, then follow directions above.

Adventure Route: Take Hwy 50/I-80 to West Sacramento and exit at Jefferson Blvd. Continue south on Jefferson Blvd (Hwy 84) to Courtland Rd and turn right. Then a left onto Ryer Ave and continue a few miles on the delta levies. Then right onto the Ryer Island Ferry. (Note - Ferry is free, but does not run at lunchtime (Noon -1:00pm) Exit Ferry and turn left onto River Rd. Turn left on Front Street, and follow directions above.



by Edward Millington Stout III

If you were to look in any reference book for the term, "Organ Buff", you would be directed to the name, "Bill Hunter." A real "Organ Buff" is not a stammering half-wit who thinks "A Tavern In The Town" is high art. Bill Hunter was one of those wonderful chaps with a bright engineering mind, who was deeply moved by the color and expressive possibilities the Theatre Organ offered and he did something about that passion.

Bill was born in San Francisco in October of 1938 and after his formal education, which included military school, he worked as an engineer at the great H/P Company and later served as the guiding engineer for the light rail system being installed in San Jose.

In the late 1950's Bill married his sweetheart, Jan, who also loved the sound of the Mighty Wurlitzer. Soon the Hunter household was favored with two arrivals, their son Robert and a two manual, five rank Wurlitzer. Both Bill and Jan became involved with helping Steve Restivo and Roy Dawson with the task of installing the former Oakland Paramount's four manual, twenty rank Wurlitzer in Steve and Roy's new "Melody Inn" in downtown Los Altos. The Hunters also assisted the boys with the installation of a smaller Wurlitzer in their last restaurant, "The Thunder Mug".

Bill and Jan retired to a lovely home in the sleepy delta town of Rio Vista. Clearly, total retirement was not for Bill Hunter, or Jan, who had enjoyed a successful career as a Real Estate salesperson. They bought the former Masonic Temple building in the exciting and bustling downtown of Rio Vista.

They created a splendid arrangement with long time Organ Buff, Geoff Hansen, who was one of the last managers of the old Avenue Theatre silent film operation. With the help of Dave Moreno the three manual, fourteen rank Wurlitzer was soon singing forth in the former secret society's hall of smoke, mirrors and celebrated ritual. Bill had wonderful opportunities to enjoy the room and the organ before his health failed. On November 30th, 2012, Bill joined Jim Roseveare, George Wright and others who believed "Mecca" was located in North Tonawanda, New York.

A heartfelt service celebrated Bill's life in St. Bridget's Episcopal Church, which rents part of "Hunter Hall." Several notable pipe organ dignitaries participated in the service. Bill and Jan's charming son, Robert, shared his truly heartfelt reflections about his father. After the service, lunch and fine organ music continued the tribute to Bill Hunter.

Fair Oaks Park & Rec Presents:

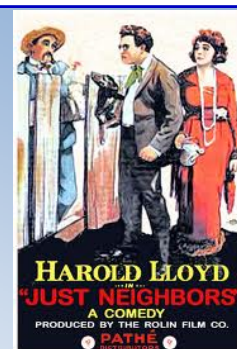
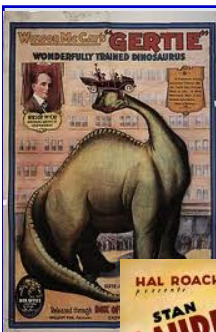
SILENT MOVIES

"Gertie the Dinosaur" (1914) - Cartoon
 "Angora Love" (1929) - Laurel & Hardy
 "Just Neighbors" (1919) - Harold Lloyd
 "One Week" (1920) - Buster Keaton

Friday, January 25, 2013
 7:00 p.m.

Dave Moreno at the Wurlitzer
 Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse

Doors open at 6:00 p.m.
 \$5/Presale, \$7/General



Dave Moreno has had an extensive background in playing the theatre organ, beginning when he was just 13 years of age. He's equally comfortable with silent movie accompaniment, solo music of the 1920's-1950's, and jazz organ. Over the past 30 years he has played in many of the

great remaining vintage theatres and organ restaurants like the Pizza and Pipes in both Sacramento and Fresno. His style at the console is as uniquely his own as his fashionable appearance. Moreno is an avid collector of vintage platform shoes, most from the 1970's, and his collection is currently over 600 pairs! You'll likely see his favorite pair of the day, busy on the organ's pedal board during his performance.

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE – Randy Warwick

The Christmas Party format initiated last year, changing from pot luck to paying at the door for a prepared buffet, was again, well received. Two years of a substantially better turn-out for the party, indicates that the membership has shown a preference; we will likely go for the prepared buffet next December. Thanks to everyone helping out: **Terry Clifton** procured the food, **Craig Peterson** refreshments, **Dave Moreno** for playing Christmas tunes at the Wurlitzer and organ prep, **Dave Sauer** collecting money at the door, and **Sherry Clifton** for very nice decorations. And a big thanks to **Bill Coale** filling in for our usual raffler, **Tom Norvell**, for our Scholarship fund raffle.

The New Year starts off with a bang as we will have two events in January and I would like to see everyone at both events. If you like concerts, the opportunity to hear **Ken Double** at the Hunter Hall 3/15 Wurlitzer should not be missed.

This organ sounds really nice and the room at the former Masonic Lodge of Rio Vista is just big enough to allow a nice bloom to the ensemble. Ken is on a West Coast tour both to play concerts and to visit Chapters as ATOS' CEO. If you are not wanting to make the drive or can offer a ride from Sacramento or the Bay area, please refer to the Sierra Membership Directory, near the back, where Terry Clifton cleverly lists members grouped by ZIP code so it is easy to find a nearby member for carpooling.

If you like silent comedies, then come to a Fair Oaks sponsored event at the Fair Oaks Clubhouse Friday evening, January 25 with **Dave Moreno** playing the accompaniment. Last year, this event almost sold out; so plan to arrive early or get advance tickets from the Parks District office.

With most of the new year still ahead, please let myself or Craig Peterson, our Program director, know of any suggestions you may have for events or concerts. While there is, of course, no guarantee for any suggestion there may be something we have not thought of, so offer it up. Other than our four regular events of Ironstone in April, Ice Cream Social in August, George Wright Memorial Concert in November and the party in December, the rest of the year is still open to schedule.

We welcome **Paul Brown** to the Sierra Board, **Bill Coale** for his re-election to the Board, **Carol Zerbo** for her election as VP, and **Joan Grootveld** for her election as Secretary. And many thanks to **Terry Clifton** for four years as Secretary and **Marian Galbraith** for six years on the Board.

Lastly, as part of a new start to a new year, if you have any ideas or concerns for the betterment of the Chapter from your experience as a member, let me know by phone, e-mail, or letter.

661/392-0269
E-Mail: rwarwick@bak.rr.com

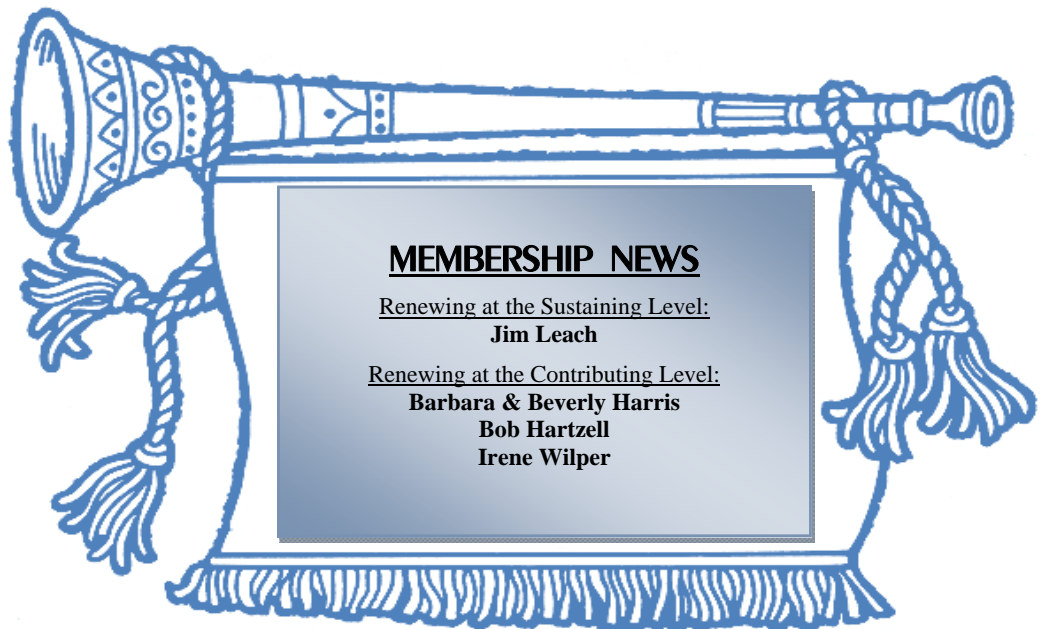


BOARD MEETING



Saturday
Jan 19
10:00AM

East Lawn Memorial Park
43rd & Folsom
Sacramento



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Renewing at the Sustaining Level:
Jim Leach


Renewing at the Contributing Level:
Barbara & Beverly Harris
Bob Hartzell
Irene Wilper



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MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR EVENTS

SIERRA CHAPTER EVENT

Hunter Hall
218 California St
Rio Vista, CA

**Saturday,
January 12th
2:00 PM**



Ken Double

Sierra Chapter Members \$8
General Admission \$10

FAIR OAKS PARK EVENT

Fair Oaks Clubhouse
7997 California Ave

**Friday,
January 25th**



**Silent Comedy Shorts
and cartoons**

Featuring

**Dave
Moreno**

**\$5 Advance at the Fair Oaks Park and Rec Office
across the street from the Clubhouse.
\$7 at the door.**

The Chapter was organized in 1968 as a not-for-profit corporation under the statutes of the State of California and is recognized as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and Section 23701d of the California Revenue and Taxation Code. It was organized for the purpose of preservation and promotion of the Theatre Pipe Organ and its music. Membership in the local Chapter also encourages membership in the National Organization, American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS.) www.atos.org