

# The Organ Spiel

NEWSLETTER FOR THE SIERRA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

AUGUST PREVIEW



July 2008



WOW!

Our **Hot August Pipes Ice Cream Social** is on **Sunday, August 3, at 2:00PM.** We will have **2 artists**, each performing a mini-concert, ending with lots of ice cream and fixings!!!

**Matthew Bason** (left), **from the UK**, will be making a special side trip to Sacramento to entertain us. Sierra (and NorCal) chapter member **Greg De Santis** (right), from Santa Rosa, will also be here, bearing the fruit of many hours of work with his concert.

All of this for only a \$5 donation! More information to come in the August newsletter.



## Iowa flooding takes toll on several Theatres

CRATOS members were summoned to the **Cedar Rapids Paramount Theatre** at 11:30am, Wednesday, June 18th at the behest of theatre management. Of concern was, and still is, the stability of the heavily damaged main stage. Based on the June 17th photos by The Gazette, the condition of the console was documented, but the condition of the pipe chambers was as-yet unknown.

We are deeply saddened to report that the console did not survive the flood intact. Altorfer and Coonrod Crane Service volunteers rushed to the aid of the CRATOS team to help pull the console free from the edge of the stage and organ lift. The strain of movement, water, time, and exposure to extreme conditions was simply too much. **Our beautiful Balaban 1A console, a fixture of the Paramount Theatre since 1928 made it into the sunlight for the first time in 80 years, holding together until the very end.**

CRATOS members onsite worked to salvage any major components from the console. The keydesk, top, stoprail, all stop tabs, pedal board, and bench were all retrieved along with several pieces of ornate woodwork and the original Wurlitzer faceplates. The remaining portions of the console are in temporary storage while decisions can be made and funding secured to rebuild or replace the console.

Following the efforts to save the console, the CRATOS members onsite entered the upper levels of the Paramount to inspect the Main pipe chamber. We were very encouraged to see that no water had entered this chamber - which we have to assume for the time being is the same as in the Solo chamber which is not easily accessible at this time. The temperature was a cool 70 degrees, and much lower humidity than expected. The water line is approximately 1 ft under the floor of the chamber.

Despite the damage to the console, the condition of the pipe chambers is very encouraging, and gives us renewed hope that the organ will once again play in its original home. It will take time, talent, and the generosity of the community to bring this priceless instrument back to life.

The Iowa Theatre's **3/14 Rhinestone Barton** (right) fared slightly better, having not been totally submerged, but the damage is still quite significant.



Summer



# Bert Kuntz Farewell Concert

By Dave Sauer



Bert Kuntz had played more than 25 Sunday Theatre Organ Concerts at the Towe Auto Museum, but his Farewell Concert on June 22, 2008 was his finest performance. It was a very emotional experience for Bert and the audience of 175 friends and relatives.

Bert's program included a wide variety of popular songs, show tunes, and even a couple of golden oldies recorded by Jesse Crawford. The audience gave Bert a standing ovation after he closed the concert with "God Bless America."

There was a reception following the concert with cake and punch for the audience and an opportunity to take pictures with Bert and tell him how much they had enjoyed his music over the years.

## Directory Assistance

It's that time of year when we publish the new membership directory!

If you have any address, phone, or e-mail changes, please either email to [terry@parklaneblessings.com](mailto:terry@parklaneblessings.com) or

give Terry a call at  
**(916) 863-6344.**

CONGRATULATIONS

### Chapter Officers

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# PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE — CAROL ZERBO

Well, I'm back on the left coast for a short spell but had a great trip back East. You know, dodging thunderstorms, tornados and high humidity. And those east coast folks say they could never live in California because of the earthquakes! Sheesh! It was fun though.

The Tennessee Theatre is very pretty and the Knoxville residents can be justifiably proud of it. I was struck by the odd shape -- very wide and not deep. However, the 3/12 Wurlitzer sounded beautiful--the distance between chambers being very pronounced. Afterward, some of us got a backstage tour. Most impressive! The theatre serves as home for the Opera and lots of stage shows so dressing rooms and prop storage were first class. I was introduced as President of Sierra Chapter/ATOS (red-face and all) and found myself fighting off requests to play. After all, it was a REAL pipe organ -- one lady said "You'll be sorry if you don't" to which my immediate response was "You'll be sorry if I do!"

On to Chicago and the Hopeful Heart fundraiser. Always wonderful -- this year Jelani Eddington and Donna Parker performed and, yup, Lyn played a couple of songs before and

after intermission. Much has been written about the amazing Sanfilippo residence and I agree with Lyn. Now that I have been there a few times and seen all the wonders that Place de la Musique holds, it's fun to just hang around the entrance to the salon and listen to the reactions of the first-timers as they walk in. "Oh My God!" is a pretty common phrase.

Back on Sacramento soil, the picnic at McCluers was fun, as always. Pete has finished the organ and with great results. NorCal members out-numbered Sierra Chapter members (what's up with that?) but, as always, I'm delighted to see them every time. As many as dared layed the organ and I think a good time was had by all. **Thanks, Dianne and Pete for the use of the hall!**

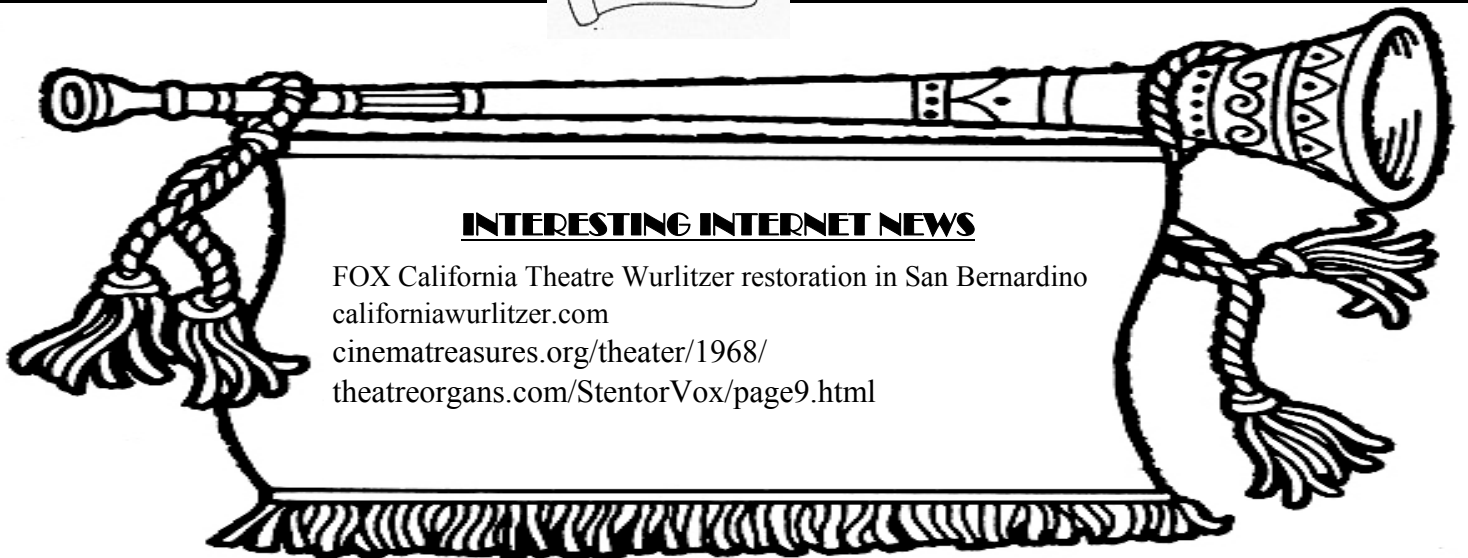
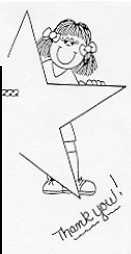
We also bid adieu to one of our favorite local organists -- **Bert Kuntz** is heading back to his hometown. He played a farewell concert to an audience of 175 at the Towe on the 22nd.



**Thanks for the memories, Bert.  
We're gonna miss ya!**

By the time this reaches y'all, quite a few of us will be in Indianapolis at the National ATOS convention. More thunderstorm-dodging but I'm sure it will be worth it!

Our last summer event will be the Ice Cream Social at Fair Oaks Club-house on Sunday, August 3rd. Our artists will be **Matthew Bason from the UK and Greg De Santis from Santa Rosa**. This will be a wonderful afternoon great music and way too much ice cream. Do plan to be there! (Note to Board members-- meeting to follow.) Bye for now, CZ



## INTERESTING INTERNET NEWS

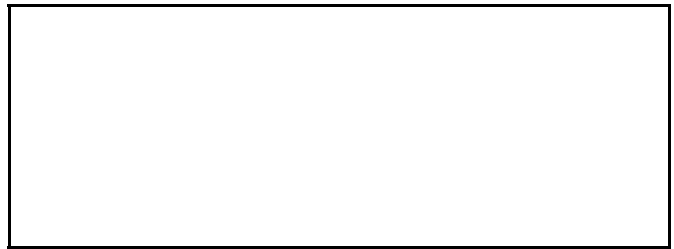
FOX California Theatre Wurlitzer restoration in San Bernardino  
[californiawurlitzer.com](http://californiawurlitzer.com)  
[cinematreasures.org/theater/1968/](http://cinematreasures.org/theater/1968/)  
[theatreorgans.com/StentorVox/page9.html](http://theatreorgans.com/StentorVox/page9.html)



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We are on the Web:  
[sierrachapterATOS.org](http://sierrachapterATOS.org)



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR EVENTS

### SIERRA CHAPTER EVENTS

Fair Oaks Clubhouse  
7997 California Ave

#### Hot August Pipes

**Matthew Bason**  
**Greg De Santis**

**Sunday August 3**  
**2:00 PM**

Admission:  
\$5 Donation



### SIERRA CHAPTER EVENTS

Towe Auto Museum  
2200 Front Street  
916-442-6802



### NOR-CAL TOS EVENT

Berkeley Community Theatre

Sunday November 2  
2:30PM

Jonas Nordwall



### STOCKTON FOX EVENTS

**Friday Jul 11 - 7:00 PM**

Pillow Talk

**Friday Aug 8 - 7:00 PM**

Annie Get Your Gun

*Sierra Chapter ATOS*

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](http://www.atos.org)

