

# The Organ Spiel

NEWSLETTER FOR THE SIERRA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

## Farewell to the California Auto Museum



MARCH 2011



A recent contract renewal between the California Auto Museum and the City of Sacramento, modified a clause which now mandates that upon termination of the contract, the California Auto Museum is required to vacate the building within 30 days.

This affects Sierra Chapter: we would also be required to remove the organ within 30 days if the CAM contract with the City was terminated.

**The Sierra Chapter board determined that this was not a viable option.** This new contract, along with the changing from Friday to Sunday afternoon, has led us to end our relationship with the California Auto Museum and the California Vehicle Foundation.

The Dale Mendenhall Memorial Theatre Pipe Organ was installed into the museum by Sierra Chapter Volunteers, as a project funded by the American Theatre Organ Society in 1991-1992. Other than the console, which was originally installed in the Lowe's State Theatre in St. Louis, the bulk of the organ originally came from the home of Cecil B. DeMille. In 2002, ownership of the organ was transferred from the American Theatre Organ Society to Sierra Chapter, ATOS.

Your Sierra Chapter Board looks at this predicament as an opportunity to place the organ in a venue more suited for a Theatre Organ, perhaps even a THEATRE!

*The Sierra Chapter Board thanks you in advance for your help in relocating the Dale Mendenhall Memorial Theatre Pipe Organ.*



**2011 Pops Concert at Ironstone**  
**Saturday - April 16th**  
**12:30 PM**

**Chris Gorsuch, from San Diego, will be our artist this year at Ironstone. Your ticket price includes the concert and a full luncheon buffet.** Last year, this event sold out quickly, so now is the time to get your tickets

**We have two types of tickets available:**

1. You can drive yourself for \$39, or
2. Leave the driving to us with a leisurely trip on a luxury coach for \$59. See the order form on page 2.

You can also order and pay for tickets directly on our website at [SierraChapterATOS.org](http://SierraChapterATOS.org).

Coach attendees will meet at the California Auto Museum no later than 10:00 AM. If driving, arrive early to tour the grounds.



**This is where Sierra Chapter NEEDS YOUR HELP!**

**We need all suggestions on venues you may be familiar with, that might benefit from a Theatre Organ.**

1. The most desirable locations would be ones which already have chambers built into the facility. This might include churches or school auditoriums that were built in the 1920's.
2. We want to know about other venues, in the Sacramento region, as well: Theatres, performing arts centers, lodges, etc, are all fair game at this point. The Fair Oaks location of our chapter organ was completely off of our radar until a Sierra Chapter member suggested it.

**Another, more urgent need, is a location (preferably free) to store the organ until it can be installed into a new venue.**

1. We think a 3-car garage sized space would do it.
2. Even better would be a space that was large enough to not only store the organ, but have a work area large enough to rehabilitate it prior to re-installation. We need those suggestions as well.



Your Sierra Chapter Board hopes to complete evaluations of new venues by May 31st. The organ must be removed from the CAM by September 2nd. Please send your suggestions to Sierra Chapter President—Carol Zerbo, or any of the board members listed at the bottom of page 2 of this newsletter.

## Ken Double at Fair Oaks

Review by Randy Warwick

ATOS National President Ken Double took his first ever turn at our 3/13 Wurlitzer at the Fair Oaks Club House. Having only about half his usual pre-concert practice time Ken acquitted himself very well with an instrument that is slightly eccentric with the on-stage chambers and Morton console. Dave Moreno and Eric Parker had worked to get the piano back in shape and that added nicely to some of Ken's arrangements. High points for this listener were a carefully and grandly orchestrated arrangement of Strauss's "Voices of Spring" and selections from the recent Broadway hit "The Jersey Boys" which features entirely the music of the sixties pop/rock group "Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons". Several of these songs are approaching 50 years ago since they were hits, so Ken is right on playing the music of the youth for the now 50 to 65 crowd...our potential new members.

Thanks Ken.



## Pops Concert at Ironstone Luxury Coach Ticket Order Form

<p><b>DATE:</b> Saturday, April 16, 2011</p> <p><b>LOCATION:</b> Ironstone Vineyards</p> <p><b>ITINERARY:</b>                  10:00 a.m. - Leave California Auto Museum                  11:30 a.m. - Arrive Ironstone Vineyards                  12:30 p.m. - Luncheon buffet                  2:00 p.m. - Chris Gorsuch concert                  4:30 p.m. - Leave Ironstone Vineyards                  6:00 p.m. - Arrive California Auto Museum</p> <p>Make checks payable to <b>Sierra Chapter, ATOS</b></p> <p>Complete this fill-in order form, then print and mail it with your check to:</p> <p><b>Dave Sauer                  P.O. Box 101                  Sacramento, CA 95812</b></p>	<p>Name <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>Address <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>City <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>State <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>ZIP <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>Phone <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>Email <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p>	<p>Tickets <input style="width: 50%;" type="text"/> x \$59</p> <p>Total Amount \$ <input style="width: 80%;" type="text"/></p> <p style="color: red;">Ticket orders must be postmarked no later than April 11, 2011.</p> <p>No babes in arms or strollers will be admitted.</p> <p>Well-behaved children supervised by an adult are always welcome.</p>
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### Mimi Blais at IL TEMPIO DI MUSICA

Review by Terry & Sherry Clifton



This Ragtime Piano event, at Sierra Chapter Member **Bill Trabucco's Ranch**, was **UNBELIEVABLE!** Mimi is an authority on Ragtime and gave the crowd of about 60 an extremely witty performance!

Mimi explained her contention that **Scott Joplin** is the most Important American Composer by showing us how his *Ragtime*, gave birth to all music following it: *Jazz, Blues, Rock and Roll* all the way to *Hip Hop*. She made the "learning" so much FUN and made her point!!!

Mimi's good friend, Larisa Migachyov, from Palo Alto, joined her for a few duets. At the end of the performance, Mimi pointed at Bill's other "toys" and asked if the audience was interested in hearing those. With a resounding YES,

Larisa sat down at Bill's Harpsichord and played Couperin's "Baricades Misterieuses". After that they did a Harpsichord/Piano duet, playing Joplin's "Bethena"

Then Bill stepped up to his 2/13 "American Classic" organ and played his interpretation of Intermezzo Sinfonico from Mascagni's opera "Cavalleria Rusticana" on the organ. 11 of the 13 ranks of this organ are un-enclosed, but it still has plenty of dynamic range, starting out with an almost reed organ-like sound and ending with full organ to a rousing applause from the audience at the end.

Larisa sat down at the organ, with Mimi at the Piano, and they played Joplin's "Entertainer". Larisa was clearly having fun, as each time she added a new rank and heard the results, she gave us a big smile.

Bill has built a very nice facility on his ranch outside of Nevada City. The building has a high barrel-shaped ceiling that was designed to acoustically compliment the organ installation. **Don't miss out on any future events at the Ranch or of Mimi - You won't be disappointed!**

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# PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE – CAROL ZERBO



What a perfect day to be writing for the Spiel! The wind is howling like a de-ranged pipe organ and its been raining enough to turn a console into, well, something less than functional.

Those who attended our last silent movie at CAM can attest to the somewhat less than ideal conditions for either person or instrument. When you rush inside to get out of the rain and find there is no difference, it kind of puts a, pardon the pun, damper on your evening.

With a 30 day notice to vacate clause written into CVF's new lease with the city, the idea of putting on a new roof seems doubtful. Cars don't mind the rain - organs definitely do! So ends our era with the auto museum.

As the article on the front page says - we need a new home for the Mendenhall organ. There is some work that cannot be done in chambers so a place to store, and restore, would be a blessing and give us time to find the old girl a home where she can be appreciated. In addition to ideas on relocation, when the time comes we will need people to help relocate and repair. Now comes the fun part -- VOLUNTEER to move and work on a genuine theatre pipe organ! Think of it as exercise, education, and entertainment. What

better way to socialize and learn what makes these wonderful instruments sing. I'm starting a list so give me a call or an email.

As you can see, February was a very entertaining month, keyboard-wise. Ken Double attended our Board meeting prior to Sunday's concert and brought us up to date on ATOS's plans. Good stuff happening! All it will take is hard work, organization and money - not exactly a novel game plan but necessary to insure ATOS's future in today's economy and shrinking musical pond.

Those of you who fancy ragtime piano would have appreciated **Mimi Blais's** appearance at member **Bill Trabucco's** in Grass Valley on February 20th. Sounds like great fun and had I not been in Berkeley for **David Peckham's** concert on the same day, I would definitely have been there.

David is the perfect organist to watch on the screen that NorCal has thoughtfully provided. His console management is precise and his fingering technique very easy to follow. Even his feet were fun to watch as he used all of the expression shoes, did a lot of right-foot pedal work and kept the toe studs going.

His playlist was refreshing and varied,

including a presentation of "Peter and the Wolf" with his wife Cathy playing the kettle drums and **Bill Coale** doing the narration. Well done -- most entertaining!

While all that was going on, **Wendell Jacob's** SF Fox lobby organ was being played by Detroit Fox organist, **Dave Calendine** for the Music Box Society. (Has anybody else noticed how many "David"s or "Dave"s there are in the organ world?) Yup - we are blessed with many events to attend and when it finally becomes possible to be in multiple places at once, I shall look forward to them all.

March remains a bit of a mystery since the silent movie series at CAM has been canceled, but rumor has it that Program Chairman, **Craig Peterson**, is working on other venues and events so, don't despair. As I mentioned in last month's Spiel, this is why you need to consult our website, SierraChapterATOS, frequently. It is the source for up to date information on the goings on. AND, for those of you really working in the "cloud", Board member **Bill Coale** is setting us up on (in?) Facebook.

Stay tuned!

Carol Z



2011

## Directory

We need any phone or e-mail address updates, now.

Your 2011 directory will be printed next month.

Please contact Terry Clifton if you have any changes.



### MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome to Returning Members:  
**Bob & Mary Green**

Renewing at the Sustaining Level:  
**Wendell Jacob**  
**Steve Restivo**

BOARD

MEETING



Saturday

March 12th 10:00AM

Home of Carol Zerbo

Open to all Regular Members, but please **RSVP to Carol** if you are planning to attend.

916-624-9182

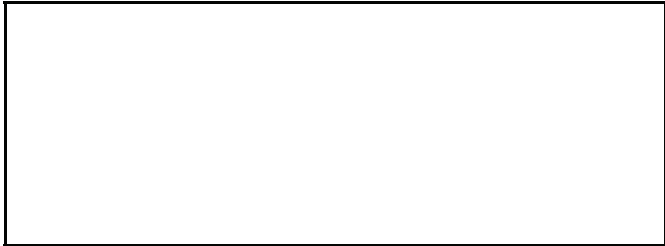




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**sierrachapterATOS.org**  
**youtube.com/SierraChapterATOS**



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**MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR EVENTS**

**SIERRA/NORCAL  
JOINT EVENT**



**Ironstone Vineyards  
Murphys, California**

**Saturday April 16th  
12:30PM**

**Chris Gorsuch**

**\$39/Drive it yourself  
\$59/Luxury Coach**

**NORCAL CHAPTER EVENT**

Berkeley Community Theatre  
1900 Allston Way

**Sunday March 13th  
2:30 PM**

**JERRY NAGANO**

**Norcal Members  
Only!**

\$10 Associate Memberships available at the door for Sierra Chapter Members

**\$15/General**



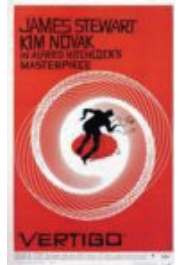
**STOCKTON FOX EVENT**

**VERTIGO**

**Friday Mar 11  
6:30PM**

**\$8/Adults**

Featuring  
**Tom Thompson**  
On the  
Mighty Morton



**Harmony Wynelands Event**

9291 East Harney Lane, Lodi

**An Evening with  
Harry Langdon**

Featuring **DAVE MORENO** on  
the Castro Theatre Pipe Organ  
**Friday Mar 18 7:30PM**

**\$12/Adults \$10/Harmony Club  
Reservations necessary (209) 369-4164**

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)