

# The Organ Spiel

NEWSLETTER FOR THE SIERRA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

OPEN CONSOLE/POTLUCK/CONCERT



SEPT - OCT 2011

## ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Greg De Santis is a San Francisco native now living in Santa Rosa. After several forays into other musical genres as diverse as renaissance winds and bluegrass, he has settled on the organ



as his instrument of choice, once and for all. Early classical organ studies led to a 1st prize at the 1981 San Francisco A.G.O. Chapter Young Organist's Competition. After hearing a Theatre Pipe Organ for the first time 'in-theatre' he contacted the late James C. Roseveare for coaching at the Oakland Paramount from 1986-1988. With the help and encouragement of the Sierra chapter he has mentored with Jonas Nordwall and coached with Lyn Larsen. He has previously performed for the Sierra chapter on the Fair Oaks chapter organ and at Hunter Hall in Rio Vista. This will be his second appearance in Shingle Springs.

## WHAT—Open Console and Potluck

**PLUS:** Theatre Organ Concert by Greg DeSantis on Pete's 3/19 Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ

**WHERE - Home of Pete and Dianne McCluer**  
(see insert for address and directions)

**WHEN - Saturday September 17 - 11:00AM**

Everyone please bring a main dish, plus either a salad or dessert. Please bring your own plates and utensils. Drinks and napkins will be provided.

Open Console will start at 11:00AM, followed by lunch at Noon, followed by the Concert with Greg DeSantis.

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The great organ move of 2011 is underway!

By David Dewey

*Volunteers taking a break! back row left to right: John Casner from ODBA, City of Oroville Museum docents George Cairo and Bob Harness, Kathy Neal from Creative Arts Center, Linda Dewey from STAGE, Terry Clifton & Dave Moreno from ATOS. front row: ATOS volunteers Randy Warwick and Carol Zerbo, STAGE volunteers Pam Casner and David Dewey.*

*Photo by John Casner.*



Already a hard-working crew of both Sierra members and STAGE folks have removed and carefully crated all the 8' and under pipes, and the console is on display in the Oroville State Theatre lobby. The Labor Day weekend will see another group of workers taking the base pipes, chests, percussions and toy counter parts out of the chambers.

One truckload of parts included a group of pipes that were too long for the pickup bed, so they were

carefully tied down with the toes sticking out. We joked that it looked like a battery of missiles, and while headed north on I-5, a car tailed the truck, taking pictures, then took off! We weren't stopped, and haven't read anything in the papers --yet.

We do want to thank all the hard workers who have slaved over this removal, in less-than ideal conditions--it's pretty warm up in those chambers! We have had more support than we had hoped for and really appreciate all the help.

# Pass the Pipes!

by Pamela Casner



Cathy Neal - Packing Pipes  
Photo by John Casner

When I volunteered to help move the organ I didn't really know what was involved. Yes, a Theater Pipe Organ is coming to the State Theatre in Downtown Oroville and I figured that's a good thing. So I planned on helping wrap pipes since that job didn't require a lot of strength and I was sure I could handle that part of the job.

John and I arrived at the California Automobile Museum in Sacramento one morning last month for the first day of the move. I thought it was a strange place to have an organ. There were 10 volunteers ready to help and 1 professional directing us. I began my work wrapping pipes and I was amazed at the shapes and sizes that were passed down the ladder from the overhead lofts. It was rack after rack of pipes of all shapes and sizes.

First the violins, piccolos, tubas, trumpets, oboes, clarinets and flutes. I don't play any instruments except occasionally humming on a harmonica so I didn't really appreciate what was happening. In fact we were packing up an entire orchestra.

The theatre pipe organ is a complex musical instrument that is truly a one-man-orchestra. This is much more than the organs I am familiar with in churches. Dave Moreno, the professional mover, would occasionally pick up one of the pipes and blow through it and exclaim, "that's a trumpet!" or "a flute" or "a violin."

Original theater organs are quite rare and only a few survive. The Wurlitzer for the State Theatre was assembled with parts from many organs. The "core" organ was first owned by Cecil B. DeMille, the famous Hollywood director, and was originally in the Lowes State Theatre of

St. Louis Missouri. The Sierra Chapter of the American Theater Organ Society (ATOS) acquired the organ in the early 1990's. Last month an agreement was signed by STAGE (Oroville's State Theatre Arts Guild), ATOS and the Mt. Shasta Theatre Society which allowed this organ to come to Oroville.

At this time the console is in the State Theatre lobby and nearly 1200 pipes, chests and tubing are in storage. This is just the first step of many to bring the theater alive with music from our organ. There are different projects ranging from cleaning and repairing pipes to building walls.

The final hours of my volunteer time were spent "passing the pipes" from the lofts to the stage where other volunteers were wrapping and packing. The pencil size pipes, the sixteen foot pipes, the round metal pipes and the square wood pipes. Many volunteers and four days of moving organ parts is just the beginning.

STAGE will continue fundraising for our Organ and is responsible for finishing this Theatre project. If you are interested in donating money please contact Jim Moll, STAGE president, at Stifle Nicolaus, (530) 534-8021. If you would like to donate time contact David Dewey at (530) 589-3676.



## Pot Luck / Concert

Home of **Pete & Dianne McCluer**

**Saturday, September 17: 11:00 AM** 5001 Mistywood Lane Shingle Springs

### Chapter Officers

#### President

2nd term expires Dec 2011  
**Carol Zerbo**  
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E-Mail: cazbo@sbcglobal.net

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2nd term expires Dec 2012  
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2nd term expires Dec 2012  
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# PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE - CAROL ZERBO



Well - the Dale Mendenhall organ is on the move in pieces - lots of pieces! On Thursday, August 18th, a crew of 7 from Mt Shasta ATOS/ Oroville State theatre met **Dave Moreno, Randy Warwick, Terry Clifton** and *moi* at CAM and we began the process of disconnecting the old girl from her 19 year abode. As an organ relocation neophyte, I can tell you that it is #1fun, #2 hard work, #3 great exercise, # 4 a wonderful way to meet new people and and watch their reactions as they learn what these remarkable machines did and continue to do. I lost count of the number of times I heard "I had no idea....." in various incarnations, like "this is what a pipe organ really looks like" or "there was this much stuff involved in making the music".

On Friday, the 19th, it was same song, second verse: remove pipe, hand down the ladder, pass off to someone who would deliver same to a table to be wrapped and packed in waiting trays. The museum was its usual toasty self for August, but at the end of the day a couple of gentlemen from Oroville told me how much they had enjoyed themselves and appreciated the opportunity to help. I think they are in it for the long haul - literally and figuratively and I sincerely hope there are more people in Oroville like that.

The console is now sitting in the lobby of

the Oroville State Theatre and I believe the intention is to post progress reports on the relocation of the "you gotta be kidding!" parts. As I write this, well over half of the organ has been relocated to a warehouse in Oroville where some long-needed repair and restoration work will be done. The Museum Director has indicated that the September 2nd deadline for removal is not cast in stone but I am pretty sure that the Mt. Shasta Chapter and the Oroville State Theatre will feel more comfortable when the whole organ is, once again, in one place.

Assuming enthusiasm is contagious, the organ's new champions, David and Linda Dewey, should be able to muster up enough retired electricians, plumbers, carpenters and handymen (or women), and financial support to enable Sierra Chapter's gift to come back to life. But while parts of her are still here, any Sierra Chapter members who wish to are welcome to help us at the CAM. We must work around the museum's availability and David Dewey's work schedule so advance notice for work days might be short. Please contact David at [djedewey@cncnet.com](mailto:djedewey@cncnet.com) or call him at 530-589-3676 and we'll be real happy to see ya!

Event wise - our Hot August Pipes ice cream social on August 7th at Fair Oaks went quite well. Many thanks to Craig Browning for his jazz organ stylings. This was a change

for us and Craig found some good sounds to compliment his tunes. All we needed to complete the air of a jazz nightclub was the smoke-filled room. NOT!! But, of course, it was a great excuse to eat all that lovely ice cream with decadent toppings provided by **Craig and Tom**. No question that the past couple of events have highlighted the theatre pipe organ's ability to play nicely with voices and other instruments and present music not normally heard.

The Piano and Pipes Ragtime Trio concert at **Wendell Jacob's** home on July 30th was great fun with more good food. The audience of ragtime devotees and organ fans were treated to organ solos and vocals from fellow Board member **Bill Coale**, and remarkable piano duets and solos from Jack and Chris Bradshaw. And sometimes they were all playing at the same time! KUDOS y'all! Next stop - the Ragtime Festival!

I hope to see y'all at **Pete and Dianne McCluer's** home on September 17th. Greg DeSantis has graciously agreed to play for us again. So, for those who missed him at Hunter Hall - here's one more chance. He is definitely worth the drive to Shingle Springs.

Happy Fall,  
Carol



## BOARD MEETING



Saturday  
September  
10th  
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**



### MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome New Members:

- Tim Laskey - Contributing
- Homer & Carol Lundberg - Sustaining
- Joanne Siver - Friend
- Roberta Thompson - Friend

Welcome Back:  
Curtis Spencer



## Nominating Committee

It is the time of the year to start thinking about how you can become a more active member of Sierra Chapter. Available positions for 2012, include President and two Board members. If you are interested, please contact any of the members of the Nominating Committee:

- Beverly Harris** 916/332-2837
- Jim Leach** 916/797-9125
- Carol Zerbo** 916/624-9182



P.O. Box 2017  
Fair Oaks, California 95628

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# MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR EVENTS

## SIERRA CHAPTER EVENT

### *Pot Luck / Concert*

Home of  
**Pete & Dianne McCluer**

5001 Mistywood Lane  
Shingle Springs

**Saturday, Sept 17th  
11:00AM**

Artist: Greg DeSantis

## SIERRA CHAPTER EVENT

### SILENT MOVIES & DESSERT POTLUCK

**Saturday, October 22 2:00PM**

Wendell Jacob's Music Room  
48 College Park - Davis

Comedy films scored by Dave Moreno at the  
Fox Lobby 3/14 Moller Pipe Organ

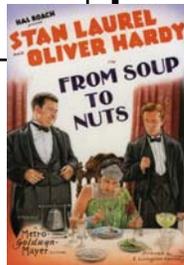
Laurel & Hardy

**FROM SOUP TO NUTS (1928)**

Harold Lloyd  
**HOT WATER (1924)**

\*Plus a silent cartoon!  
Please bring a Dessert  
to share.

Free, but donations are  
always welcome.



## STOCKTON FOX EVENT

### *All the King's Men*

**Friday Sep-  
tember 30**

**6:30PM**

**\$8/Adults**

Featuring



*Tom Thompson  
On the Mighty Morton*

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)

