

STOPRATT

Arizona Chapter of The American Theatre Organ Society

Since 1976
Volume Thirty Five ♦ Issue Six ♦ June ♦ Two Thousand Ten

In This Issue

- I June Meeting
- I Shirt Sales Help
- I Extravaganza

- 2 Membership Info
- 2 Board Members
- 2 Fun at Fizzell's

- 3 College work info
- 3 Upcoming Events
- 3 Member Profile
- 3 Letters

- 4 Vic LaFave
- 4 Board Minutes

- 5 Rosa Rio

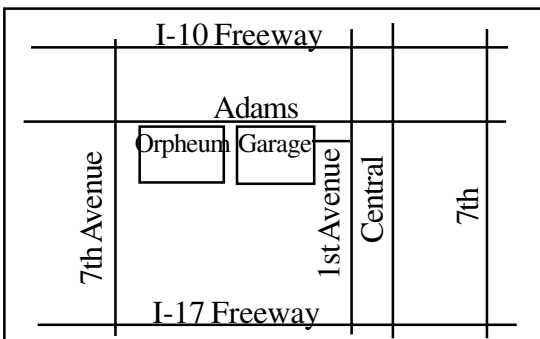
- 6 Marketplace
- 6 Birthdays
- 6 Organ too loud?

VOTS/ATOS
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Orpheum Theatre June 6th!

We get to go to our favorite venue this month on June 6th at 2:30 pm. A new dude, Mark Hawn, has graciously agreed to tackle the Wurlitzer. He was a runner up in the 1993 Young Theatre Organist Competition and in 1996 he was the winner. Of course he is right at home on the bench. The Arizona Chapter of the International Special Events Society had a meeting and dinner at the Orpheum Theatre last August. They requested that the organ be played as they entered the auditorium and at the grand curtain opening to reveal the lavish stage, set up for a formal dinner. Mark Hawn agreed to play for that event at the last minute and did an outstanding job. You won't want to miss this. He is excellent!

ORPHEUM PARKING The Orpheum Theatre is at 203 West Adams in downtown Phoenix. You will find parking in the garage directly east of the theatre. The entrance to the garage is on First Avenue, south of Adams. It's best to use a freeway exit near the west side of downtown, 7th Avenue is a good choice. Or you can find a parking space on the street near the Orpheum. You can take the light rail also to avoid parking.



A grand lady passes on

I hope there are theatre pipe organs in heaven because Rosa must be there. Stories and more photos on page five.



Rosa Rio (at age 105) and me on the bench of a Page Theatre organ in 2007.
Chaz L. Bender II, Florida
President Manasota Theatre Organ Society

Help Wanted

We need someone to take charge of the sales of the shirts, jackets and hats etc. from Desert Winds. We still owe money to the man who made the items for us, so it would be nice if we could settle our bill with him. Call Bill Carr if you can take this job. 623-694-1746 or e-mail him at: billcarr3.vots.atos@cox.net

Our Focus is on Silent Films

We will not be putting on the December Extravaganza this year. We will focus our time and energies on putting on four Silent Saturdays films and make it a profitable venue this season. This decision was made by Bill Carr, based on the responses to his request for input and opinions from the board. Replies were due by May 15th.

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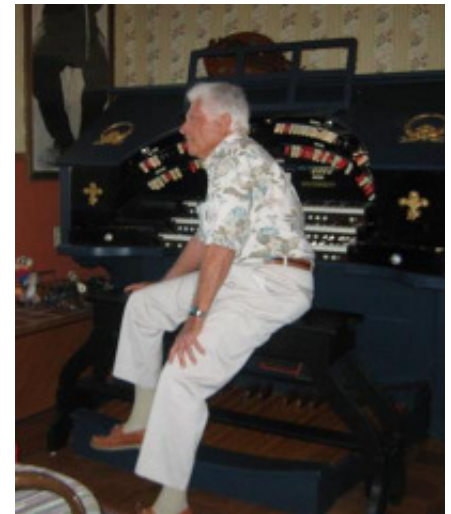


Great program by Bill Irwin

We solved the problem of folks not attending events at the Fizzell's because of the steep path going up to the back door. Tom just acquired a great battery operated cart which folks can ride on the back, or take it up the path themselves. Also, Bill Carr has a nifty scooter and can give rides right to the door! Next time, we got it covered!

Bill Irwin played an exceptional program. When he was practicing earlier in the week, he said he was going to play slower pieces for a change. Yeah, right, Bill. (He actually

did refrain from playing the chase.) He wrote a song - *Who Put The Fizz in Fizzell*, complete with lyrics, just for this program. He played and sang it, much to the delight of the audience, and handed out copies of it. Thanks Bill for this personal touch! He played many old standards - *That's Entertainment*, *Embraceable You*, *Stardust*, *Smoke Gets In Your Eyes*, and a couple of medleys of old time tunes. He played *Lover* in honor of Lena Horne, who passed away last week. We also learned some great ways to dress up our music. Bill is always a teacher, and when he takes the bench we always learn something new. He finished up his afternoon with a great joke. He can't resist! Thank you Bill for your extra care and expertise in planning this great program!



Several members brought snacks to share. Yummy cakes, cheese, chips, brownies and even cheesecake! Thanks everybody! First line of the Fizz tune: *Who put the Fizz into Fizzell? That is the Quiz, but I'll never tell.*

Irma Furtney, a VOTS member from the late 70s-early 80s time period, recently donated her husbands old Theatre Organ records to VOTS. President Bill decided to sell them at this meeting. All of the George Wright ones went to one fan. They will be available at future meeting until they are gone.

The Stoprail

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The Valley of the Sun Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society is a recognized tax exempt educational and charitable organization under section 501-C-3 of the Internal Revenue Code and is a nonprofit corporation organized in the state of Arizona.

Phoenix College Work Dates

If you can work on the organ at Phoenix College, call Bill Carr at 623-694-1746 for the June schedule and to let him know you are coming.

Getting to know you

Frederick (Skipp) Lovejoy

Way back when I was young during the great depression, I had childhood dreams of having my own famous big band like the Dorsey's, Glen Gray, Harry James, Benny Goodman and Glenn Miller. Eventually my ambitions and plans were shattered through some wicked twists of fate, and I went on to other dreams and real life challenges. However, I never forgot my childhood ambition to lead an orchestra and my love for the sounds and styles of the music of my early years. Then out of the blue in the summer of my eightieth year, while attending the International Jazz Festival in Montreal, I became fascinated by the potential of acquiring a digital keyboard. I was hooked and upon returning to Scottsdale, soon ended up with four of these digital wonders! I saw the challenge of integrating these keyboards into a console so that I could play all of them at the same time and create the great sounds of my favorite big bands, Broadway musicals and wonderful music from the past and present. After many false starts and trials, I completed the project on my 82nd birthday! I designed, assembled and now play simultaneously, four digital keyboards that have been integrated into a four manual console performance arranger/workstation that can recreate the musical sounds & styles of the big band/Broadway musical era, and may be used for recording purposes. A major inspiration and influence in the design were the famous Wurlitzer unit orchestra theatre organs of the early 20th century. Who says dreams can't come true? It's just that sometimes success takes just a bit longer!



Letters to the editor

Your place for opinions, recognition, venting, complaints and compliments.

Send letters to beverlyfz2@cox.net or Beverly Fizzell 2201 East Siesta Drive Phoenix Arizona 85042 We can even include photos with your letter!

From Beverly: I am so spoiled - Look at what Madeline says:

From Madeline: Thanks for all your effort. I did the newsletter for years, way back when, and I didn't have the luxury of the computer's cut and paste and spellcheck. That was back in the days of typing it on a stencil and mimeographing at least two hundred copies so we could qualify for bulk mailing.

From Frederick Lovejoy:

The Orpheum venue is beautiful, thanks especially to the efforts of Del and Jewel Lewis. VOTS should be commended for the great work done on the Orpheum Theatre organ. I am truly interested in, appreciate and support the restoration of historic theatre pipe organs. I attended a silent movie some time back, which featured two silent shorts with music by Ron Rhode. I feel that the market for this sort of thing is very limited and it will be hard to make such shows a financial success. Perhaps it would be appropriate to think through carefully and review whether the current Phoenix College effort to bring back to life the organ there is appropriate, considering the condition of our economy and the fact that at best it is a composite and in my mind, not truly historic.

2010-II Calendar of Events

Some events are in the planning stage and might change

Sunday June 6, 2:30 pm Orpheum Theater with Mark Hawn

Mon-Fri July 19 - 23 We are hosting the Youth Camp again this year.

Wednesday July 21 Evening Potluck with Youth Camp students at FCC

Sunday August 2:30 - Ice Cream Social - FCC- more to come

Sunday October -Organ Stop Pizza - more info to come

Saturday October 30 - Silent Saturdays Film at Orpheum

Sunday November - Orpheum Theatre - more info to come

Saturday November 20 - Silent Saturdays Film at Orpheum

December- Christmas party - location to be announced

Saturday December 18 - Extravaganza at Orpheum is Canceled

Saturday February 26, 2011- Silent Saturdays Film at Orpheum

Saturday April 9, 2011 - Silent Saturdays Film at Orpheum

More information: Hassell Moores 623-215-2953 hmoores@cox.net



From Jim Hamra:

Your newsletters are always newsy and professional; thank you. Kimberly Marshall is the director of the ASU School of Music and an organ professor. Perhaps she could be added to your mailing list so that we might get some of her students interested with our group. Jim

From Susan Fancher:

I hope that one day I will be able to join in on more of your great events! Your wonderful thoughts, prayers & condolences have helped me so much; I am grateful to each & every one of you. My dear husband Jack enjoyed meeting you when he was able to attend. My greetings to all, Susan Fancher :-)

Vic Lafave

Vic has been in and out of the hospital for over a month now. He was doing well with his leukemia but got the shingles. The virus went into his spine which caused a lot of problems. To top that off he had a stroke. He's now in a nursing home near our house having more rehab. He's not able to walk alone but his mind is coming back a lot, sight, etc. Whether he'll ever be able to get back home is doubtful but his spirits all through this has been amazing. We will probably not be attending any more VOTS affairs, so just thought I should let you know. Prayers would be appreciated. Good luck to you and everyone there. Jinny LaFave

You can e-mail Jinny at v.lafave@comcast.net

VOTS/ATOS Board Meeting Minutes

The VOTS/ATOS board meeting was held Saturday, May 1, 2010 at the Phoenix College Bullpitt Auditorium. Attending were Bill Carr, Madeline LiVolsi, Adrian Phillips III, Pete Knobloch, Don Reasor, Warren Bechhoefer, Tom Fizzell and Beverly Fizzell. Also attending were Fred Watson, Don Story, Johnny Sharp, Mark Crenshaw and John Rich. The meeting was called to order at 2:35 p.m.

The secretary read the minutes from the March 6, 2010 meeting. Pete Knobloch made one correction regarding the vibraharp at the Orpheum Theatre. Warren moved to accept the minutes as amended, second by Don Story. Motion passed. **Adrian presented the treasurer's report.** We currently have \$3117.61 in checking, \$1285.63 in the money market, and \$1016.16 in savings, for a total of \$5419.40. We lost \$2750 on Silent Saturdays. Adrian will give information to Pete regarding the tax audit. Don Reasor moved to accept the treasurer's report, second by Warren. The motion passed.

Vice-president/program chairman Hassell Moores was absent, so Bill Carr gave an update on chapter activities. May will be Bill Irwin at the Fizzell residence; June is Mark Hawn at the Orpheum; in July we will be at First Christian Church with the ATOS Youth Camp; August will be an ice cream social at FCC; September is to be announced; October will be a pizza buffet at Organ Stop; November will be at the Orpheum, artist to be announced; there will be a Christmas party in December; Christmas at the Orpheum is December 18, 2010.

Newsletter Beverly said that there are no problems regarding the newsletter.

Crew Chief Reports At the Orpheum, two sets of gaskets were replaced on two ranks. Nothing new at First Christian Church. At Phoenix College, Tom made a new backrail for the console; both keyboards are working, with some dead notes which will be fixed. Bill reported that the contract is under way with the Maricopa County Community College District

Membership Ed Benoit was absent, but it was reported that we have one new member.

Silent Saturdays There was lengthy discussion regarding Silent Saturdays. Some of the points covered included: will we continue to do it?

we take a loss on nearly every film

possibility of going with Ticketmaster

are we reaching senior citizens?

do we need to get younger people involved

how many people might show up if we gave free tickets

we should drop it because we keep losing money

we need to keep it going as a service to the community

maybe better to focus on just one film

getting other organizations to underwrite the films

we need at least two films to help Gateway students meet their requirements for class

we need more volunteers and more donations

Bill asked that all board members relay their feelings about Silent Saturdays to him by May 15 so we can decide which direction to go with the project.

Christmas At the Orpheum There was lengthy discussion regarding Christmas At the Orpheum. Many ideas, questions, suggestions, and concerns were brought forth. Chapter members attending that are not board members added much to the discussion. Warren made a motion that we should proceed with the Christmas At the Orpheum project, and we should have projected costs, projected acts, and all personalities involved including promotion by June 15, 2010, with an absolute drop-dead date of July 15, 2010. Tom seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion passed.

Open Discussion

Pete asked how the contract with the city is going. Adrian said that we are no further than we were last time.

Each time there is a committee meeting, a report should be sent to all board members.

The next board meeting will be June 5, 2010. Warren moved to adjourn, second by Tom. The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Madeline LiVolsi

Sadly, Rosa Rio died May 14th, 2010



She broke her hip about 6 weeks ago but was doing very well, having gotten out of the hospital in only one week. She would have been 108 in June. She was one of three organists who opened with the New Orleans Saenger in 1927 and was married to John Hammond the featured organist. After Katrina she sent me a note and asked if they had raised the organ console. She loved the theatre and the Robert Morton Organ was one of her favorite organs. I had hoped that she might play it again. She often asked how the theatre was doing and I had sent her notes on the restoration. She had a great life still playing concerts at 107. Anyone would hope to do so well. She was a very kind and caring person who will be greatly missed.

Barry



Rosa Rio at Tampa Theatre's Mighty Wurlitzer Theatre Organ on May 28, 2006.

See and hear her play in u-tube videos from Tampa Theatres' website: <http://www.tampatheatre.org/Rosa.php>

A silent film-era musician passes away at 107

Marian Gail Brown, Staff Writer Published: Saturday, May 15, 2010

Inside a house that Rosa Rio's neighbors nicknamed "the cave," strains of organ and piano music often wafted out for all to hear. The sound came from Rio's studio, where students took lessons on the half dozen or so organs and pianos that filled the room.

"Folks called her home 'the cave' because part of it -- the portion that fronted the street -- appeared to be underground," says Tom Nichio, who grew up on Mill Street in Shelton near Rio. "She gave lessons to a great many kids in the neighborhood. She lived for her music. She always wanted me to play the organ," Nichio says, "but I had other ideas. I was set on drums."

Rio, who began her professional career at the tender age of 10, was considered a child musical prodigy. She got her first paying gig playing organ to accompany the silent films of Mary Pickford, Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin.

She was born Elizabeth Raub on June 2, 1902, the eldest of Kenny and Mary Etta Raub's two daughters. She changed her name, her relatives say, because she believed it fit better on theatre marquees.

Rio's professional career spanned close to a century. She was married to Bill Yeoman, who was also her manager, for 63 years. She retired only last summer after her 107th birthday.

In numerous interviews she gave over the years, she conceded that she had spent decades lying about her age to such an extent that she no longer remembered how old she was. "Honey, age is just a number," Rio told a St. Petersburg Times reporter in 1999, "and mine's unlisted." Because her family never celebrated birthdays, her grandson, Claude Hammond of Chicago, says relatives never really knew her age.

"She was so youthful, so energetic and glamorous," Hammond says, "I really had no idea she was 107 years old. I was kind of surprised to learn that."

Rio and her husband made their home in Shelton for close to 40 years before moving in 1993 to Sun City Center in Florida.

Rio transitioned to radio, where she provided the background organ music to shows that included "The Shadow," "When a Girl Marries." She hosted her own radio program, "Rosa Rio Rhythms," and did some of the recording for it from her Connecticut home, where she built a sound-proof studio.

Rio spent 22 years in radio, working in the NBC orchestra and later with ABC network. Initially, she was hired as a temporary member of the orchestra, her grandniece Linda Cannon says. "They really wanted a man for the job. There was a lot of (sex) discrimination then. But Rosa won them over. She asked them if they wanted a man or an organist?"

Rio then moved into television, according to Theatre Organ: the Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society. On the small screen, Rio set the mood on soap operas such as "As the World Turns."

Rio is survived by her husband, 3 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.



More info on the Tampa Theatre website:
<http://www.tampatheatre.org/Rosa.php>

Here is where to find a great interview with Rosa last year:

<http://www.wtsp.com/video/default.aspx?bctid=50747644001#/2009%20interview%20with%20Rosa%20Rio/50747644001>

Marketplace

Rates

Have something to sell or buy? To place your ad, call Beverly Fizzell at 602-243-9546 or e-mail information to beverlyfz2@cox.net. She can also help you write your ad. Send by the 20th for next month's Stoprail.

Business Card	one year \$90.00	one month \$10.00
Member Card	one year \$70.00	one month \$6.00
Classified Ads	one issue \$10.00	or free to members
Add a photo to your ad - \$5.00		

Donation needed:

Phoenix Rescue Mission needs a portable keyboard. Donate one to them and receive a tax deduction. Contact Keith Miller at 623-572-1374



Are you having a DEVIL of a time with the tedious job of balancing your checkbook? Forget to pay bills? No time for these tasks?

Here's Pat the Accounting Angel to the rescue! Let me take care of your personal financial chores for you! I have over 20 years of Clerical experience and I am Quickbooks certified! Call 602-368-2128 or e-mail me at: aangelpat@aol.com for a free estimate.

We wish you a Happy Birthday!



Birthday time! A slice of cake goes out to our June birthday cake eaters - Joyce Ehlers, Susan Fancher, Timothy Kreifels, June Levy, Joan McFadden, John Baker, Lew Williams, John Romick, Jim Bell, Ray Ratajczak, Mark

Crenshaw and Phyllis Lowe. If we missed yours, let us know. So, blow out those candles and have a good time!

We want to wish you a **HAPPY BIRTHDAY** when your special day comes. Let us know the month and day, and we will be tickled to put it in the Stoprail.

Just let Ed Benoit know at 623-327-1437 e-mail WurliTzer@q.com

Patter in defense of loud organs, excerpts from an ongoing Facebook conversation:

No the organ is not too loud, you're just not singing loud enough!

A pipe organ should NEVER be considered only as a background instrument. I love to hear a good pipe organ really cut loose.

Why buy a big organ if you don't open it up now and then? When I was younger playing my first job (in high school) anytime anyone told me the organ was too loud was when I floored the crescendo!

There's no such thing as an organ that is too loud. If your liver's not vibrating, you're not doing it right.

OH YEAH! Shut up, old aunts and grandmothers! Those tiny little organs are far from loud!

We'd all sing louder if you didn't all play in such a damned useless key - you're always far too high or too low for most normal people.

My motto is: If the organ is too loud, then you're too old.

No the organ is not too loud, you just need to wear ear plugs! Or, you're standing too close.

I like when the organ is too loud. It drowns out the mistakes.

Sopranos always have the ability to sing louder than the organ!

If you think "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name" should be played with just 8ft and 4ft stops, you're in the wrong place!

You think I'm too loud?? Ha! I'm not loud! Loud would be 100" reeds and 64' Gravissimas.

The organ is loud enoughget use to it!

I actually once had someone complain that my postlude was too loud because the people in the narthex couldn't hear themselves chat. I said, "Since when does idle chat take precedence over Holy Mass?" (Postludes aren't really part of the Mass in Catholic worship, but are still very often added by custom.)

Organs are made to be played loudly.

You can do a quick assessment of an instrument's dynamic range by first hitting the cancel piston (all stops off) with all swell shades closed. Gradually add stops by depressing the crescendo pedal and gradually depress the swell pedals fully in. For the finale put in all the couplers. The better the instrument the greater the dynamic range. A good instrument will blow you away!! I love to hear the dynamic capabilities of a really good instrument shown off by a good organist.