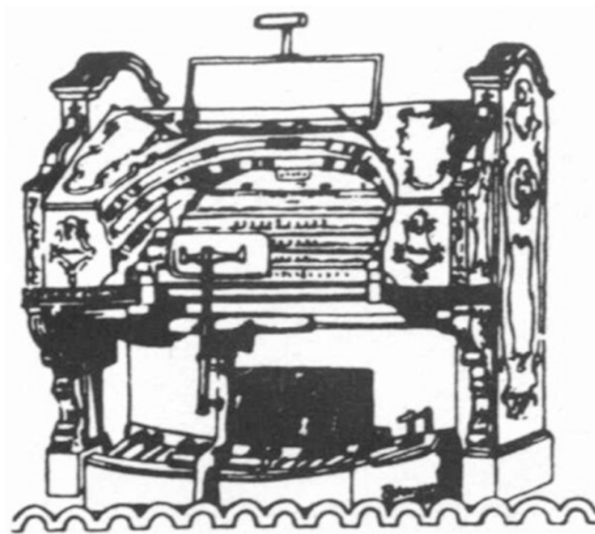


PROMOTION MARKETING & ADVERTISING

101

(July 2008 Edition)



A compilation of “how-to” articles appearing in
Theatre Organ from 2001 to 2008

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PROMOTION MARKETING & ADVERTISING 101

(July 2008)

A COMPILATION OF “HOW-TO” ARTICLES APPEARING IN THEATRE ORGAN FROM 2001 TO 2008

The following selected articles have been reprinted from issues of Theatre Organ and represent a variety of ideas and suggestions relating to marketing, advertising, promotion, and fundraising for theatre organ events.

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PART ONE: THE ABC'S OF P-M-A

A How-To Guide for **PROMOTIONS, MARKETING, AND ADVERTISING**

By Ken Double

I have been threatening to do this for years as old Mr. Procrastination reared his ugly head. But after suffering through our worst-attended concert season in years at the Long Center in Lafayette, I thought it a good time to go over the basics of marketing and promotion for a concert event or series, and also offer some tips to all ATOS Chapters on packaging events with radio stations and sponsors to help drive ticket sales and overall income.

Over the next several issues, material will be presented that will cover the following areas:

- Budgeting—so that you know your bottom line costs and profit potential;
- Pricing—the days of the \$5 and \$8 ticket are over if you want a profitable show;
- Making each concert a “special event” which will add to its drawing power;
- Publicity—from mailing lists to brochures to press releases;
- The Marketing Package—how to match radio stations with sponsors to generate hundreds and thousands of dollars in sponsorship money.

The ideas and the tools to be presented over the next several issues of the Journal are basic promotional steps that I have learned in the last 20 years in my sports broadcasting career. More importantly, these are basic ideas that I incorporated in our series at Long Center. From 1987 to 1997, the Long Center organ series enjoyed corporate underwriting for most of the concerts. That underwriting ranged from as little as \$500 per concert to \$1,000 per concert. In addition, we were successful in selling advertising in our print programs for as little as \$25 to as high as \$75 per ad. For a four-year span, our season ticket base reached 550 tickets, and our average attendance was approximately 750 tickets per concert. Our net profit per year was \$20–25,000, most of which was poured back into the costs of the 1989–91 rebuild of the Long Center Wurlitzer. I mention this past history for two reasons: first, to remind myself that

it can be done; and secondly, to let you know these strategies work.

Your chapter will need some manpower (or, “people” power in this age of political correctness!). This can come in the form of a committee of chapter members, knowing that at least one person in this committee must have solid business background, and must be able to make a strong, in-person sales “pitch” to potential sponsors and radio partners. If this is not readily available in your chapter, then you will have to muster the financial resources to hire an ad agency to help with this work. More on that later.

WE ARE IN THE EVENT PRESENTATION BUSINESS

Those of us presenting theatre organ concerts are in the same business as *Disney On Ice*, *Ringling Bros. And Barnum and Bailey Circus*, movies, and other live concert events. We are trying to sell tickets to our brand of entertainment. We just don't have the same budget and resources the others do, and thus, we have to get a little more creative.

The basic idea in promoting your event is to give as many people as possible every opportunity possible to know about your event, understand its special nature, and determine that they want to buy a ticket to that event. To help them make that determination, we must promote well in advance, through every avenue possible, and make the event special.

In the 1960s, it was enough to just announce the old Wurlitzer plays again, and sell the nostalgia of a memorable night at the old movie palace. That's not enough anymore. At the risk of upsetting some long-time ATOSers, two hours of the organist's back won't sell to the general public. Yes, WE love it, but we are in the vast minority, and that fact is proven by the hundreds of empty seats at most of our events (this expressed with apologies to venues like Dickinson and others that DO draw well).

What can make an event more special? Something simple like a silent film adds to the “sale-ability” of a concert. Use piano with the organ, or add a vocalist or other instrumentalist to the bill. Do a “Keyboard Spectacular” and

bring an electronic classic instrument onto the stage and sell to the AGO audience. Do something special or something different to add spice to the program, and offer the public another reason to buy a ticket.

For those who will complain "I come to hear the organ!" I suggest then that they underwrite the whole event and they can have exactly what they want. If we are to sell to the general public, it will be easier to sell a variety event as opposed to just two hours of sobbing Tibias.

TOOLS AND TIMING

Once you have decided on your artist and your event, or better yet, your series of concerts, there are certain tools you have at your disposal for promoting the event, and there is proper timing involved in making the best use of these tools.

Tool	Timing
Mailing List	Word out at least two months in advance
Concert/Season ticket brochure	Sent out at least two months in advance
Press Release/ Media List	Distributed to media one month in advance
Print ads/Radio spots	Prepared one month in advance
Fliers/Posters	Mailed/displayed two weeks in advance

Your press release should be distributed to EVERY radio station, TV station and newspaper in a multi-county area. Sometimes, the weekly newspapers in small surrounding communities can do a better job for you than the big-city papers. In this day of e-mail, it is sometimes easier to distribute photos along with a release to print media in this method. FOLLOW UP the release with a call to make sure it was received. Try and develop a relationship with your media partners. That personal contact will help get your release published.

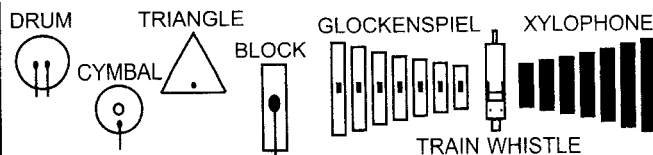
If your group produces a multi-concert series each year, it is best to have dates and artists set at a minimum of six months in advance. If your final concert of one season is in May and your first concert is the following September, you want to be selling tickets for the next season at the May concert. Some organizations do this well. Some are already booked TWO YEARS in advance! The longer range the planning, the better.

DO A BUSINESS PLAN

Your past history will indicate what size audience you are generating for your concerts. Based on those attendance figures, do a budget plan and determine what your bottom line for profit and loss will be. If your expenses are such that you need at least 400 tickets at \$10 to break even, it might behoove you to increase your ticket price.

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That can be painful, but as ATOS seeks to move forward, we need to understand that OUR new audience is the same audience that is paying \$40 a ticket to see Tony Bennett or a touring Broadway show. A \$15 ticket for one of our concerts would not be out of the question, depending on your market size. (Bristol, Tennessee is going to be different than Minneapolis or Los Angeles.)

DO A LITTLE HOMEWORK

The next issue will offer the full details on how to package a sponsor with a radio station to maximize your exposure and generate sponsorship income and free advertising. These packages are simpler to do than you would imagine, and radio stations and ad agencies use them all the time. To this end, you have two assignments. Before the next issue, your chapter or sponsoring group needs to do a little homework.

In putting together your media list for press releases (contact a station or newspaper and ask where you can get a copy of an area "MEDIA GUIDE" that will list EVERY station and paper), find out which radio station has an "easy listening" or "big band" music format. This would be a good station with which to develop a partnership. Some market areas do not have that kind of a format. In that case, we are best suited to developing a partnership with the station in your area that is seen as the most solid station for news and public affairs. Do not include NPR stations in this effort. We are looking for a commercial outlet with solid ratings and a station that will actively promote our event. Get your overall media list, and

pick out a station or two that you think will work as a partner.

Next, generate a list of at least 10 or 12 companies, businesses or corporations that can be approached as potential sponsors. To generate ideas as to which companies might work, find out who is underwriting area symphony concerts, or touring pops artists and Broadway shows. Those companies listed as underwriters on NPR or public television would be good candidates as potential sponsors. At Long Center, we had success with local banks, large manufacturers such as Alcoa and Eli Lilly (who have major plants in Lafayette), upscale retirement communities, etc. The local Coke and Pepsi distributors have budgets for such events and can be approached. Target and Wal-Mart stores have specific dollars budgeted for such events.

Work on your list of stations and potential sponsors. List them. Do NOT present anything until you see the next issue. It will have a complete "how-to" guide for putting together your professional six-page sponsorship/media proposal. And we are going to ask for \$1,500, which ought to help anybody's bottom line. Also, if your chapter doesn't have the people-power to do this, we'll address approaching ad agencies than can do it for you.

We will also address writing proper press releases, making use of interns from area colleges who can help with this effort, and things that will help your area arts critics write about your event. Artists Beware! You will be urged to have your program determined WELL ahead of the concert. The days of scribbling out your programs ten minutes before the show need to come to an end.

As we say in the broadcast business, "Stay tuned!"



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PART TWO: THE ABC'S OF P-M-A

A How-To Guide for **PROMOTIONS, MARKETING, AND ADVERTISING**

By Ken Double

CREATING A SIMPLE, EFFECTIVE MARKETING BROCHURE

Any ATOS Chapter selling tickets to theatre organ concerts can help itself immensely by putting together a package that combines a corporate sponsor with a commercial radio station. This can be prepared as a package for a single concert, or for a season's series of concerts.

One six-page marketing brochure can be the tool that will help sell your presentation to both a potential sponsor and a potential radio partner. What follows are the first basic steps for preparing and presenting this brochure, and hopefully securing for you one or more corporate sponsors whose financial support will help your bottom line. We will attend specifically to the radio station side of this approach in the next issue.

It is this type of brochure that those of us in the sports business present to potential sponsor/clients all the time. Someone with minimal computer skills can do the brochure, or it can be prepared at little expense by Kinko's or a similar type company. If you are clever, and produce a program with your concert, you might be able to trade the Kinko's expense in exchange for an ad in the program and some tickets for the concert! (Remember—those hundreds of unused tickets can be as good as cash with a good trade/barter deal, thus cutting your expenses.)

THE SIX PAGES

Your brochure should include these six pages, with detailed information to be discussed later:

Page 1—A cover sheet with a color picture of the console, and a photo of the artist for the concert, or smaller pictures of all the artists, and one banner headline announcing the event;

Page 2—A short paragraph about your chapter (include your 501(c) 3 IRS status) as the presenting organization (no more than a total of five lines) and then list the date, time, location and artist for the event or series;

Page 3—This page should "brag" about the event, i.e. promote the artist, the special nature of the organ or theatre, special parts of the show itself, and again, keep it brief, as these people will look to scan this material and get details from you later in person;

Page 4—The "sponsor" page will outline what is available to the sponsor, the promotional "value" to the sponsor of the package, and the cost;

Page 5—The "radio station" page will outline the details of

what the organization can bring to the station, and what will be expected of the station in support of the event;

Page 6—A "wrap-up" page with a final "pitch" as to why this is such a great deal, and complete contact information for follow-up discussions.

At the risk of sounding like TV real estate pitchman Carlton Sheets, this simple tool can help you acquire sponsors and radio station partners, and help your bottom line. It will be important to keep it simple, straight forward and BRIEF! This is neither the time nor the place for the history of the movie palace era. Now, for the first four pages of this package.

THE PAGES IN DETAIL

As mentioned above, Page 1 is simply a cover page. A good color photo of the console (if there is a really good photo of the theatre/venue that could be added), and photos of the artist(s) will suffice. The script on the page should be brief. Using Lafayette and Long Center as an example, at the top it would read: THE LONG CENTER THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY PRESENTS THE MIGHTY WURLITZER THEATRE PIPE ORGAN.

That would be followed with the photos, and across the bottom would read: A SPONSORSHIP/MARKETING PROPOSAL. And that's all you need on the front page.

On Page 2, as indicated above, write a very brief paragraph on your chapter including membership, the involvement with the organ, the association with ATOS and its worldwide scope. Be sure to spell out American Theatre Organ Society and not use simply the letters ATOS. Both the potential corporate partner and the radio station will look more positively on the partnership if they know this is a not-for-profit organization, thus include a line that describes your chapter as "a recognized IRS 501(c) 3 not-for-profit organization." Be sure to have copies of your IRS Letter of Determination available should your new partners need verification for their records. Your sponsor company might commit promotional dollars to you, but if they commit charitable donation dollars to you, they will need that IRS information. (If your chapter is NOT a recognized not-for-profit organization, attend to that immediately. Not doing so could keep you from attracting major dollars.)

Page 3 can include some of the information that might be

included in a press release. As suggested above, use this page to "SELL" your event. Tell them the historic significance of the theatre or of the organ. Write about how great the artist is. And add a paragraph about the show itself, especially any special part of the show. Three to four paragraphs are plenty. I always try to tell newcomers and those unfamiliar with theatre organ that the music presented is like that of a symphony "pops" concert. If you have a CD of the artist, be prepared to send that along.

The most important page of the proposal is Page 4, the pitch to the corporate sponsor. If you did your homework and you have a list of potential sponsors, you should try and tailor this proposal to the specific client. For example, headline this page "A CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP PROPOSAL TO XYZ COMPANY, INC."

Next, write (again using Lafayette as an example):

The LCTOS proposes the following package for a corporate sponsorship of the theatre organ concert(s) presented at the Long Center.

Next, list the following benefits to be provided by your organization:

In exchange for their participation, XYZ Company, Inc. will receive the following:

- Title sponsorship of the concert event, i.e. "XYZ Company, Inc. presents Ken Double In Concert;"
- Said title sponsorship will include theatre marquee, all print materials including fliers, posters, tickets, all newspaper and print advertising and programs;
- A full-page ad in the printed program, (ad to be provided by XYZ Company at least 30 days prior to the event);
- Sponsorship will be included with our radio partnership, which will include at least 40 commercials on our partner station, plus "drop-ins" and on-air ticket give-aways;
- A minimum of 50 tickets in a specially reserved area for use by XYZ Company as it sees fit (that number could increase if necessary).

Next, list the value of this package to the company. Often times in the sports business, these "values" are quite arbitrary. Some of it will be based on the cost of radio and print advertising. Obviously, the cost of the tickets is easy to figure. This arbitrary figure is normal in the sports business, but must be defensible. Companies are often looking for at least a 5-1 return on their dollar invested, some seek as much as a 10-1 return.

The value of the above listed Sponsorship package to XYZ Company is:

Theatre marquee billing (at least two weeks in advance)	\$ 2,000
Programs, fliers, and other non-advertising print	\$ 1,000
Newspaper advertising	\$ 1,500
Radio advertising (spots, give-aways and drop-ins)	\$ 2,500
Tickets (50 at \$12/ea.)	\$ 600
TOTAL VALUE:	\$ 7,600

XYZ COMPANY, INC. SPONSORSHIP COMMITMENT FOR THIS PACKAGE IS JUST \$1,000.

There you have the package to be presented to as many corporations as you can call on to make the pitch. If you do a four-concert series, call on 15-to-20 to see if you can get four. It might take more, might take less. Turn to your chapter members to see if perhaps they are employed by a company that might do this. Start with the Yellow pages, or better yet, try and acquire a Chamber of Commerce business guide to get leads on companies.

Some companies might inquire if this will be an exclusive sponsorship, or are you seeking others. Your response should be, "We hope to acquire a second full sponsor, but we would be willing to talk to you about an exclusivity." Then, hit 'em for \$1,500!!! Note the amount requested is up to you and your market size. Detroit is different from Akron, which is different from Coleman, Oklahoma. It's all relative. However, \$1,000 works in Lafayette, Indiana. The Lafayette Symphony Orchestra gets \$5,000 for a full sponsor for one concert.

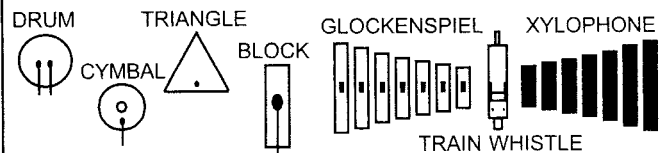
Your "pitch" is going to be made to a company executive such as a Director of Public Relations, or a Director of Community Affairs. It is always safe to send a copy to the President or Chief Operating Officer.

Take note of this: PR firms and ad agencies get paid big dollars to prepare just such a document that has been written above. And they successfully execute deals like this EVERY-DAY!

This is a lot to digest in terms of getting educated on this endeavor. One step at a time will help you better learn about this process. And, approaching a radio station is different than approaching your corporate partner. We will discuss that in the next issue of the Journal.

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PART THREE: THE ABC'S OF P-M-A

A How-To Guide for PROMOTIONS, MARKETING, AND ADVERTISING

By Ken Double

APPROACHING A RADIO PARTNER WHO DO WE APPROACH?

In the two previous issues of *Theatre Organ Journal* I have discussed some basic tools for marketing and promoting a single concert event or a series of concerts. The last article focused on corporate partners. This article will focus on approaching a potential radio partner to help promote your event.

In budgeting terms, artist expense, venue rental fees and advertising are the three major costs in putting on a concert. Artist expense is not going to change in that most artists won't play for free. (To my fellow players, that was a joke!) Rental expenses vary from venue to venue, ranging from extremely high costs at major theatres, to almost no costs at certain auditoriums. Advertising can be the backbreaker at the budget's bottom line, and yet, if there is no advertising, how can a presenting organization expect the public to get to your concert?

In my experience, radio is the most cost-effective way to promote a concert event, and if the approach is right, radio advertising can be done at little or no expense. Let's go back to the six-page brochure that was outlined in the last issue. Page Four, if you recall, centers on the potential radio partner.

TICKETS GOOD AS CASH

Almost every radio station in America gets involved in some kind of contest, promotion and/or give-away. Most of these promotions are done on a "barter" basis, with tickets to an event providing the actual payment for the promotional airtime. As I mentioned in a previous article, at most of our venues, we have plenty of unused tickets. The proposal to the radio station will make good use of as many as 24 or 30 of these unused tickets. Those tickets can become the cash by which you pay for the radio station time.

WHICH STATION TO APPROACH?

Some cities will have several stations from which to choose, some cities will be limited. Target your audience in terms of what will get you the best "bang for the buck" (or ticket since we aren't going to spend any bucks!). Again, NPR stations can help, but this is NOT our target.

If your market has a big band or easy listening format, it would probably make the most sense to approach that station. If not, I would approach the station in your area that has the strongest commitment to news and local affairs. If they all play rock, rap and country, all is not lost. A bit later, I will suggest some programming ideas that might work well with those stations.

If you have targeted your station, your initial contact should be the Program Director. If the station has a large staff, include a Promotions Director, as that person should be provided materials as well. Your process is a four-step affair: 1) Send a BRIEF letter on Chapter letterhead indicating the event, and your chapter's interest in a promotional partnership; 2) follow that letter a few days later with a phone call, and ask "Did you receive the letter?" and "Could we meet with your promotions people to discuss this . . . we have a full brochure to send you to outline our event;" 3) Mail the brochure to the Program Director, Promotions Director (if there is one) AND the station manager; 4) set up a meeting.

WHO SHOULD REPRESENT THE CHAPTER?

This is crucial. We have some theatre organ lovers, and God bless 'em, who might be so "over-the-top" in their enthusiasm, that they might drive the station away from the event, not draw them to the event. Remember, the radio people more than likely, will know NOTHING about ATOS, the theatre organ, the movie palace era, or anything else that we hold near and dear to our hearts.

If there is someone in your chapter who has had some experience in professional sales and/or management, or for that matter, in commercial radio, that person might be the best for this job. At the same time, remember that a housewife, the late Dorothy Van Steenkiste, through determination and a "won't take no for an answer" attitude, became one of the greatest salespersons the theatre organ movement ever had. Your chapter's representative will be a key cog. The radio station will be interested in helping promote an event they feel will be successful, fun and good for the community. Our concerts can clearly fit that bill.

THE BROCHURE, PAGE FIVE

In our brochure, we have Page One, the Cover Page; Page Two with information on the chapter and ATOS; Page Three covers the event; Page Four is our pitch to the corporate partner, and: Page Five is our pitch to the station.

Again, emphasis on BRIEF, as this will be scanned for information. Details should come in an in-person meeting.

This is a barter deal, whereby the chapter is giving

something to the station in return for airtime to promote the concert. Therefore, you first want to list what the chapter can do for the station. The station will be interested to know this will be "their" concert and the only place on the dial where listeners can win tickets. They will also want their call letters promoted well. They might want one of their "talent" (Deejays) to host or introduce the event. You, therefore, could include the following:

XYZ Chapter of ATOS will provide radio station WWWW the following:

- Exclusive broadcast sponsorship of the event;
- Marquee recognition as a presenter;
- Front-page recognition on the program as a presenter;
- A full-page ad in the program for the station (copy to be provided by the station);
- A lobby placard or other banner with station call letters (to be supplied by the station);
- An opportunity for "remote" live broadcast from the theatre lobby prior to the event;
- An opportunity for station talent to "MC" the event;
- Up to 20 (twenty) tickets for station use;
- Up to an additional 24 (twenty-four) tickets for on-air promotions, contests and give-aways.

XYZ Chapter of ATOS will receive from radio station WWWW the following:

- A minimum of 40 (forty) 60-second spot announcement promoting the concert over a two-week period, including permission to use corporate sponsor's name in said spot announcements;
- Additional "drop-in" mentions of the event throughout the day;
- The appropriate ticket "give-aways" on the air;
- Any other appropriate promotional opportunities to help with event awareness (monthly printed station guides, calendars, etc.).

Also, XYZ Chapter would encourage the station to sell its own "corporate" sponsor for the event, as long as said sponsor does not conflict in its business with the XYZ Chapter sponsor (i.e. should XYZ Chapter sign Wendy's as a sponsor, station WWWW cannot therefore sign Burger King). And the chapter should provide that sponsor all the benefits provided to its own corporate partner, i.e. tickets, program mentions, etc.

NOTES OF INTEREST

Just as our chapters want as much promotional and commercial mention of the concert as possible, so does the station want as much visibility as possible. Therefore, it will be important for the station to see their call letters on the marquee, to see the call letters on the front of the concert program, to have a banner or sign at the theatre, and perhaps have their talent MC the concert. Some stations have mobile vans or "mini-buses" for their remote broadcasts, and instead of an in-lobby remote, they might want their van parked in front of the theatre for such a broadcast. GREAT!!!! This all helps put the spotlight on the event for the chapter, and helps the station feel it is fully involved.

Be sure they understand that the number of tickets is

flexible and negotiable. A big station might want more tickets for use by staff and families. Fine. Sometimes they only need 20 (or ten pairs) for on-air give-away. The chapter can negotiate this item.

BE CREATIVE

You might find other ways to help push this. If you have favorite restaurants near the theatre, see if they might print special table placemats or table "tents" promoting the concert. And give them some tickets in return for that promotion. And be sure those placemats feature your radio partner and your corporate partner prominently.

It will be important to be a good corporate partner. In Lafayette, we have at times provided nice plaques with an engraving depicting the console and given these to our station and corporate sponsors.

And if your market only offers the "rock" station format, then get more creative. Begin NOW to plan for a big show next Halloween. Have an "Elvis" impersonator, or do a costume contest, tie in the outrageous rock performer *Alice Cooper* with a look-a-like contest. There would be lots of things you could do around a Halloween silent movie presentation that could fit a rock format station that could work. Station employees can be creative people as well, and they could spice up the event.

PLAN! PLAN! PLAN!

Do not expect that you can think about all this in March for a concert in May. This could be a ten-to-twelve month endeavor to make all this happen. As I mentioned in an earlier article, in terms of the corporate partnership, many companies operate on an annual budget for these items, meaning you would need to be 16 to 18 months ahead in your planning.

However, if you are careful in your planning, and are a good corporate partner, you might begin establishing a relationship with stations and companies that can help your bottom line for years to come. In Lafayette, the Long Center organ series has benefited from one corporate partnership with an annual \$1000 contribution for 12 years. In our big years in the early '90s, we had four such partners each season.

ASK FOR HELP

As you embark on this process, a simple \$40 lunch date might get you more help than you imagine. Again, do a little homework. Find out what advertising and PR agency in your area is the strongest. Contact someone there and see if they might join you for lunch so you can get a little guidance. Let them know "up front" that you want to pick their brain for some help. You can always dangle the carrot, as they say, in terms of some business down the road. I am sure that at least one agency would agree to spend a little time and offer some help. Even better, a retired agency executive in your area might be in a better position to help, and might even be looking for something to do!

In the next issue, we will display a sample of the complete six-page brochure, and in upcoming issues, I will attempt to offer at least one or two good marketing and promotional ideas for your consideration. Meanwhile, e-mail your questions and comments to *Theatre Organ Journal*, and I will be happy to provide whatever information I can.



PART FOUR: THE ABC'S OF P-M-A

A How-To Guide for **PROMOTIONS, MARKETING, AND ADVERTISING**

By Ken Double

MORE ABOUT MARKETING AND PROMOTION

In the three previous issues of the Journal, I have written about preparing a brochure that could help your chapter pursue sources of corporate funding for your concerts, and also help in approaching radio stations for promotional support. These articles focused on a five or six page brochure, and detailed the specific pages and information you need to properly approach the corporate leaders and/or station personnel that make decisions on these issues. All of these things make perfect sense to me, because I have worked almost all of my life in the world of the media, and in the world of promoting sporting events. Despite my best efforts in the articles, some of this might not make enough sense to you and your chapter members to have you go forth and start contacting people. Thus, I am going to suggest some things that might find you someone to "hold your hand" and get you started in this endeavor.

FREE HELP

Most chapters do not have a budget of thousands of dollars from which to spend heavily on promotion and advertising. This is one of the reasons we seek corporate partners who can help underwrite these costs.

If you have some degree of trepidation about charging out into the corporate and advertising world armed with only what I have written, I have a suggestion. Like legal firms who do "pro bono" work, advertising agencies and public relations firms often times will handle projects at no cost.

Armed with my articles, and prepared with your concert dates and artists lined up for the future, (again, this is long-range planning for your concert and must be done at least six months ahead of the concert date, and preferably one year in advance), start contacting both the large and small advertising and public relations agencies in your community. You are going to be prepared to tell them four things:

1. Our ATOS group is presenting a concert, and we seek

help in the area of promotions and corporate sponsorships;

2. Our budget is very small, in fact, this is our first attempt to do this in this manner and we seek advice;
3. We have been doing these concerts at (name the theatre/venue) and have had a modicum of success, but would like to expand on our audience and our profits;
4. If we are successful, we would be prepared to discuss with you a contract for your services for future events.

I cannot guarantee you will find an agency that will accept your project, but this is a solid approach that should work. Regarding Point 4, YOU decide after the concert whether or not the agency's efforts would be worth a long-term deal. It's called "dangling the carrot" and it is entirely proper.

ANOTHER APPROACH

If the idea of approaching an ad agency doesn't fit in your overall plans, you might try working with your local college or university. Any school teaching courses in business and marketing could be seeking class projects for practical experience for students. This is a viable method for getting help in marketing and promotions, and will gain you one distinct advantage. It will bring your concert and/or series to the attention of a small group of young people. We all know how difficult it is to attract a younger audience to our concerts.

The students will NOT bring the specific expertise that an ad agency can bring, but they will have ideas, energy, leadership from their class professors, and a whole new approach to promoting a concert. They can also do a lot of legwork, from helping organize a computer mailing list, to running around putting up posters.

The other advantage this approach offers is the opportunity to do this with the university again. Should this prove

to be a successful experience for both your chapter and the class, the individual professor will want to do this over and over for future classes, ensuring you a partnership for a long time to come.

BE SPECIFIC IN WHAT YOU SEEK

In approaching either an agency or a college class, be sure to be specific in terms of what you want accomplished.

- You seek corporate partners as underwriters for the concert or series.
- You seek broadcast and print partners to help promote the series.
- You need a promotional/marketing brochure prepared.
- You need a list of businesses and broadcasters to whom you will present your brochure.

- The bottom line is twofold: increased awareness of the event, and increased dollars in sponsorships to help your bottom line.

My previous articles can be a road map for either an agency or a class, so you are not at all unarmed as you seek assistance.

Finally, should you be prepared to go out on your own, the next issue of the Journal will have a section included that will have an exact sample brochure for a fictional concert date, from which you can simply plug in YOUR concert information, and head out into the corporate and advertising world. Our fictional date will feature "JOE DOAKS IN CONCERT . . . at the PARAMOUNT THEATRE . . . FEBRUARY 31st, 2004" and it will include all the pertinent information you need, completely laid out in brochure form.

I sincerely hope these ideas make sense and can be of some assistance to those interested and inspired to be more aggressive in promoting our concerts. If you have comments, feel free to contact me via e-mail at kdouble@aeros.com.

A New Home Organ Festival Cruises to ALASKA! August 3-10, 2003

See the beautiful sights of Alaska while enjoying the finest in cruise amenities aboard NCL's newest member of the fleet--the *Norwegian Sun*. Enjoy the best in Broadway-style entertainment, fantastic food, an on-board casino, top-notch exercise facilities, pools, spas, plus much more!

Theatre organ aficionados will delight in the artistry of Walt Strony and Jonas Nordwall featured in concerts and workshops on the Allen 3-manual theatre organ.

There is a music-filled day in the Seattle area before we set sail--including a visit to the Levine's 4m/48r Wurlitzer at Gig Harbor--then dozens of exciting shore activities and excursions at every port. We will visit the home of Fred and Eva Beeks in Skagway to hear their 3-manual Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ. We will also stop in Juneau to hear the State Capital Office Building's stunning 2m/9r Kimball theatre pipe organ.



Walt Strony



Jonas Nordwall

*Don't delay...book now
and receive a free cabin upgrade!*

Complete cruise packages from \$1329.
For further information or to request a detailed brochure, contact Terry at 503/233-7274 or e-mail: OrganCruise@aol.com

presented by West Coast Allen Organ Dealers



PART FIVE: THE ABC'S OF P-M-A

A How-To Guide for PROMOTIONS, MARKETING, AND ADVERTISING

By Ken Double

An Actual Marketing/ Sponsorship Proposal

The past four issues of *THE-ATRE ORGAN* have featured articles outlining ideas for marketing and advertising your concert or series of concerts. What follows today is an example of an actual marketing proposal that was prepared for the Central Indiana Chapter for the '97-'98 series.

The articles discussed a six-page proposal, or preparing separate proposals—one for a possible radio partner and the other for a sponsor partner. Back in 1997, the chapter had a working relationship with a radio station, thus this is a four-page article incorporating the necessary ingredients for securing an advertising partner for the concert.

As previously discussed, the Cover Page is simple, somewhat flashy with the color photos, and to the point. The second page offers a word about the chapter, and the historic and/or musical significance of the two organs featured in the series. The third page lists the concert events (and could be improved with the addition of photos of the artists), and the final page offers details on the proposal.

Hopefully, this information presented in a final form, can help your chapter structure a proposal that can bring sponsors, and sponsorship dollars to your event.

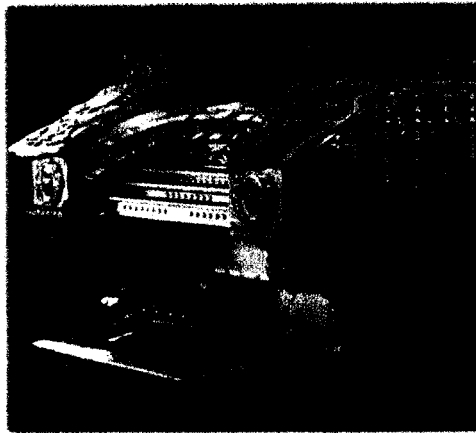
Central Indiana Chapter

of the

American Theatre Organ Society

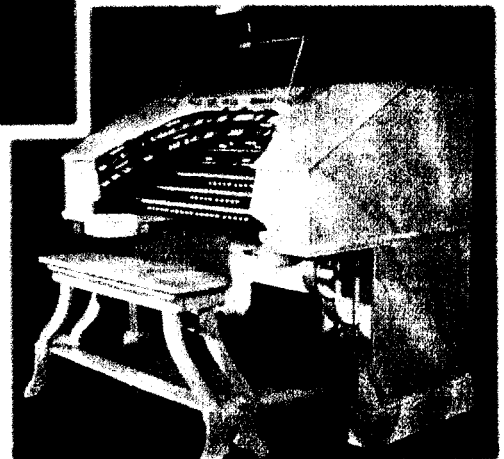
presents

THE GRANDE BARTON



The Warren Performing
Arts Center

THE MIGHTY WURLITZER



Emmerich Manual High School

A MARKETING AND SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

THE CENTRAL INDIANA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

The Central Indiana Chapter (CIC) of the American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS), a not-for-profit organization headquartered in Indianapolis, is one of 75 chapters worldwide dedicated to the preservation and presentation of the great theatre pipe organs that graced the movie palaces of a bygone era. The American Theatre Organ Society is one of the oldest preservation groups in America, with nearly 10,000 members.

THE GRANDE BARTON AT THE WARREN PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

This is perhaps the most famous pipe organ in Indiana, despite the fact it has not been heard publicly in nearly 40 years. It was installed in the Indiana Theatre (now IRT) in 1927 with the great Dessa Byrd, and later her sister Virginia, as the headlining organists. Through the efforts of the CIC-ATOS volunteers, numerous individual and corporate donors, the organ is in its new home at the Warren Performing Arts Center, following a complete rebuilding and installation effort that took nearly three years to accomplish. It was the featured organ at the 1997 ATOS National Convention held in Indianapolis.

THE MIGHTY WURLITZER AT EMMERICH MANUAL HIGH SCHOOL

A truly magical name in the world of the theatre pipe organ, the "Mighty Wurlitzer" at Manual High School is the largest Wurlitzer organ in a high school auditorium in the United States. This installation was completed in 1990, and it, too, was the culmination of volunteer efforts by members of CIC-ATOS. This organ has been featured in annual concerts since its installation and is now joined by the Barton in a new series of concerts staged by CIC-ATOS.

**THE 1997-98
THEATRE PIPE ORGAN SERIES**

CONCERT 1

Sunday
October 19, 1997
2:30 p.m.

Manual High School
3/26 Mighty Wurlitzer
LEW WILLIAMS

The opening concert features a real crowd pleaser from Phoenix

CONCERT 2

Friday
December 5, 1997
7:30 p.m.

Warren Center
3/18 Grande Barton
BILL TANDY

Kokomo's versatile artist offers truly authentic stylings at the organ

CONCERT 3

Sunday
February 8, 1998
2:30 p.m.

Manual High School
3/26 Mighty Wurlitzer
RON RHODE

Former ATOS Organist of the Year, he has headlined no fewer than 10 ATOS conventions

CONCERT 4

Friday
May 1, 1998
7:30 p.m.

Warren Center
3/18 Grande Barton
CLARK WILSON

This concert features one of the world's best, and current organist at the Ohio Theatre in Columbus

MARKETING AND SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Following many years of sponsoring individual concerts on an irregular schedule, CIC-ATOS instituted a regularly scheduled season series of programs in 1992 and has seen a steady increase in attendance with each successive season.

With the new organ at the Warren Performing Arts Center, there is a new opportunity to introduce the glorious sounds of the great theatre pipe organ to a whole new audience. Additionally, there is a great opportunity to use the instrument as an educational tool, both musically for those who wish to pursue keyboard studies, and educationally in reference to the unique place in Indiana's entertainment history held by the Barton organ.

FULL SEASON SPONSORSHIP

Become a corporate partner with CIC-ATOS in presenting these unique pipe organs and popular programs. Your sponsorship includes:

- Up to 40 tickets for each performance to be distributed as you see fit;
- Front cover program sponsorship on the concert programs distributed at each performance;
- A full page ad in each program;
- Broadcast mention in each ad aired on WMYS AM 1430, our concert series radio partner.

THE SPONSORSHIP PACKAGE: \$1500



The Keys to Success

By Scott Smith

In September 1999, the Great Plains Chapter of ATOS hosted a regional convention in Wichita, Kansas, themed "Holiday at the Paramount." For that event, I was engaged to conduct a seminar, whose purpose was to inform and encourage attendees toward a direction similar to that of other arts groups in their pursuit of successful concert production and promotion of same.

The Great Plains Chapter is closely associated with the independent Wichita Theatre Organ, which maintains instruments and produces concerts at the Century II Exhibition Hall and the Little River Studio. My own Michigan-based organization, Lansing Theatre Organ, literally sprung from the loins of WTO. The two organizations have enjoyed a close and active working relationship spanning several years, trading ideas and sharing information.

In the four years since the convention, I have sent out literally dozens of copies of the printed materials distributed at that time. Because it is still such a frequently requested document, I felt it was time to publish this now-revised outline for all readers of the Journal to peruse and consider.

Before undertaking the task of producing a successful concert series, acknowledgement of one basic concept is essential. Like it or not, one individual needs to be CLEARLY in charge of all aspects of concert production, or it will fall like a house of cards in a crisis, or simply in time. Furthermore, the quality of leadership is absolutely critical to the success of any government, business, chapter or event.

So many ATOS chapters and special-interest clubs fail for one of three basic reasons:

- 1) Overbearing, controlling behavior on the part of one or more individuals.
- 2) Complete apathy or passive/aggressive behavior on everyone's part.
- 3) Total lack of vision and/or leadership.

Unfortunately, amongst our own ranks, mediocrity has become not only tolerated, but is actually embraced as the norm. Apathy runs rampant. By and large, the mediocrity comes not from the performers, but rather from mediocre show production, stemming from mediocre attitudes. For some unknown reason, there exists a prevailing attitude of taking the low road by some groups, who freely and sometimes blatantly cite silly and baseless excuses for not pursuing excellence. They don't have the money. They don't want to appear hoity-toity. They don't think audiences know the difference between mediocrity and excellence. On the flip side, there are

some groups that produce remarkable, memorable performances, time and again, and our hats should be off to them. They are the ones who are creating a living legacy for the coming generations. Why can't we all follow their lead?

In terms of building and maintaining audiences, many well-intentioned club members will suggest what amounts to quick fixes, most commonly the hiring of nothing but the local favorites. They cite a greater audience response to the locals, which, of course adds to the bottom line. Can we really define that as success? In truth, that type of programming is short sighted and can only last just so long before it, too, starts to suffer attendance attrition. Then there are those who view the situation as being much more dire, and desperately drive home their perceived "need" to mix the theatre organ with rock-and-roll groups and other inappropriate performance mediums. Come on now, let's take this more seriously. We have an obligation to our audiences to consistently present the best performers in high-quality performances. They trust us and therefore trust our judgment. The very least we can do is to deliver the level of their expectations, if not greater.

If you are already producing concerts, and think there's no room for improvement in how it's done, you're simply drinking your own bathwater and calling it champagne. There's always room for improvement, no matter how well things are running.

Ask any performance-based group that has been producing concerts for a while, professional or amateur, and they will tell you openly that there simply is no magic bullet. But, in the same breath, they will also tell you that all things are possible. That loyal audiences are built over time, not overnight. That when it comes to making things happen, there is no such word as can't (i.e. can't = won't). That you cannot fear the unknown. That, as Jeeves said repeatedly to Wooster, "There is always a way."

Fundamentals:

- 1) Commitment to public concerts on a seasonal basis.
- 2) No less than three, no more than four concerts per season.
- 3) Hire the best musicians.
- 4) Strive for professional appearing concerts:
 - a) Brief announcements.
 - b) Lighting and sound cues (rehearsals, please!).
 - c) Film cues.
- 5) They are POPS concerts, not organ concerts.

Promotions:

- 1) Establish an ideal timetable, as follows:

January 1—Begin planning for the next season.

February 1—Have contracts in the mail.

March 1—Deliver season brochure to printer.

April 1—Have brochure in mail.

This is the basic schedule that all arts groups try to stay with. Make sure to have a copy of next season's brochure in the hands of all of the patrons at your spring concert. If your last concert of the season is prior to April 1, back this schedule up accordingly. This also gives you a tool to use all summer. If you simply cannot get the season brochure out on this timetable, for whatever reason, make up a small "sneak preview" card and put that in the literature racks and in the hands of your people for use in the summer months. You need something to use 24/7/365 to keep your events in the minds of the public. Think of concert promotion like blood . . . it needs to be pumping all the time, or you're dead.

*Think of concert promotion like blood
... it needs to be pumping all the
time, or you're dead.*

If possible, mail all of your season brochures first class or first class presort. The pieces get there faster and they look less like junk mail. The post office has quietly renamed "bulk rate" as "standard rate," attempting to undo some of the negative connotation of the name. It's the cheapest thing going, but it's a hassle to handle, and your mailing can sit for days in one location before moving on. I don't recommend it.

- 2) Appoint a public relations director from within your group. This person should be responsible for all public communications, including the season brochure. This person could be your business manager or executive director, and potentially your public spokesperson.
- 3) Control use of the media. Don't overuse it. Don't throw your money away on media that won't bring you any new patrons. Paid advertising is generally a waste of money, unless you have an outside sponsor who's willing to take the financial risk. This includes outdoor, television, radio and print media.
- 4) Utilize public relations to the hilt to promote your concerts that you can get free or cheap. This includes use of:

Press releases—These should give the basic information of who, what, where, when, why, ticket sales, etc. Date the document and write: "For Immediate Release" at the top in bold letters. Give the basic information in the first paragraph and try to summarize what the program is all about in the second, and just a couple of lines about the organ, the hall, or the project in the third. Most importantly, include the telephone number of your public relations director, and indicate whether or not the media may release this phone number to the public or not (I generally do not). Press releases should go to magazines and newspapers, large or small, within a radius of 50 to 75 miles of your venue to the community events or arts columnist. Run these on a colored

bond sheet; anything but white. The color will gain more attention in the mound of press releases newspapers receive every day. Magazines usually like to have this information 45 to 60 days prior to the date of publication; newspapers should have information 30 days prior, with another hit to your local paper about a week prior to your event.

Public Service Announcements (PSA)—These can be run as a postcard, about 1/4-sheet size (4 1/4" x 5 1/2") on a colored card stock and give only the most basic information, with the public relations director's phone number. These should go to television and radio stations, as well as certain columnists in the print media within a 50 to 100 mile radius; again to the community events director(s). You might end up sending redundant messages to the same individuals, but better too many

than too few. Send in 30 days prior to your event, with another hit to the locals about a week prior to your event.

- 5) Postcard reminders to selected individuals on your mailing list can snag those last minute, single ticket buyers. What you lose in the cost of the mailing will likely be at least gained in ticket sales, but once you get them hooked, they'll keep coming, and they'll come to depend on the reminders. These can be run much the same as the PSA postcards, about 1/4-sheet size on a colored card stock.
- 6) Use of the Internet should not be overlooked nor its potential power discounted. First, establish an E-mail address that's hooked in with a web page. The E-mail address offers two-way communications with outsiders, should they have questions or special needs (seniors, handicappers, etc.). It also opens up the potential for concert reminders via the Net, and helps by reducing mailing costs. Just copy the concert information used on your postcards and send it to yourself, with all of the other addresses listed as a "blind copy." This way, your E-mail list is kept confidential. Many ATOS groups now have web pages that have a great abundance of information about their events, organs, venues, ticket sales, etc. The advantage of this is that small organizations can look as impressive as big ones, as everyone's web page is the same size. And by the way . . . if you don't have a web page right now, you're rapidly falling behind.
- 7) Other promotional contacts:
 - Public radio and TV stations (send separate releases as they are often not directly affiliated).
 - College level film classes.
 - Film buffs.
 - Public access TV stations.
 - Local talk shows (TV and radio).
 - E-mail newsgroups/bulletin boards.
 - Newsletters (Other organ groups, arts groups, chambers of commerce, lifestyle groups, singles groups, travel agencies).
- 8) Community involvement is one factor often overlooked by small, concert-producing organizations. Too often, chapters and organ clubs are such a tight-knit group that they fail to

see the big picture. Joining the local arts council is a big step toward acceptance in the community, as we find ourselves listed alongside larger, better-established organizations, like symphony orchestras, live theatre and dance companies. Keeping this in mind, we also need to stop comparing ourselves to other organ groups and start seeing ourselves in comparison to other arts groups. This also opens up greater opportunities in terms of potential fundraising, as arts councils often act as the local funnel for much larger grants. Many arts councils act as a central ticket agency for arts groups.

Another aspect of community involvement is to help out other arts groups. For instance, your group might offer to assist your local public radio or TV station during fundraising campaigns by answering phones for pledges. It's highly visible to your target audience, it's good P.R. and you're involved in preserving and improving the cultural life in your community.

9) Complimentary tickets are also a good method of promotion. Often, people who are unsure if they want to attend can be swayed with the promise of comp tickets. Just be sure to not give freebies to the same people all the time, otherwise they'll just take advantage of you. Be generous with these tickets when you need to—between 5 to 10 percent of your total estimated audience. That's about the same as a salesman's commission. Stamp or identify these tickets somehow as comps; it's a method of tracking. Don't work harder . . . work smarter.

10) Save yourself as many headaches as possible. Delegate, delegate, delegate. A good delegator is one who has a certain disdain for work. Workaholics are not good delegators.

Get a ticket agency to handle all ticket sales outside of your mailing list.

Try to sell tickets in season packages, with a little discount

as an incentive. No one wants to stamp and post all of those checks. You need the money.

Establish a no-questions-asked ticket return policy. It works for Sears.

Charge at least as much as a movie for a ticket price. The audience establishes a perceived value based solely on the price of a ticket. And make those slackers who won't buy a ticket ahead of time pay a premium at the door!

11) Fundraising is a marketing function. Plus your fundraising events are as important as your concerts and should be treated as such.

An annual Pops Yard Sale can potentially be a very simple, straightforward method of fundraising. Even symphony orchestras and opera companies that previously stuck their noses up at this type of event have now come to realize the relative ease of raising money in this manner. It's also a great way to get your promotional material into the hands of some people who wouldn't ordinarily receive it. Getting members, friends and businesses to donate their surplus goods is good for your series and it's good for them. They get their excess out of the way, they feel that they've done something good, they don't have to hold their own sale, it pools all of your resources, and the whole idea is bigger than the sum of the parts. Hold this event for a couple of days in a yard along a very visible location, where passers-by aren't going at a high rate of speed, or if possible, in the nicest neighborhood where you can find a willing volunteer to allow use of their house. Trust me, when the event is over, your lawn will look like the circus has just left town.

A Season Program is a good way of acknowledging your donors. Like a symphony program, it is distributed at each concert and remains the same for the entire season. Not only does it describe each event in greater detail than your season brochure with a larger picture, but you can include a stop list and some history about the organ, and you can save space for advertising, which can help to offset the costs of printing of this piece. Reserve as much space as you need to acknowledge your donors within their given donation levels and keep adding to the list; don't ever take names away. There's a "keeping up with the Jones" mentality that this appeals to. In-kind services with dollar equivalents should also appear here from businesses, as well as grant givers. The most important task that your season program can serve is to up-sell the upcoming concerts.

Grants are among the most feared, but respected methods of fundraising, but once you've succeeded at one or two of these, you'll wish you had started sooner. Seek out a foundation list at your local library; some state-governed agencies also offer these. This will list the organizations and the types

POPS ON PIPES

CENTRAL INDIANA CHAPTER
2003 CONCERT SERIES
INDIANAPOLIS


JELANI EDDINGTON & DAVID HARRIS, Feb. 16

JIM RIGGS with silent short "Fluttering Hearts," April 27

KEN DOUBLE, Aug. 10

SIMON GLEDHILL, Sept. 28

For tickets and additional information contact 317-356-3561.
theatreorgans.com/cicatos



JEFF WEILER

ARTRA
ARTISTS MANAGEMENT
555 W. Madison St. • Suite 2110
Chicago, IL 60661
312-648-4100

of projects they fund. Some prefer to donate to capital improvements (building or restoring an organ) and others prefer performance grants. Networking with your local arts council and rubbing elbows with others who have been through the process helps a lot. Make sure to fill out the grants completely (put something in every required space) and use words like "historic," "public good," "cultural heritage" and the like in the right context and half the battle's won. Some private foundations want to see financial statements from previous years, others don't. My advice is to do some shopping around for your grant money. Look for potential givers that are already donors to the arts, with a track record for the maximum amount of money and the minimum number of strings attached. Local arts council often administer mini-grants to help offset expenses above income derived from ticket sales. The gift amount may not be as high, but the grants are relatively easy to apply for and your chances of being selected for a gift are greater. Remember that longtime grantors are constantly seeking new outlets to which to give, instead of giving money to the same old groups time and time again.

One of the biggest mistakes we make as arts groups is to give discounts to our most interested attendees . . . and charge full price to those less interested.

- 12) One of the biggest mistakes we make as arts groups is to give discounts to our most interested attendees . . . and charge full price to those less interested. Instead, offer promotional ticket sales that change every year to provide incentives for new patrons . . . two free individual performance tickets or a free CD to new attendees for every two season tickets sold to regulars, or something like that. Offer a different incentive to new subscribers every year. Keep it fresh.
- 13) Be willing to take artistic risks. Almost universally among arts groups, it's a given that only about 50% of your expenses are going to be covered by ticket sales. Don't judge the success of your series based solely on financial gain, but rather by artistic merit. Don't be put off by one or two closed-minded loudmouths. Always keep in perspective the fact that, while it looks like a lot of money, the budgets of theatre organ concerts are miniscule when compared to other arts groups.
- 14) Be more competitive with other organ and arts groups. Think of yourself as a business. Try to aim toward your audience's interest level, and keep raising the bar. Always try to service your ticket holders better each season with more incentives, more interesting programs, and more variety. A potential patron can only be in one place at one time; make sure it's at your venue.
- 15) Be prepared to promote your series at all times. Keep brochures with you at all times; in your car, your briefcase, at home and at the office. It's better to print too many brochures than too few. Be generous with your brochures, and make sure your people do the same. Force about 25 of

them in to the hands of each of your key volunteer staff when they come out, and tell them to get busy!

- 16) It's a fun thing. Too often, arts groups promote their performances as "this is good for you" instead of "this is fun." When it's working right, audiences are so entertained, they don't realize they're being enlightened!
- 17) Give each of your performances a title. Silent films are self-titling. Solo and combo concerts should get some sort of title with more imagination than "Joe Schmoe at the Mighty Wurlitzer."

- 18) Keep a dedicated briefcase with you at all times. If you are involved with more than one organization of any sort, consider keeping a separate briefcase for each one. This comes in handy when attending meetings, both scheduled and impromptu, as well as giving out brochures or selling tickets. Make certain your pops concert briefcase contains the following items:

- Season brochures
- Season programs
- Press releases
- Phone log (for all of your volunteer staff and club members)
- Business cards
- Notepaper
- Pens and pencils
- Tickets (for upcoming shows)
- Calculator

Performances:

- 1) Don't look a gift horse in the mouth. If your audiences are elderly, be thankful! They have more disposable income, they are more appreciative and they are more attracted to "being" types of experiences, as opposed to "vicarious" experiences, like TV or movies or Nintendo games. Don't fuss about who is buying tickets, as long as they are buying tickets. Does General Motors really care about who is buying their product?
Keep in mind that by the year 2030, the U.S. will have 70 million retired persons . . . that's 18% of the population in just 27 years!
- 2) When lamenting the lack of attendance or involvement by younger people, keep a little thing called a Life Cycle in perspective. Young people are getting married, buying houses and other expensive things, raising children and sending them off to college, and don't really have a lot of extra time or money to attend many performances. If nothing else, the Baby Boom generation is known for later marriages, delaying the start of families and long-term commitments until their careers are well established, and the Gen-Xers don't appear to be any different. A concert of any sort is perhaps the last thing on the mind of someone trying to reach

the top of the corporate ladder today . . . but perhaps not tomorrow.

- 3) You can't stop a thing like Value Migration from happening. People's interests and values change over a period of years and they simply lose interest. Public radio and TV stations use a rule of thumb of a 10% attrition rate per year; some from death, some from moving away and some from Value Migration. Some migrate back, some don't. Just don't give up entirely on them when they appear to go away. Life's not all black and white.
- 4) Keep announcements to a minimum. There's a certain amount of anticipatory tension built up in your audience in the minutes just prior to any show, so allow yourself a minute (or less) to announce the performer(s) for the show. Don't talk again at all during the entire show. It's the performer's show, not yours. Let them shine. And announce from offstage. The audience doesn't need to see you. Don't announce other events from the stage. If you wish to get information of other events into the hands of your patrons, type them up, copy them and offer them when your patrons enter. It gives them something to do while they're waiting, and they don't have to rely on their memories for important details. Long, drawn-out announcements can kill even the best show. Shut up. And NO raffles! This isn't a sideshow!
- 5) Hire professionals when you have to, whether it's to tune the organ, to run the shows, or fulfill union requirements. And don't grouse about it later. You won't be sorry.
- 6) Managing volunteers: getting the right person for the right job can be tricky, but is real critical mass in terms of producing a quality, professional-appearing show. At the top of the list is the Technical Director, who sees to it that all aspects of the show operate like a well-oiled machine; lighting and sound cues, film cues, etc. An energetic, world-class worrier is your best bet for this job; one who fusses over details. Your Audio/Video Director should have real working knowledge of projectors, audio equipment, etc., not just anyone who happens by. Your Security Director should have a handle on what's going on outside (parking, shoveled walks, general safety) as well as inside (suppressing recording devices, stopping gate-crashers), and it doesn't hurt if he looks like someone you don't want to mess with. Your Record Counter Director should be organized, have good bookkeeping skills, and have knowledge of what recordings you have for sale. You can also use a couple of Floaters who are flexible and willing to do just about anything; these people are real gold.
- 7) Insist that your board and volunteer staff dress up for your concerts. This is why business people dress as they do. They want you to take them seriously and regard them as professionals. You should do the same.
- 8) The organ should be in tune and in top operating condition. If it's not, you shouldn't be giving concerts. Technicians should be on hand during concerts at all times. An audience

*Within our own ranks, we need to
agree to agree on where we're going,
otherwise, what's the point?*

should only have to think about the music and the experience, not the organ. The same goes for the organist.

- 9) Shows should operate like a well-oiled machine:

Doors should open at a specified time.

All tuning and practicing should be done when doors open.

All volunteers should be at their posts when the doors open.

The sound of the organ should not be heard between the opening of the doors and the beginning of the concert.

The record counter and concession stand should be open.

A short announcement and then it's show time. On time, too!

Keep intermissions between 10 and 15 minutes (unless many people are still at the record counter).

Don't announce the second half. Flash the lights and let it happen.

When the show is over, leave the record counter and box office open 5 to 10 minutes, and then close it down.

Start promoting the next concert immediately.

The box office should have tickets for the next show available (all concerts, if possible).

- 10) Offer discounts for season tickets or groups.
- 11) Extend your season ticket offer. If patrons are at the first concert of the season, but don't have a season ticket, give them the opportunity to buy the remainder of the season for the equivalent discount.
- 12) Keep a large dish of cough drops and hard candies at the box office. This will help to suppress coughing during cold and flu season. Major symphony orchestras do this all year long. A little candy makes for a lot of goodwill.
- 13) Treat your performers as you would like to be treated. They don't like to be jerked around, they don't like to play "private concerts" (unless separately compensated), they like their space, and they need to have their needs met as professional artists/performers. If you help them look good, they'll help you look good.
- 14) Be less concerned with club membership and more concerned with audience attendance. That is not to say that you shouldn't continue to recruit people for potential chapter members. But, there are those who will come repeatedly to the concerts that simply do not wish to join, for one reason or another, and they should not be made to feel guilty about not joining. They have reasons. Respect them. If you focus on methods to attract new concertgoers, new members will automatically come into the fold on the path you are creating for them.
- 15) If you're not producing concerts and have no plans to do so, don't grouse about the lack of membership or people wanting to participate in your club or chapter. This is the way to get the word out. If you strive only to maintain your organization simply for your turn at the open console

on the local theatre organ, you're staring down the wrong end of the kaleidoscope. Be inclusive, not exclusive. Open your doors to the world, and welcome it in. But not without buying a ticket first!

NEGATIVE THINKERS SAY:

- "We're just a little organ club."
- "We're ain't no professionals (sic)."
- "We haven't had the training."
- "We wouldn't know where to begin."

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF THE ORGAN CLUB:

"We've never done it that way before."

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

Don't ram the organ down everyone's throat. In terms of promotion, the organ is the least important factor in the concert. The most important thing is the *music*. It's *always* the music.

The same old methods yield the same old results.

Hope is not a method.

THE MOST IMPORTANT WORDS TO REMEMBER:

Believe in yourselves. Believe that you can. And in the words of Winston Churchill, "Never, never, never give up."

Afterthoughts:


Our ATOS membership represents a diverse group of people, which can be segmented into several identifiable

subgroups. If we are suffering from strife, it is because we are not all seeking the same goals. Some just want more and better concerts. Some just want to play open console and cannot understand why we need concerts. Some don't care about concerts or open console and just want to "tinker" with the organs. Some just want the cookies.

Within our own ranks, we need to agree to agree on where we're going, otherwise, what's the point? When it comes to finding solutions to challenges within a volunteer-based organization, seek compromise wherever possible. Compromise is not defeat. It is a practical solution where there are divergent viewpoints. Business leaders know this all too well. To be successful, all solutions need reflect a "win-win" situation. As with most specialty interest groups, we have a small group of loud, self-appointed experts among us. We know who they are. Just remember . . . they don't speak for everybody. Think carefully, weigh the "evidence" at hand, draw your own conclusions and make logical, well-reasoned and insightful decisions based on your own experience.

If we do not take ourselves and what we are doing seriously, can we honestly expect others to do the same?

Scott Smith is an organist and organbuilder from Lansing, Michigan. He is currently in his 22nd year as President of Lansing Theatre Organ, Inc., producers of the Riverside Pops concert series at the Grand Ledge Opera House in Grand Ledge, Michigan. ♪

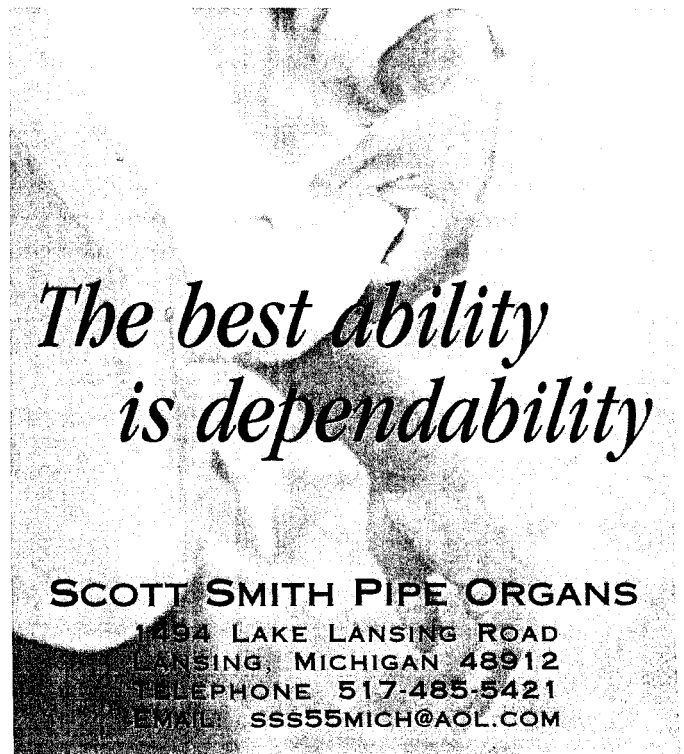


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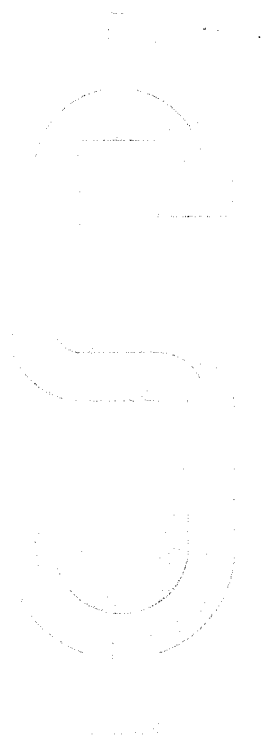
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Fundraising 10

BY SCOTT SMITH

There's probably only
one area where
Washington and
Hollywood agree.
Money.



Nothing happens without it. As the title implies, money talks—and we all know what walks. So many clubs and chapters fall short of successful concert production and restoration funding simply because they don't understand how to go about acquiring supplemental income. Frequently, it seems that those who can only think of reasons not to do something outnumber those who accomplish things. In the big scheme of things, virtually all arts and cultural organizations are struggling with shortfalls in funding, and there is no more "easy money" to be had. Public television and radio stations hold pledge drives and on-air auctions to maintain quality programming. Museums and art galleries rely more and more on their gift shops for survival. Public libraries go head-to-head with used book stores by selling decommissioned and donated books for extra income. It seems that hardly a week goes by that there isn't some organization asking for some sort of contribution. Let's face it: we're all in the same boat together. Today, it's unrealistic to expect ticket sales of any performance art to cover all of the expenses of production. Period. If we expect to be able to continue producing quality concerts with well-maintained organs, we need to add to our bottom lines in any way possible to offset potential losses. While it's sad to say, our society has come to a point where it tends to worship money over everything else. Altruism isn't dead, but it's not feeling very well.

Several years ago, I attempted to hire a professional fundraiser to raise the necessary capital for the Grand Ledge Opera House project. He was generally known to be the most successful fundraiser in the area, particularly for one of the major political parties. His abilities were good

enough that with only a handful of telephone calls, he was able to easily get ten area businessmen to pay \$10,000 each to play golf for an afternoon with a former U.S. president. In our only telephone conversation, I described our project in brief, and without hesitating, he told me that it was simply too small for him. He was, however, generous with tips, ideas and offering a general direction to follow for fundraising. He understood our basic needs and was sympathetic to the cause. Perhaps the strongest point he made that afternoon was to dwell upon the fact that we already had the best of all possible worlds—an historic organ going into an equally historic building. Initially, his rejection of our project was a serious disappointment. Our perfect plan was that he would do what he does best, while we would do what we do best. It didn't work out that way, but in the long run, having to do all of the fundraising ourselves was like anything else. We would learn to appreciate each dollar earned if we had to work for it, just as we would appreciate the quality of the work performed to restore the organ if we did that ourselves as well.

Like any business or arts organization, there is a limit to which we can realistically go in cutting fees and services and still remain in business. An image of being "cheap" doesn't help anyone. A concert or concert season should start out with a budget, listing fixed expenses vs. anticipated income. Previous experiences will tell us what the shortfall might be, and there is our start for filling the gap. There is a vast difference between "how much do we need" and "pass the hat." Before setting out to raise additional capital, we need a well-thought-out idea of how much we actually need over a given time period.

Happy are those who dream of

1: It's all about the money.

So many club members shortchange themselves and their clubs by pinching pennies. They act as if every expenditure was coming directly out of their pockets. We all grew up with the adage: "Watch the pennies and the dollars will take care of themselves." I'm sure this was wise philosophically when it was first coined, but the ante has been upped considerably since then. I'm not advocating a policy of spending wildly in any regard, but in each case, be it a concert series, restoration or expansion project, we need to look at the big picture and respond accordingly. That's why we need supplemental income.

The inverse of fundraising is hoarding. I know of organ (and other types of) clubs with sizeable bank accounts which see hoarding money as their primary goal. They pinch pennies, whine about expenses, and wring hands about dwindling audiences. Whining is a hollow plea, and sets itself up for victorious defeat. Furthermore, a nonprofit with a big war chest really serves no purpose. Hoarding has a long-term negative element that is slow in surfacing, but very real. It lulls club members and concert patrons into a false sense of security. Without expressing a constant need for additional funding, the level of importance in our lives diminishes, leaving us with a sense of complacency. We don't feel "involved." When things seemingly go awry without warning, we always hear the same thing: "Too bad they couldn't save it." The truth is: "they" is actually "us."

The perpetual reliance upon a single, generous donor is another potentially lethal danger. Like a standard of living, both we and our audience become accustomed to certain conditions at a certain level. When the financial rug is yanked out from beneath us, especially if the support is considerable,

confusion and pandemonium can result. It can potentially destroy your concert series and ultimately your organization. Here today...gone tomorrow.

Like a business, a concert-producing organization's credibility rides the crest of a wave called stability and integrity. Ultimately, it reflects on those who direct it. Old-school thinking tells us to simply "make do" with what we have, but I submit that there is nothing wrong with expressing need. This is not about pride. This is about survival.

We must accept that we live in an ever-changing world. Our overly stimulated society now seems to expect a higher degree of entertainment in every performance of any kind. Today's audiences are more reluctant to commit to a whole season of anything than ever before. While an increasing amount of spendable income is being spent on entertainment, the "pie" is much larger than ever, offering an ever-increasing variety of fun and interesting things to see, hear and do. As stewards of the art of the theatre organ, our job is twofold—to educate and to entertain. Concerts need to be more than a high-wire act at low level. Our job is to give them what they need, as much as what they want. Furthermore, realistic goals need to be defined, and if you find that you're not achieving them, use the business school directive. Don't get new goals. Get new people. That is to say, there is nothing wrong with moving people around to different committees and different jobs until you get it right. Just try to get it right the first time.

If you're serious about committing to a strong future and long life for your organization, I'd like to recommend that you establish a perpetual Fundraising

Committee. As the two chief financial officers, the chairman and treasurer should always be members. Salespeople and interested parties who have run successful businesses can be especially helpful. In a nutshell, the committee's function is to create, schedule, produce and manage fundraising events, both large and small. They need to know that marketing and fundraising go hand in hand, and they should be instrumental in performing those tasks as well. Once they have well-defined goals, there is no limit to what they can do, but in a perfect world, they will need the assistance of every single member in your club in some way. This is serious fun, folks. Back in the day, organ concerts seemed to just "happen" and financial risk was minimal. Today, it's a different story. If we want them to continue, thrive and even grow, we need to plan for a solid future by setting the stage today.

In the coming issues, fundraising ideas will be presented here with a given method with which to approach each one. Other methods can be employed to accomplish essentially the same thing. There is something of a risk-return ratio with each one, but, with little exception, the return is generally proportional to the amount of work required for each task.

If I can leave the reader with one single thought after reading this series, it is that fundraising is not a one-time thing. Once begun, it needs to be perpetual. So long as your organization is active, you need supplemental income. Did you ever offer a contribution to an organization that turned it down because they already had too much?

dreams, and are willing to pay the price to make them come true. —Anonymous

Fundraising 101:

BY SCOTT SMITH



(Smith Collection)

It was the summer of 1994. Less than six months from the Grand Ledge organ playing for the first time, and we were flat broke. Money had been committed to various phases of the project and spent accordingly, but resources had seemingly all dried up. All of us had devoted a great deal of time to the project, and it was frustrating, even maddening to be this close, but still so far away. What to do?

Finally, it was my mother who suggested the concept of a big yard sale (which is chiefly how she became our Fundraising Director). She pointed out that we all were collectors of various types, be it junk or something of actual value. Logically, that meant that all of us probably had enough surplus goods to donate "lead items" to a sale without sacrificing much of anything. From there, all we had to do was to put out the call to friends, family and our local database to seek donations of goods from those who had already donated cash. Furthermore (and this was the heart of the matter), it gave us an opportunity to do two important things. First, we drew people on the periphery to become more closely involved, potentially increasing the number of supporters, thereby increasing interest and excitement, thereby increasing revenue. Secondly, everyone who donated items could feel good that they had contributed something tangible toward the ultimate goal of a playing organ; something that didn't cost them anything, at least not directly.

As it turned out, the sale was so successful it has become an annual event, both for our group and for the neighborhood. It is now the anchor for an annual street sale. A big concept made bigger by virtue of its size and longevity, generating more interest, drawing more people. Even the local TV news teams rarely miss our event. That doesn't hurt.

Over the past several years, through my business ties, I've come to know many people who are key to the arts in my community. Some of them snickered at the concept of this sale when we first began. One of our own people even verbalized his belief that a yard sale could potentially hurt

us with a "low-class" image. However, as soon as he learned that the first sale generated close to \$2,500, he stopped scoffing. Now those groups all hold their own sales, with similar results. I guess it's not so low-class after all.

While the amount generated may not be the moon, it is something. Is it worth all of the time devoted? Absolutely. It has multiple additional benefits. It engages the public, gives you an opportunity to do a soft sell of your efforts in an informal setting, and increases your visibility as a viable, active organization. Plus, it has the added benefit of getting your group together for a finite amount of time, with a can't-miss goal at the end. In business terms...low risk, high return.

If you plan to do this sort of thing, my advice is to do it all the way, and keep doing it. You won't regret it. Through the years, we've experimented with the way we do things, and we think we have it down to a science. Obviously, there's always room for improvement, and every situation is different. You may find another way that works better, but the basic concepts are universal.

The Basics of Successful Fundraising Saleology

Where—The real estate maxim works just as much for this type of sale as it does for a great house in an appealing area: location, location, location. Ideally, you want some place with high visibility, where you can maintain the sale year after year. An attractive home or business location in a good, middle-of-the-road area is ideal. Convenient free parking is essential. Moderate traffic at medium or low speed encourages potential buyers to slow down and stop. Put everything on tables out in the open where it can be easily seen from the road. Encourage your people to mill around the tables and park nearby; people always want to be where others are doing something fun. Resist the temptation to run the sale out of the inside of a garage.

Oftentimes, sales are lost for the simple reason that many people simply do not want to get out of their cars and enter the "Black Hole of Calcutta."

When—In spite of an intuitive notion to run a sale on weekend days only, we've found that running it on a Friday and Saturday (with option to open on Sunday) works the best. Friday is traditionally our heaviest traffic day. Run it either in the late spring or early fall, and hold it from 9:00am to 5:00pm each day, like a business. In our case, one of the major determining factors for our annual September sale is that we generally receive a generous contribution of goods from an area gift store just prior to the event, right after their annual sidewalk sale. Other types of retailers and service providers should be tapped as well for their surplus and obsolete goods. Even my dentist has contributed interesting stuff that was just cluttering up his storage space. Just be convincing that you're doing them a favor by hauling it off.

Sale Director—Perhaps the biggest reason for failure of any enterprise or event is the lack of direction. Like anything else, even something as simple and straightforward as a yard sale will go much more smoothly if you are organized and have one person directing it. This person needs to be generally respected, have a cool head, and have an overall vision for the event. It need not necessarily be your chairman or even an officer, but without it, your sale will be much less than it can be. To that person, I offer the three most important words that potentially spell success: delegate, delegate, delegate!

Storage—Before the sale, you'll want a place where you can store everything. It should be some place where it could be stored for up to months at a time. Whole estates, the remains of other sales, and the results of spring cleaning have come our way over the years, and they didn't all arrive at convenient times of the year, either. In a perfect world, when the sale is over everything would magically disappear, but you will have plenty of stuff to deal with. For whatever reason, if you choose to save it to run at next year's sale, you'll want a central

place to store it. This same storage depot should also work as a place where you can mark prices on items as they arrive. That way, it doesn't become a madhouse in the week just before the sale.

Marking—The pre-printed, self-adhesive stickers are a Godsend. Pick up several packages of these at the office supply or grocery store. We have found that it is particularly helpful to have a group marking items. A small box of hanging tags comes in handy, too. Ask yourself (and each other): how much is the maximum I would pay for this? Keep in mind that the primary object of the sale is to make money, not get rid of the stuff. Of course, that philosophy reverses itself as soon as the sale is over, but you get the point.

Pricing Policy—The estate sale professionals usually hold to a rule of full-price the first day, half-price the second day (except for jewelry and certain antique items), and we modify it by going to "a buck a bag" after lunchtime the second day, depending on how much stuff you have to dispense with at that point. Tacking up a few signs explaining this simple pricing policy may save you from the hassles of those who will not be put off in their attempts at dickering on everything (they're generally the ones who will ignore the signs and try to dicker anyway). We've stuck with the simple rule of marking nothing under 25 cents. If it isn't worth that, then it goes into the Free Box, which helps to make junky (but still somewhat useful) stuff go away, and the associated guilt usually helps to sell something, too.

Pickup Service—Those who own pickup trucks and vans can be enlisted to pick up items from those who have no means of transporting them to your location.

Just Say "No"—Even though you're relying totally on the donations of goods as a result of the kindness of others, you do have the right to limit what you'll take in. Old clothes do not seem to sell particularly well. They take up a lot of time to unfold and place on hangers, and they somehow seem to take even longer to process to send to the next stop when the sale is over. Learn to say "no, thanks," with a smile. (Note:

when you publicize "no clothes" to your members, be sure that they understand that you don't want them to arrive in the nude!)

Cleanliness—While it's an added step, and it does seem to be a pain, make sure everything is clean. Items should be clean when they arrive, but you should be prepared to do it yourselves if at all necessary. Clean items do sell better; that's for sure, and it's good for your image.

Perks—Sale volunteers should be allowed a certain amount of "free stuff" from the sale, as a token of appreciation for their time and effort inputting on this event. Just make sure to put a finite dollar-and-cent limit on this privilege.

Promotion—Make sure to take out a classified ad in the local newspaper, and don't hesitate to spend the extra money for a hefty border and bold type. Run the ad the day before and on each day of the sale. Depending on your area, shoppers' guides can be a good backup for print media. This is a very minor investment for a potentially major payoff. Press releases to all of the local print, TV and radio are a must. Remember to include it in your newsletter and concert season brochures. Don't forget to mention ties to your website (don't tell me you don't have one!), with more info about the sale, including some digital photos of the more interesting stuff, like jewelry, antiques and unusual stuff.

Signage—You should learn what your local policies are regarding yard sale signage before putting even one up. Yard signs are good, but it's not a bad idea to ask first if you can drive a stake into a well-manicured lawn. More often than not, transportation departments and utility companies frown on nailing something directly to a wooden pole, so you'll need to be creative. I use a set of 11" by 17" signs cut from 3/8" plywood, with photocopied signage glued to them with heavy-duty spray adhesive. To keep vandals from pulling them down, I now wire the signs to various local signs: the type with perforated metal poles. They have to work pretty hard to get these down! Another clever way to handle signage, especially if you live in a "concrete jungle," is to plant your staked

sign down into a five-gallon plastic bucket, and fill it with sand, stone, concrete chunks or even wet cement. These can be placed just about anywhere. You should be aware that some local ordinances outlaw the use of any kind of temporary signage. Remember: even in the most restrictive areas, you can always put up obnoxious signs with huge arrows on the insides of windows of cars legally parked strategically near your sale, and there's not a thing the law can do to you. It's free speech, after all.

Even though many of the people who attend your yard sale event might not give a rip about the organ or organ music, do not fail to put up a few signs that clearly state that the "proceeds from this sale directly benefit..." If at all possible, make your signs computer-generated, as it lends an air of credibility. Plus, don't be afraid to be creative with attractive graphics and big, bold typestyles. Remember: it's a fun event, and everything about it should reflect that.

Setup—To save yourself a lot of grief and heartache, cordon off your yard or parking lot area and set up your sale on tables the day before (ours are the long banquet hall type and were donated by the local police department when the tables were taken out of service). Organizing things will help greatly in making your sale appear logical, and it reflects well on you and your organization. Electronics, books, art, furniture, automotive, tools and so on can all be segregated into their own areas. Remember: this is your "showroom." Remember to place lead items, like bicycles, furniture and other large items of interest, out near the street, where passers-by can't miss them. When you're done for the day, cover everything up with heavy plastic drop cloths (it could rain, you know!) and, if you feel it necessary, volunteers could take turns standing guard all night. This is especially good for those who work nights and/or don't want to be involved in the actual sale. As items sell, keep consolidating and reorganizing, and start eliminating tables as soon as you logically can. One full table is far more appealing than two nearly empty ones.

Food—Ask one person to take care of feeding the crew for lunch, be it take-out, or catered in from "Mom's Kitchen." You could ask everyone to bring a dish to pass, but if your sale is as busy as ours has been over the years, you'll need someone not involved in the actual sale to help feed the rest. Cookies, finger foods, coffee, and cold

bottled water and soda pop are good to have available at all times.

Cashier—This spot should be clearly marked and manned at all times. Remember to go to the bank the day before the sale starts to get a good variety of singles, other small bills and change. You don't want to be embarrassed when the first buyer of the day hands you a twenty-dollar bill for a fifty-cent item and you don't have the right change.

Valuables—Jewelry, watches and other items of value that could easily go walking should be kept at or near the cash register, under the watchful eye of the cashier or other members of your staff stationed nearby. Unfortunately, you should expect a certain amount of petty theft, and the remarkable thing is that when it happens, it's right under your nose. Remember to lock it up at night!

Coupons—Discount coupons for concerts or concessions sound like a good idea to place in each bag, but we find that people are only interested in "the goods," and so we have elected to end this practice. We do, however, keep a handful of season brochures out on display for those who are interested.

Entertainment—You will generally have some sort of radios or televisions that have been donated to you. We always check stuff out and leave small notes that indicate the condition. It's probably not a bad idea to have something on in the background to break the din, but whatever it is (and this includes theatre organ music), don't play it at an obnoxious level or people will leave for sure. You may find that getting people to agree what to listen to or watch is the most difficult part of this.

Presales—This is a decision for you to make, but we've softened in our position over the years. If an item is "out," the customer has exact change and is willing to pay full price, we say: why not? A sale is a sale. Many people tell us that they make as much with presales as the "real" sale. Besides, it makes the buyers happy and makes them feel special. Isn't that what we're really after?

Other Sources—Among our people, little gets thrown away during the year. When something gets replaced, becomes outmoded or simply done away with in their homes, the words "yard sale" are verbalized, and they have a special box they keep around strictly for that purpose. At the end of the year, it gets trotted over to Yard Sale Central.

Contributions—Some people are by nature "tossers" and wouldn't dream of

keeping old stuff around long enough to put into a sale. Keep this in mind: if they have the money to consistently replace stuff, they have the money to contribute in lieu of it. You know who they are... go get 'em!

Curb Service—We know of a man who hates waste. I mean really hates waste. He scours the curbs of his neighborhood on his bicycle the night before trash day, as he has for decades, as did his father before him. He takes notes of selected items, the address where they can be located, and later returns with a pickup truck to take them home. He can even recite the Supreme Court decision verbatim that gives him the right to do this. Bicycles, microwave ovens, and computers are all quietly repaired and sold at his annual yard sale. In some cases, the repaired items are sold back to the original owners! (He considers "Trash Amnesty Day" to be a national holiday.) Consider the curb as a resource for your sale. Seriously!

Leftovers—There are organizations that actively collect, process and sell used items that are generally leftovers from yard sales. They are Goodwill, Volunteers of America, AMVETS, and the Salvation Army, to name a few. Some will even come and pick the stuff up, if it is boxed and packed properly. Make sure to check with them before hauling anything there, as policies vary from place to place. There is also www.freecycle.org, which allows you to post online the items available (for free only), and I can guarantee they will go away. Finally, assuming your zoning ordinances are not particularly strict, there is always the curb. If we put stuff out late on a Saturday afternoon, it is generally gone by Tuesday.

Epilogue

Be warned: if you choose to do this at your house, after the sale is over and the tables have been cleared away, your lawn will look just like the circus has left town. Fear not. It will grow back. At least it has on my mother's lawn for the past dozen years. When it's all over, you'll likely be amazed at how much you make on the sale. Do this: don't make any rash decisions whether you will or won't have a sale the following year during the last hours on the final day of the sale. You'll be too tired and sore (not to mention cranky!) to make a rational decision. My advice is to take a deep breath, and count your money.

Fundraising 101:

BY KAREN WHITE COUP

The WTO Cookbook and Getting ORGANized!

When I set out to pen this how-to series about supplemental funding, the initial idea was that I would write each installment. However, it soon became clear that I would need some advice and historical information from those who had successfully accomplished the individual fundraising tasks and events. Ultimately, it occurred to me that I should simply get out of the way and allow them to tell their story in their own words. Taking it step-by-step, Part Three of our series tells the tale of how Wichita Theatre Organ was able to successfully (and brilliantly) combine simple-but-clever marketing and fundraising simultaneously.

—Scott Smith



(Photo by Katie Coup)

As has been noted in earlier THEATRE ORGAN articles, ticket sales alone simply will not support a theatre organ concert series, or any other type of music. Raising money for a theatre organ support group is especially challenging, due to the relative obscurity of the instrument itself. In order to attract and keep the public's interest in supporting any charity, fundraising can, and should, take several forms. As past articles by Scott Smith and others have demonstrated, there are many ways to create interest in a given charitable group.

Not-for-Profit Status

If your group is not currently classified as 501(c)(3) but could be (so that donations are tax-deductible), get it done. Now. Then make up some forms that can be given to any contributor of funds or goods, and do not forget a nice handwritten thank you note. Enlist those English majors that every group has and put them to work.

"Jams and Jellies"

The Paramount Wurlitzer made its debut in Wichita's Century II Civic Center in December, 1972. For the next few years, except for selling an occasional recording that a featured artist brought or the WTO-produced LPs that Rex Koury or Billy Nalle made, the Wichita Theatre Organ group had no "jams and jellies" table at concerts. When we visited a restored B-17 Flying Fortress in Fort Worth, a not-for-profit project, the "jams and jellies" idea literally was hauled out from under the plane to make me think "We could do that." The restoration and fuel costs of such a machine were monumental, and the very enthusiastic wife of the owner had thought of every way possible to supplement funds; she dragged out big plastic trunks of t-shirts, tote bags, and all manner of B-17-decorated memorabilia. I thought, "Why not?" and started ordering recordings from all over.

That was the beginning of the WTO Sales Table at concerts and by mail order.

At concerts, we soon learned the hard way that having enough "change" was vital, and that's meant two ways: change as in dollar bills, and change as in new and different products as often as possible. But in retrospect two things were more important, and the first is a "hindsight is 20/20" observation: the Sales Team should know what the artist is going to play! And then, they should be familiar with the goods. If the artist of the evening brought recordings, the sales staff needed to become familiar with the tunes on each one before the doors opened. If said artist ended the first half with a "bang," the audience would head en masse for the table and want "the recording with THAT piece on it." If that big piece wasn't on an available recording, there were disappointed faces for sure, but then "Well, is my old favorite that he also played on one of them? Or on ANY recording?" It saved time and made sales to know the answers.

More casual browsing before the concert brought different queries from the three groups of people at Wichita concerts: the dedicated Wichitans who knew, loved, and cared only about "their" Paramount organ, the knowledgeable theatre organ fans (mostly from out of town), and those who came due to pre-concert or silent film publicity and knew little or nothing about theatre organs at all. The first group seldom bought anything but WTO-produced items. The second group quickly grabbed any "hot off the press" theatre organ recording or anything they didn't already own, and the third group searched the recordings for their favorite tunes—artist and organ didn't matter. If the sales staff could make conversation, offer help and information, and determine the interest level of the client, a sale could be made. If no help was offered, particularly those in the last group were almost always daunted by the number

Karen White Coup is the former Business Manager for Wichita Theatre Organ, Inc. She edited the cookbook Get ORGANized and Cook and helped to plan and host the 1999 ATOS Great Planes Regional Convention in Wichita. She writes for National Horseman magazine and still enjoys ORGANized friends and concerts.

of titles and organs they'd never heard of—resulting in no sale.

Timing was always the major factor. Having the table set up and ready for business when the doors opened 45–60 minutes before show time was essential. Sales before the show were always minor, but at least the crowd learned what was there, and that second group would make purchases to expand their collections. At intermission, especially if the artist properly left them “wowed” and leaping to their feet with appreciative applause, high spirits, and open checkbooks, there was no time to waste. Intermission only lasted 15, or at best 20, minutes so there was a small window of selling time. Having educated sales people who could make change and process charge orders efficiently and quickly was essential. (In our experience, sales after the concert ended were always minimal. The “glow” died fast as people headed home, no matter how well the artist ended the show.)

Charge orders increased sales substantially. During the early years at Century II, it was “cash or check” (and we only had one bounced check in all the years that I handled the table). As credit cards became more popular in the early 1980s, more and more people wanted to make their payments that way. We joined the modern world and learned the often-annoying technique of the sliding card process machines. The charges had to be called in within 24 hours from home. Even in the later years, when the call-in might have been handled on the spot, there was not a telephone line available. But taking credit cards was definitely worth the effort: sales increased two-to-threefold.

The Cookbook, and More

During the reign of Jesse Crawford at the Paramount in New York, the caretaker of the Wurlitzer was Dan Papp. His second wife was a petite Hungarian lady named Theresa. After Dan died, she left the East Coast and moved to Wichita, to be near “Dan’s Wurlitzer.” During her years in Wichita, my then husband, Mike, and I occasionally picked her up and brought her to our home to cook us dinner—she loved to cook. Even in her declining years, she would muster her strength—she was a tiny thing—and stand at the kitchen counter making things from scratch for dinner. And “from scratch” meant with her very old yellow ware bowl and her one very old wooden spoon, both of which she brought with her from Hungary to this country.

No using Kitchen Aid mixers, no food processors—she beat egg whites by hand until stiff for her Walnut Torte, and gently used that spoon to mix flour with eggs for her spaetzle, dropping spoonfuls into her chicken soup.

Shortly after Theresa died in March of 1992, I recall standing at the same counter, thumbing through my recipe box, and finding her Walnut Torte 3x5 card, which I had made while watching her create the delicious cake. The measurements weren’t very accurate: “1/2 water glass of chopped walnuts” and “1/2 square—maybe more—of chocolate, melted.” I thought to myself that, at least to other lovers of theatre organ, saving her recipes, and those of other organ world great cooks like Lyn Larsen, Helena Simonton, Jim Riggs, and yes, even those of the Coup family, might be important. I realized literally at that moment that I had on the counter a “fundraiser cookbook” for a friend’s church, and that the answer to my quest to preserve recipes lay in front of me. Thus was born my idea for a fundraiser cookbook for Wichita Theatre Organ, Inc.

A company called Morris Press had printed that church cookbook. With considerable excitement, I called them and asked about doing a cookbook. “How much does it cost? How many can we print? How do we do it?” They sent a kit, and I was off and running, or as off and running as I could be with two little girls ages 11 and 8! They soon became used to hearing “Mom’s working on the Cookbook, go play.” (Those daughters are now 25 and 22, and both use the Cookbook regularly, but Betts, the younger, admits to some resentment for the “Mom-hours” its production stole from her.)

The cookbook kit explained the formula. The number of recipes and the number of books ordered determined the price per book. Three hundred recipes would make a book worth a given dollar amount, four hundred recipes would make an even better book which would sell for more. Never one to shy away from going for the top, I immediately made four hundred recipes the goal. The next day, I wrote a letter explaining this fundraising effort and requesting recipes, and I sent the letter to the WTO mailing list, the ATOS chapters, and to every theatre organ person for whom I could find an address. I also sent letters to our family members and personal friends, who, by association with us, were suddenly “theatre organ” supporters. Response was immediate and generous, and recipes arrived, singly and in bundles. One woman in particular, Virginia Steele, who still

attends WTO concerts, sent so many low-and non-fat dish descriptions that one section of the book was inspired by her and is nearly all hers. Well-known artists and friends of the theatre world sent recipes: the list included Lyn Larson, Helena Simonton, Olga Papp, Stephen Ross, Marie Kibbee, Scott Smith, Jim Riggs, Jeff Weiler, Chris Elliott, Marian Minor Cook, Peter Botto, Patti Simon, Bill Wilson, and Dave Weaver. Many more fans, friends, and family members contributed their favorite recipes and reminiscences.

All of those recipes, and we did indeed hit the goal of four hundred, had to be put in publishable form. It was tough back then—no e-mail, few home fax machines, no computers, few word processors: and virtually every recipe arrived handwritten or typed, and I typed many myself—all of Theresa’s, and others given me in earlier times by Lyn, Helena, Michael’s mother, my mother. Those from my own files were nearly all handwritten on cute recipe cards. I had specifically asked the recipe donors to add “personal notes” to their recipes—after all, the “historic” aspect of Theresa’s recipes was the original inspiration. I did have to work a bit on the publisher about that—they weren’t too enthusiastic about all that space given to “notes,” and they had to be persuaded that the “names” were the most important part of the book! Eventually during the project, those personal parts expanded to include tributes to Jesse Crawford and to Jesse and Helen as a couple, the “Memories” section, a history of the Paramount Wurlitzer, and a history of the concerts at Century II—all at the beginning of the book. Crazy stories of Virgil Fox, George Wright, and Dick Simonton, as well as the recollections of older folks who remembered the Wurlitzer in the New York Paramount, became part of that section. I tried to record photographic history as well, using on the section dividers photographs of the Crawfords, Theresa Papp, Dick Simonton, Billy Nalle, Raymond Shelley, and others important to the Wurlitzer’s story. The quality wasn’t perfect, but where else could people easily see a snapshot of the Paramount console sitting in the street in New York City, prior to being loaded on a truck bound for California? Many people who admitted they didn’t intend to make a single recipe bought the book for those things.

There were personal and selfish benefits for me. I was able to record “for posterity” my own family’s favorite recipes for my own use and, as it has turned out, for the use of

my children and their friends. To this day, many of my own friends still use the book frequently. Family history emerged due to its publication: my much-older cousin-by-adoption, Barbara Williams, enjoyed reading the book and told me a story later that my father's aunt was one of the country's first female church organists.

The foreword to the book was written on February 10, 1993, bringing the project that had begun about a year before to the point of ordering. I believe we requested 300 books at about \$8.50 a book (a total order amount that would have paid the fees of at least a couple of concert artists, and that caused the WTO treasurer, David Bernstorf, to swallow hard and hope that this was a good idea). Every recipe donor received an order blank, and we sold the cookbook first for \$20, then \$18, then \$15, at concerts and convention record shops, and by mail, eventually offering aprons and tote bags to match the "Get ORGANized" logo. A local box manufacturer contributed shipping boxes made to fit the books. The original order of 300 sold out and a second printing of 300 was ordered somewhere along the way, probably around five years later. The books are still available from WTO. And, interestingly, in the decade-plus that has passed since the initial order, the cost of doing the books has remained about the same. (Our cost was a bit higher due to those "extras" referred to above: photos, historic pages, and personal recipe names and notes.)

With the advent of modern technology that includes laptops, files, scanners, and e-mail, cookbook planning and assembly has undergone a revolution. Morris Press is still going strong, and their expansive website, www.cookbooks4sale.com, will explain the options for and details of publishing your group's own cookbook.

Raising money by putting together a cookbook for your theatre organ group is a worthwhile goal. But try to take it "the extra mile." Get those historic and personal vignettes, so that when finished, the book will be more than a cookbook. It will be an historic record of people and music and an instrument well loved.

Aprons and Tote Bags and T-shirts—Oh, My!

The Get ORGANized logo from the cookbook naturally opened the door to more "jams and jellies" for the WTO Table. Even back then, it was easy to submit the logo, which remained on file for us with a company in Texas and which was used on

all manner of items. In order to offer "matching" items with the cookbook logo, aprons, tote bags and mugs were ordered, and t-shirts appealed to those who weren't so interested in the other items. Such items sold well at concerts and by mail. Gift-wrapped-and-shipped "gift sets" were offered, although seldom ordered. Most of those items back then were about \$3 each, so a markup to \$10 or so meant a fair profit to the group.

As noted below under In-Kind Donations, for several years, the Wichita Sales Table has proudly featured the beautiful vests made by long-time WTO supporter Patti Doyle of Columbia, Missouri. A skilled theatre costume designer for Stephens College, Patti made and donated for resale many of her charming and unique vests featuring fabric keyboards, accurately stitched console images, and tiny brass "bells and whistles." Each was a work of art, and many theatre organ fans of the Wichita organs and others wear them proudly. Books of all kinds were offered at various times, with varied results. The soft-cover New York Paramount publication from the Organ Historical Society was of interest to many people. Lyn Larsen and Walt Strony wrote music and "how to play" books that were always good sellers. When Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., appeared at Century II at a silent film event in the 1980s, copies of his last book were offered for sale. Two others, which sounded intriguing but were too obscure or too pricey for the Century II crowd, were Ray Biswanger's fine history of the Wanamaker Organ in Philadelphia and another coffee table book, a history of Disney's early silent films by J. B. Kaufman, the Wichitan who wrote our fine silent film notes. Obvious items such as 8x10 photos of the organ console, or of the interior or exterior of the New York Paramount or Wichita's Miller theatre, were also good sellers, and in this day and age of home digital imagery could be truly inexpensive to produce.

Be persuasive and convince handy folks in the organization to contribute their skills by turning old organ parts into saleable items. Old stop tabs make great key chains—clean them up (or if they were touched by Jesse Crawford at Simonton's as WTO's were, leave 'em dirty!), drill a hole, add a ring from your local office supply, and you have key rings. Wood pipes can be turned into drop boxes for donated funds, or birdhouses. Surely something can be made from old metal pipes. If all else fails, and they're deemed to be of no historic or future value, in these days when recycled metal

can bring in money, old pipes could simply be recycled. Ditto the copper and other wire from old installations—don't let it go to the dump!

In-Kind Donations

Never forget that many supporters want to help with specific donations, either because it is a doable or easy way to help, or because it may be the only way they can help. Print a list of needed items in the concert program and, many times, such items will appear. Or, donations can be suggested to "friends" of the group: print shops can donate programs, office equipment businesses can donate office items from computers to legal pads, travel agents can donate air travel for artists, restaurants can donate refreshments, and hotels can donate or reduce rates or offer special packages on rooms.

WTO's "parent company" was an unusual but most helpful business. Maker of fans, heaters, and other air-circulating devices, Vornado donated backing for entire concerts, such as the very popular River Festival "Big Band at the Paramount" concerts, and, at other times, simply gave fans for door prizes. Old LPs, and now "old" cassettes and gently used CDs, can be a valuable source of resale value for your group. Encourage your supporters to donate such items, or any musically oriented items, to your group. WTO sold boxes and boxes of LPs (of all sorts of music) for \$1 each; it's not much, but it adds up.

A Last and Lasting Gift

Remind your supporters to consider making your group the "memorial" for their loved ones who love the organ. Note such contributors in a dignified way in the program, and obviously, acknowledge gifts with a handwritten note and, if not a brochure, a card giving basic information about the group's activities.

The Restoration Project

When it was determined that the Paramount Wurlitzer would need "re-restoring," a fundraising campaign was publicized. Called the Quarter Century Restoration Fund, various categories based on the amount of a tax-deductible donation were established, and such contributions were noted in each concert program. People love to feel needed, and most people love to see their names in print. In some communities, an effort to enlist the help of major businesses might be workable, and

would be announced at concerts. An effort was made to report on the progress, chamber by chamber, of the restoration.

Personal Fundraisers and Help from Artists

One bright day in 1990, the always generous Lyn Larsen offered to "cook up a fundraiser" in Wichita at the Coup residence. Stephen Ross flew in from Los Angeles to be his sous chef and Katie Coup, who was all of 11 at the time, served as the waitress. The table sat 12, so, if memory serves, ten enthusiastic Larsen-friendly fans of gourmet food paid \$50 each to watch and then enjoy Lyn's wonderful cooking. This isn't a fundraiser that would work too many places, but it was fun!

Lyn also contributed in so many ways to WTO through the years. He contributed in major ways that were not publicized, such as the Uniflex system on the Century II organ. He played more than one complimentary concert to raise funds for the re-restoration of the Century II Wurlitzer, and he donated recordings more than once.

Through the years, nearly every artist associated with WTO in any way donated concert time or other help to the organization. In addition to Lyn Larsen, Brett Valliant, Scott Smith, David Harris, Jelani Eddington, Jeff Weiler, and Patti Simon are a few of the most prolific contributors, but in his or her own way, every artist who ever came to Wichita helped further the cause.

"Keep the Music Playing"

This simple phrase, which became the mantra for Wichita's fundraising efforts, came from Olga Papp, the daughter-in-law of Dan and Theresa Papp. A major supporter of WTO, she loved the Paramount Wurlitzer and believed in those words wholeheartedly. Try to apply Olga's dedication to whatever ORGAN-ization captures your interest. Support it in any way you can, to the fullest extent of your ability, and think hard to come up with new and innovative ways to extend this list. Keep the music—and the organs—playing!

Bob brings them in at the Orpheum Theatre!

"The Orpheum Theatre recently brought back Bob Ralston for his second performance in less than twelve months. Once again, Bob filled the seats with over 1,000 tickets sold and the theatre walking away with a nice profit. The organ fans were delighted with the show and patrons were asking me to bring him back again next year. Not only can Bob sell tickets for the theatre, he is great to work with. The Orpheum plans to have him back again and again!"

—Kim Steffen, Development Director
Orpheum Theatre, Sioux City, IA



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BY DOUG POWERS Fundraising 101:

Planning a Strategy and Producing a Benefit Concert

This segment of the fundraising series will offer one chapter's experience with not only a specific fundraising event but with the process that went into the planning and overall strategies leading up to a special concert. This article takes the position that fundraising is the result of a plan, and not the other way around. In order to develop impetus toward developing a chapter project of any significance, those responsible for the work must be involved and motivated. This effort takes planning and development, with a dedicated group. Therein lies the first hurdle to overcome developing a cohesive team.

The Western Reserve Theatre Organ Society is located in Cleveland and northeast Ohio. Our chapter has numerous years of pride and enjoyment in maintaining and presenting public concerts on a 3/15 Wurlitzer we installed in the Cleveland Grays Armory. It is important to note that this instrument is not the property of WRTOS, Inc. but belongs to the Cleveland Grays (a non-profit historical and educational organization that honors American military history). Throughout the past few decades, our treasury was blessed with modest increases as significant theatre organ components were donated and then sold. We also were able to achieve moderate increases in our savings by prudent management of resources, as would any responsible organization.

Setting the Stage

During 2004, our chapter began a slow process of revitalization. While we are still struggling with this today, I believe it is safe to say our ability to support our mission of presenting and preserving the theatre pipe organ is stronger now than it has been in quite some time. I offer a few pieces of background in order to provide a relative comparison of our chapter's situation as it might compare with yours: Our membership had declined every year for some time, the energy in the chapter was weakening and, while not in immediate peril, the future of the Wurlitzer in the Grays Armory was not as strong as it had been for the previous 30 years. Our direction and goals had become murky, the incentives for active involvement were stale, and our treasury was stagnant. Relationships with some chapter area theatre organ venues had weakened due to various misunderstandings, questionable communications, and an unintentional decline in chapter support of those instruments. So, what did we do? While some or even all of the following steps may not be appropriate for your chapter, these are the general stages we have gone through thus far.

Assessment

I'm sure we would all agree that just because certain conclusions and opinions have prevailed for some time, this does not necessarily provide a basis for planning and decision-making. Yet so many organizations proceed with policies or objectives that are doomed from the start since they just don't have the support of the stakeholders or those in control of the resources. So why should a small, essentially social, club operate with the same level of ignorance? For the first time ever, a chapter membership survey was created that sought answers about the collective mood, the strength of support for our mission, methods in which we might move into the 21st century, and what level of active involvement each member was willing to offer. Ideas regarding our concert series, marketing and fundraising, leadership, and organ ownership were also included.

Results

The responses were analyzed and presented at our chapter's annual meeting in 2004. Some conclusions were predictable; others were surprises. The point is that we now had an actual baseline of concerns

Left to right: WRTOS benefit ticket (Courtesy of Doug Powers) Ralph Wolf (seated) and Rob Richards, Concert crowd, Wurlitzer console (Photos by Tom Rathburn)



Western Reserve Theatre Organ Society Presents



A Summer Breeze Benefit Concert
In support of our 4 manual 28 rank Wurlitzer Project
Wednesday Evening, July 12th, at seven o'clock
850 Ashford Court, Gates Mills, Ohio



ADMIT ONE
General Admission



Patron Number _____

and recommendations from our members. Rather than relying on preconceived notions, we had the beginning of a roadmap with genuine grist for the mill. This led our chapter to ramp up a bit of risk-taking and a somewhat more aggressive approach toward our future. It also identified a few new ideas, as well as individuals who were willing to get more involved, and a handful of those who were willing to make donations but did not want to do any hands-on work. This allowed us to start the process of targeting a more systematic approach in setting goals and in managing the chapter. If your chapter has not conducted a member survey, I would recommend you consider the idea as one that could help open doors previously thought to be sealed shut!

One of the most important results had to do with organ ownership. As mentioned, the 3/15 Wurlitzer in the Cleveland Grays Armory does not belong to WRTOS, Inc. While we enjoy a cordial and constructive relationship with the Grays, we have had concerns about spending tens of thousands of dollars in rebuilding and maintaining an instrument that does not belong to us. Transfer of ownership and other negotiations with the Grays were met with friendly dialogue, but we were unsuccessful. This, along with a clear mandate from our membership, set the mood for a plan to keep this organ in concert-ready condition, but not to perform a major restoration. Indeed, we have spent serious money on maintenance and repair, and we will continue to do so. But, due in part to our membership survey results, we now knew that we would need to seek out another organ to call our own and a cause for which we would direct major resources (many of which we had yet to build!). So now what do we do?

Marketing Committee

With a reinvigorated look at our situation, new challenges began to take shape. It looked like we needed to try some new concert ideas, develop a more diverse audience, improve relationships with nearby venues and, above all, include chapter members who were willing to be part of the team. In time, we formed a new marketing committee that would become a crucial part of the planning for our chapter. The issue of fundraising has become linked to the goals we are developing. Having a reason to increase our treasury and add new members (the human resource) provided fresh incentives and an updated *raison d'être* not felt in our group in many years. Regular meetings led to brainstorming and open discussion. Some shared workload (along with a table of snacks) did wonders for this committee's ability to forge ahead with a more novel approach. While we still struggle with issues, and there are certain challenges ahead, we now have a resource built from membership support, board leadership, and motivated theatre organ supporters.

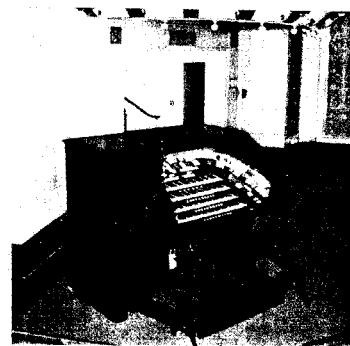
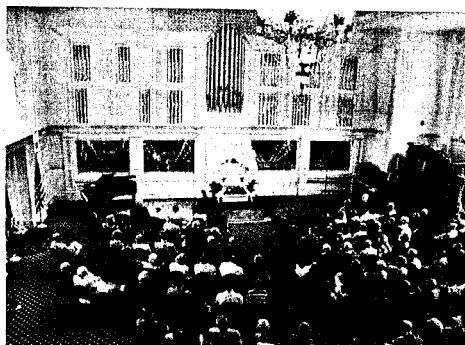
Early Signs

It is not the intent of this article to dissect the details of our past three years of regenerative efforts, but to underscore the point that a strategy of growth and development for our chapter began with a systematic approach. We worked on identifying how the membership felt about things, what they liked, what changes were needed, and so on. Once that was achieved, a broad visionary outlook blossomed into measurable and real goals, and methods. As a result of a lot of teamwork, our membership grew over 18%, and our treasury was raised over 50% since this strategy began.

With the support of our chapter members and the establishment of a new board of directors, we sought the donation of a theatre pipe organ and searched appropriate venues in which an installation and relationship could be built. WRTOS did try a similar project many years ago with a Kimball theatre organ but, due to several difficult scenarios, that project never ended in a successful placement and, sadly, the organ was sold. In 2005 and 2006, we experienced similar frustration. However, this time we were successful. The difference was probably attributable to a combination of timing, new contacts, and luck, with an emphasis on the latter. Last summer, with a lot of teamwork and some negotiation, our chapter was able to secure an agreement with the trustees at the Cleveland Masonic Auditorium and Performing Arts Center (PAC). At the same time, we were in the running for the receipt of a donation of one of two significant Wurlitzers. Indeed, during the late summer of 2006, we became the fortunate recipient of a four-manual, 28-rank instrument. Once the time came to bring the organ to Cleveland, we were thrilled at the huge level of support and physical effort given by many of our members, all of whom were excited about the upcoming project. It is unlikely that any of this would have happened had we not started working together on a survival plan a few years earlier.

How Funds Were Increased

There were three major factors in this area. Shortly after the membership survey was completed, our chapter was given a two-manual, seven-rank Wurlitzer. The instrument was not an original opus, but was a hybrid of parts from different organs. Our original intent was to augment and rebuild



this organ and install it at a location appropriate for its size and likely use. When the 4/28 Wurlitzer donation became a likelihood, we decided to sell the parts of the smaller organ. This brought in a few thousand dollars. The second source of raising money was our benefit concert held last summer. The third was related in that several extra donations were received as a part of that production. The benefit concert was another idea from our marketing committee. Once we had a tangible goal in sight, along with a renewed interest in investing effort in the chapter's future, we decided to take another risk. This is that story:

Benefit Concert— Step By Step

Budget: We knew this would be no ordinary public concert production. The fact is that this turned out to be the most expensive concert (and, therefore, another significant risk) we had ever undertaken. The collective feeling was this endeavor was worth the risk. We also knew that certain components would be more expensive. While our regular concert series tickets are \$10 and \$12, this was a different occasion, as we were clearly looking to make money this time! A somewhat arbitrary ticket price of \$50 was, therefore, set. We attached dollar values to the planned pieces as described below before committing to the actual concert, and we felt we could adjust the ticket price if prudent. However, we kept that arbitrary price.

What: The key to the entire event circled around the excitement of establishing a world-class theatre pipe organ installation in a public venue in Cleveland, and the value in supporting an historic musical asset unlike anything seen in our area. Much excitement centered on that goal. Support of this project would assist this accomplishment, and much more. For some, this was an important cause. For others, the chance to see the venue and experience an unusual (for them) type of entertainment was an effective lure.

Where: In choosing a place for this concert, the theme of the event directed the location, the style of promotion, and what we would do differently compared with our usual public concerts. The first thing that was needed was a reason to catch the attention of our potential patrons. First of all, that meant having it at a different venue, particularly since we were looking to raise money to help support the installation of a chapter-owned instrument in a location other than the Grays Armory. While not every chapter has access to an upscale location housing a magnificent theatre pipe organ, our choice was made simple when Mr. and Mrs. Vince Aveni graciously allowed us the use of their magnificent residential music room and their 4/60 Wurlitzer. Clearly, an alternate choice might have been to work out an arrangement with one of the local theatres with an instrument capable of providing a concert. Once we had the venue, the next challenge was to arrange an artist.

Who (the artist): There were two parts to the "who." First was what organist(s) would we engage and how much would this cost? In all honesty, since many of the pieces of this puzzle wound up being more expensive relative to other concerts, had we added the typical cost of hiring an artist, our "benefit" would have been less attractive as a fundraiser. But fortune smiled on us, as we were able to engage extraordinary talent by not one, but two very generous artists who agreed to waive their artist fees for our benefit concert. We were thrilled when Rob Richards and Ralph Wolf came to Cleveland (we paid travel expenses) to help us with this exciting event. Clearly, in order for you to recreate a benefit concert such as this, you would need to engage someone willing to work with you at a discounted or donated fee. With patience, a well-developed plan, and a professional approach, this may not be difficult to replicate. I would personally not ask a professional musician to consider such an arrangement without a convincing cause, and I would not recommend you seek the same kind of arrangement unless you have a strong plan in place. We owe a good deal

of gratitude to this pair of top-notch entertainers; our efforts would not have been so fruitful without their generosity and wonderful support.

Who (the audience): It was obvious to us that within our 900-name concert mailing list, we could rely only a fraction of those to remit the four-fold ticket price. So, we knew a different approach was needed to attract others. Considering the uniqueness of holding a concert in the Aveni home with a world-class instrument, the glamour of the location, the top class musicians, the inclusion of a professionally catered pre-concert cocktail hour and dessert at intermission, we were out to include a fresh group of future patrons. Certainly each of us invited persons we knew who we felt would enjoy the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, as well as individuals known to support the arts and music organizations. We also were able to obtain the mailing list for members of three local chapters of the American Guild of Organists, and several individuals belonging to the Music Box Society and the Automated Musical Instrument Collectors Association. We also approached music schools and certain businesses in the music industry. This all took time and some sleuth work by many. But as a result, we added nearly 300 names to the 200 we selected from our regular concert mailing list.

When: This decision was more dependent on the availability of the artists and the home owners along with anticipated weather conditions. It turned out that the middle of July suited everyone's availability. It was done on a Wednesday evening rather than a weekend for two reasons: First, the artists had commitments during weekends and asking them to give up a paying gig was not appropriate. Secondly, we felt the novelty of a weekday concert might attract more attention.

Promotion: Once again, due to the unique style of this event, we decided that the usual concert flyer would not cut it. So a far more classy and professional looking invitation, with a return card and pre-addressed envelope, was designed by one of our members. We used off-the-shelf high-grade paper and envelopes of an ivory color.

"A large part of the turnaround our chapter seems to be making has resulted from developing a committed team willing to work together, with the ultimate goal of keeping the theatre pipe organ in the public eye."

The copying was done at a local Kinko's rather than having it done by a higher-cost printer. The cost of this mailing was much higher than for a typical concert promotion. But, again, presenting the upscale image and the need to differentiate a worthwhile cause was essential to the effort.

We also took advantage of this event to redesign our chapter's promotional brochure, which is nothing more than a single piece of standard laser copy paper made into a tri-fold, with black and white text and images. The use of color and a high-quality paper was considered, but it was simply too expensive. As the guests arrived, they were given a brochure and chapter membership form, along with a warm welcome and thank you. During the intermission, the donor of the Wurlitzer gave a short presentation highlighting salient pieces of the organ's history and its owners. He also provided the crowd with a warm message of gratitude that the instrument would be used in a manner benefiting both the local community and the theatre organ world. That presentation was followed by an equally brief "commercial" for WRTOS, where we offered a discounted membership fee to those interested. A large color poster of the console of the newly donated organ was set

up on an easel for all to see, and WRTOS members stood by to engage conversation and answer questions.

Result: The net result yielded ten new members that night and, while our expenses soared to an all-time high, we netted a total of \$5,000. That was not only from ticket sales but from several donations. Most donations were under \$100, but a few were higher; one reached \$1,000. The reward turned out to be well worth the risk.

Epilogue

Since our benefit concert, we produced one other public concert at the Grays Armory. We performed another WRTOS first by combining a swing band with Ron Reseigh at the Wurlitzer. Swing dance clubs and other dance organizations were included in our mailing, and we featured an open dance floor. Attendance was better than average, and we actually made a small profit. More surplus organ parts have sold, and we have officially begun work on restoration and installation of our chapter Wurlitzer. Our next goal is to create a formal fundraising committee to further the work started by the Board and our marketing committee. Grants, gifts, and

other methods of raising money are all on the agenda. We still have a challenge ahead with our current Wurlitzer project: again with the assessment, collaboration, and planning, we have done together, the excitement is growing in our chapter. It all sprang from a strategy created by the decision to develop a serious self-assessment and the willingness to take some risks. We are even considering the production of another benefit concert. A large part of the turnaround our chapter seems to be making has resulted from developing a committed team willing to work together, with the ultimate goal of keeping the theatre pipe organ in the public eye of the Western Reserve for several more decades. May we offer you the best wishes with your own chapter fundraising!

Doug Powers is president of WRTOS, Inc. and is the crew chief of the chapter's 4/28 Wurlitzer project. He is on the Board of Directors of ATOS and heads up the ATOS Strategic Planning Committee.

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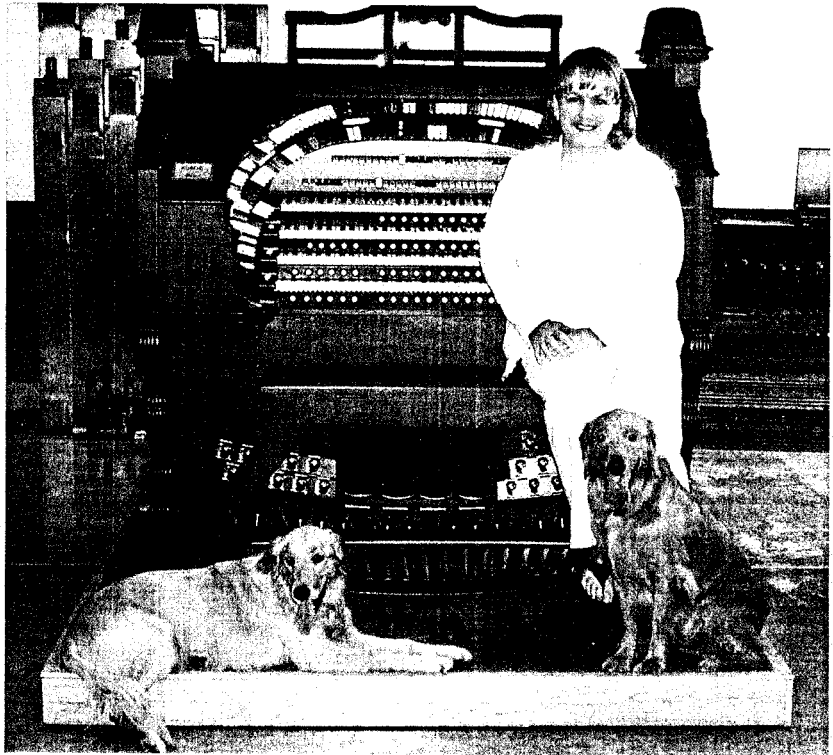
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 Wurlitzer Manor, 4/48 Wurlitzer, Gig Harbor, WA
 Washington Center for Performing Arts, 3/22 Wurlitzer, Olympia, WA
 Aveni Residence, 4/60 Wurlitzer, Gates Mills, OH
 Peery's Egyptian Theatre, 3/23 Wurlitzer, Ogden, UT
 Holdgreve Residence, 3/21 Wurlitzer, Colorado Springs, CO
 Burnett Residence, 3/18 Kimball, Halstead, KS
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Please send your items of interest to the Editor.

Fundraising: Think Outside of the Box

Has theatre organ gone to the dogs? Yes, but it's a good thing! On October 15, **Donna Parker** hosted a silent movie presentation of *The Phantom of the Opera* at the historic Hollywood Theatre in Portland, Oregon to help raise funds for two worthy organizations: Golden Bond Rescue of Oregon and Columbia River Organ Club. It all started when Bob MacNeur of Oregon City adopted a golden retriever named Gracie from Golden Bond last year. Gracie had been given up by her original family due to the need for major hip surgery they could not afford. Rather than put her down, she was taken in by Golden Bond, and her surgery was funded by donations to the organization. A year later, another golden retriever named Reggie received a hip replacement through Golden Bond and was adopted by Donna Parker. As a gift to Golden Bond for all of the wonderful work they do to save golden retrievers, Donna suggested a fundraiser with a silent movie presentation at the Hollywood, co-hosted by Columbia River Organ Club. This not only will raise much needed funds to help save other goldens, but it presents a wonderful opportunity to introduce the theatre organ to a whole new audience! A portion of the funds will go toward the organ installation fund at the Hollywood Theatre. Similar fundraisers and silent movie presentations



have been done successfully in Oregon for Habitat for Humanity and an antique Model A car club. Think outside of the box when considering ways to introduce theatre organ to the general public.

Donna Parker with guests of honor, Gracie and Reggie, who attended the Hollywood Theatre silent film fundraiser (Photo by Bob MacNeur)



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This ad for Lew White appeared in The Metronome, May, 1929 (Weiler Collection)

Rialtofest

HOW DOES JATOE DO IT?

By Steve LaManna*

DONNA PHILLIPS PHOTOGRAPHY



The front of the Rialto Square Theatre

The Pipe Organ Extravaganza and Rialtofest Weekend #5 was another huge winner, not only the Main Event Saturday night, but the concerts by Warren York, Ron Rhode, Dave Wickerham and Peter Conte at the separate venues as well. A lot of people have asked us over the last few months about the Rialtofest weekend and how we are able to fill a theatre full of paying guests . . . particularly when, as a general rule, theatre organ audiences have dwindled so greatly. The weekend is the result of a combined



effort of the Joliet Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts (JATOE), and the Rialto Square Theatre, and was born six years ago. The entire concept of the Pipe Organ Extravaganza was the sole brainchild of the past Executive Director of the Rialto Square Theatre, Mr. Sam Driggs. During Sam's tenure in 1996, he became very curious and interested in the sound of the organ and watched the work being performed on the Barton organ. He and his son even helped rebuild some of the chest work. He could see how hard the crew was working on the instrument, trying to keep it playing. It was obvious to Sam—the club was struggling hard, trying to raise money for this major restoration project.

One day, Sam, filled with great ideas, called a meeting, interested in discussing what assistance or help the Rialto could provide for the organ. Sam's idea was to have a "Really Big Show" featuring two organists, but soon discovered that idea has been tried numerous times. Finally, after several tries and various ideas, the concept of the Pipe Organ Extravaganza was born, featuring five organists and other forms of talent. Now we had a big show, with something for everyone! JATOE and the Rialto Square Theatre were now working together, promoting the Extravaganza.

The Rialtofest concept was geared to help raise additional funds for the organ, and help speed the restoration process. A miracle was taking place before our eyes! The Rialto's management and governing board of directors were completely behind the idea, willing to fund the Extravaganza, with a percentage of sales going directly into the instrument. Immediately, dates for the next four years, 1996 thru 1999, were written into the schedule book and the shows began. JATOE is indeed grateful to Sam Driggs for his caring and love of the Rialto's organ, and his desire to help JATOE and the organ. It is unusual, in that it is rare today, for anything to do with theatre organ to receive full support, including financial, from the theatre where it resides.

It was decided that it would be necessary to draw interest from two areas—theatre organ fans for the weekend (similar to a Regional Convention), and from the local community for the Saturday night Extravaganza. Both are important, but crowds the general size of most theatre organ events today cannot support the production level presented at an event like this.

JATOE concerned itself primarily with the management of the entire weekend for the incoming attendees. JATOE members handled logistics for the weekend. The Rialto Square Theatre, along with the producer, was responsible for the entire Saturday night event. The event would be promoted as a "Pops" style concert, which just happened to have a lot of organ music. The emphasis was on popular music, drawing a more varied attendance.

In December of 1999, I was asked to take over the helm of the departing producer. Having a background in corporate production and staging, and having a long-term love for the instruments, I thought the challenge would be exciting, and scary! Losing no time in interfacing with the theatre in terms of budgeting and promotion, I had a good grasp of the event business details and went about the work of putting the show together. Jim Stemke's loving care of the Rialto Barton Grande was assured and what was left was artists, theme, orchestra, etc. Soooooo let's go through the weekend!

I have never worked with such a great group of artists, including all my experiences in the entertainment world. Not just the obvious musical talents, but personalities as well. Someone in this organization a long time ago made the funny comment that all organists were made up of just egos and hairspray!!! Neither could have been less apparent with this group . . . everyone worked well together and played nice with the other children. I can't say enough about their performances. The artists were coming in as early as Wednesday, wanting time to practice on the Barton, as well as the Petroff Piano, and of course, the Walker Digital Organs. Any artists who were playing other venues had to schedule practice time. So, some careful "artist resource" management had to be skillfully negotiated.

It was the usual rush on Friday for the artists to fight for control of the keyboards, as each one needed time to practice on the Barton. Of course, they ALL wanted to try their hand on the Walker, and Rob Richards and Bob Walker were pleased to let them try, with great results later at the show! Jelani also needed time to practice at the piano. Even though each artist only had about 20 minutes of individual console time at the show, as I said earlier, I wanted their best pieces that would fit with the evening and not just "thrown-in" ones to fill time. The theme for the night was American Music. This gave a wide enough parameter and still provided a single voice for the selections. All of them came through.

Saturday was actually a "nervous fest," as we took a departure from what has happened for the last four years and changed the program to an all concert format, deleting the circus-style acts and other sideshow-style bits, and concentrated on the artists and the music. We rehearsed the orchestra and the artists all day and this was the first and ONLY time we would have this run-through for the show that evening. Judging from the sold-out audience response, we made exactly the right choice.

The entire show was greeted with whoops and hollers from an audience largely NOT theatre organ groupies, but local attendees looking for a good pops concert experience. The show opened with the DePaul University Wind Ensemble playing a great set of patriotic marches. JATOE President, Jim

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Stemke, welcoming the audience to the fifth year of the event, followed this.

Ron Rhode opened the keyboard part of the show with a rousing "Strike up the Band," and followed with several favorites such as "Oh By Jingo" and the "Boston Pops March." Ron is a seasoned professional and his program was excellent, despite the fact that he had just played an entire concert that morning at Mundelein. He then invited Jelani Eddington out on stage and they performed a melodic duo of the concert version of Deep Purple.

Next up was Rob Richards on the Walker theatre organ. Everyone was waiting to hear this and the sound was stunning. Rob played some beautiful pieces, opening with a rousing "Hooray for Hollywood" and a George Wright version of "Ain't We Got Fun." He finished with a beautiful medley of Disney tunes. Sadly, Rob's closer, a spectacular medley of Disney music through the years, is the one thing we CAN'T put on the double CD . . . Disney legal would probably chase us down but, trust me, it was great! So often, medleys have some throwaway tunes in them, but Rob's was carefully orchestrated showing off the full capabilities of the four-manual digital wonder.

Following Rob was Peter Conte on the classical Walker. Peter, as many of you know, is the artist in residence at the Wanamaker Organ at Lord & Taylor's in Philadelphia. He came to us through a special route . . . my childhood friend of many years, Curt Mangel, who is now with the Sanfilippo estate, is heading up the group that is restoring the full sound of the 6/469 monster at Lord & Taylor's in Philadelphia. We wanted to get Peter to play not only at the show, but also at Jasper's on the Sunday portion of the weekend as well. Peter played two wonderful pieces by Firmen Swinnon, "Song of Autumn" and "Sunshine." Swinnon was a theatre organist who was at the Rivoli Theatre in New York and later at the Dupont Estate, but I had never heard anything by him until this show. The first piece was a lovely pastoral melody but the second piece was an astounding toccata that really showed what a 3/80 digital, a copy of an Aeolian Skinner, can do...we might as well have been in a huge cathedral! The accuracy of these instruments lived up to all the talk.

After a closing presentation of "Belle of the Ball" and "That's Entertainment" by the DePaul Wind Ensemble we moved to the second half, which was opened by the Ensemble playing the beautiful tunes from "My Fair Lady."

John Giacchi was up next and played some lovely pieces beginning with "We Saw the Sea," "Blue Twilight" and finishing with the "Slaughter on 10th Avenue" on the Walker. Another house burner that

had them howling over the balconies. John charmed the audience with his dialect and it is great that US audiences are now hearing more of him. While he was in town he also recorded an album on the 5/80 at Sanfilippo's. I had several chances to hear what he was putting onto the player. By the time all of you read this, he will hopefully have sold a lot of these CD's!

Dave Wickerham was up next and had the audience enraptured with his selections, "Easter Parade," a Cole Porter and Gershwin Medley, and a beautiful "Stormy Weather" on the Walker . . . complete with Thunder and Lightning effects sampled on the digital toy counter. Dave is a local favorite and the audience has always been very responsive to his return trips to the area. His technique has just gotten better and better every time we hear him!

Jelani Eddington rounded out the program with such favorites as "The Trolley Song," "Give Me the Simple Life," "Serenata" and "Candide." He also played "So In Love" on the Petrof concert grand. Jelani is a real class act.

We closed with a round of tunes from DePaul, joined at the end by all our artists playing the "Washington Post March" and an encore of "Stars and Stripes."

All of the performers were commenting to me backstage that they have rarely heard such an audience response . . . and I have to agree with them. They were really on fire, meeting every artist with hollers, yells, whoops and loud applause of approval. I don't know if the crowd was starved for entertainment or just that this was an audience that wasn't jaded with theatre organ concerts like so many of us are. We may enjoy them, but our enthusiasm is more reserved . . . frankly, the energy was great . . . and infectious! I guess the old Broadway adage holds true . . . just book the best and get the hell out of the way!

Again, what really is important is the audience was made up of eighty percent or more NON-ATOS attendees . . . folks who just bought tickets because they wanted to hear good music. It proves that we can still have full houses of paying guests if an



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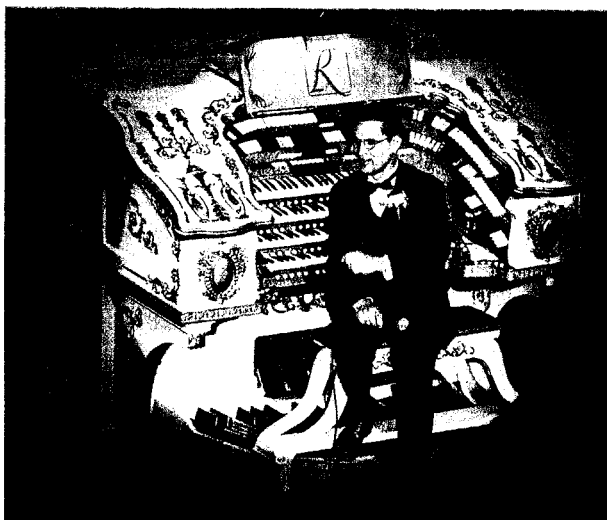
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John Giacchi, a most talented artist from Australia.



Jelani Eddington takes a skillful turn at the Petrof Concert Grand.



Ron Rhode responds to thunderous applause after he opens the theatre organ portion of the show.



Rob Richards entrances the audience with his Disney melody.

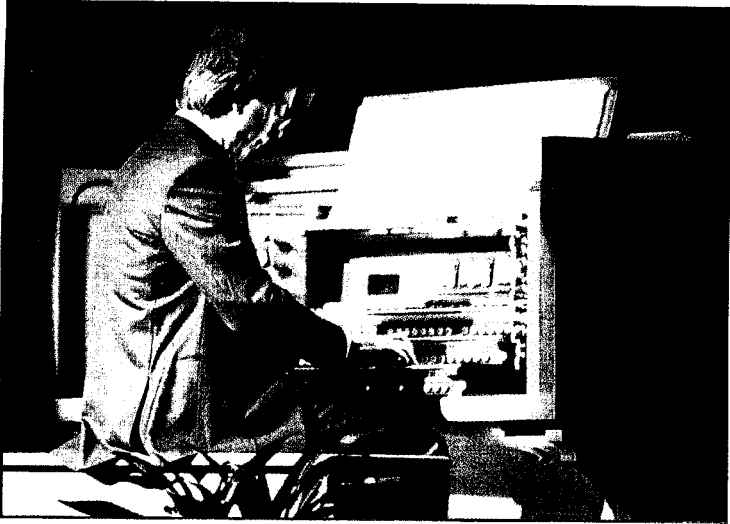


The DePaul University Wind Ensemble opens the show!

event is promoted correctly and has support from the theatre.

The rest of Rialtofest Weekend changes from year to year, depending on what venues and attractions JATOE feels will attract attendees. Our only challenge is: WHAT ARE WE GONNA' DO NEXT YEAR? Well, we have solved that. Besides a roster of incredible talent, we are including a "Live"

appearance by George Wright at The Rialtofest, including performances on the Walker Digital Organ. George will be playing selections that have NEVER been heard by the public before . . . on any record or any concert. George's selections and performance at the show will surely spark the interest and curiosity of a lot of people. We are proud to provide the



Peter Conte of Wanamaker Organ fame thrills the audience with his orchestral playing.



Dave Wickerham wowed 'em at the Rialto and the Sanfilippo 5/80 Wurlitzer.

The artists and JATOE crew that made it happen strike a quick pose minutes after the concert/s finale.

Top Row from left: John Giacchi, Ron Rhode, Jelani Eddington

Center Row from left: Steve LaManna, Jim Patak, Dave Wickerham

Bottom Row from left: Jim Stenke, Eileen Sheridan, Dolores Patak, Rob Richards



The entire ensemble takes a bow.

Rialtofest audience with the music of this amazing artist.

Finally, I am particularly pleased that the THEATRE ORGAN Journal has given us the opportunity to review and comment on the Pipe Organ Extravaganza and Rialtofest, and to elaborate on how we manage what we do, in hopes that others can do the same.



*Steve LaManna originally joined ATOS in 1971. He was involved with Curt Mangel in the saving, restoration and marketing of the Shea's Center for the Performing Arts and its 4/28 Wurlitzer. Becoming more active in ATOS by Joining JATOE three years ago, he has been donating time to produce the Rialtofest, in conjunction with JATOE and the Rialto Square Theatre. He lives in Orlando, Florida.

In The Wings

Ideas & Assistance for Chapters & Organ Groups

The Secret of Our Success

by Robert E. Dilworth

I was asked to write an article for THEATRE ORGAN that explained the "Secret of the Success of the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society." For many years artists have told us that DTOS consistently draws one of the largest audiences in the world for theatre organ. Stories from other travelers seem to substantiate this.

I hate to tell you, but there is no 10-second answer to our success, and there is no "secret." It takes a goal, hard work, a consistent philosophy through the years, and some luck. I don't have all the answers. I can only tell you what has worked here at DTOS.

Shortly after I learned that John Dickinson High School was the proud possessor of a theatre organ, I had the opportunity to read Ben Hall's book, *The Best Remaining Seats*. I read about Roxy, the legendary showman, and his basic philosophy became clear to me. The theatre is a magical place where the cares and trials of the audience members could be forgotten for a portion of time. If the audience were treated as royalty, they would fill the theatre. He accomplished this by having the staff of the theatre provide all needed services so that the audience only needed to enjoy the magic of the performance. Part of that philosophy is illustrated in this

quote from Hall's book, which was taken from the playbill of the Capitol Theatre in New York (1921).

"When you enter these portals you stray magically from the dull world of confusion and cares into a fairy palace whose presiding genius entertains you royally."

Here at DTOS we try to do that by providing all the necessary services to make the audience feel they are part of our family. Creating the atmosphere where this can take place is not done by accident. It is a group of staff members working together for a common goal.

One of the ways we promote a feeling of family is our 8-page newsletter, *The Vox Humana*. The newsletter is sent out to the 1,300 names on our mailing list three weeks before each concert. This list is culled every year. If we have not heard from a person in two years, (purchase of tickets, contribution, or CD purchase by mail or check) we send them a letter requesting them to do one of the above actions or we will drop their name from the list.

The newsletter is not simply a concert announcement. It also contains a review of the previous concert,

Photos by
William Clark
Charlie Gibb
Robert Wilhelm

CHARLIE GIBB



The DTOS "Family."



WILLIAM CLARK



Security personnel assist and supervise unloading at curb.

ROBERT WILHELM



"Your seat is one aisle over."

information about other DTOS events, an occasional "Spotlight" interview of one of the DTOS workers, and information about the organ and organ crew activities, information about our publications and CDs, and the requisite ticket information. We try to make it informative and chatty, not formal.

The first contact with the audience is at the curb. When a car arrives at the school, we have a DTOS member (plus a member of the security company we hire) assist in unloading passengers at the entrance to the lobby. It is a small service, but greatly appreciated especially by some of the elderly and handicapped members of the audience. It also speeds the inflow of people since the driver does not have to exit the vehicle to assist his passengers.

When the patrons are inside the lobby, there are signs to direct newcomers to the ticket table. Our season ticket holders (nearly 700) are looking at other attractions in the lobby. There is an information table where questions can be asked and answered, a snack stand, a music shop with displays of theatre organ CDs, DVDs, books and booklets. And just before the main entrance there are several tables holding Marion Flint's ever-changing display of theatre organ venues around the world.

Once inside the auditorium, the patron is handed a



Marion Flint Display.

playbill and an usher offers to show them to their reserved seats. Many of our audience know where their seats are located and don't need assistance since all seats are numbered, but newcomers need minimal directions.

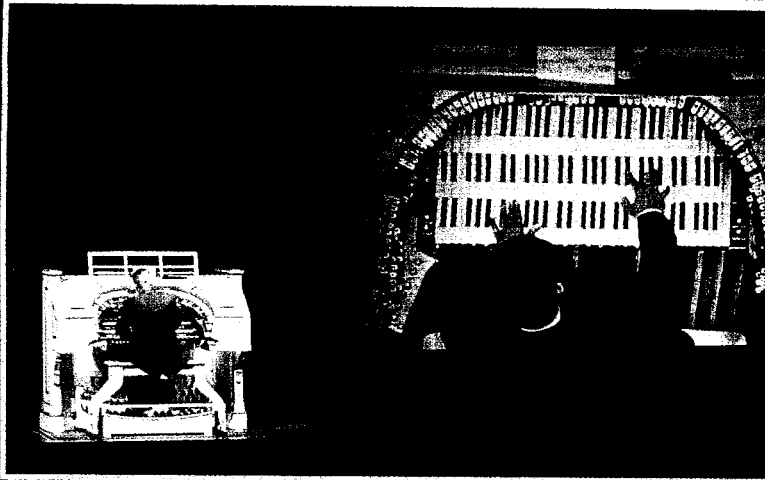
The playbill gives the biography of the artist, organ facts, information about DTOS, lists of contributors and a few advertisements. This gives a first-timer something to do while waiting for the program to begin. Their seat neighbors may introduce themselves and engage them in conversation.

Here at DTOS we strive to start each show on time. When showtime arrives, the houselights lower to one-half for about 30-seconds for the stragglers in the aisles to get to their seats before the lights go out. By one minute past starting time, the spotlight shows me in my tux to introduce the show. I chat with the audience to welcome them, urge them to sign up for the newsletter and give them information about nearby organ events. I remind them of our next concert, urge them to visit the music shop, and then introduce the artist.

When I introduce the artist, I do not give any biographical information; that is in the playbill. Instead, I relate some personal experience with the artist during the time since he arrived to begin practicing. Often it is nothing more than a comment about his forgetting a bow tie and how we got one for him — or as I told the audience in one concert, "Tonight's artist told me he is not superstitious, but he doesn't shave for three days before a concert. Here is..." This approach to the introduction helps makes the audience feel they are sharing in the overall experience — like family.

Nothing can spoil the audience's pleasure faster than some things the artist has no control over — such as problems with the operation of the lights and sound equipment or staging effects. (I remember how distracted I was at another venue where the houselights didn't go off until the fourth number.) We strive for professional quality in our staging to enhance the concert.

Ever since we installed our overhead camera several years ago, the audience has enjoyed viewing the artist's



Our projection of the keyboards, with artist Robert Wolfe.

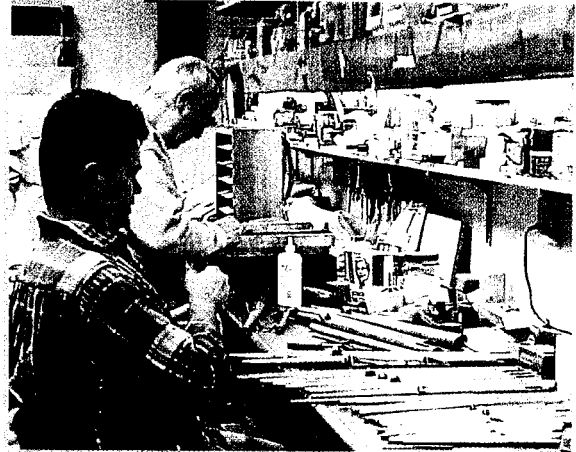
hands on the keyboards on the large (16-foot) screen. Not only is this a different view, but also it is educational and often exciting. Without the screen, the view of the artist at the console is limited except for a few seats in the auditorium. Frank Pratt is very correct in his article in the September/October issue of *THEATRE ORGAN*, the audience does enjoy this addition very much. At one concert we didn't use the overhead camera because of a staging situation and many asked about the picture. An informal survey ran 50 to 1 in favor of the projection.

At the beginning of the second half, when I reintroduce the artist, I invite all the members of the audience to our on-stage reception immediately following the concert. The reception is a chance to meet the artist, socialize with friends, meet new friends, and just look around. We serve homemade cookies and punch. This is a very important part of trying to create a feeling of belonging.

While creating a feeling of belonging is part of our "secret" for keeping the audience happy, we cannot ignore the importance of the organ and the artist.

The organ must be in the best condition possible. Not only must it be in tune, but also everything has to work properly. The theatre pipe organ is known as a melody organ in that one hand is playing a melody while the other hand is providing the accompaniment. Even one note that does not play can wreak havoc in a concert. That missing note can cause the audience to wonder whether the problem is with the organ or with the artist. Also, it may force the artist to change his playing style to overcome this missing note.

When an artist prepares for a program, he selects the sounds he feels best fit the music to create the effect he desires. As our early concert seasons progressed, we listened to the comments of each artist as to what was good and what was still needed with respect to the organ. Often these comments led toward the expansion of the organ. Under the leadership of Brant Duddy, careful



Clark Wilson and Brant Duddy work on a voicing project.

additions were made to the organ to increase the sounds available on the tonal palette for the artist. No additions were made just to enlarge the organ. They each had a specific tonal color that was desired. We finally stopped at 66-ranks, making it the fourth largest Theatre Pipe Organ in the world and the largest in a public building.

We have an organ crew of 6 to 10 dedicated people. The crew checks the organ about two weeks before each concert to find any dead notes (or other problems) and works to make the necessary repairs. Because of the changes in temperature and humidity in the auditorium, the organ is tuned immediately before each concert. Thus, we have gained the reputation among artists that "everything works," which gives them the confidence to do their best in concert.

The Artist Selection Committee chooses the artists for a season using a variety of criteria. We want the season to be exciting to the audience so they will purchase season tickets. In order to do this, we try to mix the playing styles of the artists so that we don't have a complete season of one style, no matter how good that style might be. Second, we try to have at least one new (to DTOS) artist in each season. We do not repeat artists who played in the current season. We try to book artists far enough in advance that we can finish all the preliminary work (contract, biography, photo) before May of the preceding season. This is so we can prepare our concert brochure and announce the upcoming season in the newsletter for our June concert, which is the start of season ticket sales.

We feel that an artist can perform his best when he is comfortable about the job. We provide a comprehensive contract so that the artist is aware of what we expect and what he can expect from DTOS. When the artist arrives in our area we meet him and provide his transportation to the motel and between the motel and the auditorium for his practice times. We have someone at the auditorium while he is there to take care of any problems. We usually accompany him to lunch or dinner so he is not

CHARLIE GIBB



CHARLIE GIBB

The author, Artist Liaison Rich Lewis, and Artist Robert Wolfe chat before concert.

Post Concert Reception.



WILLIAM CLARK



alone. However, we try not to smother him; we leave him alone at the console to do what he needs to do. Another part of the DTOS artist hospitality is dinner at an upscale restaurant of his choice the evening before the day of the concert.

We have an Artist Liaison who sees to the needs of the artist. He brings the artist to the auditorium. Before the concert, he shields the artist from friends and well-wishers if requested. He supplies requests for water or soft drinks. He runs errands and sometimes just chats to pass the time. At the end of the first half, the Liaison assists the artist to the dressing room until his eyes become accustomed to the darkness. His beverage choice is waiting for him. If there is a problem with the organ, we try to take care of it during the intermission. Following the final encore, there is an on-stage reception so that the audience can meet the artist. We provide him with a podium so that he can autograph CDs or playbills.

Following the on-stage reception, we take the artist to a local restaurant for a meal, since many artists do not eat before the concert and they are ready for food. Many of the DTOS workers choose to join us for this social time. This is a gradual letdown from the emotional high of the concert. The artist can relax because he is not being grilled, but everyone is socializing with each other. Naturally, most of the conversations have to do with organ topics.

A third "secret" (additional to the audience-family and the excellence of the artists and organ) is that we

have always treated the project as a **business** rather than a hobby. Our business is to provide good entertainment for the general public. Not only is everyone welcome, but also we must try to provide an experience that will cause patrons to want to come back again . . . and again.

DTOS has had to be self-sufficient. The school district does not provide any money for the organ or our concert series other than free space and electricity (including heat and cooling). Each season has to generate enough money to pay for the concerts as well as the maintenance of the organ.

In the early days, to assist in the presentation of the

CHARLIE GIBB



Receiving Line with Lyn Larsen.

ROBERT WILHELM



Terry Nace tuning before concert.



concerts, committees were formed to provide the necessary work — ticket, ushers, stage crew, music shop, snack stand, etc. The heads of these committees met following each concert to discuss the results of that concert and plan for the next. This arrangement was later formalized into the Board of DTOS, Inc., a not for profit Corporation of the State of Delaware, with a current annual budget of \$75,000. In making decisions we strive for a consensus rather than risk the divisiveness of voting.

One of our greatest challenges has been how to let people know about us. After almost 40 years we are not as well known, as we would like. We have learned from surveys of our "family" that the most effective publicity is "word-of-mouth." Audience members talk to their friends and co-workers, and talk about the fun times they have. Many in the audience bring guests to a concert. Another way we encourage new people to come is to provide each season ticket holder with a guest ticket for a concert. Nearly half of the first-timers come back after their first concert and about half of these eventually become season ticket holders.

We offer other organ experiences. Our two annual Open Houses offer a taste of theatre organ without the cost of a ticket. Each year we also provide a theatre organ experience for the 5th graders in the Red Clay District. We give a one-half hour presentation in their classrooms to introduce them to the organ by a Power-Point presentation. Then they are bused to the auditorium for a one-hour concert (with silent film). The kids react to

the program with great enthusiasm and occasionally will use the free concert ticket, which we offer. We also provide a **daytime concert** for people who do not drive at night. For \$1.00 we present a one-hour theatre organ concert, which often includes a sing-along and a silent film. Attendance is generally around 500.

Is our audience gray? Sure, but there are many younger people as well. As the older audience members drop out, younger ones are being added to our audience. By younger people I mean in the 35 to 50-age bracket. (I doubt many groups would be able to fill a theatre, concert after concert, with teens.) By the time a person has reached the age of 35 to 50 he begins to look for musical forms other than rock, hip-hop or rap. Many gravitate to Country, a few to Classical, and some to Classic Rock or Big Band—which is where our new audience members come from. The big question is how to reach out to them.

Our first concert brought 1,500 people to our 1,200 seat auditorium (chairs in the orchestra pit and on stage) as a result of the newspaper featuring the story of an unusual group of students who moved the organ. The novelty wore off and the audiences diminished. We have found that advertising in the daily newspaper, radio, and TV is not effective because of the expense of the ad. However, we do request public service announcements from them. We occasionally purchase advertisements in several weekly newspapers since their rates are considerably lower. They are also more likely to do feature articles on DTOS.

In the beginning, none of us had any idea where this

WILLIAM CLARK



At the Music Shop.

WILLIAM CLARK



"A drink and a hotdog please."

CHARLIE GIBB



Lobby during intermission.



Author wiring a key contact strip.

project would take us. We have been lucky; many things worked out for us without any effort on our part.

The acoustics of the auditorium are excellent for the organ. There was plenty of space behind the walls and backstage for chambers. There was unused space on either side of the projection and lighting booth at the rear of the auditorium for an organ workshop and the DTOS office.

Originally, the school district loaned us \$10,000 to get the organ moved from the Boyd Theatre in Philadelphia and installed in the auditorium of the John Dickinson High School in Wilmington, Delaware. After we paid back \$5,000, the rest of the loan was forgiven. From that point on, we have been financially on our own.

When DTOS incorporated, we had a written agreement with the school district as to what were our rights and responsibilities. We work well with the Red Clay School District (Dr. Robert Andrejewski, Supt.). The Superintendent is a supporter of our efforts. In return, we have given equipment and scholarships to the school. Because of our close relationship with the school we have been able to develop a consistent schedule for our concert series, making possible our season ticket program.

A large part of our "secret" is the people who have made the DTOS concert series such a success. We must thank the members of our audience, which averages almost 900 per concert. Without them, our efforts would have no purpose.

Each of our concerts involves about 75 volunteers working in some capacity either before, during, or following the concert. We did not start off this way. We had to develop this cadre over the years. In the beginning, we had a group of students and adults who had caught the vision. The students were a great help with posting flyers in local store windows as well as providing the various work crews. However, after this group of students graduated, the tasks fell to adults. Each of the committees found adults who volunteered their efforts to "make this thing work." As the size of the audience grew, so did our group of volunteers. Like most volunteer organizations, we are constantly looking for more workers. We have been fortunate so far; people catch our



Crewmember Bob Simpson lacing a wiring harness.

vision and want to use their skills to make DTOS work. It is the feeling of being part of the family that encourages them to volunteer.

So, how can your group adapt our "secrets" to make your "success?" If I were asked to suggest where to start, I'd say, "Look at your group's basic goals and philosophy. Are you willing to make the operation into a 'business of entertainment' or do you want it to be strictly a hobby for a few? Are you willing to give up much of your time to make this work? Look at the organization carefully to see how it meets the needs of your stated goals and philosophy."

Look at all the other aspects of a presentation. It is not good enough to say, "We'll give a concert," and the audience magically appears. As theatre organ 'nuts' we tend to make the organ our first priority, **but** without the support of an audience, how can a series of concerts continue?

The "Secret of DTOS's Success" is the continuing vision of an organization which provides a well maintained organ, excellent artists and a welcoming presence for our audience-family.



"Welcome."

In The Wings

*Ideas & Assistance
for Chapters & Organ Groups*

A Whole New Dimension To The Organ Concert Experience

by Frank Pratt

Adapting an idea from sports and political arenas, the Kingston, Ontario chapter has come up with a simple innovation that has turned out to be captivating to theatre organ concert audiences; projected TV. Moreover, the anticipated resistance from concert artists has turned out to be a myth.

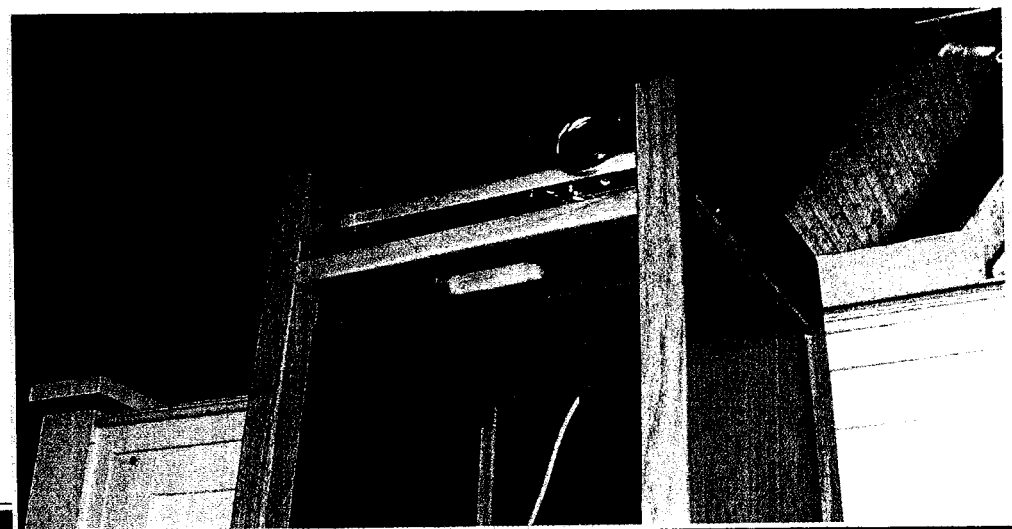
Fortunately, the chapter enjoys a good rapport with the city fathers, whose Cultural Affairs Department came up with a substantial grant for "concert presentation improvements." These included a wireless microphone system (to get rid of that pesky mike cable that did little to enhance organists' announcements or, for that matter, pedal playing) and the novel video projection system.

Traditionally, theatre organ audiences have derived limited visual enjoyment from the concert experience spending hours staring at an organist's back, (remember Helen Crawford and her theatrical gowns that were more

elaborately decorated at the back than the front) and only a few choice seats provided a distant oblique view of the keyboard actions. Kingston audiences, right to the back row, now enjoy a clear view not only of talented fingers at work but, occasionally, trained feet as well. Nor does it take a Gallup Poll to realize that most of the time eyes are focused on the screen rather than the direct view of organist and console.

While novel in North America, the organ-video combination has become a staple at commercial venues in the UK. At both the Turner Musical Merry-Go-Round at Northampton, where Nicholas Martin plays the Wurlitzer, and the Thursford Collection (of carousels, steam engines and street organs) where Robert Wolfe presides, audiences are treated to real-time video projection on double screens, picked up by concealed, overhead cameras; overhead being a significant word. The Kingston crew expected, with a 40-foot open space

FRANK PRATT



The video projector in its tower behind the console.

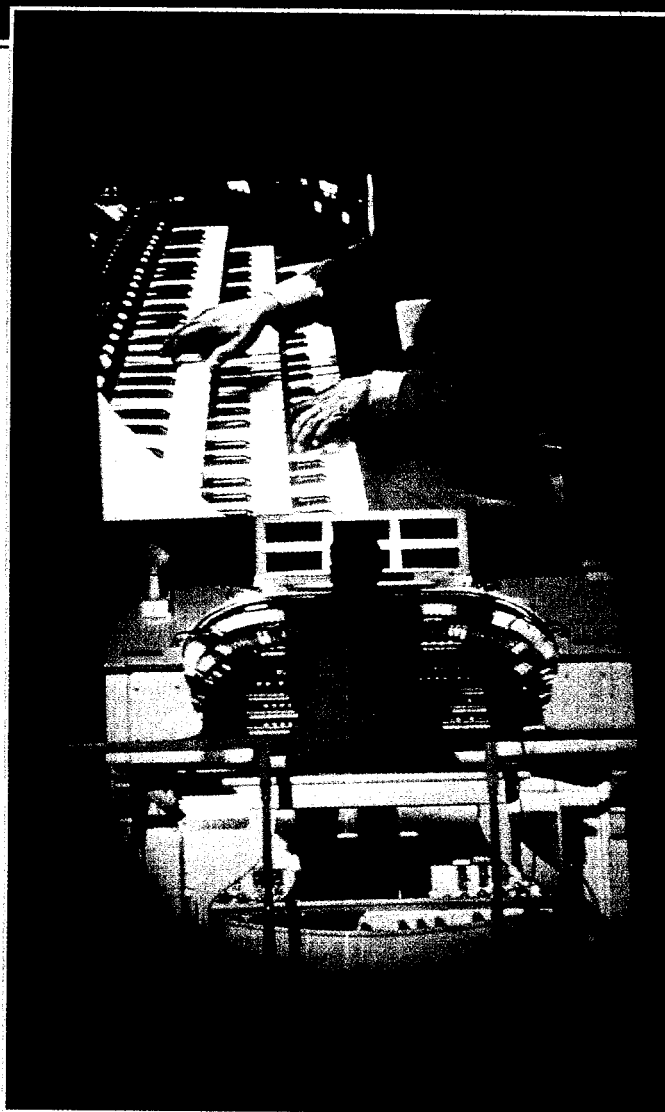
above the console offering no concealment, a camera dangling above the console would be a visual irritation requiring some kind of elaborate structure to hold it in place and probably obstructing the audience's view of the overhead screen. As it happened, those who came to the Simon Gledhill concert where the system was introduced noticed nothing at all before curtain time nor, in fact, until after the opening number. The camera was deliberately held back until the second selection so as not to distract first-timers from the novelty of the theatre organ experience, especially the attending mayor and councilors who were invited to see what their grant accomplished.

With Simon's second selection the impact was immediate as everyone got an enlarged close-up side view of his flying fingers. But where was the camera? Only the most alert eventually noticed the tiny unit mounted above the Accompaniment stop tabs (another was tucked up under the bottom keyboard, aimed at the pedals below). The resulting side view of the organist's hands has been found, in fact, to give a more instructive picture of finger action than a camera directly overhead would provide. Local amateur organists are thrilled to see what could only be guessed at before: exactly what trained and talented fingers did to bring forth that enthralling music in its endless variety. Cause-and-effect could now be perceived and enjoyed simultaneously, much like a well-produced organ video, but in real time. Some trial and error revealed that use of the pedal camera is best restricted to the occasional spectacular pedal passage, since the routine alternation between root and fifth is less than riveting television.

And how is all this magic accomplished? The camera feeds go to an inconspicuous laptop computer off in a corner, where the action is controlled, and thence to a digital video projector located in a specially made tower, out of sight behind the console.

One unexpected problem did show up after a prolonged pre-matinee showing of promo material on the screen when the overheated projector turned itself off. Improved ventilation in the supporting tower has brought permanent relief from that problem.

Fears that visiting artists might be intimidated by the big moving image right above the console turned out to be unfounded. To date they have all been entranced by



John Lauter in concert at the Kingston chapter's 3/28 Kimball with his projected image above the console. The removable camera is at the top left of the console.

it, although some have been momentarily startled to see a left foot grow to an alarming size as it approached the pedal camera. "Isn't this great?" John Lauter asked his audience, to enthusiastic applause, "even in the 5,000 seat Detroit Fox (his home base) we don't have anything like this." Chances are they will have, though.

We had one more concern that turned out to be groundless. It was feared that the spotlight would obscure much of the picture by casting the organist's shadow on the keys, but it was found in practice that the slightest dimming of the spot was all that was required, thanks to the sensitivity of the cameras.

Nor is use of the video projection system limited to live console action. As mentioned above, pre-concert

projection of promotional material (future concerts, chamber views, etc.) from a prepared disc occupies the attention of waiting concertgoers. Lyrics for sing-along sessions have also been put on disc and with a bit of coordination between organist and laptop operator, can be perfectly timed. This is a great improvement over the cumbersome use of a slide projector in the balcony, where embarrassing accidents can happen, with reversed, upside-down or out-of-sequence slides. When John Lauter heard of the Kingston system in advance, he brought along a short silent film comedy on DVD to his concert and played a marvelous accompaniment as the picture unfolded on the screen, all smoothly presented with no film projector to be set up in the aisle at intermission so it could noisily aim a keystone image up at the screen.

Although the basic idea occurred to the writer during the rush of meeting a grant-application

deadline, Roy Young undertook the selection and installation of the equipment. Jim Hopkins operates the equipment, when he isn't himself at the console, using his own laptop. Roy Young also made the projection tower in his home workshop.

For the benefit of techies, in addition to the laptop the video projection system consists of a Panasonic LCD projector model PTLC80U, which has an ANSI rating of 2100 lumens (\$2,000 US), two Panasonic model WV-CP244 color video cameras with Cosmicar model C70312FQ lenses (\$355 US) and one Kramer video switcher (\$360 US), all interconnected by standard video cables. The projector accepts either the video output of most laptop computers or an RGB signal from the cameras, via the switcher.

Those harsh Canadian winters may hamper many activities, but they clearly don't hinder innovation.



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In The Wings

*Ideas & Assistance
for Chapters & Organ Groups*

WHEN LESS IS MORE... IDEAS FOR THOSE HOSTING CONVENTIONS

Food for Thought from Ken Double

Here are some random thoughts and ideas, as I consider the comparisons between the Regional or 'local' weekend events, (Atlanta's FFOW, St. Louis, LA Wurlitzer Weekend, etc.) and our Annual Convention events. The thought crosses my mind that convention planners might wish to consider the 'less-is-more' attitude.

After talking with numerous artists and many attendees, at Atlanta's spectacular Fabulous Fox Weekend and Dairyland's wonderful annual affair, I have some thoughts and ideas worth exploring for future conventions. Much of this has to do with timing, planning and coordination, and it all is aimed at making the convention experience better for everyone involved.

I will state my premise succinctly: I think some of our convention concerts last too long. Lord knows we theatre organ lovers can't get enough of these glorious instruments, and the overall level of performance at the conventions has never been better. But the old show-business adage, "Leave 'em beggin' for more" needs to come into play in our planning and coordination.

Because of seminars, tours, bussing to and from events, and just simple mealtimes and visiting times, I believe that staging every concert at a convention as a full two-hours-plus affair with an intermission is a mistake. The "normal" convention concert presentation demands housekeeping duties and instructions from the MC; needs time after the concert for photos; and, with standing ovations and the requisite (much deserved) encores, almost always goes longer than the allotted time.

One specific event prompted my writing. At Atlanta,

Richard Hills played an absolutely marvelous program. The fact that after it was over, there was barely an hour to have dinner, (on a holiday weekend, when it was tough to find a lot of restaurants open on Sunday) before having to get back to the Fox Theatre was **not** his fault. Intermission ran a little long, plus, we needed an additional 10-12 minutes to include the presentation for the Milwaukee convention. In addition, the event planners squeezed the afternoon somewhat to save on the exorbitant costs of the Fox, thus Richard's program began at 3 pm, and the next program, the film started at 7 pm. It turned out to be a very tight squeeze.

It is not unusual that after a convention event, we hustle to a bus, fight afternoon traffic to get to the hotel, and then quickly scramble to find a restaurant for something to eat, and then with barely time to freshen up or get a quick change of clothes, we are again back on a bus to the next venue. This is **not** good for digestion, for enjoying the next concert, (and for some of us, we get a little cranky if we don't get our cocktail!!!!)

My suggestion is simple. The first and last concerts of a convention can be deemed special events, and should warrant the full treatment of two hours with intermission included. The same situation exists for the Young Artists Concert, in that clearly two halves are required. The other concerts should be 75 to 80 minutes without intermission. This would free up substantially more time for the travel, mealtime, CD/record shop time and the other things that make the conventions fun, and lessen the stress of meeting deadlines, especially on the days where the planners have scheduled three performances in one day.

When one considers that a "normal" two-hour concert with intermission actually includes about 100 minutes of concert time, the audience at the shorter programs would really only be missing three or four selections, since most of the time being cut out would be the intermission time. Imagine having an extra 40 minutes to enjoy a relaxing dinner or lunch, instead of having to chow down on something fast just to catch a bus for the next event.

By way of comparison, note the differences below in a regular convention day (on the left), and a day incorporating my suggestions (on the right):

Incorporating the lighter schedule on the right expands the free time by at least 15 to 20 minutes on each side, thus possibly 40 minutes more time in the overall interval between performances.

The obvious advantages to the changed format go far beyond just a little more time to eat, or a chance to sleep in a little more on one or two mornings. The pacing makes it easier on the audience to enjoy each concert. I know after hearing eight or nine full two-hour concerts, my ears, back and behind can get worn out! And I pity the organist who must play the final concert, no matter how talented he or she is. It is almost impossible to maintain that audience's rapt attention when they've been horded to lengthy program after lengthy program for four or five days.

For convention planners, I would also suggest two things. There should be a general meeting with all the artists at the start of the convention. At this meeting, they should be reminded of the time schedule and the bus schedule, and offered a suggested time to be finished with his or her program. In addition, the artist that is presenting on the specific day of the next convention presentation, and the artist involved in the Young Organists' day, should be advised to program accordingly, i.e. a little short. Those two events alone can add as much as 15 to 20 minutes to a program time.

All the artists should be reminded that a traffic snarl, a problem with the organ, or some other item might force them to be flexible with their program, and drop a number or two. This is not an unreasonable request, but

having been backstage once or twice during difficult times, I know some convention chairmen are concerned about asking an artist to cut selections.

No one wishes to hurt anyone's feelings, and that clearly is not the intention. Sometimes, the theatre must have us out of the hall at a certain time to accommodate their programming. At the Fox weekend, had the

NORMAL SCHEDULE

8:30 am Last bus departs for concert
 9:00 am Two-hour morning concert
 11:45 am Last bus arrives at hotel
 1:30 pm Last bus departs for concert
 2:00 pm Two-hour afternoon concert
 4:45 pm Last bus arrives at hotel
 7:30 pm Last bus departs for concert
 8:00 pm Two-hour evening concert
 10:45 pm Last bus arrives at hotel

This schedule is "normal," but almost always runs into timing problems, thus squeezing mealtimes, forcing the feeling of constantly rushing for everything.

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

9:00 am Last bus departs for concert
 9:30 am 80-minute concert
 11:20 am Last bus arrives at hotel
 2:00 pm Last bus departs for concert
 2:30 pm 80-minute afternoon concert
 4:30 pm Last bus arrives at hotel
 7:45 pm Last bus departs for concert
 8:15 pm 80-minute evening concert
 10:20 pm Last bus arrives at hotel

This schedule leaves more time for dining, leisure, an additional seminar, or exploring the electronic rooms. Late night "jam" sessions would also wind up not being quite so late.

program gone too long, the convention might have incurred thousands of dollars in overtime costs for union employees, as per theatre contract. There are many varied issues that dictate the schedule, and indeed, we need to be flexible at these events.

My discussions with artists on this topic have generated interesting responses. Most agree with the points I have raised above. None have expressed any sentiment about feeling "slighted" or short-changed should they be asked to present a shorter program. In fact, a couple of them responded quite positively.

I would be interested to hear some feedback from artists, convention planners and audience members alike. Furthermore, I would like to propose this idea for general discussion among ATOS Board members and Convention Planning Coordinator Mike Kinerk. In this instance, I firmly believe that "Less would be more" in terms of adding to our overall enjoyment of our wonderful convention events.



Ken

Fundraising 101:

It's All About the Music

BY SCOTT SMITH

In the preceding parts of this series, you've read (at least I hope you've read) about three distinctly different approaches to fundraising by three different, unrelated theatre organ entities. The truth is (as you've no doubt figured out already), the possibilities are endless.

The trick is to find something that connects to potential funders at the level at which they wish to be connected. For example, the yard sale had the least connection between funder and fundee, and yet it was successful, at least financially. The cookbook and other jams 'n jellies were about in the middle, as in each case, even if the individual purchaser didn't initially give a rip about the club or the organ, important information about them still remained in the purchasers' hands indefinitely. Finally, there was the fundraising event, having the most direct connection, with club members supporting it completely.

As a personal aside, after the previous parts of this series have appeared in these pages, it astounds me when I meet old friends who apparently are either oblivious or incapable of changing their methods, even if it means the survival of their chapter and organ(s). They complain that things aren't like they used to be, that getting into venues is no longer on a 24/7 basis, and they wring their hands about the future. Still, they don't seem to be motivated to take action and change direction. Let's not fool around here. Time's a-wastin'. We need to adopt a new mantra: Fundraising is an essential element of preservation.

In this, the final chapter of our fundraising series, are other approaches that may or may not suit your situation. If I leave you with but one thought, it is that fundraising is not a one-time thing. No way, no how. In these days of rising costs and diminishing resources, we need to find a way to keep our musical ship afloat.

Bake Sales

While it won't bring in a great deal of money, this is an almost 100% surefire winner. Whatever you don't sell, you can

give away to other club members or simply take home yourself. Be wise about your local health codes and investigate them thoroughly before scheduling one of these. I once worked for someone who organized an absolutely enormous church bazaar every year. One particular year, she decided to expand the thing a little further and got several members of the church to bake up tons of breads, cookies, cakes and the like. Just 24 hours from Opening Day, she received a call from the county health department, whose humorless officer recited chapter and verse the requirements for selling foods at such events, and home preparation was not among the options. I imagine the bazaar workers ate pretty well that year! Consider the use of attractive computer-generated stickers on wrappers that subtly but clearly states that all monies received from the sale of this item directly benefit either the organ or concert series sponsored by your club or chapter. Let's be careful about not overselling our product (the organ) or service (concert series). Turning people off has a potentially greater negative effect than doing nothing at all.

Dinners

Again, not a huge moneymaker, but dinners work for a lot of churches and give you an opportunity to expose a part of the population to your project. As with bake sales, make sure to check out those local statutes. The old standbys, like pancake breakfasts and spaghetti dinners, are always appealing, but others, like wild game and even "smelly food" dinners have their own type of appeal and can be surprisingly successful. Your Board of directors are ideal for waiting on tables, but consider also the use of local celebrities, whose preannounced appearance there will potentially draw out more people, and can lend an air of credibility and support to your efforts.

Auctions

Be they conventional or silent auctions, they can potentially be fun and exciting for the attendees. If it's a silent auction, hold it

on the stage of the theatre and have someone play during the event. Offer free refreshments, be friendly to visitors, but again, be careful not to oversell.

eBay

This is America's marketplace, and it can be your sit-down yard sale (plus you can do it any time of the year). If no one in your group "does" eBay, then it's time to get started. You can sell just about anything (or absolutely nothing, in some cases), and people will pay for it. The major bookstore chains have volumes about how to navigate your way through eBay's website, and the tricks to know to maximize your profit. I won't profess to be an expert here, but, for example, if you're listing something for auction, do two things: list a low reserve, or no reserve, and you'll make more when the bidding gets hot, and remember to list your item(s) on a Friday. This gives a ten-day auction two complete weekends to draw in the most number of potential bidders. There are other websites, such as Craig's List, but eBay is by far the most well-known and utilized. www.ebay.com, www.craigslist.com

Organ Parts

While the market for surplus organ parts is soft, it isn't dead. One shouldn't be too hasty about getting rid of stuff you're unsure if you'll need, so you should only dispose of those things you know you'll never use. If you're unclear as to the value of items, ask an expert, or simply look at other ads. I've bought and sold things in a matter of hours of listing on the websites below, and for now, both are free: www.theatreorgans.com and www.keyboardtrader.com.

The Venue

Oftentimes, the most overlooked source for funding can be the venue where your organ is installed. The owners of the venue should realize that they have a vested interest in a quality instrument performing quality music there. It reflects on them, as well as your organization. I would

recommend that you hammer out a plan, put it on paper, set up a meeting, and urge the most businesslike people in your group to present it, as well as getting their input on putting the plan together itself. Whenever you are asking for money, always put yourself in the other person's place. What are they going to get out of this? Is there a benefit for them? If there is, what is it? One of the most success-ful sales techniques can be employed in these types of meetings. If you can get the other party to say "yes" about five times repeatedly (no matter what the questions are), you can probably sew it up handily. Just don't be afraid to close the deal.

Grants

Here's the one that makes everyone itchy. Still, it can be a great source of income. Now, I'm not an expert by any stretch, but I've had some success writing grants. So that you don't waste time knocking on the wrong doors, the first thing you need to do is to try to match your organization up with granting organizations. Do your homework. The library and the Internet can both be resources of potential grantors. Many give to hospitals and education, but you want the ones which focus on the arts. Is this grant for a capital expense (building), or performance? Know the difference, know your ownership status of the organ in question, and know your tax status. After you have an application in hand, carefully read the requirements. Don't hesitate to ask the granting agency directly what they're looking for specifically if that appears unclear. If a particular application asks for what you think is too much information, or ties too many strings to the potential grant, simply move on to the next. Next, make sure you fill out the application completely. This sounds silly but so many proposals are kicked out because the potential grantees failed to fill them out. Sad as it is to say, there are many grants that are not awarded each year, simply because no one applies.

Performance Grants/ Corporate Sponsors

Is someone in your group a business person who advertises his/her goods for sale to the public? Start there: simply ask them to sponsor the artist's fee and expenses in exchange for a couple of mentions during the show and perhaps an acknowledgement in the printed program. Keep the approach simple, direct, and similar to that which people are accustomed to hearing from public TV and radio stations: "Today's performance is sponsored, in part, by the accounting firm of Huey, Dewey and Louie, reminding you that the end of the tax year is approaching." Avoid the use of any hyperbole or value-loaded lines.

"Fundraising 101: It's All About the Money" was the name of the introductory article to this series. On the surface that's true, but I'll freely admit now, I chose that title primarily to grab your attention. The truth of the matter is, no matter what the question, the answer that can and always should be injected is: it's all about the music. No matter how tough the questions or how big the challenges, that simple, yet powerful, statement needs to be ever present in the minds of organ aficionados, and if you can accomplish that singular task, your burden will lighten and the answers will come.

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THE TOP TEN REASONS WHY

(Plus Ten Things Young People Should Know)

Over and over, we keep hearing the same old saw. "We need to get young people involved." It's like a broken record (remember those?). If we're lucky, one does actually come along periodically, but most don't seem to stay around for long. Why is that? In truth, what many club members seem to want is a group of young people who are merely clones of themselves to maintain the status quo. Others, who hold great promise, but have different ideas, are discouraged or prevented from involvement. We all know it's true. Still, it seems that some of us are content to keep our heads planted firmly in the sand, lamenting where this corps of youthful volunteers is hiding out and why.

First of all, we must face the fact that there are some things we can control and some things we cannot. Among the factors distracting young people that we cannot control are: school, marriage, family, personal relationships, employment obligations, catastrophes, value migration, competing interests and simple boredom. There are, however, factors that we can, but fail to, control. Maybe we're not aware of these factors. Maybe we are aware but live in denial that they exist. In any case, we need to collectively remove barriers and change what we're doing before it's too late.

THE TEN REASONS:

1 Constant use of the word: "NO!" to every suggestion.

It's just as bad to be condescending, if not worse. As a whole, young people are a pretty sensitive lot and need to know where they stand at all times. Their confidence can be crushed if they do nothing but constantly hit that big brick wall called "NO!" Let us ponder this notion: Is there a reason why we always say "no"? Is it a control mechanism, or is it just a habit?

2 Refusal on the part of the Status Quo to do anything different than they've ever done before.

Is the way we've always done it really the best way, or just the way we've always done it?

3 Exploitation of their skills, time or muscle power.

Some only want young people around when there's something heavy to be lifted, or an event when a "free" organist is required. The rest of the time, they want them to be scarce. Is this fair?

4 Refusal to move them up to positions of authority.

The healthiest, most vital special-interest organizations (not to mention businesses) are full of young people who have at least some say in what's going on.

5 Unwillingness to treat them as equals.

The unwillingness on the part of those already in power to include the opinions of young people when making important decisions may well be the critical mass of this subject. Even if they may not know as much as we do, they still hold an opinion. Who knows...we might come to see the situation in a different, more productive light if we allow them equality. What a concept!

6 Resistance to publicly acknowledge them for their work.

In truth, young people don't really want special attention; at least not all the time. They just want to be secure in knowing they're included. Sincerely acknowledging them for accomplishments goes a long way toward that inclusion.

7 Constant ridicule, publicly or privately.

There is nothing to be gained with deriding "pet" names, or constantly bringing up some mistake that happened yesterday or especially long ago. Set an example. Just move on.

YOUNG PEOPLE GO AWAY

BY SCOTT SMITH

8 Refusal or resistance to allow them to do Actual Organ Work, teach them new skills, or to develop their own.

This is a practice that I don't understand. If the youth are the future in this old world, what's wrong with passing along skills or techniques that have worked for us? Are we so afraid they'll put us out of business that we're willing to potentially lose them? Is it possible that they might come up with a shortcut that we've never thought of and (gulp!) surpass us? Take the Johnny Appleseed approach, and spread some real skills and knowledge around.

9 Not telling them the truth and not helping them when they need it.

Yanking positions or projects out of their hands without warning or explanation has been done time and again. Even if they say they don't need help, if it looks like they do...they do. Find a way to get them to let you help without taking over the project yourself. Too many parents engage in this, causing chronic friction. In the end, no one really benefits. Do young people need this in their free time, as well?

Young people are not as fragile as one might think. If they need to know they're screwing up, failing to come through, or just being annoying, then someone they trust needs to tell them privately and diplomatically. They'd rather know than be treated like babies. Respect works both ways. Condescension and coloring the truth can be more damaging than brutal honesty.

10 Unwanted or unsolicited sexual advances.

As unpleasant as it is to think about, if it can happen in the church and in the U.S. Congress, it can happen in the theatre.

A FEW ANECDOTAL NOTES

Here are several real examples of young people, or middle-aged types with young ideas, who have been kicked out of the nest or frustrated to the point of leaving the fold. Readers might be surprised, even shocked at who some of these people are.

Young Person # 1 became involved with an organ project in nearly all facets. He is a very talented and bright fellow, who put in many extra hours, took on several additional duties and eventually found himself to be doing just about everything alone. Older types stayed so far out of his way that the only interaction that seemed to be taking place between them was when they gave him the rare pat on the back. Without realizing it, he had assimilated so much responsibility that he became embarrassed to ask the others for help. To those on the outside, it was obvious what was happening, but no one on the inside stepped forward from the cookie table. Citing personal and professional reasons, he resigned totally from the situation in frustration and, to this day, remains uninvolved. Everyone could see how hard he worked, but no one offered to help when he needed it, and worse yet—no one begged him to stay. A perfect example of Reason # 9.

Young Person # 2 had all of the enthusiasm of a cat with a can tied to its tail. His breathless eagerness as a teen did not seem to stir the interest or acceptance of those behind the doors upon which he knocked, and there were many. In his case, nothing could stop him. He eventually found his way through all of those brick walls that were placed in his way, which probably makes

him an exception to those who are easily put off. His undying tenacity is a fine example of the Abraham Lincoln quotation: "When you cannot remove an object, plow around it."

Young Person # 3 came to an agreement with a Board of Directors as to how and when the duties of his youthful committee were to be performed, and the Board appeared to be very pleased with how they achieved their goals. That is, until one individual who did not like YP#3 was allowed to bully the Board into firing him and most of his committee without reason. Those not fired were coincidentally those who "didn't make waves." Most of those fired committee members still retain memberships, but refuse to be involved or provide support in any way. By the way, this wasn't the first time this had happened, either. Bad blood still exists all the way around. The committee still stings from being fired, and the group can't understand why the former committee members remain at such a distance.

Young Person # 4 attended events and wanted to become involved. Phone call after phone call citing a deep interest and offering help went only to the answering machine of those in control. Finally, after nearly a year of letters and phone calls, he took it upon himself to confront the president after a public concert, face-to-face. The red-faced president confessed that the group had an unwritten policy of not admitting new people into the club, and merely wanted to keep it as a social group for their little coffee klatch. The embarrassed president could have taken advantage of the situation by admitting the failed policy of their withering group and welcomed the young person on the spot, but instead remained true to his narrow-minded beliefs. YP#4 never returned to any more events.

Young Person # 5 was an organ student who was actually pre-teen when he became aware of the acquisition of a small theatre pipe organ by a family that he knew only blocks from his home. He called and wrote, offering help, but was ignored. Shortly thereafter, he learned of another project in his hometown, and offered help there, as

well. Again, ignored. Later, he became involved as an organ volunteer with the local movie theatre, but it was controlled by one individual, who damned him with faint praise and spread ungrounded gossip for years. Ultimately, the young person grew up and achieved personal and professional goals, but was often dogged by the actions of that jealous adult.

Young Person # 6 is actually middle-aged, but in theatre organ years (something akin to dog years) is young. He was involved with a group for some time several years ago along with his parents, but left in frustration when his more youthful, unorthodox ideas (read: anything new) were ridiculed and rejected. He left the fold, and there was an undercurrent of bitterness between all parties for many years. The more vocal Status Quo types eventually went away, and at some point, he took the mature attitude of simply letting all of that negativity go. At the right moment, he became re-involved, and today, everyone has greatly benefited from this shot-in-the-arm, so sorely needed. Those "youthful, unorthodox ideas" appear to be working.

What of young women? It's no secret that the theatre organ field is and always has been dominated by men in all aspects. As theatre organists, young girls are often exploited for their cuteness and not taken seriously as musicians. The proportion of women to men in church musicianship is at least a little more balanced. Why is that? In organ restoration, let us be mindful that the role of women in the actual construction of the instruments back-in-the-day was rather significant. While they didn't make nearly the income of their male counterparts, they were preferred in wiring and leathering, as their hands were seen as quicker and more nimble. We should all create a spoken policy that traditional gender roles need not apply here, and acknowledge that women are capable of doing far, far more than just baking cookies and arranging flowers. Let's take down the "No Girlz Allowed (sic)" sign from the front door of the clubhouse, shall we?

TEN THINGS YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW

1 Control your temper.

If you are lucky enough to be involved at the administrative level, this will be a proving ground for your leadership skills. Achievements and volunteer work at a young age look pretty impressive on a resume.

There are those who will constantly try to "get your goat." Just ignore them. They don't have the best interests of the organ at heart, and certainly not yours. Be pleasant to them when necessary, but by all means, avoid them as much as possible. Eventually, as your star rises, so may their outlook toward you. If it doesn't, you'll have positive confirmation that your feelings were right all along.

As President John F. Kennedy once said, "Forgive your enemies, but don't forget their names."

2 Plan ahead and follow through.

Pace yourself. Don't rush, but by the same token, don't dawdle. Prove yourself.

3 Ask questions.

Keep asking until you understand. Some people may be annoyed with this, but most will be flattered and share whatever it is they have or know.

4 Don't give up so easily.

Learn the meaning of the word "tenacity."

5 Have realistic goals and expectations.

Don't expect all green lights down a wide avenue. It's not all about you. Big ego = no go.

Nothing irritates older types more than a younger person who will perform tasks or do things for others only when they see a direct benefit to themselves. Learn the meaning of the word "altruism." It's largely gone out of fashion, but you can still find it in most dictionaries. Learn it and live it.

Successful people are deemed as such when they have a short list of goals, achieve those goals and then begin a new list. If you learn to engage in this early on in your young life, those around you will come to see you as a leader and an achiever, and that is where you gain confidence and credibility to begin to step up in the world.

Don't try to "save the world" all in one fell swoop. Ultimately, you will find it doesn't want to be saved, and you'll live in frustration until you acknowledge this fact to yourself.

6 Get involved, but not so much that it frustrates you into quitting.

No matter how enthusiastic you may be, you don't need to be on every committee, nor be involved up to your eyebrows in every project. Getting involved means making a difference, not controlling everything.

7 Learn how to trust your instincts.

Don't tell everything you know to everyone you know. Knowledge is power. As Kenny Rogers taught us, know when to hold 'em and know when to fold 'em.

8 Try to strike a balance between your "organ life" and your "real life."

You'll only be young once. Don't short-change yourself by immersing yourself totally into the organ world, exclusive of everything else. Live a little. In fact, live a lot. You'll find that your organ life is more fun and fulfilling if you do.

9 Don't be afraid to admit failure.

Have a backup plan, just in case. If you say you're sorry, then mean that you're truly sorry, and don't use the "S" word to constantly get yourself out of trouble. That only works up until about age five. Then you're on your own.

10 Put your involvement where your mouth is.

If you say "someone should..." then be prepared to step up to the plate and be that someone, even if you don't initially understand how to do it.

We need not only to encourage our young people to lofty goals, but to create opportunities for them to flourish and succeed beyond their wildest dreams. If we fail to do so, the art will wither and die, and everything we've worked for will be for naught.

Utilizing volunteers is potentially tricky at best, and politically charged at worst. The fundamental goal of managing volunteers is to get the right person for the right job. Just like moving furniture around the living room, it may take a bit of experimenting before we get it right, but don't be afraid to do so if things aren't working. Knowing the skill range of older volunteers is relatively straightforward, but with younger people, it's more of a black art. They haven't had the range of opportunities or life experiences their older counterparts have had. In truth, this can be more of an advantage than a disadvantage. Why? Because they don't know what they can't do.

Overall, young people are idealistic, willing to learn, and eager to please. At the very least, those interested in the organ usually possess above-average intelligence and have good ideas, even if they are unorthodox at times. They are generally a lot of fun and full of energy. But when they decide to move on, it's hard to watch them leave the nest.

If we perform our jobs the way we should, today's young people will grow into positions of leadership with a lot of experience under their belts, all because we have made it possible. Let's stop running them off, and when they walk away...let's run after them. Who knows; we might like where they're going after all.

Scott Smith, Contributing Editor to THEATRE ORGAN, admits he's not as young as he used to be, but not so old that he's forgotten what it was like, either.

Journal of American Organbuilding
Quarterly Publication of the American Institute of Organbuilders

This publication is devoted to the dissemination of knowledge regarding the design, construction and maintenance of pipe organs in North America. Although primarily a technical journal for the benefit of organbuilding professionals, it is also a valuable resource for architects and project consultants, church musicians, building committees, seminary and university libraries, and anyone involved with the design or renovation of contemporary worship space.

Far from being the "lost art" that the average person believes it to be, organbuilding in the United States and Canada is maturing and thriving in hundreds of small and large shops throughout the continent. At the same time, serious challenges lie ahead for those promoting the pipe organ in an era of limited budgets and competing options. Readers of the *Journal of American Organbuilding* will benefit from the thoughtful exchange of information and ideas intended to advance this time-honored craft.

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