



Detroit Theater Organ Society

January 2012 Newsletter **HAPPY NEW YEAR** Volume 51, Issue 1

HOLIDAY PARTY FOR EVERYONE

Sunday, January 8, 2012
Fisher Mansion, Detroit MI

This month the members of both the Detroit Theater Organ Society and the Motor City Theatre Organ Society have been invited to the Fisher Mansion for a Holiday Party.

The party, being hosted by our own board member Michael Fisher, starts at 3:00 p.m. with Hors D'Oeuvres and a dinner at 5:30 p.m.

Guests are requested to R.S.V.P. to either Carl Kiehler (home—248-557-8164 or cell—313-283-0225) or Connie Masserant (734-652-6004). You are asked to bring either an Hors D'Oeuvre, dessert, or beverage. The attire for the event is casual holiday attire.

The Fisher mansion is the Former Charles T. Fisher Mansion (of automotive fame) and is a 1922 commission of the renowned architect George D. Mason (who built the Masonic Temple Building, Trinity Lutheran Church of Detroit, Detroit Yacht Club, Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island).

Come see the original Estey Pipe organ as it is being restored. Come make new friends and be reacquainted with old friends from the Senate and Redford.

This is sure to be a great evening. Plan now to attend this Holiday Party!
Address is 670 West Boston Blvd in Detroit.



CHRISTMAS CONCERT A SUCCESS

Gil Francis
DTOS Board of Directors

The Christmas Show on December 11 at the Senate was a great crowd pleaser.

The stage was beautifully decorated with trees loaded with beautiful lights. Strings of lights covered the organ chambers. All those lights were constantly changing color during the show, making an unending variety of shapes and colors. Beautiful! Those wonderful decorations were planned and setup by our organist, Dave Calendine, who just loves Christmas. (Some of our members enjoyed helping Dave with all that work.)

With Dave Calendine at the console the music of Christmas filled the theater with the lush sounds of the great Wurlitzer thrilling everyone there. Song after

song filled our hearts with the joy of the Christmas story. Dave's music was just great, and just right for the occasion. The vocalist, Bob Taylor, sang many songs superbly, making us feel like he was singing just to each of us alone. What a great talent.

Intermission included the traditional collection of goodies, drinks and conversations that we all have come to enjoy. A chamber tour followed the performance, and many new visitors saw the secret of the great Wurlitzer's wonderful sound.

It was a happy bunch of people that went home after the show. If you were not there, you missed a great show!



R ENOVATION UPDATE

Connie Masserant
DTOS Board of Directors

As the year comes to an end, it's time to reflect on our accomplishments in our first year back at the Senate. With the help of volunteers and generous donations, we have been able to give our lady a new look.

We began by installing an electronic gate opener, which allows our playing members to come and go with total security. Soon after that, we added a card reader to the side door which allows anyone with a key fob to enter from the secured parking lot.

On the inside, our floors in the lobby and concession area were made to look like new as they were stripped and waxed. A new soffit with new lighting was installed above the concession counter thanks to a donation made by a member. Enough donations were received to make it possible to replace the mirror in the concession area.

A cozy seating area was established for early arrivals to hang out and socialize before the concert as well as during intermission. A new wall was built along with new wall paper being hung. Furniture and a grand piano fill the new space. Several beautiful chandeliers were donated and hung which added the final touch.

An outside brick pilaster was torn down and rebuilt which solved our water problem, and four out-

side doors were replaced.

The last major project was the stage expansion. An 8-foot extension was built which will allow for other groups to come in and perform. This will bring in new revenue.

In looking ahead into 2012, we still have a distance to go. Long term it is hoped to get the auditorium walls renovated and painted along with some type of artistic décor. A new lighting system, new movie screen and projector are on the list.

In the short term, the goal is to complete the stage work and stairwell repairs before the March Concert. The front facing of the stage needs completion (decoration of some type). I am accepting ideas from members who would like to make suggestions as to how they would like to see it finished. You may submit drawings, send me an email with your ideas or give me a phone call. The ideas will be discussed at the board meeting and decided upon by the board.

Again, I must say that we are still in need of volunteers who will come and roll up their sleeves to dig in and help with the ongoing renovation projects.

Please contact me to volunteer at:
Cmasserant13@gmail.com
Cell 734-652-6004



Did you know.....

- The Senate Theater will be available in the year 2012 for rentals?
- We are currently working on updates, policy, procedures contracts, etc., thus allowing our theater home to be ready for your next birthday party, anniversary celebration, graduation party.
- We have hopes that as we progress, we will be rented out for business meetings, plays, graduations, seminars etc.
- Spread the word.
- Interests, ideas, suggestions..... please contact Michael Fisher, Chairman of the Rentals and Events committee—(313) 378-1275 or Fisher.michael65@yahoo.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE REDFORD THEATRE

January 6 & 7—Seven Brides for Seven Brothers

January 20 & 21—Forbidden Planet

February 3 & 4—Charade

February 17 & 18—The Apartment

March 2 (8pm), 3 (8pm) & 4 (2pm) —Gone With the Wind

March 16 & 17—The Quiet Man

March 23 & 24—Three Stooges Festival

March 30 & 31—Shirley Temple Double Feature

April 21 8pm Only—Mary Pickford Silent Film “Duds” accompanied by Dave Calendine at the Barton Theatre Pipe Organ

All of these great films are shown Friday and Saturday evenings at 8:00 p.m. as well as Saturday afternoon at 2:00 p.m. (unless otherwise noted)

Organ overtures start thirty minutes prior to each show time.

Sit back and enjoy the movies under the Redford's star-lit sky!

Visit the Redford Theatre on the web at www.redfordtheatre.com

Please consider helping the society save money each month by electing to receive this Newsletter electronically. The savings on paper, printing, and mailing are quite significant. It is quick and simple to sign up. Just send an e-mail to:

Dave@Calendine.net

and ask for your Newsletter to be sent to you each month in your e-mail.

FROM THE BENCH

Scott Smith The Modern Organ, Part IV

If you haven't noticed when you're playing the Fisher organ (or any other similarly equipped Wurlitzer), the Chrysoglott goes down another half-octave below tenor C (where you'd customarily not go below) to low G, and the Marimba-Harp down to low C. While we never saw it back in the day, we now see those percussions appearing at lower pitches today in addition to the normal pitch, calling them Sub Marimba and Sub Chrysoglott. Having these available at two pitches makes for more choices and is especially helpful when playing the "Chicago Style" left hand or in arpeggios, whether at one or two pitches.

Wurlitzer's second-touch "collective generals." Either you love 'em or you hate 'em. As originally designed, the piston buttons on the Great manual of the Fisher organ (and virtually all other large Wurlitzers of its time) are second-touch. When depressing them only to first touch, it remains simply a divisional piston, affecting only the Great manual, but if pressed to its limit, it acts as a general piston, affecting all manuals and pedal. Kimball often employed second-touch pistons, even in their church and residence organs. On modern theatre organs, second-touch generals have been done away with. We have grouped the generals all together over on the left side of the piston slips (where all of the black "helper" pistons exist that were added to the Fisher console), and they are single or first touch only. This appears to have been influenced by our classical cousins, and I don't know of anyone who thinks it's a bad thing. Too many pistons? Are you kidding me? Not possible.

Among the earliest and most important of the many subtle changes we see in modern organs is the emphasis placed on rock-steady bass tone. Back in the day, every pipe from bass to treble was on same wind system within a given rank on Wurlitzer organs. That meant that every pipe on that system was tremulated. Over time, it became apparent that the basses suffered with that "wobbly" tone and a certain amount of power loss, especially in fast pedaling, where the idea is to have quick and consistent power. The modern organ

removes the bass octaves of all 16' stops, the big 8' flues (particularly tibias and diapasons), often the louder reeds (the tubas and Trumpet) and sometimes even the louder strings (Solo Strings) from tremulated wind systems and puts them on straight wind. This means the addition of at least one additional regulator in each chamber requiring same, but the response time and sonic difference is dramatic for the organist.

One cannot have this discussion without observing how wind systems are divided in vintage organs vs. today. As designed and as it stands today, the Fisher Wurlitzer has eleven tabs controlling thirteen individual tremolo motors. By the late Twenties, the larger Wurlitzer organs tended to reflect what we think of today as progressive or ergonomic thinking in the trem department. That means that not only were the Tibia and Vox ranks individually controllable from the console, but also the Diaphonic Diapason and the big chorus reeds, those being the Tuba Horn and Tuba Mirabilis. Surprisingly, little would change today. The only system that would change for sure would be the separation of the English Post Horn and Tuba Mirabilis onto their own individual systems, instead of sharing one as they have since 1928. Contrary to the belief of some, the standard Publix #4 spec called for the Tuba Mirabilis and the English Horn to share the same 15" wind system, as they appeared at the Brooklyn (NYC) Paramount and the Boston Metropolitan theatres. There is plenty of documentation around to support same. Musically, it makes sense to have the thick and powerful Mirabilis sans tremolo and wrap itself perfectly around the crackling Posthorn to create one big brass chorus in large ensembles. While every individual designer might have their own thoughts on this matter, the only other ranks that might possibly gain independence would be the (brass) Trumpet and (brass) Saxophone.

Here is one interesting little fact regarding the original spec for the reader to ponder. Despite the fact that it is eight ranks larger, the Fisher organ has only one more tremolo control than that called for in the standard Publix #4 specification, and that would be the

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Diaphonic Diapason. In the stock Publix #4 spec, the Diaphonic was on the same wind system as the Gamba and Gamba Celeste, and all three were on 15" wind pressure. In the Fisher organ, the Diaphonic was split off onto its own 15" system, with the Gambas ganged with the introduced Harmonic Flute, all on 10" wind pressure. Aside from a wind pressure differential, the Foundation chamber at the Fox is somewhat similar to the Fisher in its rank makeup: Tibia Clausa (15"), Diaphonic Diapason (25"), Harmonic Flute, Gamba and Gamba Celeste (all on 15"), with the addition there of Vox Humana (6"), Clarinet, Musette (both 10") and Solo Trumpet (15"). It would appear that while the organ increased in size as originally conceived as a standard Publix #4, with twenty-six ranks to the thirty-four as included in the Fisher Wurlitzer, the number of tremolos did not increase exponentially. In fact, aside from additional ranks, not much of anything else changed, meaning no added percussions or traps.

For many years, everyone followed George Wright down the primrose path, putting the English Horn (Posthorn) on its own wind system without tremolo. After fifty years of this practice, we have seen a partial return to the availability of tremolo on Posthorns, but it is generally a regional philosophy, and when we see it, it does not share the wind system with another rank.

It's impossible to have this speculative discussion without including the obvious difference of a modern electronic relay. The market has gone completely in that direction, and today, you cannot find a supply house that offers a conventional discrete relay (the kind the Fisher Wurlitzer uses), much less even the largest commercial organbuilders. Of course, anything can be built for a price, but who has unlimited funds to throw around these days? There are pluses and minuses to both types of relays, but the convenience and space-saving potential of an electronic relay generally wins over even the most reluctant planners of modern organs, except of course, when in cases of conservation and preservation. As we know, aside from making fine pipe organs and virtually every other musical instrument known in the Western world, the Wurlitzer company was rather savvy at making a good profit on every-

thing they sold. While the Organ World moves forward at a pace just ahead of that of a snail, when they realized they could cut costs by doing something a little differently, they would do just that. Had they continued to build pipe organs into the modern day, Wurlitzer would have undoubtedly chosen to go with electronic relays. Which one? Most likely the one they regarded as the most reliable and profitable for them. They may have even built their own. Who knows?

In terms of control of the instrument, the first thing to go onto any modern organ is a multiple level combination action. With this feature, every organist can potentially have their own combinations firing from the pistons. Some organists use multiple levels just for one concert, even utilizing a single level for one piece of music only when playing something difficult or requiring more and faster changes than the standard fare, say, a transcription of an orchestral piece. Speaking frankly, I have a hard enough time remembering what's on ONE level of combination, let alone several! My hat's off to those who use multiple levels.

Among the modern gadgetry we see on today's church organs are MIDI and A/B programmable crescendo pedals. As I think we all know, MIDI stands for "Musical Instrument Digital Interface," and that means we can drive a nearly endless assortment of other keyboard instruments and drum machines from the organ keyboards when the instrument is so-equipped. The inverse is also possible, but let's not go crazy here. While it seems to be a "must" on all of today's pipe and digital church organs, we rarely see it in actual practice. However, many modern theatre organs do offer a MIDI interface of some sort via their solid-state relay systems. Crescendo pedals became something of a holdover from the era before combination actions. A well-balanced one allows the organist to bring in the voices one at a time, incrementally building to full organ at the end of the pedal's travel. While useful, this traditional manner of use also offers temptation to bypass the use of tabs or knobs altogether and simply use it as a manner of changing dynamic levels. There's no artistry when this is done, and the organist is allowing someone else to control their choices. I know of one commercial organbuilding firm that attempted to get around this

practice by wiring the crescendo pedal in such a way that it would not operate electrically unless there was at least one stop knob or tab engaged somewhere on the organ. How many organists do you think this actually fooled? The traditional type of crescendo pedal also appeared on Wurlitzer and other theatre organs and was used in a similar manner as in the church. However, we can credit Jesse Crawford for creating an alternate method of use of the crescendo in a theatre organ that is still in limited use today, and that was to use it for quick accents. In Crawford's case, the tibias and generally the foundations were left off the crescendo pedal altogether. The strings would gradually enter, building a controlled level of excitement from somewhere just after the beginning to about the middle of the pedal's travel, with big reeds or even the English Posthorn appearing at the end. This was perfect for Crawford's playing, as he tended to rely heavily on the Tibia/Vox sound in the melody line, and the lightning-fast jabs using thin, incisive string tones could prove most effective. In more recent times, organists such as George Wright, Lyn Larsen, Ashley Miller and John Seng used crescendos effectively for similar momentary excitement, while others never use it at all. Back in the day, crescendo pedals were programmable only via a plug-in manner on the back of the console with a tangle of wires, and even a minor change was a hassle. However, in the case of well-appointed organs of today, each level of the crescendo is easily programmable right from the bench. In fact, today's crescendos not only allow the organist to pinpoint where a particular voice enters the pedal, but also the option of where it exits, if that is so desired. Furthermore, the availability of an A/B switch offers two choices of crescendos, so that a particular piece may be executed in a different manner. One can see the advantage of having this on a modern theatre organ, so that the "traditional" and "alternate" uses could be not only easily switchable, but that switch could also be tripped via the combination action.

Without question, the most controversial subject regarding the modernization of theatre organs is that of moving the tabs via electrification vs. original air action. Some people get downright emotional about the subject. Many instruments have had this change made to electric stop actions, and a few have even made the difficult trek back to air. In a large, historic

console, like the Fisher, there's really no reason to make the change. Granted, the air actions are big, bulky and difficult to service and require releathering every so many decades, but it has worked well for over eighty years now, almost without interruption. It's the way all Wurlitzer organs with combination actions were originally equipped back in the day. In the ensuing years, numerous four-manual Wurlitzer theatre organs have been electrified, yet the two big four-manual Detroit organs have stubbornly retained their historicity by retaining their air actions. May it ever be so.

Some of the more specific tonal differences in a modern version of the existing Fisher Wurlitzer might include any number of the following: the Concert Flute appearing on the Great at 1' (with the top octave of pipes repeating in the top twelve notes of the keyboard), the Foundation Tibia taken up to 2' (all tibias go up to 2' these days), the Dulciana down to 16' (yours truly would have the bass octave in wood, while Wurlitzer would have undoubtedly remained steadfast with zinc), the Oboe Horn down to 16' (Opus 1960, the NYC Paramount Studio and all of the Stuart Barrie designed organs had one), the English Horn down to 16' (as you'll find downtown at the Fox, and as called for in the original Publix #4 spec) the Clarinet down to 16' (again, at the Fox and even as far back as the Teens) possibly a 16' Solo String Celeste (gasp!) (again, the Paramount Studio), even an 8' Horn Diapason Celeste (a modern notion borrowed from the church). In addition, we might see the both tibias appear at additional fractional pitches on the Great and Solo manuals and both at 2-2/3' and 2' on the Bombarde. The general rule of thumb in specifying a modern theatre organ is about ten stop tabs per rank, give or take. If we apply that paradigm to the spec of our basic thirty four ranks to create a theoretical new one, we'd be up to about 340 tabs. Now we're talking about using the big Fox box for sure.

A few tabs would likely disappear here and there in favor of louder stops, or become "reorganized" in an attempt to create more logical sonic groupings. The Concert Flute and Gamba tabs would probably disappear completely from the Bombarde. The traditional String Ensemble seen so often on the Solo manual of standard three and four manual Wurlitzers might appear as String Ensemble I (brighter, more assertive

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strings, like Solo Strings I and II and the Violes) and String Ensemble II (darker strings, like the Salicionals and Gambas) on the Bombarde or the Solo or both. The Saxophone in the Pedal, an inexplicable staple for Wurlitzer organs that contained such a set, would undoubtedly disappear in favor of something more useful.

While you don't see them on the Fisher organ, toe studs were common even on the smallest Wurlitzers of its time. Lack of space at the front of the pedalboard is probably the most obvious answer as to their absence from Opus 1953. Unfortunately, most of today's organs are not spread out in numerous chambers as they once were, and so we have lost a number of swell pedals accordingly, and a certain amount of artistic control and dynamic expression along with them. Comparing the large Wurlitzer organs of its day to each other, it's interesting to note how certain ranks managed to float from this chamber to that one, while others remained absolutely constant from organ to organ. We would likely see an additional swing out "junk tray" (Wurlitzer's term, not mine) under the right side of the keydesk, which would include various controls operated by switches and momentary or locking buttons. In addition, today we see buttons galore in the keychecks, keydesk, piston slips and just about any place but the bench. That's next, I'm sure.

Others have tried assembling modern versions loosely based on the Publix #4, or even more specifically on the Fisher organ. The Wurlitzer composites (built up from vintage parts never together originally) at the Shanklin Conference Center in Groton, Massachusetts (4/34) and at Berkeley Community Theatre in Berkeley, California (4/41) are two of the better examples, and both reflect the best of modern thinking in their specifications.

Just briefly, let's reflect musically on what was going on during the era in which the Fisher Wurlitzer was designed and built. At that time, there were many noble experiments taking place with regard to specification and overall design, both in church and theatre organs. Some ideas developed traction, while others did not. Moller and particularly Kimball developed track records of building large, so-called concert organs, on which a clever and talented organist could deftly per-

form nearly any kind of music for audiences in a single performance, with everything from Bach to French Romantic to salon music to the latest pop tune. To a large degree, it appears that the Fisher Wurlitzer was one of those noble experiments, albeit a rather conservative one. While Wurlitzer built up a number of organs for churches (note that I did not identify them as "church organs"), they were not really equipped to design or build credible instruments capable of choral or hymn accompaniment or offertories, nor evidently were they interested in doing so. The company was making money hand-over-fist on the theatre instruments. I'm certain they strongly questioned the efficacy of investing so much time to develop the church market. While they were good business people, they were not major risk-takers. They played to their strengths and their marketing supported that. In terms of pipe organs, they were basically theatre organ builders, and they knew that. The Fisher organ gave them an opportunity to unveil their concept of what was essentially a gold-plated ideal and prove, once and for all, that they could actually take a few risks...so long as someone else was footing the bill. Plus, they knew that if this design was not too "far out," it couldn't hurt them, and that may be wherein the truth lies.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this discussion about the evolution of the theatre organ is what hasn't changed, and, aside from the ergonomic and control improvements we've seen in the past fifty or so years, most everything else has remained basically the same. In the author's opinion, the Wurlitzer organ always was and probably always will be regarded as the kingpin of the field due to the parent company's size, diversity and financial strength, allowing it to seek out and hire the best organ engineers and craftsmen of its time. To this day, no one has improved upon the three-valve regulator, their tremolos are among the quietest and most efficient, and their chest action is arguably the fastest, smoothest and most responsive of any ever created. In fact, today there are major church organ builders who have closely copied Wurlitzer's chest action, replete with their own "improvements," whatever those may be. They were also wise to associate themselves with the remarkable talents of Jesse Crawford

and other popular organists of the day, and to respect their consultation. It was probably as much luck as it was good business sense that Wurlitzer was able to buy the remaining assets of the financially ruined Robert Hope-Jones and his pipe organ manufacturing company at the critical moment of business failure. Ultimately, they were able to make their relatively modest investment into a musical phenomenon that we all still appreciate and enjoy eighty years after the last instruments of any size were built for motion picture theatres, and seventy years after the company stopped producing pipe organs altogether.

Suffice it to say, while the modern organ is

eminently more playable from an ergonomic standpoint, it is not more musical, nor does it make us better players. At least not in the writer's opinion. Granted, it is easier to access certain voices and create different combinations of sounds not available in the Golden Era, and it does make playing easier overall, so that we can focus more on how to best express ourselves artistically and less on being contortionists to achieve sonic nirvana. Still, as organists, the only gains we've actually made have been in terms of convenience.

Above all, let us all keep in mind that in its day, the Fisher Wurlitzer defined the modern organ, and to some degree, it still does.



NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dick Leichtamer
President, DTOS

First of all I would like to wish you a Happy New Year and welcome you into the year of 2012!

It seems like I just welcomed you into 2011.

How fast time goes by. 2012 is looking to be a very exciting year in the history of the Detroit Theater Organ Society. This is our 50th anniversary year. Some of the charter members can't believe it either. One charter member remarked that when this group started up they didn't think it would last more than three or four years – and here it is *fifty* years. We have a lot of wonderful artists scheduled this year and several celebrations. There will be other articles on those. However, I would like to touch on two items.

First, if you haven't paid your dues for 2012, please try and get those in as soon as possible. We need to know what our financial outlook will be for the

year. Maybe you forgot to send them in with all the holiday rush. That can be a problem, so please help us out and get them mailed in to Robert Weil, our Treasurer at 23238 Clairwood, St. Clair Shores MI, 48080-3414. We would much appreciate it. Associate Dues are \$120 and Playing Member Dues are \$160.

The other item is donations. First of all the Board of Directors and myself can't thank you enough for all of your time, talent and donations that have come in this past year. The Senate Theater looks beautiful. Please don't stop sending them. We still need money for improved lighting for the stage area. We eventually would like to replace the carpet in the lobby and theater areas. Keep us in mind for donations. They are all tax deductible. A sincere thanks for all your donations.

EXCITEMENT BUILDING FOR OUR 50TH

Connie Masserant
DTOS Board of Directors

It won't be long and June 9th will be upon us. There are many preparations to be done to get ready for that exciting weekend.

We have begun to receive a few photos from members in helping us to put together our history. However, we still need additional photos, newspaper clippings, old newsletters etc. from all decades. BUT, we need articles and photos from the beginning years. We have NO photos from the Iris theatre. Anyone who has any of the above, please contact me at the below phone number. I will make copies and return the originals to you or you may send me copies. I am willing to come and pick them up if there is a need.

We hope to be able to kick off the weekend with a silent movie, accompanied by our Mighty Wurlitzer here in our own theater Friday night, June 8th. Events for Saturday are still being planned. The afternoon events will include presentations by our own John Lauter, Lance Luce, and Tony O'Brien. There will be displays depicting our history along with a slide show presentation. An open console was suggested as part of the day's events.

A roundtable is being planned with some of the charter members to share their story and our history.

There will be Hors d'oeuvres followed by a catered dinner at the theatre. To top off the evening, we will enjoy a concert given by Lance Luce.

Please make your reservations early. This will be a big event and we do have limited seating for dinner. Since it is catered we do need to have an approximate count. The cost is to be determined later but you will want to save your seat now.

Registration was set up at the last concert and will be set up at the next few concerts.

You may also register by phone or email to any of the committee members.

Let's make this an unforgettable event.

50th Anniversary Planning Committee
Glenn Rank – Chairman
Michael Fisher – committee member
Connie Masserant – committee member

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Dave Calendine
Editor, DTOS Newsletter

Happy New Year! I hope that you had a great holiday season, and that 2012 proves to be an even better year than last.

While there are no concerts during January and February at the Senate, there are still lots of things going on there.

There will still be work days at the Senate. See Connie's article earlier in this Newsletter for more information. Any help you can give would be greatly appreciated.

We have an exciting opportunity to visit the great Fisher mansion for a Holiday Party hosted by our own Mike Fisher. See the front page of this Newsletter for more on the party.

Coming up shortly, you have the opportunity to be a major part of the Detroit Theater Organ Society. That opportunity, open to all playing members, is to be on the Board of Directors of our organization. Each year, the term comes up for several board members. Most of the time they choose to run again, but this also gives anyone else that is a playing member a chance to be on the Board of Directors. If you are interested, please let our President, Dick Leichtamer, know and he will let our election committee know. You will be asked to provide a short "bio" of yourself that will be published and mailed out to all members eligible to vote. This is a most-important part of our organization, as all procedures, policies, and decisions that are made regarding our organization come from your elected Board of Directors. The Board meets every month on the last Tuesday. Meetings start at 7:00 p.m. and usually last around two hours. Please consider "throwing your name in the hat" for the Board of Directors. We need active Board members to keep the society moving in the right direction.

Have you ever taken a good look at the policies and procedures and bylaws of our organization? The Board of Directors are about to take another deep look at them, as with all of the renovation and changes happening at the Senate, we are finding that many of

them are a bit outdated. With that in mind, please take a look at them and see if anything stands out as needing an update. The review of them will start with the January Board meeting.

Do you come and play the Wurlitzer at the Senate? Want to make sure that it is available when you want to come in? Lance Luce has worked tirelessly on updating our web site and creating a new simple-to-use "console reservation system" that you can sign up and use for free. Please make use of this valuable tool so that you don't come down to play when the organ is down for maintenance and renovation.

We are working hard at coming up with enough money to install a new lighting system at the Senate. With the new stage expansion, our existing lights are just not enough to cover the new stage area. As antiquated as they are, many of the fixtures just simply are not working anymore. If you would be interested in helping us obtain and have installed a new state-of-the-art lighting system, please consider donating towards the project. Your donations could help us be more prepared to offer the Senate Theater for rentals to various organizations for recitals, meetings, and more.

Part of the ongoing restoration of the Senate also includes the installation of new restroom facilities on the ground level. Several ideas exist to do this, but the main hurdle in the project is the prohibitive cost to the society to install them. With your donations and help, the main-floor restrooms could come to a reality much sooner that we could ever hope. This would enable those that have serious troubles navigating the stairwells up and down to the existing restrooms. Won't you please consider helping the society out and make our theater more user friendly for those that attend our concerts?

And finally, thanks to Joan and Craig Brown and Lynn Walls for their help with getting the decorations put up for my Christmas concert. The place looked awesome when done thanks to their help!



photo: Lance Luce

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Look for us on Facebook!

2012 Concert Series

March 18—Scott Foppiano

April 15 — Ken Double

May 20—Ron Rhode

June 9—Lance Luce

September 16—Pierre Fracalanza

October 21—Steven Warner

November 18—Melisa Ambrose-Eidson

December 2—Fr. Andrew Rogers