

The Organ Spiel

NEWSLETTER FOR THE SIERRA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

MORTON MADNESS XV

April 2009



If you missed him at the *George Wright Memorial Concert*, last fall, then this is your second opportunity to hear this very fine young organist!!!

Mark Herman was born on August 25, 1987, and currently lives in Chicago, Illinois. He has been studying the piano since he was seven years old and began classical organ lessons at the age of 12. His first introduction to the theatre organ was when he was in fourth grade and was at the Embassy Theatre in downtown Fort Wayne. In 2001, he began theatre organ studies with John Ferguson of Indianapolis, who is recognized worldwide for his skills as a teacher.

In 2004, Mark won the *ATOS Young Theatre Organist Competition* in Milwaukee; that enabled him to perform a successful concert for the ATOS 50th Anniversary Convention in Pasadena the following July. During the summer of 2006, he toured for six weeks in Australia and New Zealand, setting records in CD sales at many of the venues. Over the past two years, he has played numerous solo concerts in theatres from coast to coast.

For those of you new to Sierra Chapter, this is your opportunity to hear two very nice Robert Morton Theatre Organs: They are nearly identical in specifications but with very different sounds.

The first concert starts at 1:00PM, at Harmony Wynelands, in Lodi. Come early to enjoy the grounds, as well as a glass of wine to savor before the concert. Wine will also be available for sale by the bottle.

Following that concert we make the trek to Ironstone Vineyards, in Murphys, where we will enjoy a delicious buffet dinner with wine, of course, followed by another concert by Mark.

All of this for only \$50 per person. A convenient ticket order form is enclosed with this newsletter.



Come early and bring a picnic!

Harmony Wynelands is set in stunning natural beauty among lush grapes, surrounded by picturesque gardens.

The organ here was originally installed in the San Francisco Castro Theatre in 1922. Bob Hartzel purchased and installed it in the "Blue Barn" built just for the organ.



Ironstone Vineyards is nestled against the Sierra Foothills, in the heart of California's scenic Gold Rush Country. Enjoy a Vintage Hat & doll display, a History Museum, beautiful gardens and jewelry shop

The Organ here was originally installed in the Alhambra Theatre in Sacramento in 1927. It went from a Baptist Church in Stockton to Bob Hartzell. John Kautz later bought it for his winery and built the Alhambra Music Room to house it (now a 3/14) and provide banquet space.



Jim Riggs at the Stockton Fox (Bob Hope Theatre)

If you are already headed towards Lodi, for Morton Madness, consider coming a day early (April 17) to enjoy the 1923 Buster Keaton silent film "Safety Last", accompanied by Jim Riggs, on the fabulous 4/21 Robert Morton Theatre Organ. The Organ Concert begins at 6:30PM, followed by the film and a short subject at 7:00PM. The Stockton Fox is located downtown at 242 E. Main Street.

\$8 Adults - \$4 Youth Call (209) 337-HOPE



Sierra Chapter

Going to Berkeley

Wurlitzer Pops Concert

Lew Williams

**Sunday, May 3, 2009 at
12:30PM**

We are taking a luxury coach from the Towe Auto Museum to Berkeley to attend a Concert, featuring Lew Williams who is noted for creating *the Big Band Sound* on the Mighty Wurlitzer.

The \$35 price includes bus transportation and concert admission! After the concert, we will stop at the NEW Brennan's Hofbrau in the old Train Station for a No Host dinner.

Sierra Chapter featured in Senior Magazine (April Edition)

If you have Internet access, take a look at this link:

www.seniormagonline.com



Photo used by permission Senior Magazine...49 or plan to

On the cover,
is a picture of our
Publicity/Program
Director/Board Member
Craig Peterson
Then read the story at:

**[www.seniormagonline.com/downloads/April2009/
April2009_pages5-7.pdf](http://www.seniormagonline.com/downloads/April2009/April2009_pages5-7.pdf)**



Sierra Chapter Directory

Updates Requested

If you have **any address/e-mail/phone updates** for the Sierra Chapter Directory, please **contact Terry Clifton at (916) 863-6344** or you can e-mail him at **terry@parklaneblessings.com** He will be printing a new directory to be handed out/mailed to all members.

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE – CAROL ZERBO



It's here! Morton Madness time! Technically the date is Saturday, April 18th but y'all might be interested in going to the Stockton Fox on Friday night to see "Safety Last" starring Buster Keaton. Jim Riggs will journey from his new home in Wichita, Kansas to accompany the film. That's right, Bay area boy Jim has moved to the middle of the country to become the resident organist for the Century II Convention Center in Wichita. We are now one less artist out here and our loss is their gain but, as long as the planes fly perhaps we may still enjoy Jim's wonderful accompaniments and concerts. Best of luck at your new post, Jim!

Now, back to Friday night. "Safety Last" is a wonderful comedy, as anything with Buster Keaton is. The Stockton Fox's 4/21 Robert Morton is a beautiful installation, well worth a listen. If you haven't heard it before, now is your chance. Curtains up at 6:30 so all you out-of-towners come early and enjoy Jim and Buster before Morton Madness.

On the topic of silents, Bob Salisbury accompanied "Thief of Baghdad" on March 20th at the Towe. We had a great crowd! Everyone seemed to be having a good time. Bob is always popular with our silent movie fans. **Be sure to save May 22nd when Bay area**

favorite Jerry Nagano will play "Seven Chances".

Speaking of the Bay area. The weekend of March 13th was an organ lover's dream. Pipe organ offerings started on Friday with a silent movie at the Stanford in Palo Alto accompanied by Clark Wilson. Saturday night, The California Theatre in San Jose hosted the Symphony Silicon Valley presentation, "The Organ & The Great C" on Saturday and Sunday. Also on Sunday, Silicon Valley Chorale presented a wonderful evening of choral music.

At the magnificent 4/27 Wurlitzer auditorium organ was the perfect person for the job, Jonas Nordwall. You can read the review on the ATOS website. Playing the audience was Jerry Nagano on the 2/10 lobby Wurlitzer, just about the sweetest little organ you'll ever hear. Adding to this excess of sonic pleasure was Jim Riggs' concert on Sunday at Berkeley. As I have not yet mastered the art of being in two places at once, I opted to stay in San Jose and experience the wonderful blend of organ, orchestra and chorus a' la Nordwall. People, you simply must journey to San Jose to hear these two Wurlitzers. They are musical works of art! Wonderful additions to the Bay area's already sizable inventory of theatre pipe organs.

But, to return to my original thought - It's Morton Madness time! At the risk of gushing, Craig Peterson outdid himself when he got Mark Herman to visit us again so quickly. Mark's performance at Grant in November gained him an auditorium full of appreciative listeners. I have heard from quite a few people who are delighted with the chance to hear him in person on two more local pipe organs. He is a real charmer and, oh yeah, he definitely knows his way around a theatre organ! This is one Morton Madness the younger generation might also appreciate so invite a music student or even an open-minded young relative to experience the delights of the theatre pipe organ. You might mention the dinner that comes with the concert just to seal the deal.

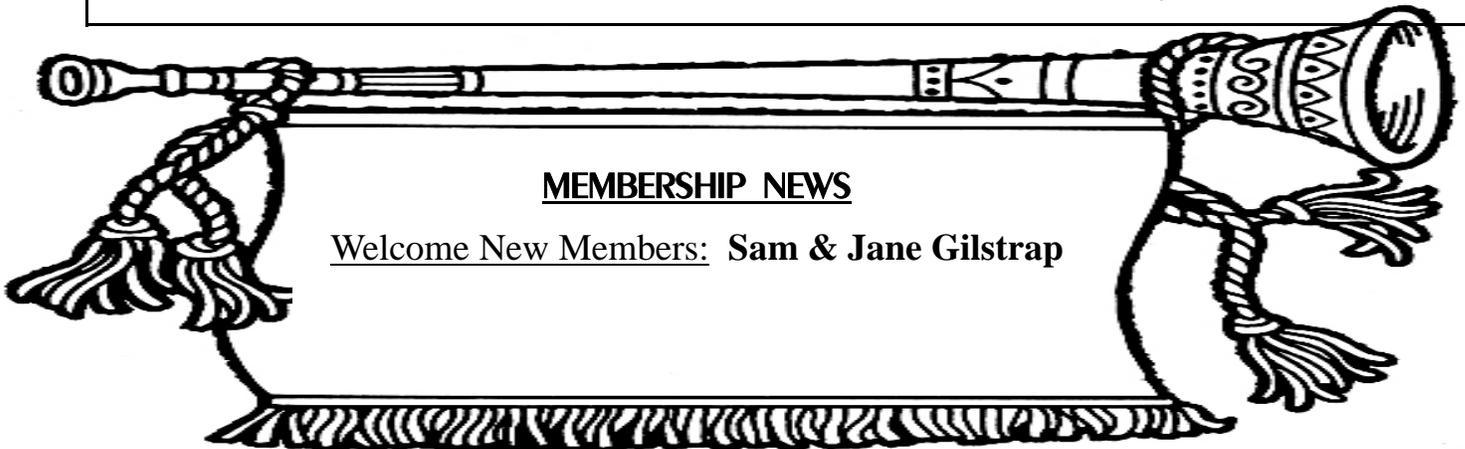
Details are in the Spiel and on our website.



See y'all there!
Carol Z

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome New Members: **Sam & Jane Gilstrap**

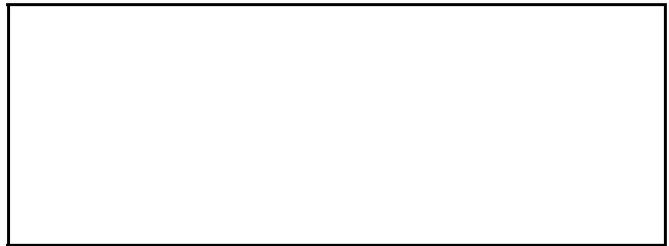




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We are on the Web:
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MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR EVENTS

SIERRA CHAPTER EVENT

Towe Auto Museum
2200 Front Street

Sunday May 3

Meet at the Towe 12:30PM

Coach Tour to Berkeley

Low Williams

\$35 includes Concert Ticket

Friday May 22 - 8:00PM

Seven Chances (1925)

Silent Film - **Jerry Nagano**

\$10 General
\$8 Members
\$5 Students
\$20 Family

MORTON MADNESS XV

**Saturday, April 18
1:00PM**

**Harmony Wynelands
Lodi, CA**

**Ironstone Vineyards
Murphys, CA**

Guest Artist: Mark Herman

\$50 per person includes Buffet Dinner

See enclosed order form



NOR-CAL TOS EVENT

Berkeley Community Theater

**Sunday May 3 -
2:30 PM**



Low Williams

\$15/General
Admission

STOCKTON FOX EVENT

Bob Hope Theatre
242 E. Main
Stockton, CA

Friday Apr 17 - 6:30 PM

Safety Last (1923)
Featuring **Jim Riggs**
On the **Mighty Morton**

The Chapter was organized in 1968 as a not-for-profit corporation under the statutes of the State of California and is recognized as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and Section 23701d of the California Revenue and Taxation Code.

It was organized for the purpose of preservation and promotion of the Theatre Pipe Organ and its music. Membership in the local Chapter also encourages membership in the National Organization, American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS.) www.atos.org