

# The Organ Spiel

NEWSLETTER FOR THE SIERRA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY



## 15TH ANNUAL *GEORGE WRIGHT* MEMORIAL CONCERT



NOVEMBER 2012



**GRANT UNION  
High School**

1400 GRAND AVENUE  
SACRAMENTO

**SUNDAY,  
Nov. 11th  
2:00 PM**

The four-manual twenty-one rank theatre pipe organ at Grant Union High School was installed over a period of one year from 1938 to 1939. Pipe work and chests were obtained from theatre organs in Redding and San Francisco, California, and Reno, Nevada. The best parts were used to assemble the organ by students under the direction of Fred Wood, an organ builder from Oakland. The new Grant organ was presented to the public in a recital by Emil Martin, Howard Scott, and George Wright on December 8, 1939.

## GUEST ARTIST: **MARTIN ELLIS**

Martin Ellis holds the distinction of being the first winner of the ATOS Young Organists Competition in 1986. After his initial exposure to theatre organ at the Paramount Music Palace in Indianapolis at 7 years old, Ellis began organ studies in the sixth grade, and at 15 began studies with John Ferguson. Upon winning the ATOS competition, he premiered with Rex Koury at the Chicago Theatre Wurlitzer that year, and was featured in concert at the ATOS National Convention the follow-

ing year in Richmond, Va.

With extraordinary sight-reading skills and the ability to musically adapt to a variety of situations, Ellis was invited to be the fourth member of the Trio con Brio by Donna Parker, Jonas Nordwall and Tom Hazleton. He performed for the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society and Fort Wayne's Embassy Theatre when Tom was unable to perform, and was ready to step in and play any of the other member's parts as the understudy, definitely the toughest job of the three!

Returning to Indianapolis, Martin became the Senior Staff Pianist/Organist for the Indianapolis Children's Choir—a touring organization with more than 2,000 children! Their tours have taken them through most major cities in Europe and Canada—including playing an organ concert on the Tambourini organ at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. They have appeared on several major TV networks and ESPN. For seven years, Martin has concurrently served as Artistic Assistant/Pianist for the Pacific Rim Children's Choir Festival in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Martin maintains an active concert schedule and has become a prominent face among the large church scene and orchestra scene in Indianapolis. He frequently is featured as a keyboard artist with a variety of venues including performances of the Saint-Saens Organ Symphony with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra and the Poulenc Organ Concerto with the Carmel Symphony Orchestra. He has appeared on the Ohio Theatre's summer movie series for several years.

In 2004, Martin was appointed the Associate Director of Music and Organist at North United Methodist Church in Indianapolis playing the restored 4/76 Kimball orchestral pipe organ. He also became the third permanent member of the Trio con Brio upon Tom Hazleton's passing—something Tom, Jonas and Donna agreed upon when the trio was formed.

Martin performed for us at our annual Ironstone Pops Concert in 2010, which was extremely well received by the public. Do NOT miss him!





## Annual Election of Officers and Board Members

It is again time to line up candidates!

*The success of every nonprofit organization depends on its volunteers.*

**Your participation is greatly appreciated!!!**

**Nominees so far are:**

**Vice-President:** Carol Zerbo

**Secretary:** Joan Grootveld

**Board Member:** Bill Coale  
(2nd term)

**Board Member:** Paul Brown



If you are interested in running for any of the positions on the left, please contact:

**Randy Warwick** (Nomination Chairman)

**661/392-0269**

**E-Mail: rwarwick@bak.rr.com**

If you are a member of ATOS National and have not yet gotten involved at the chapter level...this is your opportunity!

*Ask not what Sierra Chapter can do for you...ask, what can I do for Sierra Chapter?*

It takes a lot of people to keep the chapter machinery running and we have fun doing it!

## Chris Gorsuch 1954 - 2012



It is with a heavy heart that I report the passing of our long-time and dear friend and colleague, Chris Gorsuch, who, after courageously battling cancer, passed away peacefully in his sleep just before midnight on October 17th.

As you all know, Chris earned widespread admiration as a brilliant organist, arranger, and technician. In 2008, he received the honor of the American Theatre Organ Society's Organist of the Year.

Those of us who had the great honor of knowing him will always remember his gregarious, fun-loving, outgoing nature and will deeply miss his friendship.

Although he was unable to respond personally to everyone, Chris was profoundly touched by the tremendous outpouring of support that he has received over the past several weeks. --

Jelani Eddington

### Chapter Officers

#### **President/Publicity**

1st term expires Dec 2013

**Randy Warwick**

661/392-0269

E-Mail: rwarwick@bak.rr.com

#### **Vice President**

Term expires Dec 2012

**Carol Zerbo**

916/624-9182

E-mail: cazbo@sbcglobal.net

#### **Secretary**

2nd term expires Dec 2012

**Terry Clifton**

916/863-6344

E-mail:

terry@parklaneblessings.com

#### **Treasurer/Web Master**

2nd term expires Dec 2013



**Dave Sauer**

916/925-7440

E-Mail:

davesauer@comcast.net

#### **Program Director**

**Craig Peterson**

916/682-9699

E-Mail: peterson59@comcast.net

#### **Historian**

**Beverly Harris**

916/332-2837

#### **Recording Library**

**Beverly Harris**

916/332-2837



#### **Board Member/Facebook**

1st term expires Dec 2012

**William Coale, Ph.D.**

510/778-9117

E-Mail: wmcoale@comcast.net

#### **Board Member**

1st term expires Dec 2013

**Gary French**

916/726-4516

E-Mail: gary.french@comcast.net

#### **Board Member**

Term expires Dec 2012

**Marian Galbraith**

916/722-0411



#### **Board Member**

1st term expires Dec 2013

**Joan Grootveld**

916/635-4160

E-Mail: joanie52@sbcglobal.net

#### **Membership**

**Terry Clifton**

916/863-6344

terry@parklaneblessings.com

#### **Newsletter Editors**

**Sherry & Terry Clifton**

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#### **Organ Technician**

**Dave Moreno**

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davem@lanset.com

#### **Music Librarian**

**Gary French**

916/726-4516

E-Mail:

gary.french@comcast.net



## PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE – Randy Warwick

Thanks much to **Wendell Jacob** for hosting the September event at his really neat musical toy room in Davis. **Dave Moreno** did his usual excellent accompaniment of the silent comedies.

The George Wright 1940 recordings at Grant High School compiled to a CD are finally done. **Carol Zerbo** shepherded this project from beginning to end in what turned out to be a bigger job than anyone first imagined. Thanks much to Carol! Also many thanks to **Dick Clay** who owns the original recordings. **Matias Bombal** researched many song titles and **Bill Coale** jumped in and found out he had graphical skills he did not even know he had and did a fine job setting up the cover art and liner notes.

**This very special CD** will be available at the Grant concert. **It is our gift to you for a minimum donation of \$25.00.** (It can be mailed or picked up at Grant!)

*All proceeds go to maintaining the Grant High organ!*

Visit [sierrachapterATOS.org](http://sierrachapterATOS.org) for more details

Everyone involved **deserves kudos.**

Even though the fidelity of the recoding is marginal given 1940 technology, the genius of the young George Wright at age 19 is very evident with the exuberance of youth, matched by his already incredible technique and style. The late thirties' current big band sound is very influential in many of these arrangements as most are up tempo and you can hear why the students who were growing up with *big band* as their music really would have related to hearing George at the Grant High Wurlitzer.

And speaking of George Wright, the annual George Wright Memorial concert is at Grant union High School on November 11 with the terrific **Martin Ellis** from Indianapolis. Martin did a fine job at our Ironstone event two years ago and he will bring another organist's tribute concert to George Wright.

Also set aside December 2 for the Christmas Party and election/annual meeting. We had a nice turnout last year and all seemed to have fun that we would like to repeat again.



### Board Meeting

Saturday

**Nov 3**

**10:00AM**

Home of Carol Zerbo  
Rocklin, CA

### MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome Back at the Benefactor Level:

**S. Troy Killorn**

Renewing at the Benefactor Level:

**Bill Coale**

**Linda & Bob Jarvis**

**Craig Peterson**

Renewing at the Sustaining Level:

**Cliff Edstrom**

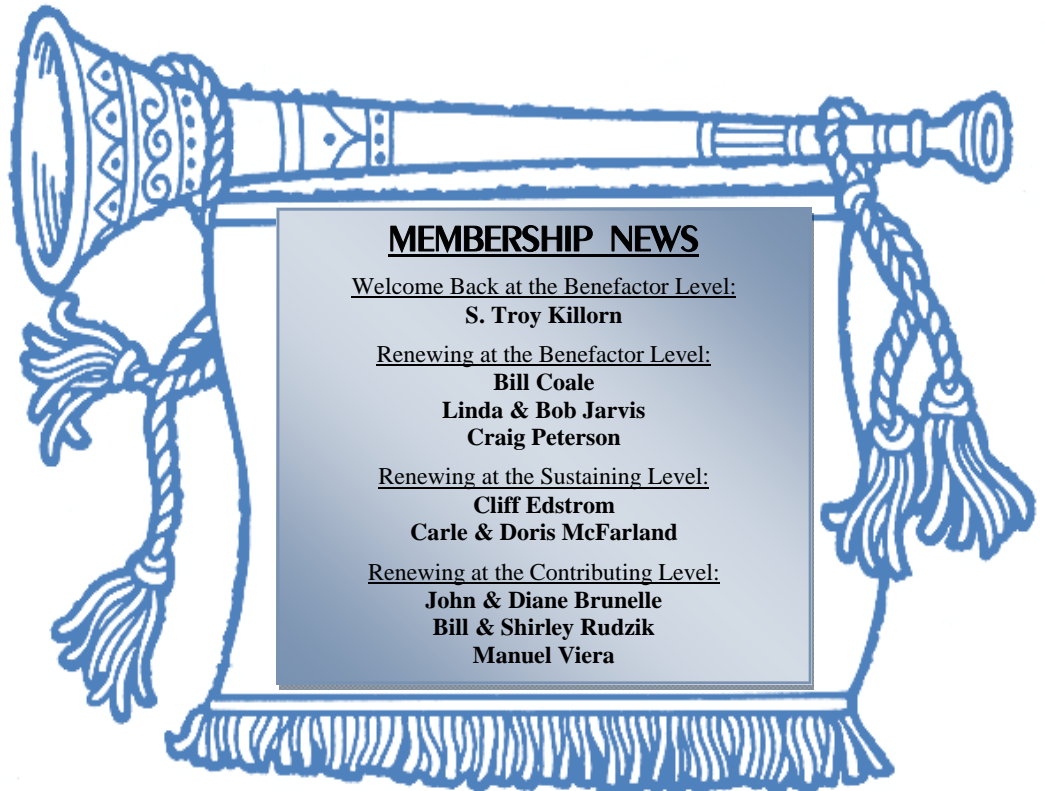
**Carle & Doris McFarland**

Renewing at the Contributing Level:

**John & Diane Brunelle**

**Bill & Shirley Rudzik**

**Manuel Viera**






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## MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR EVENTS

### SIERRA CHAPTER/ GRANT UNION ALUMNI EVENT

Grant Union High School  
1400 Grand Avenue



*15th Annual  
George Wright  
Memorial Concert*

**Sunday Nov 11th 2:00 PM**

*Martin Ellis*

\$12/General  
\$10/Sierra Chapter and  
Grant Union Alumni Members

Students - Free  
Box Office Opens 1:00PM

### SIERRA CHAPTER EVENT

Fair Oaks Clubhouse  
7997 California Ave



**Sunday,  
December 2nd  
1:00 PM**

Annual Meeting and  
**Christmas**

**Party**

*Catered Dinner*



### STOCKTON FOX EVENT

#### BOB HOPE THEATRE

242 East Main Street

**The Godfather**

**Friday, Nov 9**

6:30PM

\$8/Adults



Featuring

**Dave Moreno**

*On the  
Mighty Morton*

The Chapter was organized in 1968 as a not-for-profit corporation under the statutes of the State of California and is recognized as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and Section 23701d of the California Revenue and Taxation Code. It was organized for the purpose of preservation and promotion of the Theatre Pipe Organ and its music. Membership in the local Chapter also encourages membership in the National Organization, American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS.) [www.atos.org](http://www.atos.org)