



# *Pipes along the Rockies*

*Newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Chapter  
American Theatre Organ Society, Inc.*

*October, 2010*

*Information Line: 303-466-3330*

*Get ready to take a trip to .....*

## **Fantasy Destinations**

**Sunday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2 pm**

**Holiday Hills Ballroom**

**Members, no charge; All others, \$5**

Enjoy a musical reminder of some of those locations, in the USA or abroad, that you've always wanted to visit or you can't wait to visit again.

Share a table with other members and acquaintances munching on snacks while being whisked away to an assortment of Fantasy Destinations!

Member **Lee Traster** returns to the Holiday Hills "stage" on Sunday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2 pm, playing the theatre organ and grand piano along with a group of musical friends who play drums, bass, banjo, tuba, accordion and do vocals.

Bring snacks for you, or for your table, or for the whole group. Ice tea and sugarless lemonade will be provided at no charge throughout the afternoon.

No reservations needed. No travel agent will call.

*Our annual "religious" get-together....*

## **Got Gospel?**

**Sunday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2 pm**

**Holiday Hills Ballroom**

**Members, no charge; all others, \$5**

Rev up your singing-in-the-shower skills in preparation for your individual participation in the hymn sing portion of our annual "Got Gospel?" club social on Sunday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2 pm, in the Holiday Hills Ballroom.

There will also be theatre organ, grand piano and a few other surprises to round out the afternoon of classical and sacred music.

Light refreshments will be served.

As in the past, there will be no sermon and the collection plate will not be passed. Hallelujah!

*Our thanks to John Ledwon .....*

## **"Free day at the Paramount"**

Our arrangement with the Paramount management, allows our club to get one day a year, free, for a "members only" event at the Denver Paramount.



On August 8<sup>th</sup> we used our free day and were fortunate to enjoy a concert by John Ledwon, organist for

Disney's El Capitan Theatre in Hollywood.

120 members were in attendance. John played a wide variety of music that the crowd loved, all reflecting his philosophy to stay with "recent" works. Open console time followed the program.

Our thanks to John and to our club member **Terry Cutshall** for making this event possible.

More photos at: [www.RMCATOS.org](http://www.RMCATOS.org)

*Education and enjoyment .....*

## **"Truck Stops & Tab Stops"**

What an interesting and entertaining afternoon was orchestrated for us by member **Janice Blakney** on September 19<sup>th</sup> at the Holiday Hills Ballroom.

Member **Doug Thompson** received a certificate in recognition of his winning first place in the 2010 ATOS Amateur Organist of the Year competition.

The 115 in attendance then experienced what it was like to attend a movie theatre in the 1920's including a silent newsreel of Lindbergh's flight



(**Bob Castle**), a bouncing ball sing-a-long (**Jim**

**Calm**), and a short silent film (**Kevin Utter** and daughter **Cori** who served as the “eyes” for her sightless dad).



After the break, the audience was transported across the US visiting, via the big screen, four vintage movie houses and listening to live

musical accompaniment: Oakland Fox (Doug), Michigan (Kevin), Egyptian (Jim) and the Atlanta Fox (Bob). Each organist also gave a verbal history of the theatre they represented.

More photos at: [www.RMCATOS.org](http://www.RMCATOS.org)

### *Our mystery players did their thing....* **“Play the Paramount (alone)”**

Ten members responded to the opportunity to “Play the Paramount (alone)” during our access to the theatre in August. Many of the participants played “alone” but several brought an entourage of friends and family to listen to the “artist of the hour” and take



tours of the Denver Paramount Theatre.

Because of a show cancelling at the last minute, we were able to use the theatre for an extra 10 days and some of the original players returned for repeat performances.



Thanks to the generosity of the players, many of whom paid more than the advertised fee, after our expenses were paid there was more than \$300 available for our “Paramount Wurlitzer Maintenance Fund.”



(See the following article about the Paramount relay upgrade project.)

It was a fun time for all and if opportunity knocks again, we’ll take advantage of the situation and once again make the Mighty Wurlitzer available to our membership to “Play the Paramount.”

### **Wurlitzer Relay Upgrade Project**

The relay is the “brains” of a pipe organ. It is the part of the installation that controls what pipe or pipes play when a given key is pressed. Original pipe organ relays were a kludge of electro-pneumatic relays, thus the name.

The Paramount’s original pneumatic relay, located three floors above the auditorium on the right (solo chamber) side of the auditorium suffered severe damage caused by a roof leak.

In the late 1980’s the original pneumatic relay was replaced by a digital or computer relay that could do everything the pneumatic relay could do plus other functions such as:

- 1) remembering the registration settings for 100’s of organists
- 2) making it possible for the organ to transpose by just pushing a button
- 3) allowing an organist to “set pistons” at the console instead of having to do it manually (pistons are the buttons under each of the manuals used to select pre-determined tab stop settings)
- 4) making it possible to record “actions” (key strokes, tab stop usage, piston results & swell shoe positions). Those recorded actions can be played back by the computer allowing the organ to be played “live” without an organist!



The original Paramount computer digital relay software was upgraded to the “latest and greatest” in the year 2003. That installation uses multi-conductor ribbon cable to connect the master and slave consoles to the computer and to both pipe chambers.

There is a practical limit of 50 feet for ribbon cable. One of the cables at the Paramount is more than 150 feet in length which makes the instrument a candidate for functional errors.



The club is planning to install a new digital relay hardware and software solution that replaces the ribbon cable with a computer network using what is called CAT5 cable. The new installation will remove the cable length limitation and offers the ability for portions of the relay system to be wireless.

Total cost of the upgrade, with club members doing the labor, is about \$4,700. Last year, **Don Wick** was able to secure an \$800 grant for the project from the national ATOS organization. Last year and this year, **Lee Shaw** was able to secure a \$1,000 grant each year from the IBM Corporation. Project funds from "Play the Paramount" and other sources total \$700. The \$1,200 short fall will be covered by additional donations and club funds.

The upgrade is scheduled to be completed prior to our next public event at the Paramount.

### DU students tour the Paramount

On September 10<sup>th</sup>, **Bob Castle**, **Rich Brooks** and **Lee Shaw** hosted a University of Denver professor and 17 of his "Film and Philosophy" students.



The purpose of the tour was for the students to get an idea of the atmosphere of attending a film in past years. ("Past Years" were somewhat different for the students than for Bob, Rich, Lee and the Prof!)

The students received a history of the Paramount, a tour of the theatre, and Bob Castle gave them an intro to silent film presentation by accompanying on the Mighty Wurlitzer two silent film clips.

### In Memoriam

Word has been received of the passing of two of our members: Andrew Keller and Roger Williams. Our sympathies to their families and friends

### Name Badge Replacements

Due to a large number of recent requests, if you misplace or lose your RMCATOS name badge, there will be a \$5 charge for its replacement.

### RMCATOS Officers for 2010

President: **Jim Calm** (303) 989-3671  
VP:  
Secretary: **Kathy Brayton** (303) 657-6136  
Treasurer: **Rich Brooks** (303) 322-8586  
Tickets: **Doris Beverly** (303) 466-3330

*If you have comments about club activities or would like to attend a board of directors meeting, contact one of the officers.*

### Welcome New Members

David Dahms, Windsor  
John & Rachael Moyers, Denver  
Cindy Thornton, Aurora

### Don't be shy..

The position of Program Chairman still needs to be filled as of January 1, 2011.

Now is the time to add a new dimension to your life and gain some new experiences producing club socials and public events.

The job could be divided between multiple people. Those interested should contact Lee Shaw (303-530-2421) or Jim Calm (303-989-3671).

### RMCATOS Events Calendar

**Oct 3rd** – (Sun) – "**Fantasy Destinations**"

Holiday Hills Ballroom – 2 pm  
Music by Lee Traster & Friends  
BYO refreshments

**Nov 14<sup>th</sup>** – (Sun) – "**Got Gospel?**"

Holiday Hills Ballroom – 2 pm  
Sacred & classical music plus  
a hymn sing

**Dec 5<sup>th</sup>** – (Sun) – **Holiday Pot Luck**

Holiday Hills Ballroom – 2 pm  
Our annual Christmas-time event of  
food and fun

### Non-RMCATOS Events of Interest

**Dec 12, 2010** - (Sun) - **Hector Olivera**

South Broadway Christian Church - 3 pm  
23 Lincoln Street, Denver, CO  
12-rank Kimball with Rodgers 4-manual  
digital expansion  
Free will offering



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**See the newsletters in Color!**  
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**[WWW.RMCATOS.ORG](http://WWW.RMCATOS.ORG)**

## **“Truck Stops & Tab Stops”**

Photos by Bill Kwinn

