

CHICAGO AREA

President: Jerry Biasella, Chicago Heights, IL
Vice President: Richard Van Metre, Park Ridge, IL
Secretary: Carol Veome, Chicago, IL
Treasurer: Joe Pekarek, East Dundee, IL
Reporter: Curt Clifford, Villa Park, IL
Board Representative: vacant

In March about 27 people enjoyed a delightful dinner/theater evening in Chicago. After dinner at a local restaurant we went to see "The Black Pirate," a silent movie which was loaded with swashbuckling adventure laced with humor, romance and suspense. It featured two full-scale ships and was one of the very first color movies. Local pianist David Drazin accompanied the movie with a terrific original piano score drawn from many sources. In addition we saw a Mexican short called "La Cucaracha" with lots of music, amour, and dancing. Our treasurer reported that at the start of 2008 we had \$7565 in the bank and a total of 89 memberships, many of which represent couples or families.

In June Paul and Cynthia Mayer hosted the group in their home in Oswego, IL. Despite threatening weather, lunch was enjoyed outdoors in their beautiful and spacious back yard. Paul offered a presentation on the Recordo piano expression system, using his 1929 Wurlitzer baby grand to demonstrate the rolls. He explained that the Recordo system has a 98 hole tracker bar, with five holes at either end used to control roll operation and provide the expression. He also described the history of Recordo roll-making as it moved from manufacturer to manufacturer.

In June a group of 25 people were hosted by Vice President Richard Van Metre and his wife Margaret Bisberg on a Sunday afternoon in their home in Park Ridge, IL. They have a medium size collection of disk and cylinder musical boxes, plus a Steinway Duo Art piano, and a Victor Credenza phonograph.

About 200 people attended our holiday meeting in December at the estate of Marian and Jasper Sanfilippo in Barrington Hills, IL. They have a spectacular 44,000 square foot home. Holiday music was loaded and awaiting our arrival. The Mason & Hamlin RAA Ampico B and Steinway AR Duo-Art reproducing pianos were featured and docents played other instruments upon request. We gathered in the theatre for a business meeting followed by a live concert of holiday tunes by world renowned theater organist, Jelani Eddington. This put us all in the holiday spirit. After the concert the festivities moved to the Carousel Pavilion where we dined in a setting with the 1890 Eden Palais Salon Carousel and 24 fairground and dance organs. The latest addition, a 92 key Decap dance organ, was formerly in Svoboda's Nickelodeon Tavern and Museum. We were also able to view the progress of the facade restoration for the colossal 110 key Gavioliphone and enjoy hearing it play a wonderful program. A new observation deck offers a spectacular view of the adjacent Steam Engine Gallery, but operation on live steam is still a year away.

Jasper did "fire up" a few engines on compressed air. At the close of 2008 our Treasurer, Joe Pekarek, reported that we have 73 memberships of which more than six are new and we have over \$7000 in the bank.

In 2009 we already have a schedule of home meetings planned and field trip ideas are also being explored. We continue to be a viable chapter in middle America.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Veome, Secretary, Chicago, IL