

Northern Lights Chapter, Mpls / St. Paul
MN, Manitoba, N. Ontario, N&S Dakota

President: Paul R. Watkins, Champlin, MN

Vice President: Ronald S. Olsen, Robbinsdale, MN

Secretary: Michael LuBrant, Hastings, MN

Treasurer: Barb Watkins, Champlin, MN

Board Representative: Alan Turner, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Reporter: Jerrilynn Boehland, Blaine, MN

Our chapter dues are \$15 and with money from hosting the 2005 Convention we have a balance of \$4600. Of this, we invested \$4000 in a short term CD to help grow our balance. We continue to discuss ideas for using some of our money on a project, but for now no decisions have been made. We currently have a membership of 38 that represents 24 households with a “maybe potential” of 40 households. Our meetings and events seem mostly to fall on Sunday afternoons with an attendance of from 12 to 20 members. A bigger attendance, weather permitting, occurs at Christmas. Our yearly schedule usually involves four to five “get-togethers” and these range from a member hosting to an outside concert event.

Utilizing our preplanned activities calendar we started **January 2009** with a luncheon meeting in downtown Historic Hudson, Wisconsin followed by a theater organ concert at the Phipps Center for the Arts (Hudson is E of Mpls/StP on the St Croix R). A superb concert was presented by organist Jelani Eddington and the January 31 midwinter day was delightfully warm and sunny.

In **March**, member, Don Barton, of Barton Player Piano, hosted his Ninth Annual Piano Roll Flea Market and Movie Event. The Flea Market was at his shop and the movie portion was held at the Historic Heights Theater, Columbia Heights, MN with a 1925 Wurlitzer theater organ accompaniment provided by Carl Eilers. Many may remember Carl’s silent screen interpretive abilities from visiting this theater and hearing Carl play during the 2005 National Convention. This has been an annual event that Don sponsors to raise funds for the restoration of the Heights’ organ in cooperation with the local ATOS chapter.

In **May** we had an Hawaiian theme party hosted by Pierre Girard and Dennis Borrell at their Golden Valley, MN residence. We enjoyed their recently restored 1925 5’8 Mason & Hamlin Grand Piano, a 1950’s Conn Classic Church Organ and fun

was had with a 1930's 1½ hp John Deere Model E gasoline engine that was originally used for pumping water.

August brings us to the home of David and Barb Kearns in Maplewood, MN. Dave has a work of musical modification in progress. He is taking the "core" of a two manual, seven rank, Wurlitzer organ (formerly from the MacPhall Center For Music in Minneapolis) and combining it with a converted Devtronix electronic organ. Dave built this house with the intention of accommodating a pipe organ for his and Barb's enjoyment. He also has a 1910 Shimmel piano with a pianocorder and a grand piano.

December 2009 we will be Christmas partying with Bill and Diane Nunn at Skyrock Farms in Hamel, MN. Bill is completing a big addition to their indoor facility which houses band and fairground organs and a rideable four horse carousel. You may remember Bill and Diane's collection of organs and carousel horses and his rideable outdoor carnival train from the 2005 Convention. We've heard about the addition and now we'll get to see how they have constructed a "European Beer Garden" atmosphere in the new area.

This is the second year that we have been successful in selecting meeting dates and establishing our activities in advance of a new chapter year. Last year we also adopted an Email Notification System that our secretary Michael LuBrant constructed. This enables Michael and chapter officers to easily and inexpensively stay in contact with 98% of our members via email with the remainder by snail mail. Utilizing these ideas we email current, past and potential members at the beginning of the year with a descriptive chapter agenda and then follow up with additional information and reminders throughout the year. We think 1. advance planning, 2. easy email notification and 3. a descriptive chapter agenda helps to maintain current attendance and helps potential new members evaluate our chapter's activities and the type of events we participate in throughout the year.

Submitted by Paul Watkins, Chapter President, Champlin, MN