

Be sure you mail all Chapter News to: A.T.O.E.-P.O. Box 7404, Bitter Lake Station, Seattle, Wn. 98133

### **ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER**

The big occasion for Rocky Mountain Chapter took place in two locations early Sunday morning. The concert at the Paramount Theatre in Denver was played by Bob Castle, popular Denver organist. Bob, almost single handedly has kept the big Wurlitzer from falling into disrepair over the years. As many of us know, there is nearly always something to be repaired on the larger organs. One of the more recent things to be done was releathering one of the main reservoirs. The reservoir is beautiful with its neatly skived leather applied more exactly than the original. The instrument is one of the few remaining twin console Wurlitzers and is a Publix #1. Bob has replaced the Tuba Mirabilis in the solo side with a Wurlitzer Post Horn, adding some needed brightness.

Sprinkled through the concert was some music from the operettas. Bob uses an orchestral approach to this type of music and a fine theatre style for the pops with a bit of one man band thrown in for added diversion.

The pictures taken at the concert did not turn out, so the ones shown had to be taken later. Hidden under the console is Bob's broken leg, which he acquired skiing sometime between the concert and the pictures. Comment from Dick Hull;



Photo by Maddy

Bob Castle at the Paramount. Secretary Dick Lewis trying the Howard Seat in the background. "At least he had the grace to break his Tibia." As usual Bob's concert was much too brief. The members then formed up for the exodus to the much-anticipated pancake breakfast at Doctor and Mrs. Belshaw's residence. Dr. Belshaw, owner of a beautiful 3/15 Wurlitzer, was cook,



Photo by Maddy

The Belshaws serving breakfast to Rocky Mountain Chapter. Don, Dr. Belshaw, and Betsy.

ably assisted by son Don, while Mrs. Belshaw assembled ingredients in the kitchen. The process of feeding nearly fifty people went with such smoothness and dispatch the Belshaws would qualify as professional restaurateurs. Needless to say, the meal was delicious.

The Belshaw's Wurlitzer is awaiting the completion of a new home for its installation, so we were entertained by George Wright (via records). After much organtalk and some official remarks by Chairman Duane Searle, we finally and regretfully dispersed after a thoroughly enjoyable morning.

Dick Lewis Chap. Secy.

# POTOMAC VALLEY CHAPTER

On Sunday afternoon March 19th, the Potomac Valley Chapter met at the Montgomery County, Md. radio studios of station WPIK, to see and hear the recently installed two manual ten rank Moller theatre organ, owned by Doug Bailey, local advertising executive and radio broadcaster.

The organ, comprised of pipework from the Moller organ originally in the Loew's Palace, Washington, D. C., the relay and blower from the Kimball organ in the Warner Ambassador, Washington, and the console from the Shoreham hotel Moller, has been recently installed by Paul White and Bob Oberlander, and is currently undergoing final finishing stages. The organ, designed for broadcasting, includes a large scaled marimba and 61 note harp chrysoglott, and percussions exposed outside the chamber include the glockenspiel, xylophone and chimes. The instrument is featured daily on the Parker Bailey show from 12:30 to 2 p.m., and is one of the very few theatre pipe organs still to be heard on the radio, and probably the only one featured daily as an integral part of a radio show. Many notable area organists were present to play, among them Milton Davis who at one

time was head organist for the Warner theatre chain in Washington, D. C. A recorded interview was made with Mr. Davis, and was broadcast the next day. Chapter Chairman Ray Brubacher was interviewed on the history of A.T.O.E., and what its aims and purposes are, and this broadcast was made on Tuesday the 21st.

We are grateful to Mr. Bailey and his wife who helped with refreshments, and to all who worked hard to make the March meeting the great success it was.

The next meeting will be held Sunday 23rd at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Harvey Bartlett of Oakton, Virginia. The Bartlett's 2-7 Wurlitzer will be ably handled by former Colorado area theatre organist Earl Sharits.

Ray Brubacher

## NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

A good turnout for the "Cavalcade of Organ Greats" and the latter "Fun Meeting" of the Pacific Council of Organ Clubs was rewarding to see. The Avenue Theatre's Wurlitzer is fast becoming the "talk of the country." Many of the Nation's organists have stopped to hear and try it, and comments are very good. Additions are "enabled" only after passing rigid appraisal, so everything that is playable from the console is excellent. The "ensemble" of this instrument is a thing of beauty, and sounds the same in any seat in the house.

The fabulous Lyn Larsen in now "Resident Organist and Music Director" at the Avenue. This young musical giant has been writing special "scores" for the Friday and Saturday night movies, and the audience has been much impressed with his music and his artistry. We are fortunate to have Lyn in our area (1933 Packard, and all).

Our sincere thanks to Mr. Harold Wright for making the California Theatre in Santa Rosa, California, available to us and for demonstrating its Wurlitzer organ so well. We also appreciated the fine efforts of the many other preformers on hand—Larry Vannucci (a true orchestral organist), Emory Stevenson (direct from the Avenue Theatre), Irving Bud Rose (famous broadcasting organist, all at the mighty console; Alice Blue and Jim Trader at the 88's; Len Moores, banjoist; Ed Stout, choke cymbalist; and Julian (Mr. Square Music) Porritt and his Green Mill Orchestra.

## CENTRAL INDIANA CHAPTER

The April meeting at the Rivoli Theatre with Kay MacAbee and David Ashby was a success. David's before and during the silent movie was very professional style. We had about 400 empty seats; re-

(Continued on next page)

member, those 400 tickets represent pure profit. Let's make a real effort to "fill the house" at our next show. Neil Dykins and Event Chairman Betty Roch wish to thank all members who worked at the theatre in preparation for the last show. All inquiry cards which were returned indicated a very favorable reaction. Final accounting is not yet completed, but we do know that we operated "in the black".

Radio activities - FM Stereo, 95.5 WFMS: Thursday evenings at 10:00 p.m. Member Dessa Byrd Rappaport may be heard on the Allen Theatre-model every week. Member Bob Cox has succeeded in acquiring a Radio sponsor for our Chapter, and that is WFMS, FM stereo; Mr. Martin Williams, Manager. We are currently enjoying free publicity in return for preparing Theatre Pipe Organ Stereo tapes from either the Rivoli special shows, or other material. Bill Burch has been helping Bob Cox prepare the programs currently heard on Tuesday evenings at 10:00 p.m., toting his tape deck to Bob's home and recording the material you hear on FM radio.

### LAND O'LAKES CHAPTER Minneapolis.

The March meeting of the Land O Lakes chapter was held at the home of Harold Peterson in St. Louis Park, a suburb of Minneapolis. Harold and his sons Don and Dodds had just completed installation of a Wurlitzer, 2m 5r recently uprooted from a theatre in St. Cloud, Minn. A business meeting preceded a fine concert played by 17 year old Dodds, including an original composition worthy of publication. The organ was then turned over to the membership to explore.

The organ, a special (with tibia) is housed in an addition to the basement of the suburban home and replaces a Barton which was recently sold. The swell opening is large enough to allow the instrument to be heard, and when called upon, will speak with great authority, but never objectionally loud. In the general opinion of the membership, this is a fine example of what can be done when Mr. Average Citizen wants a pipe organ and is willing to work for it. In a future issue this installation will be covered in greater detail.



Harold Peterson with son Dodds at the console of their Model B special, opus 735 Wurlitzer.

#### LAND O'LAKES ENJOYS SILENT MOVIE PROGRAM

For most of us, the April Meeting fulfilled a long-felt desire-to see a full-length classic, accompanied by a genuine theatre organist, our own Jim Kennedy. At 14, he must have been just about the youngest organist playing for silents. (you don't look old enough, Jim!) We are very grateful to Bill Carter for showing this first real epic western, "Covered Wagon" (1923). Jim worked hard preparing for this event, even composing special themes for wagon and love scenes; the result was a Charlie Chaplin comedy, also accompanied by Jim. Program Co-Chairman Don Taft played for and led a well-received sing-a-long, enhanced by his colored slides.

Our heartfelt thanks to our host, Clyde Olson, for playing an organ interlude, for his "Little Theatre", and especially for his "Conn-Olson Theatre Special", which just has to be the best plug-in around, and which added much to the enjoyment of the program.

As if these events weren't enough, we were indeed fortunate to have as guests Dr. and Mrs. Mel Doner of Winona. Mel shared with us many delightful reminiscences of the early days of theatre organs, and of his part in starting our beloved ATOE. It was, in short, a very full and rewarding afternoon.

John Zetterstrom

#### CHICAGO CHAPTER C.A.T.O.E. Features Patio Theatre Bash

Excitement and enthusiam prevailed Thursday night, April 6, 1967 as organ



 Hal Pearl at Patio Theatre (Chicago) 3-17

 Barton Organ.
 Photo by Tom W. Yannitell

enthusiasts stormed the doors of the Patio Theatre on Chicago's Northwest side in anticipation of hearing an organ silenced since 1932.

The 8 PM starting time was delayed as the huge crowd still at the box office waited in vain for tickets. Over 200 people were turned away for lack of space. Nevertheless, at precisely 8:10 PM; Fred



Sing-a-long-Hal Pearl at 3-17 Barton.

Kruse, CATOE Chairman, stepped to the stage and welcomed the guests and introduced Hal Pearl, Chicago born organist and formerly of Aragon Ballroom Fame. As Hal released the lever on the lift, the long awaited moment arrived and the 3/17 Grande Barton Pipe Organ majestically rose from the pit to the thunderous applause of over 1,500 lucky seat holders to the music of "Warsaw Concerto".

Hal then played a Salute To The Patio Theatre with a medly of Spanish selections in keeping with the decor of the 40 year old theatre. The stars in the ceiling never twinkled more merrily as the cloud machine gently projected over the recently relit blue ceiling to the music of Granada and other appropriate melodies. Hal followed this with Medley of Movie Themes. In the Memory Lane grouping, the beautiful tones of the Barton organ were never more evident and the applause of the audience expressed their approval. The percussions of the organ predominated as Hal presented his Marching Along selection. Sousa would have been happy to have heard the rousing reception at the conclusion of the medley.

The lights dimmed, the organ slowly lowered into the pit as the silent movie "Saga of William S. Hart" flashed across the screen accompanied with great finesse by Hal at the organ. Laughter prevailed throughout the theatre as the audience watched Mr. Hart in various scenes of his silent film days.

Highlight of the first half of the program was the next event—"Sing-A-Long". Using song slides from Mr. Pearl's personal collection, the audience joined in singing lustily and enthusiastically as Hal guided them thru a fast 10 minutes song fest. The roar of approval was deafening as the house lights came up for the intermission.

Intermission over, the audience hurred back to their cherished seats as Mr. Pearl opened the second half of the program with a waltz medley while the spotlite picked up the giant mirrored ball casting (Continued on next page)

its hypnotic reflections thruout the theatre. Once again the organ settled back in the pit and "Cliff Hanging Moments from the Serials" appeared on the screen. The audience "hissed" the villain as the silent film showed scenes of Pearl White in death defying acts.



View from balcony just before show.

Next on the program were two acts of vaudeville - Jay Marshall, world famous magician and The Coachlighters, famed midwest barbershop quartet. Immediately following the vaudeville, another silent film—this time a comedy "Laurel and Hardy—Two Tars". Again the roar of laughter from the large audience filled the theatre as Hal guided the Barton organ thru the various scenes.

The program closed with Hal playing a medley of "Oldies But Goodies". At conclusion, hundreds of people gathered at the raised console as Hal continued playing encores, signing autographs and posing for pictures. Hal finally was able to leave the console shortly before midnight.



After performance Hal treats people to some of the workings of the console.

#### Photo by Tom W. Yannitell

Success of the program goes to William Rieger and Robert Mueller, CATOE members, who for a year worked at restoring the 3/17 Barton Organ. Countless CATOE members also gave of their time and effort in polishing and relighting the theatre for this glorious event. A special note of appreciation to Fred Kruse, CATOE Chairman, who spent endless hours in assembling the program —the sound system—the films—and the close contact work with Hal Pearl. All CATOE members agreed the program was a "giant" success and look for-



View from stage. Last of small group of people wanting autographs. Hal looking at camera. Photo by Tom W. Yannitell

ward to future organ programs at the Patio.

Readers of Theatre Organ Bombarde will be interested in knowing that a feature article on the Patio Theatre and it's 3/17 Barton Pipe Organ is being prepared by CATOE for a future issue of the magazine.

William T. Benedict Publicity Director - CATOE

## PUGET SOUND CHAPTER

The Puget Sound Chapter held their Spring session at the Ridge Roller Skating in the north end of Seattle on Sunday, April 19, 1967. Despite the early morning time—before the rink opens for business—members from Vancouver, B.C., Portland, Oregon, Bremerton, Bothell and other neighboring communities were on hand with local organ buffs to hear the 2/8 Wurlitzer with large Morton Tibia, perhaps the hardest working pipe organ in Washington State and the only live-music skating rink in the state.

Laverne Little, rink organist, gave a commanding performance of popular tunes—St. Louis Blues, Cabaret, Lara's Theme, Clarinet Polka and many others, ending with a request for 76 Trombones. One comment, "She plays like a man!" fit her playing manner since she had the little old organ simply bouncing with rhythm and sound—terrific! Mrs. Lit-



Laverne Little at the 2/8 Wurlitzer-Ridge Skating Rink.

tle's career starts back at the Blue Mouse Theatre where she played silents for four years. She played for radio for a time in Seattle—then to Catalina Island Casino and the Sir Francis Drake Hotel in San Francisco as well as other hotels around the country before returning to Seattle.

The owner of the Rink and the Wurlitzer, Bill Vance, was most cooperative and pleased to have Dick Schrum, National ATOE President, Russ Evans, Chapter Chairman and Dan Adamson get the organ in shape for the concert.

During the Jam session following the concert the following enjoyed playing the fine instrument: Brian Englesby (Bellingham), Don French, Bill Epperson, Dick Schrum, Tom Hobbs, Burdette Nairn, Ken Gallwey, Bob Burke (Portland,) Bob Jones, Tom Kaasa, and Bill Hale (Vancouver, B.C.)

A short business meeting revealed plans for a June meeting in Vancouver, B.C., and the progress of the Puget Sound Chapter's purchase of their own organ.



Left to right: Chairman Russ Evans, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Vance (owners).

## CONNECTICUT VALLEY CHAPTER

The Connecticut Valley Chapter, ATOE, Conn. Valley Theatre Organ Society, Inc., celebrated its sixth birthday on Saturday, February 11, 1967, in Hartford. Chairman Jack Heavens opened the business meeting



Stillman H. Rice (rt.) accepts "chair" from Jack Heavens (lft.) Connecticut Valley Chapter. ATOE.

at the Allen Organ Studios where the Chapter membership adopted revised Bylaws expanding and spelling out the structure of its organization.

The slate of 1967 officers proposed by the nominating committee was accepted unanimously as follows:

Chairman Stillman Rice

Vice Chairman Frank Manion

Program Chairman Harold Weaver

(Continued on next page)

Secretary Carmen Charette

Treasurer John Angevine

A rising vote of thanks for a job well done was given to Jack Heavens and his retiring officers.

Immediately following the business meeting, the staff of the Allen Organ Studios provided the Chapter with refreshments, which included a fancy Birthday cake, while several members provided entertainment on the Allen Custom "Theatre Deluxe".



Connecticut Valley Chapter Business Meeting Feb. 11, 1967 Allen Organ Studios Hartford, Conn.

At 11:00 PM when the show broke at the Allyn Theatre directly across the street, the members and guests moved in for an open console party at the 3-12 Austin Unit. While Austin built nearly 100 organs for theatres, this instrument is the largest of only nine unit or unified theatre organs built by that company. Of these nine, only the Allyn organ and the 3-8 belonging to Vice Chairman Frank Manion are in existence today. A complete description of the Allyn Theatre organ may be found in a back issue of "Theatre Organ".



Members Rosa Rio and George Shaskan. Shaskan 3-22 Wurlitzer (Kimball Console) Connecticut Valley Chapter ATOE.

It seems fitting to celebrate our Birthday at the Allyn Theatre since the original interest in a Connecticut ATOE Chapter was generated at a "midnight" console party there in 1960 when the organ was revived by Al Miller and Joe Tobin. Frank Manion, Chief Custodian, tuner and cobweb-chaser during Al Miller's extended visit to his Uncle Sam, arranged for the theatre lighting in addition to the use of the organ.

The program was opened by Joe Puskas, who was followed by Mike Foley, who had recently played for the premiere of "Follow Me Boys". Mike showed off some of the organ's tonal color with a group of ballads. Joy Zublena played an intricate arrangement of *Just the Way You Look Tonight* in the style of J. S. Bach, which reminded us so much of Billy Nalle's *All the Things You Are.* 

Al Miller, who had managed to get away from Uncle for the weekend, played a medley of seldom heard tunes from the Broadway musical, "On a Clear Day, You Can See Forever". After several other members had played, Ev Bassett closed the program with a couple of those "good-old-tunes" which he continually conjures up from his musical bag of tricks.

## NIAGARA FRONTIER CHAPTER

This month the Niagara Frontier Chapter spotlights member, Harvey K. Elseasser. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Russell Elseasser, born February 25, 1925, Harvey is one of the fortunate musicians who not only inherited the ability to play, but the love of music as well.

At the tender age of four, he was picking out tunes on the piano by ear, and at the young age of six began taking piano lessons. Before he or many of his school chums and friends could read and write, Harvey could read music. At the age of nine, he had made his debut into the musical world as a pianist in the grammar school orchestra.

His love for the organ was evident long before he decided to study formally. After three months of lessons with Paul J. Miller, Harvey accepted his first position as organist and choir director at Walden Presbyterian Church, Buffalo, where he played for the next nine years. During this time, he simultaneously held position of pianist for the Sunday Morning City Mission broadcast on WBEN, and musical director for The Back Home Hour broadcast on WKBW, Sunday evenings. Further organ studies continued with Stephen Palmer, then organist at Central Presbyterian Church.

From 1957 to 1961, Harvey was organist-choir director at East Aurora Baptist Church, and, since January 1962 held the same position at St. Paul United Church of Christ.

Among his various endeavors, Harvey managed to be musical director for several local stage productions including "Anything Goes" and "Damn Yankees".

Besides the Niagara Frontier Chapter, where he holds number one chapter membership card, Harvey has been kept busy with concerts for the Detroit Theatre Or-



Harvey K. Elseasser

gan Club, and, the Rochester Theatre Organ Society. His fingers have been kept limber on consoles both large and small, from Radio City Music Hall, and BBC Moller, to 3 and 4 rank home installations, including his own 7 rank Wurlitzer-Marr and Colton.

The last 4 years Harvey has taught the adult education organ course at Lancaster Central High School. In between all this Harvey has managed to accumulate 25 years service on the staff of the Buffalo Evening News.

Harveys entire organ class and church choir was in attendance at the concert he played February 20, 1967 at Skatehaven roller rink paying tribute to a fine musician and choir director.

To people unfamiliar to Skatehaven's Wurlitzer it consists of 3 manuals and 15 ranks. The console is on a raised platform on one side of the rink and the chambers on the opposite side. The percussions are not under expression and are exposed so they can be watched in operation.

Harvey's concert consisted of selections from semi-classics to popular songs that are easy on the ears. Near the end of the concert Harvey was handed a note written by Chapter Chairman Herb Schmit that trouble had developed with the 12 volt system, with sparks flying, due to a loose connection, take a break and give us a chance to fix it. Harvey asked for an intermission and Chairman Schmit was quick on the draw another mike to ask local officers and board members to step forward to be recognized. When Harvey came down to the rink floor, he was surprised to receive the Quenton MacLean award for outstanding service to the chapter in the past. While Harvey was kept busy on the skating rink floor, Harry Ricken sneaked up to the console to make the announcement that the next day was Harvey's birthday, and asked everyone present to join in to sing Happy Birthday to Harvey.

Being the true showman that Harvey really is, he marched right back to the console and played requests from the floor to complete a memorable concert for this chapter.

At the conclusion of this concert Chairman Schmit made the announcement that there were three people in the audience

that are responsible for Harvey's success, two being his parents, and the third his charming wife and hostess, Mrs. Edna Elseasser.

Congratulations to Harvey Elseasser. May you live a long prosperous and happy life, with hopes you may reach the goals you desire.

March 10, 1967 found the membership and guests at Klauder Hall, St. John the Baptist Church in Kenmore for the first formal concert on Chapter owned 2-6 Wurlitzer. Dean Robinson was the featured artist.

Mr. Robinson played many popular tunes, and to add to nostalgia, played selections which were popular when the organ was installed at the Haven Theatre in Olean, New York. The concert was a real treat to the 100-plus in attendance.

After Mr. Robinson's hour long concert, a short intermission was held, and refreshments were served. After the intermission, Mr. Ed Schaefer was the lucky winner for the drawing on a Buddy Cole record. At this time the console was turned over to anyone in the audience who wished to try their hand at playing a theatre pipe organ.

Among the many people who tried this instrument, three people were outstanding. The first two were Dick Barnhart, an 11 year old boy, who is the grandson of member Ken Barnhart, and Robert Hajduk, a 17 year old, who is a student of Harvey K. Elseasser, not yet of concert quality but getting there. Both of these boys proved to their elders that the younger generation is not all bad, and showed enthusiasm for the theatre pipe organ, and of course the third person was no other than our own Harvey Elseasser, who members enjoyed hearing again.

## Fred Kucera

### ST. LOUIS CHAPTER

St. Louis Chapter planned to have a farewell meeting at Ruggeri's Restaurant on the last nite the organ was to be used. However, a forgetful and unco-operative management cancelled our plans at the last minute. Several members went to the restaurant individually later in the evening of Tuesday, April 18. Stan Kann and several of the members played the organ on this final nite before the big switch was pulled.

A special meeting was held on the subject of finances for the Kirkwood project, on Sunday, April 30. The immediate problems were solved and it appears the project will now proceed, although we still need cash.

Work has started on removing the organ from the restaurant. The console and relay are already out and in storage. The rebuilding work on the Kimball console and relay is now well under way. The regular meeting for May was held at Dale Zieger's home. The program consisted of analysis of a number of theatre organ recordings.

St. Louis Chapter will have a large delegation at the National Convention. We'll see you in Detroit.

Don Ullrich Vice-Chairman



Letters to the Editor concerning all aspects of the theatre organ hobby are encouraged. Send them to the editor concerned, Box 7404, Bitter Lake Station, Seattle, Washington, 98133. Unless it's stated clearly on the letter "not for publication," the editors feel free to reproduce it, in whole or part.

Editor's Note: The theatre organ is heard by our men in Victnam via taped programs. The letter which follows will indicate the appreciation and pleasure derived from this endeavor on the part of our fighting men. Credit for this worthy effort goes to Laura Thomas of the Niagara Frontier Chapter.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY HEADQUARTERS, 1ST LOGISTICAL COMMAND APO 96307

AVCA SS-R

24 March 1967

#### Miss Laura Thomas 3534 Bowen Road Lancaster, N. Y. 14086

Dear Miss Thomas,

I am writing to you to thank you for giving me some very pleasant hours of listening pleasure when I monitored your "Tapes for Troops" tapes.

I have a copy of the first 15 tapes sent to Vietnam. I enjoyed them so much, I just had to have them for my tape collection. I have sent these home. I regret that I didn't get the other ones copied before they were distributed throughout Vietnam. I am sure others, who have listened to these tapes, have enjoyed them.

Since I am returning to the States in early May, I was wondering if my wife and I could join your organization so we can keep up with your group's activities and possibly help to form a chapter in our locality.

Thelma, my wife, teaches and plays Hammond organ, but loves the theater organ sounds. She has the Church model with two tone cabinets.

Thanks again for an opportunity to

spend some pleasurable hours away from home by listening to excellent artists and their musical selections.

> Sincerely yours, Kenneth F. Haydon CPT. AGC Chief, R&R Branch Special Services Office

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91 Woerd Ave. Waltham, Mass. 02154 5 January 1967

Dear Mr. Editor:

First off, allow me to compliment you and your staff on producing a most enjoyable magazine!

I have a couple of questions, and I would be interested to know whether you might be able to furnish me with some answers:

1) Has there thus far been any attempt on the part of the electronic manufacturers to simulate the apparent delay in the speaking of a pipe after its corresponding key on the manual has been depressed?

I say "apparent," as I am told that in reality the pipe does respond almost immediately. This does not seem hard to understand, considering the speed of any electrical signal, even if the purely mechanical function which follows may not be quite so instantaneous. It is my understanding that when an organist does not hear the note play for anywhere from a fraction of a second to one or two seconds after he has depressed the key, the time-lapse involved is accounted for largely by the fact that it takes just about

