

# American Theatre Organ Society



I hope that many of you sent in your resumes for the coming election for the Board of Directors, because ATOS needs the sincere dedication of those who are willing and qualified to serve in this capacity. When you receive your ballots this spring, cast your vote for those you feel are most competent to guide your organization. **BE**

**SURE TO VOTE** and if you don't know the candidates, ask someone.

The Executive Committee of the National Board met in San Diego January 7 and 8 to assess the progress of our programs previously planned by the Board, and I am pleased to report that all committees are actively working on their assignments.

Our membership drive has paid off in many early renewals, which will materially reduce the cost of postage for back issues and the difficult work of maintaining our membership roll.

It was a pleasure recently to meet with the Nor-Cal Chapter convention planning committees, and to see the beautiful Sheraton-Palace Hotel which is to be convention headquarters for 1983. Their meetings have produced an excellent program for you to anticipate this coming summer, and after hearing the organs at the Castro and Oakland Paramount Theatres that weekend I can assure you that you will be thrilled as I was. What wonderful opportunities we have in this organ world of ours. The never-to-be-forgotten beautiful experience that Motor City shared with us last year and now to be able to look forward to San Francisco! How lucky can we get?

**Lois F. Segur, President**



I wish to thank the membership for the opportunity to again serve as a director. The number of projects currently underway makes this job both challenging and rewarding. The National Young Organist's Awards program is taking shape, thanks to Eleanor Weaver's hard-working committee. This program is a logical extension of

the local chapter competitions, and we hope it will encourage more gifted young organists to take an interest in the theatre organ.

Now that most theatre organs are getting to be 60 years old, the need for complete restoration becomes more apparent. In many cases, simply replacing leather, felt, and rubber cloth is not enough. Many parts begin to wear out after 50 years, and often sooner where continual hard use is involved. When silver contacts, pallet valves, primary valves, leather packings and even the more durable items such as springs and other metal parts become badly worn or deteriorated, restoration becomes a more difficult and time-consuming operation. Even the choice of proper materials can be a difficult task, and unfortunately, a careful restoration done with improper materials usually spells disaster.

I have been encountering more and more problems of well-meaning amateur technicians getting into trouble,

and in extreme cases, ruining an installation by attempting to improve or redesign the mechanics of the organ without really understanding how it is supposed to work. This extends to areas such as cutting corners to save time or material costs. I cannot overemphasize the need for professional guidance when restoring or reinstalling an instrument. Finding this assistance can be very difficult. Generally, it is wise to seek the assistance of a professional organbuilder, bearing in mind that most church organ people will be unfamiliar with some aspects of high pressure installations. There are many qualified independent organ technicians. Don't be afraid to ask for references and check on them, or go to see and hear some of their work. Don't expect to get lots of free advice or work. Professional organ technicians have to eat, too.

There have been many thoughts in the past of trying to establish ATOS goals or standards of excellence. Organbuilding covers so many different fields, this is not a simple matter. I would like to pursue a program of this type to either set up some standards or to help those of you who need assistance in finding a qualified technician. I would like to hear from any members and technicians who might have ideas on this subject.

Lance Johnson's technical seminar was well received at the last convention. We hope to expand technical sessions in various forms — seminars, lectures, panel discussions — at future conventions.

**Allen R. Miller**

