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## THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

by

*Judd Walton*

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**OUR RESPONSIBILITIES**

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In the early days of A.T.O.E., when many Theatre Organ Enthusiasts were discovering the organization for the first time, we received many, many letters which all contained a phrase identical in meaning, if not in exact wording: "I thought I was the only one in the whole world who still loved the theatre organ." Practically all of the writers went on to express their delight at discovery of A.T.O.E. and fellow hobbyists with whom to share their interests. As a matter of fact, we still receive many such letters from long-lost enthusiasts just now finding their way out of solitary confinement!

The point is that it is in the sharing that one finds the realization of true enjoyment. Sharing, however, can appear in many forms. Chapter Meetings, unexpected calls from visiting enthusiasts "just traveling through and I wondered if I might stop by", correspondence, playing and listening to an organ, collecting old records or purchasing new releases, installing a pipe organ in your home - "it won't take up much room, honey, and I can get it for practically nothing" -- these are all forms of sharing our mutually enjoyable hobby. The visits, the music, the work and the grime are all part and parcel of good times -- but without sharing, it becomes less appealing and sometimes pointless.

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Another form of sharing that is of vital importance to all of us who enjoy the activities of A.T.O.E. and its Chapters -- or any other similar organization, for that matter -- is SERVING! A recent study made in the Pacific Northwest revealed that less than 1% of the members of all organizations surveyed were willing to SERVE their organizations. The members simply did not want to share the responsibility of carrying on the very activities which they as members enjoyed.

A.T.O.E. is not exempt from this law of human behavior. (Would that it could be repealed!). We have learned that some of our Chapters have had difficulty in electing new officers to direct their activities. This is indeed regrettable, and we may consider ourselves very fortunate to have had the volunteer services of so many fine people, past and present!

As my second and final term draws to a close, these matters have come into focus more clearly. On the one hand I will be glad to be relieved of my duties and perhaps then spend more time on my own organ project. (Who knows, I may some day even get it completed, although perhaps secretly hoping I won't!!!) On the other hand, however, I must be concerned that my successor will carry on the duties and responsibilities of the office. I am re-assured as I assess the possible candidates, knowing that among them are none who would assume the duties and shirk the responsibilities.

So even in our hobby -- in our fellowship and our fun, we must look to the future and OUR part in making the theatre organ a lasting hobby. For after all, there is only one person who can really guarantee that the theatre organ will never die; who must give it the time and the attention and love it must have to nourish it -- and that person is the one now sitting in your chair!

We are pleased to report that as a result of our last column statement, and help from ads in The American Organist and The Diapason, our membership has now passed the 900 mark. This insures the continued success of A.T.O.E. and Theatre Organ. A.T.O.E. Membership is Four Dollars per year, and includes a subscription to Theatre Organ, for the four issues produced for that fiscal year. 1960 members will receive the four issues of Volume II, and 1961 members will receive the four issues of Volume III, etc. Membership subscriptions do not start with the "current issue", but are retroactive to the first issue of the year in which membership is paid.

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SEE PAGE 10 FOR ANNUAL MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

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