

# THE DETROIT THEATER ORGAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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## Member asks for explanation

Early last month, after reading his copy of the newsletter, a member asked for an explanation from the board why the Society has elected to purchase another building rather than leasing or renting a new home. This month, we want to clear the air and give our reasoning behind this decision.

We began looking for leased/shared space as soon as we put the Senate on the market for sale. We looked at several theaters in the area including the Millennium in Southfield, the cinemas at Laurel Park Place Mall in Livonia and theaters in Detroit and downtown Farmington. What we

found is that due to the size of our instrument and the inability to move it easily, all of the other tenants did not want to give up this large space and they did not want to work around our monthly schedule. They wanted DTOS to work around their schedules with no give in their schedule at all. Another problem that would arise would be access to the theaters for our playing members to practice.

After several discussions took place at board meetings, it was clear that the only way that we would be able to keep our monthly concerts and retain 24/7 access for practicing by our playing

members was to own our own building. We knew we would need other sources of income and we would need to re-build our membership at the same time. Both of these could not be accomplished at the Senate due to the condition of the theater and how the instrument was set up on stage. The organ and piano can't be moved for a partial stage setting and we do not have main floor restrooms to accommodate an aging membership. So, a new building would be required in an area that we could concentrate on placing the instrument on a moving

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## **COMING TO THE SENATE:**

August 31 – Board of Directors meeting at 7pm. All members encouraged to attend.

## Board to apply for ATOS Grant Money

During the recent visit by ATOS President Ken Double, he was invited to dinner by President Leichtamer and membership chair Gary Grzebenik for the purpose of getting some information on how to improve ourselves as an organization.

During the dinner, it was mentioned by Mr. Double that grants were available from ATOS for specific projects related to theater pipe organ institutions like ours and it was suggested that when the time comes, we should

apply for a grant for a project on our instrument. He felt that our instrument was well known at the national level and any grant applied for would breeze through the approval process.

While the window for applications does not open until January of every year, discussions have already taken place with Scott Smith to plan on a project since the application needs specific information as to the work being proposed and

the company that will do the work being funded.

After a couple of e-mails, it was decided that maybe the best project that could be funded by ATOS would be recapping the keys on the Wurlitzer's four manuals.

Since real ivory is very difficult to find in today's world, an alternative is still being researched that would give the same feel and look of ivory.

Scott Smith has agreed to help with the application and more information will come later.

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## *Inspections to begin at Troy Facility*

At the regular board of directors meeting last month, the board approved funding to engage Cunningham-Limp corporation of Farmington Hills, MI to help DTOS with its due diligence at the proposed DTOS Studios in Troy.

What is proposed as phase one of two, Cunningham-Limp will take control of the inspection of the property and its mechanicals, continue working with the City to obtain approval for our use at the facility, draft preliminary site plans, floor plans and building elevations, develop a conceptual scope of work and projected

time line and work together with DTOS to obtain shared parking agreements with the neighboring businesses. Cost of phase one is not to exceed \$4,500.00.

Cunningham-Limp comes highly recommended not only for its strong ties to the City of Troy from previous projects, but the firm completed all the preliminary work for the failed plan to expand the Senate Theater for DTOS about 6 years ago.

Phase two of the proposal will be developed once City approval for our use is obtained and after reviewing a

“needs list” currently being developed by members of DTOS. Phase two will involve the creation of construction blueprints and the management of all the trades to complete the actual work once approved by the City. The cost of phase two is not immediately known but will be announced before the work is started. A construction time line will also be included as part of the phase.

## **COMING TO THE REDFORD**

- ◆ August 6 and 7 - IT'S A MAD, MAD, MAD, MAD WORLD, 1963
- ◆ August 20, 21 - Monty Python and the Holy Grail (1975)
- ◆ August 27, 28 - Laurel and Hardy Film Festival: Sons of the Desert, Liberty, Second Hundred Years, Two Tars and from Soup to Nuts

## *Used Items sold on E-Bay*

DTOS recording engineer and board member Fred Bruflodt has been a busy guy for us over the last couple of months on e-bay as well as an amateur radio trade show in Lansing.

With a new facility on the horizon for DTOS, Fred took the opportunity to go through some of the items at the Senate

that have not been used in years and tried to sell them for DTOS profit towards new equipment at the future facility.

Through his efforts, Fred presented treasurer Bob Weil with a check at last months board meeting in the amount of \$1,678.00.

While the e-bay process is a very long process, his efforts

are much appreciated. He pointed out that the check presented did not include any sales fees or mailing fees and that those had already been deducted from the sale.

Thanks for all of your hard work Fred. Your efforts and dedication to DTOS are greatly appreciated.

## *Playing Members Regain Access to Senate*

After several months of closed doors and several members expressing a desire to play the Wurlitzer, the Senate doors will re-open once again for private practice time.

By the time that the members receive this newsletter, the key fobs should all be reactivated to allow access to those who paid their dues. The board does not guarantee that the fobs will work and they will not guarantee how long the doors will remain open. Once a new buyer is found and a

new purchase agreement is signed, the doors will close once again.

Several board members expressed concerns about the pipe trays that are stacked in the concession area and other items that have been moved downstairs in preparation for a move but were out-voted by others that expressed that they do not pose a risk to members entering the Senate to practice.

The process for entering the Senate remains the same as it always has and the steps to

turn the instrument on have not changed.

Keep an eye on the DTOS website for changes regarding the closing of the doors again if it changes. The reservation system will also be placed again on the home page and we encourage everyone to reserve time in an attempt to prevent delays in practice time if another member is there when you arrive.



## Venue (from page 1)

platform so a partial stage could be used for other bands and motivational speakers. A new venue would also have main floor restrooms that would accommodate larger crowds.

A generous gift of \$500,000 dollars was secured from one of our members and together with donations from the late R. David Brewer, DTOS could find a building that was newer with amenities such as air conditioning.

While owning another building will bring back the same responsibilities that we currently have at the Senate,

we believe that the excitement of the new building and new members will step forward to help take care of it. In addition, we hope to be able to market the new venue as a photo studio and recording studio for upcoming bands to make demo recordings. The door will be also open for the production of "live" music videos as well. An idea of "live" organ radio broadcasts has also been suggested. An aggressive marketing campaign will be started once we open to the public and the 2012 membership campaign will be more detailed as well. Please bring

your suggestions for additional income to the board as well as any suggestions for a building name as well. Currently, the only suggestion we have for a building name is:

### **"DTOS STUDIOS"**

## August Event Details Revealed

By now, the membership should have received their invitation to this year's picnic that is being held in Pearl Beach, Michigan.

Dave Voydanoff and Glenn Rank are opening their house to the membership this year on August 15 for the day long event. Some food items will be included by the hosts but

members are requested to call Dave and Glenn to arrange for a dish to bring and pass along.

Along with a dish to pass, please bring along your music as their Wurliitzer 3/10 will be up and running at the house and we will need our talented members to keep the event going with some live music from the garage.

To arrange for a dish to pass, please call Dave and Glenn at (810) 794-3410 (evenings) by August 12 and they will let you know what you can bring.

It is always a fun day and the view of the lake is always breathtaking. We look forward to seeing everyone at the event this year.

## DTOS Attorney Fee's on the Rise

For the first quarter of the 2010 fiscal year, DTOS has accumulated attorney fees of around \$15,000.00.

The fees have been generated because of two real estate transactions that the Society is attempting to close on.

The first deal that was negotiated as previously reported was the sale of the Senate for a proposed night club setting. It took weeks of negotiation between DTOS and the buyer to get a purchase agreement in place. While ninety percent of

the communication was done electronically through e-mails, a lot of time was spent only for the buyer to back away because of his inability to finance the purchase and have alternate renovation funding as well.

The other real estate transaction is still ongoing with the purchase of a new home for our instrument. Again, weeks of negotiation between us and the buyer and we are very close to having a purchase agreement in place. One of the last sticking points is the desire of

the seller to force us into the purchase of the property after our 90 day due diligence and membership approval. DTOS wants the ability to back out of the purchase at any time all the way up to closing day.

While some members may consider the fees unnecessary, it is crucial in any real estate transaction that we be represented by a firm who looks out for the better interest of the Society with both transactions.

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### **Executive Board**

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Christopher Dengate, VP  
David Calendine, Secretary  
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Jeff Cushing, Director  
Gil Francis, Director  
Gary Grzebienik, Director  
Tom Iwankovitsch, Director  
Lance Luce, Director  
George Orbits, Director



## **Senate Open House results in no offers**

Last month, an open house was hosted by the Friedman Real Estate group in an effort to find a buyer for the Senate.

About six individuals who had called while we were under contract with the previous buyer showing interest in the Senate were contacted and invited to the open house. Out of the six that were invited, only two individuals walked through during the event that was held between 9am and 11am.

While we are discouraged by the number of folks that showed up, one of the individuals was preparing a purchase agreement to present to the Board of Directors for consideration. At this time, no purchase agreement has been passed along.

One of the biggest challenges that we have for us is a poor economy and fact that banks are not loaning any money to anyone, even those

that have the best credit. Because of it, the interested parties are turned off as soon as they find out that DTOS is not interested in any land contract deals. The Board made that decision back in June when they turned away a five year land contract deal from the previous buyer.

The Board remains optimistic that a buyer for the properties can be found and continue to keep hope that it is sooner than later.

## **Membership Information**

This month, members are asked to keep long time member Don Jenks in your thoughts and prayers as he recovers at home from a recent illness.

If you know of one of our members who is sick or in the hospital, let one of our board members know so we can get a card in the mail to them.

We also have a new (well not really) returning member this month. We welcome back John Kline who is returning after several years out of the State of Michigan and is encouraged with the activities that are currently going on at DTOS. He is also excited about the future move to a new facility as well. Welcome back, John.

The program committee is starting to work on the 2011 concert schedule. All concerts are going to be held at the Redford Theatre again and the board is looking forward to

both Redford and DTOS members in 2011 at Detroit's Fox Theater.

While the details are still being worked out, due to scheduling conflicts with the Fox, the best month to hold an event would be in August according to Fox employee Dave Calendine. More details to come as they are made available.

If you have an artist that you would like to perform in 2011 for us, contact President Leichtamer who also serves as the Program chairperson.

Calling all Playing Members: We are in need for a few folks to participate in this year's Membership Concert at the Redford on September 19th.

Lance Luce is coordinating this year's event so if you are willing to show off your talents on the Redford's Barton, let him know.