

**DECEMBER 14, 3 PM, CHRISTMAS PARTY/MEETING/PROGRAM
WITH JOHN MCCALL AT STEPHENSON H.S.**



Our December 2014 meeting will be a Christmas party and concert by John McCall on our Grande Page 4/16 organ at Stephenson High School with guest vocalist 18-year-old Daniel Mata on Sunday afternoon December 14th at 3:00 pm. Bring your favorite Christmas dish and we will share the goodies and enjoy the music.

A variety of drinks will be provided for you to enjoy with the assortment of great food in the lobby area outside the auditorium (School regulations prohibit food or drinks inside the auditorium.)

John McCall, a native of Vidalia, GA, got his first taste of the theatre organ through the HI-FI record "George Wright Encores at the Mighty Wurlitzer". By the time his family relocated in Moultrie, GA in 1960, he had a fairly extensive library of theatre organ recordings and was hopelessly hooked. Early sightings of silenced organs in Georgia's Albany and Fox theatres heightened his interest in movie palaces and their musical "soul". In 1969, he finally heard his first theatre organ live at the Atlanta Fox with Bob Van Camp at the helm. He promptly joined ATOS and the Atlanta Chapter.

McCall's theatre organ training has been self-taught. His teaching tool was a two-manual pipe organ console graciously supplied by Atlanta Chapter members Edd and Norma Simmons. In 1986, he played for his first real audience prior to a screening at Chicago's Music Box Theatre. His second appearance in a theatre was not until June, 2000, when he played for the screening of *Singin' In the Rain* at the Rylander in Americus, where he followed with his first concert appearance with ATOS members Fred Boska and James Thrower.

He earned a degree in journalism from Georgia State University. While there, he produced the first "Keyboard



Photo by George Milburn

Colossus" at the Atlanta Fox. The concert raised more than \$9,000 toward the "Save The Fox" effort. His monograph on the theatre, "Atlanta's Fox Theatre: Mecca on Peachtree Street" went through several printings and raised more than \$70,000 toward the "Save The Fox" campaign.

McCall has written numerous articles and jacket notes on theatre organ and theatre history for such publications as "Marquee," "Theatre Organ Journal," "Atlanta Journal and Constitution," and the "Atlanta Historical Society Bulletin." John was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Atlanta Chapter, ATOS following his solo concert at the Rylander Theatre, October 16, 2010.

In addition to being an honorary member of Manasota ATOS and an active member of the Atlanta Chapter, he is a lifetime member of England's Theatre Organ Club and the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Society. His recordings, "Alabama Album" and "Walking the Walker" have been featured on ATOS Theatre Organ Radio.

John performed the fourth annual concert for the Florida Packard Club on the Forker Memorial Wurlitzer in Sarasota in November 2014. Also, in October 2014, he concertized for the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation's Annual Ramble in Americus, GA at the Rylander Theatre Möller.

Additional concerts for 2014-15 include the Pinellas Park Wurlitzer,

Pinellas, FL and Westminster Oaks Centre, Tallahassee, FL with pianist Larry Davis.

Daniel Mata, our guest vocalist, is a senior at Lassiter H.S. in Marietta. He is one of triplets born in Venezuela and truly a singing sensation. At the age of 15 he won the very first "Variety stars of Tomorrow".

About the Instrument... The following is taken from an article written by Larry Davis and used with his permission. The Grande Page theatre organ at Stephenson High School was the first of the Page Company's crown jewel, four-manual organs. It was originally installed in 1927 in the WHT radio station in the Wrigley Building in downtown Chicago. It was said to be the largest such organ ever built for a radio studio. In 1929, the WHT Page was moved to the Michigan Theatre in the town of Flint, Michigan, where it entertained theatre audiences until 1950. Later it was removed and installed by several owners. Ultimately in 1977, the late Richard Weber (a member of the Atlanta Chapter of ATOS) acquired the Page to be used in a proposed pizza restaurant in Atlanta, Georgia. However, a different organ was ultimately installed in the restaurant, and the Page organ was stored in a warehouse owned by Winn Sound in Atlanta.

After a couple of moves to other warehouse locations for Winn Sound, the organ was purchased by Mr. Winn in 1991 and donated to the Atlanta Chapter. At that point, it was removed from the warehouse and stored in trucks at a local business. Through the late 1980's and early 1990's efforts were made to find a home for the Grande Page. It was at that time that chapter member Jack Sandow emerged as the champion of the Grande Page.

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**Atlanta Chapter,
American Theatre Organ Society**

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*AC/ATOS is recognized as a tax-exempt organization under
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Chapter President - *Tim Stephens*
Vice President - Ken Double
Treasurer - Rick McGee
Secretary - John Alford
Newsletter Editor - Elbert Fields
Chapter Correspondent - Larry Davis

*Ads or announcements for this newsletter:
Contact Elbert Fields at 770-435-7340 or
elfields@yahoo.com*

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***President's
Note...***

The carols have commenced at Callanwolde; spectacular sounds surround you at the Strand; the Page is being prepped for a holiday pops presentation; and the magnificent Mighty Mo is ready to master the merriment at the Fabulous Fox Theatre. It's Christmas time again in Atlanta, and while schedules are typically crazier than at any other time of the year, we hope you'll stop and take the time to enjoy some of the many musical opportunities this month. Whether it's the *Christmas Tradition* at the Strand, *Christmas at Callanwolde*, *Mighty Mo & More!* at the Fox, or our own Christmas gathering at Stephenson High School, you're destined to have a great time!

Speaking of the New Year, that once again brings the reminder that membership fees will be due starting January 1, 2015. We've maintained our same standard dues of \$35 for the past 10 years (\$17.50 for students) and that will remain the same in 2015. If you can, we do hope you'll renew and donate at the Donor, Contributor, Sponsor, or Patron levels to help support the Atlanta Chapter in its ongoing efforts. For your convenience, we are currently working on integrating

membership into our website. Hopefully by January you'll be able to join, renew, and donate with your credit card and a few clicks of the mouse. Of course, Rick will still be glad to take your check in person or by mail as always, for those who prefer or aren't part of the online community.

After two years of penning the President's Note, it's time for me to hand the pen to a new writer. It has been both an honor and a privilege to be able to represent and serve the Atlanta Chapter and to be entrusted with the responsibilities of an organization that is extremely close to me. I want to thank each of you who contribute day-in and day-out to make our Chapter a model among ATOS circles, and I especially want to thank the officers, board members, and others who work tirelessly behind the scenes and are constantly taking care of business. I'm not disappearing by any means – just taking a back seat, and I look forward to continuing to serve in other capacities and to watching ATOS Atlanta grow even more in the years to come.

On behalf of the Officers and Board of the Atlanta Chapter, our wishes for a most wonderful Christmas and the best to you and yours in the New Year!

Tim Stephens

YEAR 2015 ACATOS NOMINATIONS/ELECTIONS ANNOUNCEMENT

The Annual Meeting of the Atlanta Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society is scheduled for December 14, 2014 at Stephenson HS at 3:00 pm.

As provided in the chapter bylaws, the annual election of officers and directors shall take place at this meeting. In addition to the names listed below, qualified chapter members may present themselves as a candidate for office or as a director by written notification to John Alford, P.O. Box 130, Soddy Daisy, TN 37384-0130, phone (423) 443-1495 or email johndalford@yahoo.com, or may be nominated from the floor during the Annual Meeting. Please do not nominate someone without discussion and confirmation with that person! The nominees for office and board are:

Officers

President: Larry Davis - **Vice President:** Ken Double - **Secretary:** Randy Cobb - **Treasurer:** Rick McGee
Newsletter Editor: Elbert Fields - **Strand Project Chair:** Ron Carter - **Page Project Chair:** Jack Sandow -

Directors at Large

Bob Fountain - Randy Hendry - Lee Lanier - Tim Stephens - David Tuck

Director Emeritus – Bucky Reddish

THANKSGIVING WITH THE CARTERS (AND FRIENDS) !

Sunday, November 16th, 2014, at 3:00 pm, the Atlanta Chapter, ATOS and a good number of local invitees were again graciously welcomed for a Thanksgiving treat ! We gathered at the home of Ron and Donna Carter for an afternoon of music, show, talent and surprises (even more than last year !) The featured instrument was the Allen Renaissance GW-IV with the new Vista MIDI controller, the digital grand piano, and our artists!

Mr. Ron Carter, our host and emcee welcomed all and after recognizing local guests, launched a full-on entertainment revue:

The Show:

Ron introduced grandson Jake Carter and the show-stealing was on ! Jake began with an organ solo medley of the "Theme from 2001," and the "Theme from Superman."

Next on the bill: Ron Carter featuring a selection made famous by the Larry Clinton Orchestra, "I Double Dare You," and then a well-presented medley from the ever-popular musical "My Fair Lady" featuring the selections "Get Me To the Church On Time," "On the Street Where You Live," "With a Little Bit of Luck," "Wouldn't It Be Lovely," "I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face," and "I Could have Danced All Night."

Ron then introduced a new artist for this year, Ms. Chari Guzman, performing "I Will Always Love You" from the film "The Bodyguard", with Ron on the Allen. A great voice and winning stage presence made for a great musical treat.

Next, Ron introduced Joe Arnotti, returning again this year. His selection of "The American Trilogy" made



Ron Carter, Nathan Peace, Abby Carter, Jake Carter, Chari Guzman, Taj Stephens, Catherine Moulton, Joe Arnotti

famous by Elvis Presley was very well presented and even die-hard Elvis fans were happy. Ron was on the Allen and featured some of the Vista voices as well.

Also returning from last year was Catherine Moulton. She presented "Danny Boy with Loch Lomond" in tribute to Diana Durbin.

Introduced next, another new talent, Mr. Taj Stephens. A moving selection, "Going Home". Based on the Largo from Dvorak's New World Symphony was a welcome addition and a very personal rendition made it special!!

Jake Carter returned – this time as a vocal artist. Ron moved to the digital grand and Jake asked us all "You Wana Build a Snowman?" (from "Frozen") Abby Carter assisted with the vocal asides – and the answer from all in attendance – "YES !!"

Abby Carter was then featured in her own vocal solo "No One Is Alone" from "Into the Woods." A great performance – and a proud Ron accompanying her on the digital grand – He is still smiling !!

Another new performer, Mr. Nathan Peace – a 17-year-old from First

Baptist Church, Marietta, and a student of Tom Alderman, offered us a classical organ solo - "God of Grace" (Paul Manz arrangement.) Well done! We expect to see you at Stephenson in December to try our Grande Page !!

Ron Carter returned to the Allen for "Por Una Cabeza" from "Scent of a Woman," a 1937 film. Great selection and well offered!!

The Finale:

The entire cast returned for a grand selection of tunes from the musical "Les Miserables."

Chari started with "I Dreamed a Dream," followed by Catherine giving us "On My Own," then Taj begged us to "Bring Him Home," and Joe extolled of "Empty Chairs at Empty Tables." All cast joined in the grand closer: "One Day More."

All performers remained amidst vigorous applause to offer a Grand Finale: "When You Believe" from "Prince of Egypt." We all did!!

Ron requested a reprise of "One Day More" and we were not at all opposed!!

A great show, fine performers (returning and new) and show-stealers, all, for a fine afternoon of music. How do you top this for next year ? Only Donna knows !!!

After this, the door prizes were awarded, and the much-anticipated feast from the Carter Kitchens (who else, but Donna and her never-failing magic touch) left nothing else to say but a grateful "Thank You" from all in attendance. This was a November meeting to remember !!

Offered by **Biz E. Body**, a completely unbiased (and still full) ear! Remember, the walls / chambers, kitchen and balcony all have ears!!

(Continued from page 1)

He approached his friend, Dr. James Hallford, Superintendent of Schools of DeKalb County, who expressed interest in having a theatre organ placed in one of the county high schools. Chapter members toured existing schools, but were unable to locate a suitable facility for a pipe organ. At the time, Stephenson High School in Stone Mountain, GA was in the design stage. In 1992, a meeting was held between officials of DeKalb County School System and members of the Board of Directors of the Atlanta Chapter. The school system agreed to make building modifications to a planned 500-seat theatre in the new Stephenson High School to include chamber space, an organ pit, organ console storage area, blower accommodations,

and electrical and wind conduits. Jack Sandow became the project leader after the initial meeting and worked closely with Beers Construction Company and the school system's engineer as design and construction progressed.

Work has continued on the Grande Page over the years. Most of the organ has been rebuilt and plans call for adding six ranks to what you heard at the Convention. The Atlanta Chapter's Page Crew has been working untiringly to make sure the Grande Page will be ready to perform better than it ever has.

Directions to Stephenson H.S. on Page 4

Upcoming Meetings & Events *(Mark your Calendars)*

- **December 14, 3 pm Christmas party/meeting/program at Stephenson High School with John McCall.**
- December 16, 11:00 am, Pinellas Park City Auditorium, 7690 59th Street, Pinellas Park, Florida. John McCall in Concert at the Pinellas Park Wurlitzer, No admission charge. Sponsored by the Central Florida Theatre Organ Society.



- **Marietta's Pops Orchestra The SYMPHONY ON THE SQUARE** plays a wonderful Christmas concert of popular holiday favorites on Thursday December 11. The show begins at 7 pm. Ron Carter at the Mighty Allen Organ with a pops pre-show and carol sing-a-long. This is the 2nd concert by this four-year-old, 45-piece pops orchestra at the Strand, which sold out quickly last spring. Get your tickets now by calling the Strand Box Office at 770- 293-0080, in person or on the net at www.earlsmithstrand.org. General seating tickets are \$12.50

- **A Christmas Tradition** - Live spectacular holiday song and dance review at the Earl Smith Strand Theatre for twelve December performances, December 5-7; 12-14; 18-21; Organ pre-show begins 30 minutes prior to showtime. All shows begin at 8 pm except for the Sunday matinees on December 7, 14, and 21 which begin at 3 pm. Tickets are only \$25 with assigned seating and special pricing for groups and seniors.
 - Monday, December 22nd **The Wonderful Life Movie Marathon** 12 pm, 3 pm, 6 pm and 9 pm. with organ pre-show and sing-a-long by Larry Davis and Misha Stefanuk 30 minutes prior to showtime.
- For tickets to all shows, please contact the Earl Smith Strand Box Office at 770-293-0080; or in person M-F from 11 am to 6 pm and on Sat from 9 am to 1 pm or on the web at www.earlsmithstrand.org.

Those who have donated want their donation letters - especially if they want them early - please call John Alford at (423) 443-1495 or email johndalford@yahoo.com at the earliest possibility.

DIRECTIONS TO STEPHENSON HIGH SCHOOL

From I-85 N - Turn South on Jimmy Carter Blvd. which changes to Mountain Industrial Blvd. and then Hairston at Memorial Dr. Go to the 3rd traffic light and turn left on Rockbridge Rd. When you cross the railroad tracks, continue two miles and turn right on Stephenson Rd. Go 1 mile. School is on the right.

From I-285 - Exit on Memorial and turn East toward Stone Mountain. Turn right on Rockbridge Rd. and continue. When you cross the railroad tracks, continue two miles and turn right on Stephenson Rd. Go 1 mile. School is on the right.

From I-20 West Side - Take Exit 74 and go north on Lithonia Industrial Blvd. Turn left on Stone Mt. Lithonia Rd. Go about a mile and turn right at the light onto S. Dishon Rd. Proceed approximately 1.25 miles (past a church on the right) and turn left on Alford which dead-ends into Stephenson Rd. Turn left. The school will be about 1/2 mile on your left.

School address is: 701 Stephenson Road, Stone Mountain, GA 30087

Atlanta Chapter, ATOS - Membership Application

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State/ZIP _____ Email _____

Do you own an organ? _____ If so, description _____

Membership Category (check one): Patron (\$300 and up) Sponsor (\$200 - \$299)
 Contributor (\$100 - \$199) Donor (\$36 - \$99) Basic (\$35) Student (\$17.50)

Send Newsletter via email: Yes No

Please make check payable to **Atlanta Chapter, ATOS**
 Mail to: Atlanta Chapter, ATOS, Attn: Treasurer, P.O. Box 426, Marietta, GA 30061-0426