



# PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Volume 30, Nos. 11 – 12 • Nov. – Dec. 2019

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Reserve  
now!

## Spirit of Christmas

Music ▪ Singalongs ▪ Carols ▪ Holiday desserts & beverages ▪ Fun for all!

Featuring



**JAMIE SNELL**  
Piano, Wurlitzer



**JO ANN EVANS**  
Wurlitzer

**SUN. DEC. 8, 1:30 PM**

Haller Lake Community Club  
12579 Densmore Ave. N. • North Seattle

**ADMISSION \$10 per person**

To cover hall rental and refreshments  
16 & under free with adult

**Important!** *A head count is needed for food and seating. PLEASE RESERVE by Thurs., Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> at [joann@pstos.org](mailto:joann@pstos.org) or at 425-485-5465, leave message*

*A brief annual membership meeting with election and installation of 2019 officers will precede the festivities*

### Drive directions

**Northbound I-5:** Use Exit 174 onto NE 130th St., turn left over freeway one long block to 1st Ave. N.E. Turn left (south) one block to 128th. Right on N.E. 128th a few blocks to Densmore. Left on Densmore, clubhouse is on the right. Parking both front and rear. Handicapped entry with parking and an elevator at rear of building.

**Southbound I-5:** Use Exit 175 onto N.E. 145th, turn right one block to 1st Ave. N.E. Turn left (south) continuing through N.E. 130th to N.E. 128th. Right on N.E. 128th a few blocks to Densmore. Left on Densmore, clubhouse is on the right. Parking both front and rear. Handicapped entry with parking and an elevator at rear of building.

# PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

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**Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society**  
10002 Aurora Ave N, Suite 36 #516  
Seattle, WA 98133-9329

*Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization furthering the appreciation, restoration, and use of the historic Theatre Pipe Organs of the 1920s, through education.*

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## JOINING PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY IS FAST AND EASY!

Simply click on the link below and select your preferred level of membership.

- Secure!
- No checks!
- No stamps!
- A few clicks and it's done!

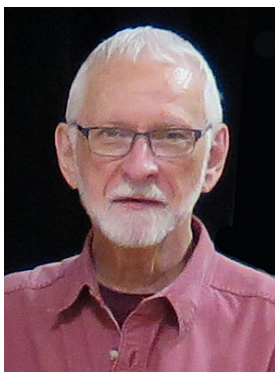
<http://www.pstos.org/membership/new-member.htm>



# PRESIDENT'S Message

Greetings PSTOS members and friends! I wish you all a lively holiday season.

The PSTOS annual meeting and holiday party will be held at Haller Lake Community Club Sunday, December 8th. It's a time for like-minded people to gather, listen to the Chapter's 3/10 Wurlitzer theatre organ, socialize with friends, enjoy some dessert, and sip on libations. We hope to see you there.



The 2020 Concert Series featuring Calvary Christian Assembly's 3/25 Wurlitzer-Kimball has been scheduled. The series will launch with Justin Stahl from Indiana performing April 25th. Justin has made a name for himself at ATOS conventions, has played the Australian circuit, and is someone to look forward to hearing.

Next comes Simon Gledhill from the U.K., who plays Saturday, June 27th.

Clark Wilson, who last played for us at the 2010 convention here in Seattle, will return to entertain us on October 24th.

Tickets for the entire series will be available in January and if you purchase the entire series you will save some dollars. Watch for the January/February Pipeline for the schedule and pricing, then go to the PSTOS website at [www.pstos.org](http://www.pstos.org) to purchase the series.

Please Google search the artists and view some of their Youtube videos so you will know a bit more about them and what to expect during the 2020 season.

The program committee encourages your feedback and suggestions for future programs, so please send a letter or an email to any board member, whose email addresses are listed in the column to the left. Your comments and/or suggestions regarding the programming, schedule, and the artists you would like to see and hear are greatly appreciated by your hard-working program planning team. We try very hard to present interesting and engaging musical adventures for our members and friends. We realize we can't please everyone all of the time, but we try our best!

Remember, December 8th at Haller Lake Community Club for the annual meeting and holiday party. See you there!

...Bob Zat, President

# PSTOS Coming Events



**SUN., DEC. 8, 1:30 PM**

Haller Lake Community Club

**Annual PSTOS Christmas celebration**

*Announcing . . .*

## 2020 THEATRE ORGAN POPS

**At Calvary Christian Assembly**  
6801 Roosevelt Way NE • Seattle



**JUSTIN STAHL**  
From Indianapolis  
Sat., April 25



**SIMON GLEDHILL**  
From London, U.K.  
Sat., June 27



**CLARK WILSON**  
From Ohio  
Sat., October 24

**Series tickets will be available for purchase in January, 2020**

<http://www.pstos.org/events>



**The Seattle Star**  
 SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1939.

**FIRST RADIO ORGAN HERE**

**New Radio Console Ready**



Washington Woods Used in Big Instrument to Have Premiere Tomorrow Night

**BY ROY RYERSON**

Concerts from the finest radio pipe organ in the west will soon be floating over the ether to Seattle homes as a regular feature of KOMO-KJR, after the premier broadcast Wednesday of the station's new three manual-and-pedal pipe organ.

The organ was previewed in studio "B" in the Skinner building last week, and is now prepared to go on the air as the latest addition to Seattle radio circles.

Built by Wurlitzer, the modernistic instrument was assembled and installed by Balcom and Vaughn, master organ builders, of Seattle. The natural finish console was constructed in Seattle of Washington woods to fit KOMO-KJR specifications, and is one of the very few organs especially built for radio broadcasting.

The console, completely different in appearance from the customary type of pipe organ, is to be mounted on wheels and made as nearly portable as a piano, except for the huge tho compact pipe loft.

The completed organ contains 700 pipes, 30 different effects and 143 percussion tones, to say nothing of a maze of 14,000 wire connections in the sound chamber.

For the opening concert, over KJR Wednesday at 9:45 p. m., a program of varied musical numbers will be presented, ranging from "18th Century Drawing Room" to "The Lost Chord" to give the countless numbers of organ music lovers a chance to hear the almost unbelievable ranges reached by the new Wurlitzer.

Seated at the console of KOMO-KJR's mighty new Wurlitzer is Eddie Clifford, giving a preview of the instrument. The new organ, described as the most outstanding instrument of its kind ever built purposely for radio, was installed for Wurlitzer by Balcom & Vaughn of Seattle, and the complete installation took 11 weeks.

The Seattle Star operated from 1899 to 1947, a time when Seattle had three daily newspapers. The organ featured in this 1939 article is now installed in the private estate of the Fisher family, who owned KOMO radio. When the station was sold, the organ was removed. It has recently had a major renovation.

## PSTOS Board Announces Matching Funds for Contributions Supporting RhondaSue Wickerham's Cancer Treatment

As many of you may know, RhondaSue Wickerham, wife of superstar theatre organist Dave Wickerham, has been diagnosed with a rare form of cancer and is undergoing treatment. Her treatment is expensive and is not covered by insurance.

The family has been raising money through a GoFundMe online campaign at: [www.gofundme.com/f/the-rhonda-sue-wickerham-cancer-fight](http://www.gofundme.com/f/the-rhonda-sue-wickerham-cancer-fight)

The PSTOS Board recently approved a \$1000 donation, which will be used to match contributions from PSTOS members dollar-for-dollar.

If you would like to help the Wickerham family, please mail your check, payable to PSTOS and marked to benefit the Wickerham Medical Fund, to:

**PSTOS #516**  
**10002 Aurora Avenue North, Suite 36**  
**Seattle, WA 98133-9329**

Your check will be matched by PSTOS, doubling the amount to help cover the mounting medical bills.

Thanks from PSTOS, and more importantly, from Dave and RhondaSue and their family.



RhondaSue and Dave Wickerham

## AGO Programs

### Sunday November 3, 5:00 pm

Durufle Requiem. For the Feast of All Souls, the Epiphany Choir will sing the Requiem by Maurice Durufle. Zach Hemenway, director; Dr. Wyatt Smith, organist. Epiphany Parish 1805 38th Avenue Seattle, WA 98122. No charge.

### Sunday, November 10, 4:00 p.m.,

Christ Episcopal Church, Tacoma, celebrates the 40th anniversary of the John Brombaugh pipe organ. Dr. Kraig Scott plays music by Handel, Buxtehude, Bach, Franck, William Albright, Paul Ayres and David Briggs. 310 North K Street, Tacoma, WA 98403.

### Friday, November 15, 12:10 pm.

Mark Brombaugh, organist, continues the 40th anniversary celebration of the organ built by his brother John. His program will include music by Melchior Schildt, J. S. Bach, Paul Hindemith, Louis Vierne and David P. Dahl. 310 North K Street, Tacoma, WA 98403.

### Sunday November 17, 2:00 pm

Chapel concert at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, 1245 Tenth Ave East Seattle, 98102. Zach Hemenway, organist and Danielle Sampson, soprano present a program of Baroque music. Program includes Schütz, Purcell and Hammerschmidt. \$20/\$15

### Sunday November 24, 4:00 pm

Michael Kleinschmidt plays the Fritts Organ at Gethsemane Lutheran Church of Seattle. Tickets \$18 General, \$10 seniors. 911 Stewart St, Seattle.

### Friday December 6, 12:05 noon

Wyatt Smith will perform a free program on the Fritts organ in Kilworth Chapel, University of Puget Sound, Tacoma. The program features music based on the Great "O" Antiphons, including Nico Muhly's cycle for solo organ.

### Sunday December 8, 2:00 pm

The choir of St. John United Lutheran and the Northwest Firelight Chorale present Vivaldi's Gloria with orchestral accompaniment. Nathan Jensen conducting. 5515 Phinney Ave N, Seattle, WA 98103.

### Sunday December 22, 4:30 pm

Flentrop organ concert at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral 1245 Tenth Ave East Seattle, 98102. Joseph Adam, organist, presents the entire La Nativité du Seigneur by Olivier Messiaen. \$20/\$15

### December 22 | 5:00 pm

Evensong for Advent IV at Epiphany Parish 1805 38th Ave, Seattle, WA 98122. The Epiphany Choir will sing this service of Evensong in the Chapel, led by Zach Hemenway and Wyatt Smith. It will feature music by Robert Parsons, William Smith of Durham, Charles Villiers Stanford, and William Byrd. A wine and cheese reception will follow Evensong.



## Ellis-Bergman Duo Presents Eclectic Program

Review by Jamie Snell    Photos by Jeff Snyder



Linda Bergman and Martin Ellis

Whoever heard of theatre organ and flute played together? Possibly not many, but at the October 12 CCA concert, the duo of Martin Ellis and Linda Bergman treated the audience of about ninety to a surprisingly eclectic sample. The two have been playing together in Portland as the Ellis-Bergman Duo, and demonstrated the high level of musicianship and wide repertoire they have established.

Following introductory comments by PSTOS President Bob Zat, Ellis opened the concert with two Alan Menkin tunes, “Prologue” and “Belle,” from the Disney film *Beauty and the Beast* (or rather films – the 1991 animation, and the 2017 live-action remake). Turning to light classical, he then played the bouncy “On a Spring Note” by the British theatre organist Sidney Torch. And then to the

Great American Songbook, for Nacio Herb Brown’s rousing “Love is Where You Find It” from the 1948 Sinatra/Grayson film *The Kissing Bandit*.

Ellis then welcomed to the stage flutist Linda Bergman, who joined him in Erroll Garner’s luscious jazz standard “Misty,” followed by a virtuosic rendition of the classical piece “Regrets and Resolutions” by the prolific composer for flute, Gary Schocker. Returning to Alan Menken, the duo played “Colors of the Wind” from the 1995 Disney animation *Pocahontas*. Next two more classical works: an exquisite rendering of Debussy’s famous “Clair de Lune”; and an organ arrangement of “March of the Bowman” by the British light classical composer Frederic Curzon, from his *Robin Hood Suite*. The duo closed the first half with three distinct genres: the great George Bassman jazz standard “I’m Getting Sentimental Over You”; then “Earth,” an intriguing New Age work composed for flute and piano by Takatsugu Muramatsu; and “Veloce” from Claude Bolling’s *Suite for Jazz Flute and Piano*, with Ellis at the piano.

After an intermission featuring plentiful cookies and coffee, the duo returned with Irving Berlin’s “Heat Wave” from for the 1933 musical *As Thousands Cheer*. Then yet another genre: a 1926 novelty piano tune “Spring Fever” by Rube Bloom, artfully transcribed by Ellis for organ. The duo then resumed with “Fantasy” from *Jazz Suite*,



Martin speaks from the heart about the need to encourage young organists

composed by Jeremy Norris for flute and piano, followed by another Gary Schocker piece, “Café Music and Chanson,” from his *Musique Française for Flute and Piano*. Then back to film music with James Horner’s “My Heart Will Go On” from the 1997 movie *Titanic*, famously sung by superstar Céline Dion and No. 1 on the 1998 Billboard Hot 100 chart.

To close the concert, the duo performed three movements from the 1868 Saint-Saëns piano-orchestra suite *Carnival of the Animals*: “The Swan,” “Aquarium,” and “Finale,” beautifully arranged for flute and organ. Ellis then returned to the console for an encore, the Haydn Wood song “I Love to Hear You Singing,” a faithful transcription of the recording by the legendary theatre organist Jesse Crawford.

Many thanks to Martin Ellis and Linda Bergman for beautiful playing; Calvary Christian Assembly for welcoming PSTOS, and our CCA liaison Jeff Snyder for making everything run smoothly and for A/V expertise and photos; Treasurer Jon Beveridge for managing tickets and financials; JoAn Andenes for handling AGO tickets; Bob and Susan Buchholz for managing retirement home groups; Susan, Barb Graham, and Cheryl Stuart for taking care of refreshments; President Bob Zat for his usual fine emcee work; Greg Smith for making sure the organ was in top condition, as always; and Russ and Jo Ann Evans for so much planning and organizing.



Martin at the Baldwin grand accompanies Linda with music from *Jazz Suite*



# PAGES FROM THE PAST...1981

## *A Story of Kirk and Goliath*

Seattle Post-Intelligencer • Monday, January 19, 1981

By Cecelia Goodnow



Kirk Whitcombe, a logger by day, spends his nights coaxing boogie-woogie from his pipe organ, Goliath

CARNATION — The dance hall was packed with revelers drinking beer in the glow of dim red lights. Suddenly, mouths dropped open and glasses shattered on the polished wood floor. Conversations stopped in mid-sentence, and all eyes turned to the second-floor balcony, where a caped figure with spiky gray hair and twisted features stood poised. Without warning, the black-draped figure leaped from the balcony of the 47-foot-high building and swing past the astonished crowd, dangling from the end of a rope.

That's one way tavern-owner Kirk Whitcombe gets his kicks.

"I lost a lot of schooners that night," Whitcombe recalls with a fond smile. "A lot of girls dropped their glasses."

No shrinking violet, Whitcombe nevertheless tries to confine his Phantom-of-the-Opera tendencies to a more gentle pastime—coaxing music from a 65,000 pound pipe organ named Goliath.

By day, Whitcombe looks ordinary enough. Stripped of his rubber Halloween mask, he has wiry brown hair and gentle

eyes, and he speaks rapidly, gobbling his words. In his more normal moments, he is owner of Kirk Whitcombe Logging, which employs anywhere from eight to 22 residents of this Snoqualmie Valley community east of Redmond.

By night, he operates Goliath's Pit, a dance hall converted from a 1922 Odd Fellows lodge specifically to house the mammoth pipe organ. Whitcombe bought the 1926 Wurlitzer from the Elsinore Theater in Salem, Ore., where it accompanied silent movies until the introduction of sound tracks several years later. Whitcombe paid \$12,000 for the organ more than 10 years ago and has invested \$80,000 to make it portable—sort of. Whitcombe said it takes two semi-rigs to haul the massive instrument, which he claims is the world's largest portable pipe organ.

The organ consumes an entire wall of the tavern, and the tallest of its 3,000 pipes loom more than 30 feet high. It has more than 100 miles of string-like wires, which are housed in a 10-by-10-foot switch-stack room that Whitcombe built adjacent to the lodge building.

The white console has three 61-note keyboards, and 200 levers, and the machine can imitate horns, drums and assorted other instruments.

Dick Poley, manager of Goliath's Pit, says customers have a common reaction when confronted with the Gothic creation.

"The first question usually is, 'Jeez, does that thing work?'"

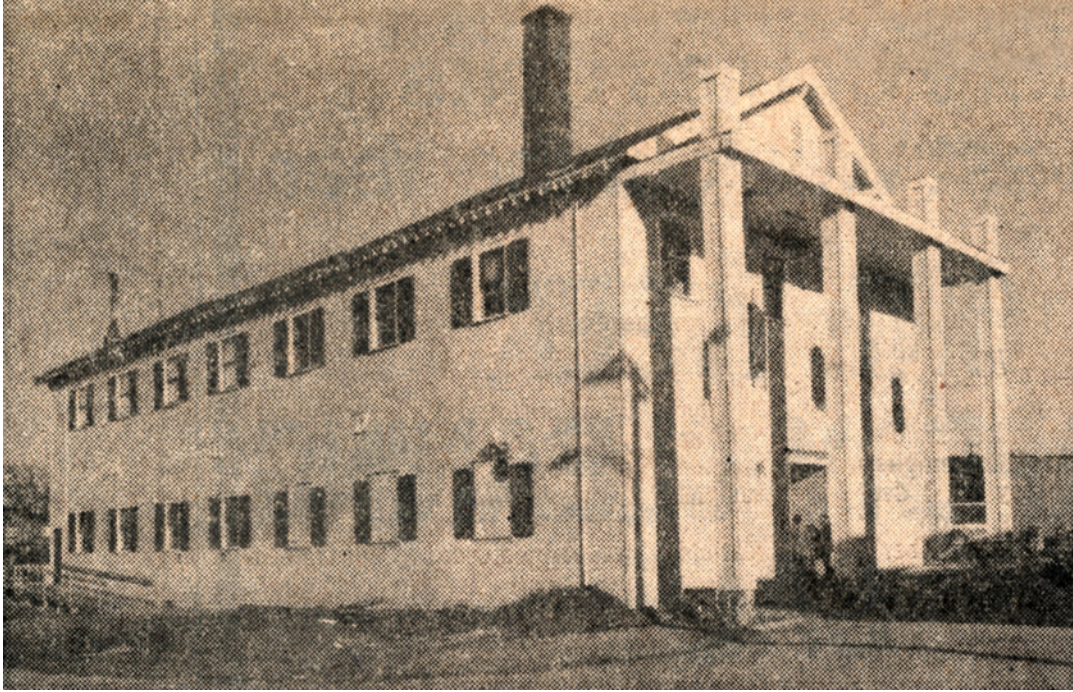
Indeed it does. The old Odd Fellows hall isn't big enough to hold the 32-foot diaphones needed for full amplification (which is just as well, since the unbridled vibrations could cause the building to collapse) but the effect is still spine-tingling. Even toned down, the organ's majestic tones waft the entire length of town on summer nights.

Whitcombe is happy to give a demonstration. Dressed in scuffed black shoes, bell-bottom jeans and a sueded aviator jacket, he launches into a rousing boogie-woogie with a cheerful counterpoint of tinkling calliope notes. Then he flips a few switches and moves into the solemn tones of *A Whiter Shade of Pale*.

But the biggest thrill comes from the



# PAGES FROM THE PAST... *Continued*



Goliath's Pit, now a dance hall, originally an Odd Fellows Lodge

dramatic theme from "2001, a Space Odyssey."

It gives me chills to hear it," Poley said. The tune, he added, is a show-stopper prompting customers to lean over the balcony and cheer Whitcombe on.

Goliath costs more to feed and house than a litter of Great Danes, and it has provoked bitter battles with the city fathers, who have cited Goliath's Pit for numerous zoning and building code violations since Whitcombe bought the hall six years ago.

Whitcombe believes the city council and building inspector have harassed him because they didn't want another tavern in town. Before the building was renovated, at a cost of \$80,000, townspeople often danced there, but, according to Whitcombe, once he put in a cash register and began to operate for profit, the city condemned the building.

At various times, he says, he was ordered to cut 12 feet off the height of the building, install a new septic system and put a 320-foot ramp for the handicapped to the second floor — requirements he says other town businesses did not have to meet.

He says he was cited for code violations for having firewood outside the front door and for having four unpopped kernels of popcorn on the floor. Another time, a liquor-license application he believed would be approved was denied in favor of a subsequent application by a competitor who,

according to Whitcomb, was related to the state liquor inspector.

Frustrated, Whitcombe sued the city and spent two years and \$11,000 in court costs. He lost the case in a hearing in Superior Court but says the city finally backed down when they saw he intended to keep appealing until he won.

Whitcombe is supported by Ella Trammell, co-owner of the Carnation Self Service Laundry.

"I don't think they wanted another tavern in town, to be perfectly honest," she said, adding that some of the citations against Goliath's Pit were "ridiculous."

Mayor Nick Loutsis tells it differently. "The only controversy is the guy didn't want to comply with the building codes," said the affable mayor, tending the vegetable garden at his home.

"The council wasn't out to get him. Heck, it's revenue for the town, and we want the revenue. (The disagreement) makes it look like we're a bunch of dirty birds."

Loutsis said the city recently gave Whitcombe a \$130,000 contract to log an 8--acre watershed.

"There's no hard feelings at all," he said. "We go there (to Goliath's Pit) after council meetings and have a beer. Kirk just got a little tempered and tried to beat the town."

He said Whitcombe dropped his legal battle when he saw it was useless to con-

tinue and that he has made all the necessary building modifications.

The dance hall opened Oct. 15 with a beer and wine license, and tensions between Whitcombe and the city have eased. Although the tavern has what Poley calls a "get-down party atmosphere," there have been no complaints of rowdiness. According to Poley, "This is a little different clientele. You don't drink in here to get drunk, you come to dance."

To ensure that relations with the city remain friendly, Whitcombe plans to join the crowd he couldn't beat. He wants to run for mayor next November.

"If I'd a been mayor before, this never would have happened," he said.

Despite the drawbacks, there have been some small gains. The six-year controversy has generated

so much press coverage that Whitcombe has never taken out a paid advertisement. And the financially draining organ may someday earn its keep. Whitcomb hopes to rent the mammoth instrument to advertise nationally-known products, an idea he conceived 14 years ago.

"If I can do one Coca Cola commercial," he says hopefully, "I can retire."

### EXCERPT FROM THE PSTOS WEBSITE:

The Goliath's Pit organ was based around a three-manual Wurlitzer from the Elsinore Theatre in Salem, Oregon. Kirk Whitcombe acquired the organ in 1969.

The "Pit" was a tavern and dance hall setup by Kirk in a former I.O.O.F. hall. An interesting feature of the organ was the 32' plywood Diaphones built by Kirk.

Before "The Pit," Kirk installed the organ in several locations including a barn near Lake Sammamish and in a portable configuration using several tractor trailers that could be hauled to fairs and other Summer events around the Northwest.

The Pit building and organ were eventually sold. In the early 1990s, the organ was sold to Terry Robson of Portland and disbursed for parts. The console went to Dick Loderhose of Seal Beach, California.

To read more about the colorful Kirk Whitcombe and his Carnation restaurant with a Wurlitzer, check out the entire PSTOS website story at <http://www.pstos.org/instruments/wa/carnation/goliaths-pit.htm>