

Paul Cuoco . . .

“Coke” was a very special person. For members that didn’t know him very well Coke was one of the most avid band organ owners in the hobby—he bought and sold more band organs than anyone I know of.

Cliff Gray and I always looked forward to seeing Coke in the rally season. He would come to Bloomdale with all kinds of rolls and parts for sale, all crammed in his little station wagon. We would go down to my workshop and buy, sell, trade and lie to each other. One such trip Coke brought so much we had trouble getting him into the driver’s seat. His sales ploy was that he was losing money on everything he sold.

His love for organ music was his life—he would call at night and play organ music by the hour. He would play a tune and then say “want to hear another one?” Cliff and I always wondered what his phone bill was because this would happen a couple of times a month.

Paul Cuoco was a very special person in my life: he had a great sense of humor and never had a bad word to say about anyone. The hobby has lost another great organ man.

Terry Haughawout



I was so sad when I heard of “Coke’s” passing but then I started remembering all of the many fun times we had with him—he had such a love and excitement about band organs. He frequently mispronounced words, and when someone corrected him, he would say “whatever” and go on with his story.

Joan Haughawout and I were reminiscing about Coke since he died and remembered that one time he came in with a grocery sack. When asked what it was, he said he was buying a band organ at the rally and the man wanted cash, so he brought cash (thousands of dollars) in a paper sack. When he opened his suitcase of Terry and Joan’s, he always had “everything” that he (or any of us) might need, including rolls of toilet tissue.

Coke had several Canaries in his house, and upon one visit to his Pennsylvania home, as he turned on the band organ, the canaries sang along with the music.

Coke loved his family, his band organs, the rallies and all of us. What a guy! I’ll always remember him.

Robbie Gray

Cynthia Craig . . .

Fran Wade . . .

In a period of 14 days in January we lost two extraordinary courageous ladies. Although they both fought the insidious Cancer for almost 3 years it won! Both were always positive never negative about their Cancer and they were too young!

Cynthia and Fran were teachers. Cynthia taught for 38 years in Illinois, Missouri, Kansas and Washington and was nominated and in the final cut for Walt Disney’s National teacher of the year while teaching for Special District Fran taught in the Akron

Public School System teaching business education at Kenmore High School. Her students respected her requirements for discipline and learning. I can only imagine the positive influence they were to so many young folks

They were organ grinders. Cynthia and Gary and Fran and Harold were true disciples of our beliefs that we entertain and educate the public with our music. Cynthia and Gary hosted 8 Rallies in Missouri and traveled to various states playing their organs and in costume. Fran and Harold were regulars at rallies wherever they were held. They totally enjoyed grinding the organs. The crowds would smile, laugh, sing and little children would hop about and dance!.

Cynthia and Gary often stopped at my house on their way to a meeting in the East. Those were memorable times and ensured a lasting friendship. If Gary could not attend a convention Cynthia was my roommate and yes, we did laugh a lot and maybe had too much fun! But, I am glad we did! I do not think she ever met a stranger

Fran was the Treasurer of Mid-Am when I was the Chair and I had the chance to totally admire her complete devotion to the Job. I honestly think she knew each member and oh my, speaking of organization, that was Fran. We also had too much fun! I am lucky as that was the beginning of our close friendship

Being a cancer survivor it was comfortable for Cynthia or Fran to talk or to email, to keep me updated on their progress, changes in medicine, or when things were difficult and we would share. Those are treasured moments and my admiration for my friends just grew and grew.

Cynthia Craig and Fran Wade were spunky, caring, funny, loyal, beautiful ladies, and they were too young to leave us.

Mary Pollock



Cynthia Craig



Fran Wade