

Meet Your Member

It was in the early years of our marriage when Bob became a firefighter with the Elyria, Ohio Fire Department, (about 1964) that he and a neighbor, who also loved the sound of organs, would discuss the fine mechanical abilities and beautiful tones that these amazing instruments could produce. Always in the discussion were the hopes that one day, we could build our own unit and share with others the joy of music!

In 1987, after Bob's retirement, we found a 1926 Chevy truck in Minnesota that had served as a grain hauler. Though it had seen better days, it was in remarkable shape. It was perfect, right down to the wooden spokes on the wheels, and we couldn't wait to get it home.

While we were restoring the truck, we contracted with Bob Stanoszek of East Cleveland to build us a unit to mount on the back of the 1926 truck. Our goal was to put together a rig that would resemble the old units that lead parades announcing the arrival of the circus. Within two weeks, Mr. Stanoszek called us to say he had found a calliope. A 1925 Tangley CA-43 that had



Bob and Nancy Mathewson pose with their golf cart-mounted Alan Pell street organ at a 2005 COAA rally.

been used at a family amusement park in San Antonio, Texas. He restored it to play flawlessly. When the truck and calliope were finally joined, it was a most remarkable sight! The whole thing looked as though it had popped right out of an old picture book. It was time to put it to a test in our first festival!

We took our labor of love to a parade in Huron, Ohio. It was a horridly hot day! The parade organizers placed us in front of the massive Budweiser Clydesdale horse team and then had to wait for

two hours, in the heat, for the parade to begin. Just as we were approaching the Judges stand, a woman stopped us so that she could invite us to a parade in her town. As Bob was reaching for the brochure she was handing him, he hit his finger on the spark advance lever and received a nasty cut. Just as I was looking for something to stop the blood, it happened...vapor lock! The truck died right there in the middle of the parade! Bob jumped

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COAA Web Site

Check out www.carouselorganassociation.org for the latest information about rallies, membership and COAA items for sale. Vice-president Larry Kern has taken over responsibility for the page and has done an outstanding job. This is a good site to refer your friends who are considering membership in the COAA.

2006 Organ Rally Dates

<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Date</u>
Circus Spectacular	Ringling Museum of Art Sarasota, FL	Allison Lakin (941-358-4267)	January 28-29, 2006
COAA Rally #1	Lake Winnepesquakah Amusement Park Chattanooga, TN	Charles Walker (404-892-0065)	May 25-29, 2006
COAA Rally #2	Knoebel's Grove Amusement Park Elysburg, PA	Tim Wagner (585-425-7072)	June 9-11, 2006
COAA Rally #3	Crossroads Village Flint, MI	Carl & Sharon Curtis (734-428-0268)	Mid-July, 2006
Mid-Am Rally (MBSI)	Warren, OH	Dave Calendine (810-869-4778)	July 27-28, 2006
COAA Rally #4	St. Joseph, MI	Ken Kasbaski (269-926-1063)	Aug. 25-27, 2006
COAA Rally #5	DeBence Museum Franklin, PA	Lynn Zillmer (814-432-8350)	Sept. 8-10, 2006



Figure 5. The special prize award, given to the Jäger & Brommer firm.



Figure 6. The Karakuri organ is displayed in the *Mainichi Shimbun* newspaper.

on a horse shooting arrows at a target—Kazuo Murakami noted on his MMD report of September 25, 2005 that the maker of this complicated entry was a retired automobile engineer).

Wolfgang’s entry was one of 10 that won the special prize (Figure 5). Besides the pride of winning in the contest it also rewarded the Jäger and Brommer firm 100,000 yen (approximately \$875.00).

Participants came from 127 countries and 15 million visitors attended the Expo. Toshiba was the special sponsor. Wolfgang attended with Adrian Oswald, who arranged the pieces played on the organ and accompanied Wolfgang on stage.

Wolfgang says the organs of this nature will be handcrafted in Waldkirch in 2006.

References:

Boyle, Kirsty, <http://www.karakuri.info/>
 Brommer, Wolfgang, personal communication, 2005
 Jäger & Brommer, <http://www.jaegerbrommer.de/Karakuri.html>
 Murakami, Kazuo, Mechanical Music Digest, September 25, 2005.
 World Karakuri Contest 2005, <http://www.karakuri2005.com/en/karakuri/>

The C.O.A.A. Spring Rally—Lake Winnepesquah

Lake Winnepesquah is hosting the 2006 spring rally on Memorial Day weekend May 25-29. The park was the sight of last year’s rally attended by many newcomers as well as some if the regulars. “Lake Winnie” is said to be one of the cleanest amusement parks in the nation and was featured on the P.B.S. special “Good Old Family Owned Amusement Parks.” Also featured on, Turner South cable “Blue Ribbon” show, last summer. The 1916 four row P.T.C. carousel is one of the largest in the nation, has become a park favorite and hopefully, if all goes well, the original carousel organ will play again. The park is located in north Georgia almost in Tennessee near Chattanooga. “Winnepesquah” Indian, for bountiful waters, is an amusement park around a lake filled with fresh water springs. It has been in continuous operation for over 80 years by the descendants of the founding family who strive to make the park a fun filled family destination. The band organs and crank organs of C.O.A.A. are sure to transport the guest at “Lake Winnie” on a trip down memory lane. Information on reservations and details will be sent out by separate mailer. The rally coordinator is Charles Walker 404-892-0065 (work) or 770-227-2597 (home).

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out and three spectators helped to push the truck. Being raised on the farm, I felt as though I should help. On the third attempt we got the truck running again. Bob is inside the truck telling me, in no uncertain terms to “Get in!” My choices were to hang onto the door and jump into the cab, or, let go and fall to the pavement. I chose to hang on and *jump*, after all, the parade must go on!

As I made my leap of faith, my sandals slid on the running board and I fell back off, somehow turning backwards and still hanging onto the top of the door I was now being dragged down the street. Meanwhile, Bob is still trying to tell me to “Get in!” The crowd loved it—applauding with widened eyes, amazed at the spectacle I had so unwillingly become. Bob, finally noticing my predicament, stopped the truck. Trying my best to maintain my composure, I got back in the truck and promptly told Bob that my contract did not call for that level of effort! Bob felt that I should have been wearing a clown suit. After returning home,

the first thing that Bob did was to install an electric fuel pump on the truck.

We took our unit as far west as Muscatine, Iowa for the Calliope Recall/Parade, and as far east as North Tonawanda, New York for the MBSI/Wurlitzer Meet. In our travels we have met many wonderful people and made new friendships with others that share in our love of music.

After 15 years and with growing health concerns, we eventually sold our unit to a gentleman who transported it to Los Angeles, CA. We have, since then, downsized to a 42-note Alan Pell band organ and mounted it on the back of a golf cart that has been decorated in patriotic bunting with Bob dressing up as “Uncle Sam.” We still enjoy going to various rallies and meets across the Midwest region, staying in touch with so many other people who, like ourselves, understand and appreciate the importance of preserving this part of musical history.

What a thrill this has been for us. We thank the entire COAA organization for sharing their knowledge, beautiful instruments and stories—truly a treasured lifetime experience.