

### Meet Your Member—Wally & Norma Venable

Wally Venable was born in Pittsburgh, PA; Norma in Rochester, NY. They met in college in New York State. In 1964 they moved to Morgantown, WV as graduate students and shortly after “bought the farm” which they still call home. Wally taught mechanical engineering and Norma wrote natural history materials at West Virginia University.

Wally bought a set of calliope plans from A.K. Brill about 40 years ago, but didn’t start to build it because it was a keyboard design and he can’t play keyboards. Intermittent (more-or-less accidental) exposure to mechanical music at the DeBence farm and at rallies in Portsmouth, ME and Marietta, Ohio kept his interest alive.

At the 2003 Ohio Bi-Centennial MBSI rally he picked up a COAA flyer. After joining COAA the Venables stopped at 2004 Franklin rally, and talked to the owner of the last organ playing on Sunday—Dave Wasson, of course. At that point Wally was thinking about building something like a Wurlitzer 150 playing from MIDI files.



Norma & Wally Venable at a rally in 2009.

In the fall of 2005 they visited a FOPS rally in Widnes, England. Wally saw a number of John Smith homebuilt organs on display and thought “I really could do that.” After returning home he ordered a Smith Senior 20 building information pack (John’s plans are rough, but the package includes a lot of good written information and a video) and shortly after he started cutting wood. By March, 2006 he was the owner of a working organ and a roll of music.

As the owner of a working 20er the Venables became regular and active COAA rally attendees. On the 2006 Organ Supply Industries tour in Erie which Dave Wasson arranged in conjunction with a Franklin, PA rally Norma saw the OSI 20 note organ, and ordered one, doubling their organ collection.

While the Venables enjoy the classic band organ repertoire, Wally also wanted some more modern music and music related to rally locations. He built a small punch (described in the *Carousel Organ*), is teaching himself a little about 20 note arranging, and playing his own rolls.

#### 2010 Organ Rally Dates\*

AMICA (Lady Liberty)	Long Island, NY	Vincent Morgan 718-479-2562	May 1, 2010
COAA Rally #1	Lake Winnepesaukah Chattanooga, TN	Ron & Glynn Keisler 803-356-4545	May 29-31, 2010
COAA Rally #2	John Damm Plaza Richland, WA	Dan Danko 509-783-7113	June 12, 2010
COAA Rally #3	Knoebels Grove Elysburg, PA	Tim Wagner 585-425-7072	June 12-13, 2010
COAA/AMICA Rally #4	Band Organ Recall/Wurlitzer Bldg. North Tonawanda, NY	Mike Walters 716-656-9583	July 10-11, 2010
COAA Rally #5	Merry-Go-Round Museum Sandusky, OH	Vicki Bout 419-626-6111	July 17-18, 2010
COAA Rally #6	“Country Carnival” Living History Farm Urbandale, IA	Jim Lester 515-233-2804	September 4-5, 2010
COAA Rally #7	“Historic Weston Street Organ Muster” Weston, MO	Gordie Davidson 913-683-3645	October 16-17, 2010

\*Call the rally host for more information regarding a rally.