

Meet Your Member

“My neighbor had an old player piano. It fascinated me so that I decided when I got out on my own, I had to have one of them,” recalls Leonard Railsback of Hutchinson, Kansas. “I’d mow the grass and do whatever I had to do to get in and see it.”

That early fascination led to a lifelong interest in mechanical music machines, now shared with his wife, Billie. Examples of many types of organs, music boxes, phonographs and pianos have passed through the Railsback collection during the last fifty years.

The first of the big organs was a Wurlitzer 150 Military Band Organ that had been found in Iowa. After it’s many years in storage, the organ needed a thorough restoration, and then it entertained the children and the community for years. When Len decided he really wanted an organ without the brass horns, the 150 was sold to Jasper Sanfilippo, who had it restored again and now plays it in his great hall.



Len and Billie Railsback stand along side their new Stinson organ, the *De Rehlsbach* dutch street organ, which they bring to every rally.

In the mid-1990's, Don Stinson completed De Rehlsbach dutch street organ for Len and Billie, and it now takes the highest priority during the summer months. They feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to travel with the organ to many organ rallies.

“Rallies are a great way to share our enjoyment of music,” Len comments. “Our many friends are also a big plus for going to the rallies.”

Winters in Kansas tend to be cold and windy, so the activity shifts inside where the Railsbacks enjoy their Steinway Duo-Art, the KT's, the

Reginaphone, the Polyphone and all the other mechanical instruments. Never one to sit idle, Len is currently installing a Pianodisc in a 7 foot Mason and Hamlin grand piano, which will take it's place in the music room.

Len and Billie enjoy demonstrating their collection to school groups and to friends. The welcome mat is always out and they invite you to stop in for a visit.

Kalamazoo Monkey Organ Rally

The Mid-America Chapter of the Musical Box Society International, **Monkey Organ Rally**, will be hosted by Bob and Cathy Cantine. The rally will be in Kalamazoo, Michigan on June 1-2, 2001.

Friday evening we will have the hospitality room and mart at the host hotel. Saturday we will be playing our organs on the mall in downtown Kalamazoo.

Saturday will be a big event in Kalamazoo—within a few blocks of the organ rally site will be two large arts and crafts shows along with a big Greek Festival. At 11:00 a.m. is Kalamazoo's “**DO-DA**” parade that is like a Mardi Gras parade. This will pass by the

organ rally site.

Saturday evening we will have our banquet and meeting in the Kalamazoo Air Zoo, a museum of World War II airplanes and displays. We will have until 11:00 p.m. to get into some flight simulators and fly planes. Also there will be staff members to give tours and answer questions.

If there are enough interested people and the weather is good, it is possible we could arrange flights in the old Ford tri-motor plane that the museum has restored.

For more information about the rally please contact Bob & Cathy Cantine.

Organ Rally Dates

<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Date</u>
Mid-America (MBSI) Monkey Organ Rally	Downtown Mall Kalamazoo, Michigan	Bob Cantine 517-857-3681	June 1 & 2, 2001
COAA Rally #1	Dutch Village Holland, Michigan	Terry Haughawout 419-454-3671	June 22-24, 2001
Mid-America (MBSI) Band Organ Rally	Honeywell Center Wabash, Indiana	Frank Rider 219-563-5030	July 19-21, 2001
COAA Rally #2	Bear Creek Village Bear Creek, Indiana	Terry Haughawout 419-454-3671	July 27-28, 2001
COAA Rally #3	Jamestown, NY	Dan Wilke 716-825-7266	Aug 24-26, 2001
COAA Rally #4	Delta Queen Gallipolis, OH	Chamber of Commerce	Aug 31-Sept. 1, 2001