

## Dean's Message for October, 2016



What a great time we all had listening to the sounds of a Wurlitzer theatre organ presented by guest artist Bill Vlasak at our opening meeting on September 19th. Our thanks to the Manasota Theatre Organ Society (MTOS) President John Fischer and Norm Arnold for making this experience possible.

My enjoyment and appreciation for theatre organ music harks back to my teens when I purchased an LP of Christmas music played by Dick Leibert on the Wurlitzer at Radio City Music Hall in New York City. I was mesmerized by the beautiful and unique sounds. Although I've since exchanged the LP for a CD, I still enjoy that album every Christmas season.

The September meeting also brought forth another memory from my high school days. A friend and I would go to a downtown theater on

Saturday mornings and play the 12 rank Wurlitzer housed there. We still laugh about the fact that the theater manager would not turn on the house lights, so the only light source for our music was the lights on the stop rail and whatever light might reach the orchestra pit from the entrance doors at the back of the theater. We had to lean to one side to let the light from the rear of the theater reach the music rack. After that initial visit we took flashlights along!

If you want to know more about MTOS you can visit them on the web at [www.mtos.us](http://www.mtos.us). The history and specifications of the Grace Church Wurlitzer are there.

Another site you might want to visit is that of the American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS) [www.atos.org](http://www.atos.org). Check out the link to performances that you can listen to on your computer, tablet or smartphone. The July 2017 ATOS National Convention will be headquartered in Tampa with a full day at Grace Church in Sarasota, so you might want to visit the ATOS website occasionally to check on convention details. I heard that it might be possible to register for a single day!

Missed the first chapter meeting? No problem! There are still six great programs for you to attend this season!

*Dwane Grace*  
Dean