

# WPAA NEWSLETTER

“A KALEIDOSCOPE OF THE ARTS”

Volume 13, Issue 2

June, 2007



MELODEON



PREACHER'S ORGAN



DRUM ORGANS  
See story on Page 3

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## The Duttons Make a Return Appearance for the 38th Season

The WPAA program season is set to begin on Sunday, September 23 with the **Doug Talley Quartet**, a critically acclaimed acoustic jazz ensemble that will perform *Cole Porter Songbook* at the Gateway, Oberlin.

The multi-Grammy Award winning Western music group, **Riders in the Sky**, will present a show of rich American music traditions of the legendary cowboy singers on October 1 in Colby.

On October 11 and 12 the **Wichita Children's Theatre** will do *The Little Red Hen* in four area schools and also a public evening performance. This group is a perennial favorite of schools because of their interaction with children.

Clark Buehling and **The SkirtLifters**, an old-time string band and that specializes in ragtime and square dance music, will do a public performance at Goodland on October 28 and school show the next day.

On November 4 The **Blue and Gray Brass Brigade**, a seven-piece Civil War-era music ensemble, will perform 19th century brass band music which includes many patriotic songs, for the general public at Atwood and a school show the following morning.

**Table for 5**, will do a holiday show of refreshingly different and well-polished vocal selections, November 30 at Colby.

The second half of the season will resume on Tuesday, February 5 at Colby with the **Harlem Gospel Singers** who share their invigorating and soulful gospel music in a wonderful show for the general public.

On February 18 and 19 the **Wichita Children's Theatre** will present an American history lesson in the musical, *Yankee Doodle*, in area schools and a public performance..

On February 24, **940 Dance Company** will perform a show of various musical/dance selections for the public at Oakley and a school show the next morning.

**Michael Cooper, the Masked Marvel**, will present a family show using a variety of masks on March 2.

**The Duttons**, a talented family of musicians who have their own theatre in Branson, will do a school show and an evening public performance in Oakley on March 27. The show will include vocals, violins and other instruments, yodeling and dancing.

**RiverCity Ramblers**, “the best Dixieland jazz that the St. Louis Riverfront has to offer”, will perform for the public at Hoxie on April 12 and do a workshop.

The harp trio of Tabitha Reist Steiner on harp, Dr. James Hall on flute, and Julie Whitton on viola, will present a program of varied selections at Sharon Springs on April 27 and a school show the following morning..

The final currently scheduled season concert will be on May 4. The **Bethany College Handbell Ensemble** will do a concert of handbell music.

To be announced later are the Tumbleweed Barbershop Chorus, The First Infantry Division Band and possibly the Navy Band.

The locations for some of the programs have not been set at the time of this writing and as is always the case it is possible that a program could be canceled and date or time changed. It is also possible that additional programs could be added to the schedule. We make every effort to inform the public of any changes through press releases to area news media, this newsletter and our website.

Provide us with an email address, and we will email you a reminder about WPAA programs and changes several days ahead of the

## President's Column

Traveling home from a Memorial Day weekend spent with family, a radio commercial caught my attention. The essence of the Kansas Travel and Tourism spot: "Kansas is a great place to call home." I couldn't agree more!

My husband and I have debated the merits of moving closer to where our daughters live after we retire. It would be great to be where there is "better" shopping, sporting events, and entertainment. Yes, the first two may be true—but not the entertainment option. One very important aspect of wherever we call home is an opportunity



to experience musical and performance art. Thanks to WPAA, we have a wonderful venue each year at our pleasure. For a yearly membership as low as \$40 per person, we can experience world-renowned talent in our northwest Kansas neighborhood.

As a teacher, I am just beginning my summer break, but by August I will be anxious to go back to school and become involved in the fall events that revolve around school. Part of the excitement will include the start of the 38<sup>th</sup> WPAA program year.

Enjoy your summer with outdoor activities, but come back "home" to WPAA in the fall.

Best wishes,

*Deb Kohn*

## Oakley Bank Supports the Arts

*By Deb Kohn*

Targeting customers 55 years of age and over, The Farmers State Bank of Oakley offers their "Gold" Account. One of the many benefits of having a "Gold" Account is the discounted offer of Western Plains Arts Association's season tickets. A "Gold" Account holder can purchase a WPAA season ticket for 50% of the ticket price and The Farmers State Bank pays the balance. The Farmers State Bank has offered this benefit to their

"Gold" Account customers for the last three seasons to help support WPAA's efforts to bring quality performances to northwest Kansas.

## Annual Meeting Held

The annual meeting of Western Plains Arts Assn. was the first Saturday of February. Deb Kohn, Oakley, was re-elected president, Althea Lebow, St. Francis, president elect and Carole Luedders, Atwood, secretary. David Leopold, CPA, Hoxie, continues as treasurer.

Mary Beth Akers, Weskan, is media correspondent and Pat Ziegelmeier is executive director.

## Board Member Profile

*By Lee Nichols*

There is no moss growing under President-elect Althea Lebow's feet because events keep happening swiftly for this talented lady. Last winter Althea and her husband, Ralph, purchased Video Connection in Saint Francis. The business rents DVDs, videos and has balloons for "all occasions." Shortly after, Althea was named Branch Manager of the local BANKWEST OF KANSAS. Althea also organized and leads the Saint Francis Weight Watchers group.

In May 2007, Althea opened "Althea's Scrap N Chat," holding scrap camps, classes and retailing scrap-booking supplies.

Always Look To Her Energy & Activity wherever she is. Besides serving as President-elect of Western Plains Art Association, she sings, is the choir director at her church and is recognized for taking active leadership roles as a community leader.

Congratulations and "hats off" to Althea and husband, Ralph.



## Wild Rose Poet has New CD

Board member Helene Landenberger, St Francis, has a new CD out "When the Whip was the Way West". It consists of Wild Rose poems and songs. It is available in St Francis stores or from Helene.

## Rhea Organ Museum

By Bill Mai

On main street of Sharon Springs, half a block down the street from First National Bank, is an old brick building that has housed many of the town's businesses for more years than most can remember. That building now is the home of a true treasure, a reed organ museum.



In past issues we have featured museums that are mostly about history of the area with some that have outstanding collections of special interest or even a temporary exhibit. The Rhea Reed Organ Museum is unique in that it features such a large display of one kind of item only. Every piece is a reed (or pump) organ, a musical instrument that creates sound by air moving through reeds, as does a clarinet or saxophone.

The owner of the museum is Richard (Dick) Rhea, a lifetime resident of Wallace County. He became interested in restoring old organs when asked to haul one to the town dump from a church clean up more than half a century ago. He hauled it off to his home instead. In his retirement he happened to find the time and interest to restore old organs and the pastime has become a local marvel. You really need to hear Dick tell the stories about how all of this came about,

and why and how each organ came into his possession.

Mr. Rhea has 65 completely restored working reed organs and the museum building houses 48 of them. The others are on display at various places in the county and the Rhea home. Dick has 14 in the process of restoration or in waiting. Although he has several organs of the same brand name, he has no two of the same model. All except one from Canada were built in the United States. He has one from England waiting restoration.

The oldest instrument on display is the MELODEON ORGAN 1848 acquired at a Colby auction. It has a single pump pedal and a 2<sup>nd</sup> pedal for volume control. Volume on a reed organ is controlled by opening and closing swell doors on the reed cage. The newest organ is the ESTEY PUMP ORGAN 1918 acquired from Golden, Colorado.

Perhaps the most unique instrument is an 1895 Kimball paper roll player organ acquired in Garden City. Dick has been told it is the only known one in existence. Patent records in his possession show only 3 ever built. The records contain copies of all the diagrams and patent information submitted by inventor Frederick W Hedgend and that the patent rights were sold to the Kimball Company. The top half of the organ plays from the rolls and

the bottom half from the keyboard. Dick was not able to completely restore the roll section.

A 1911 preacher's organ folds into a box-like carrying case. Two roller organs are desktop size and play from drums or "cobs". THE CABINET, 1885 and GEM ROLLER ORGANS 1899 have vacuum pumps operated by a hand crank. The GEM originally sold for \$3.95 and the "cobs" for 18 cents.

A large organ that might have been used in a church is the "MASON & HAMLIN ORGAN" 1893



acquired from Portola, California. It has two keyboards and has the usual pedal pump but also has an additional side pump in which a lever is inserted and operated by an assistant.

The museum is open Sunday afternoons and on call. Dick Rhea is happy to give tours to individuals and groups on other days and times. Call the home number of Dick and Bernice 785-852-4951 or his cell phone at 821-1101 for an appointment. There is no admission charge and the story Dick can tell you about each of the instruments on display is worth more than any price of admission.

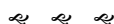
## Community Calendars

### Colby

"Picnic in the Park" each Wednesday June 13 through July will feature a different local artist at Fike Park. All are welcome—bring a sack lunch, a lawn chair, a blanket, the kids and listen to some very good music.

July 20—22, Popular Midwest Blue

Grass Festival, 'Pickin' on the Plains", features many local groups and blue grass groups from across the country, Colby fairgrounds.



### Goodland

The Carnegie Arts Center, located at 120 W 12th is open Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

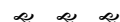
June; Nancy Besa, Overland Park, photography

July; Gallery Show for Relay for Life, featuring art done by participants

August; Model Show, by local model builders

September; Local Photography Show,

October; Laurie Albin, WaKeeney, watercolors



## WPAA Board Members

### Cheyenne County

*St Francis*; Helene Landenberger, \*Althea Lebow, Lee Nichols

### Decatur County

*Oberlin*; \*Connie Grafel

*Jennings*; \*Lynn Tacha

### Gove County

*Grainfield*, \*Alma Golden, Denise Packard

*Grinnell*, \*Leona Dickman

*Quinter*, Keith and Sharon DuBois, \*Arla & Allaire Homberg

### Logan County

*Oakley*, Deb Kohn, Shane Stephenson, \*Marguerite Walz

*Winona*, \*Jean Lowe

### Rawlins County

*Atwood*, Millie Fisher, \*Elfrieda Laufer, Carole Luedders, Charles Peckham,

*McDonald*, \*Joan Tongish, Eleanor Swihart

### Sheridan County

*Hoxie*, Ruth Currier, Lois Davis, \*Doreen Kennedy, David Leopold, treasurer,

### Sherman County

*Goodland*, Deandra Shields \*Eric Yonkey

### Thomas County

*Brewster*, \*Vi Bowman, Maxine Starkey

*Colby*, \*Joan Albers, Kevin Juenemann, Amie Kendrick,

Marge Miller, Kirk Nielsen, Rev. Carol Rahn, Kathy Sherlock,

*Colby Community College*, \*Pat Ziegelmeier, Executive Director

*Rexford*, Janell Antholz

### Wallace County

*Sharon Springs*, \*William & Wilma Mai

*Wallace*, \*Cecil & Jayne Pearce

*Weskan*, \*Vernon & Mary Beth Akers

\* Denotes local contact person

## Annual Membership Drive Under Way

Board members from the various communities are contacting current members and potential new members during June and July. Any business or individual subscribing as a Sponsor, Patron, Sustaining or Benefactor will be recognized in the 38th Season WPAA Program Booklet. You can make a secure payment at [www.wpaa.us/join.htm](http://www.wpaa.us/join.htm)

The WPAA Newsletter is Published 3 times yearly by Western Plains Arts Association for its members and friends. We welcome your comments and suggestions. Send to WPAA Newsletter, 2160 Field Rd, Sharon Springs, KS 67758

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