

Meet Your Member

As a child my two younger sisters and I were told by our mother to meet at the merry-go-round should we ever get lost each year during the local town festival. I don't think we ever got lost, but that instruction changed for me later when I was old enough to run around the festival by myself to: "meet mother at the merry-go-round at a certain going-home time." I think I was always on time, but still have fun yet today accusing my mother of always being late and this is probably what caused my addiction to live band organ music.

At age 12, a ride operator lifted me over the fencing of a portable Allan Herschell Merry-Go-Round. My wish had been granted—now I could see how a wooden box sitting by the center pole, was making such wonderful music. Later in life I would learn that this band organ, that belonged to the Gooding Amusement Company, was probably a Wurlitzer 146A with a 153 Façade. At age 15, I was recording unfamiliar wooden band organ boxes with a reel-to-reel tape recorder. A year later with some financing from my very supportive Dad, money I earned and a neighbor's help (who was a welder), I was building a lighted and motorized merry-go-round in the backyard. I had to do this, I guess, to play the recorded music I had obtained and, my Grandpa built me a 100-watt amplifier to do the



Who am I? Well, I own a lot of Stinson organs, I travel a long way to a lot of rallies and I have a friend, Pee Jay!

job just right! It became so popular that even today I am best remembered in Jackson, Ohio for that merry-go-round (by the way, Grandpa was also asked to build an amplifier with less wattage).

Around the time I graduated from high school, I saw the unbelievable at the Circleville, Ohio Pumpkin Show—the Gooding Ruth Organ. Later having somewhat better finances and a driver's license, I found myself on several occasions chasing the Gooding Ruth Organ around Ohio to see it again and again. I clearly remember the goals

I had in my mind as I entered the Air Force in 1963: I would hopefully see a day that I could own my own band organ. As I look back I cannot remember a time that I have not been interested and mesmerized with band organs and often wonder how one can stay motivated to save money to buy organs and not waver over a period of nearly 50 years. It became a passion that required at times significant sacrifices, especially while raising a family. My mother's thoughts today are simply, "what would have happened if she had said, meet me at the ferris wheel?"

Who am I? Well, if you still don't know, just ask Pee Jay. Or " 'Til we meet at the Merry-Go-Round!"

Larry Kern

COAA Organ Rally — Bearcreek Farms

The second COAA rally of the year will be held at the Bearcreek Farms in Bryant, Indiana on July 27 - 29, 2001. Playing time will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and 11:00 a.m. till ? on Sunday.

Bearcreek Farms is situated on 200 acres and offers an antique village with plenty of shopping as well as an attractive indoor water park with huge waterslides and miniature golf. There is also the Tin Lizzie Museum with a collection of 25 old cars.

Registration is \$5.00 per couple and members should respond to Kim Pontius at 765-348-0107. Cabins have been set aside for COAA members at \$55.00 per night — reservations should be made directly with Bear Creek at 1-800-288-7630.

2001 Organ Rally Dates

<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Date</u>
Mid-America (MBSI) Band Organ Rally	Honeywell Center Wabash, Indiana	Frank Rider 219-563-5030	July 19-21, 2001
COAA Rally #2	Bearcreek Village Bryant, Indiana	Kim Pontius 765-348-0107	July 27-28, 2001
Heart of America (AMICA) Band Organ Rally	Crescent Hotel Eureka Springs, AR	Marty Roenigk 800-671-6333	Aug 17-18, 2001
COAA Rally #3	Jamestown, NY	Dan Wilke 716-825-7266	Aug 24-26, 2001
COAA Rally #4	Delta Queen Gallipolis, OH	Amanda Crouse 800-765-6482	Aug 31-Sept. 1, 2001
Organ Grinder Show and Tell Gateway/HOA (AMICA)	The City Museum St. Louis, MO.	Cynthia Craig 314-771-1244	Oct. 19-20, 2001