

Visit our website at [www.pstos.org](http://www.pstos.org)

# PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Published monthly by Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society, a non-profit organization  
furthering the appreciation, preservation and use of the Theatre Pipe Organs of yesteryear

Volume 12 No. 8

August 2001



For

an evening of  
entertainment,  
log on to

[www.pstos.org](http://www.pstos.org)

where you'll find  
nearly 600 pages  
of our Northwest  
Theatre Organ  
history.

17,440 folks have  
visited the site  
since 6/1/98.

Join the  
crowd!

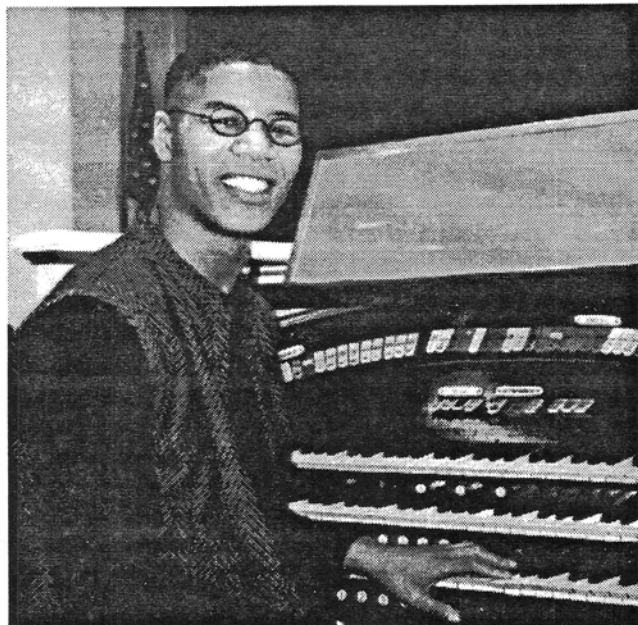
## INSIDE—

- Coming events
- The Alexander Pantages story
- The latest about our Scholarship recipient
- Much more!

## Reserve NOW for another famous Buffet Lunch & Concert at Yelm!

Featuring

# Tedde Gibson



Playing the beautiful  
**3/10 Robert Morton  
Theatre Pipe Organ**  
**Saturday Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Lunch at 1:00  
with concert following**

**St. Columban Church  
Social Hall in Yelm**

**T**EDDE GIBSON cut his professional organ teeth playing at Tacoma Pizza & Pipes and is well-known in theatre organ circles around the Seattle area. He is regarded as the 'Official PSTOS Organist' at Franklin High School. He studied organ performance at the University of Washington and plays regularly for a local church. He has performed for PSTOS at Haller Lake, always receiving high praise.

This is a chance to once again enjoy the fabulous luncheon buffet prepared and served by the ladies of St. Columban Church, as well as hear Tedde in a full concert on this outstanding organ!

— \$10 per person includes buffet lunch & concert —

**Ticket orders MUST be received by Sept. 8<sup>th</sup> to plan for food.  
Map, driving instructions, and ticket order form are on page 6.**

**Order your tickets today!**

**PUGET SOUND PIPELINE**

Vol. 12, No 8 – August 2001

Published monthly by

Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society  
6521 N.E. 191st St.  
Kenmore, WA 98028-3453

Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society is a non-profit organization furthering the appreciation, restoration, and use of the historic Theatre Pipe Organs of the 1920s, through education.

**OFFICERS****President**

Barbara Graham, 206-525-7859

**Immediate Past Pres.**

Marilyn Schrum, 206-364-5542

**Vice President**

Dan Johansson, 206-282-7954

**Secretary**

Bob Zat, 206-329-1826

**Treasurer**

Norman Miller, 206-784-7154

**Board Members**

Andy Crow, 360-357-8939

Clint Meadway, 360-805-9794

Les Lehne, 360-943-7614

Bill Keller, 360-456-8269

**COMMITTEES****Pipeline Editors**

Russ &amp; JoAnn Evans, 425-485-5465

**Pipeline Online Website**

Tom Blackwell, 206-784-9203

**Membership** – Doug Owen, 253-566-6734**Publicity & Promotion, Tacoma**

Doug Owen, 253-566-6734

**Nat'l Magazine Reporter** – Jo Ann Evans**HLIC Liaison** – Bob Zat, 206-329-1826**PSTOS Organ Maintenance**

Bob Zat, Bob White

**Haller Lake Keys**

Bob Zat

**Franklin High School Liaison**

Jackie Cedarholm, 206-282-5680

**Sunshine Chairman**

Diane Whipple, 253-735-3025

**Hospitality, H.L.C.C.**

Ellen Sullivan, 206-365-7554

**Listing of non-PSTOS events  
in the Pipeline**

PSTOS, upon request, will list non-conflicting non-PSTOS theatre organ events in the "Other Events" column of the two Pipelines immediately preceding the event, providing Pipeline editors receive sufficient prior written notification. Venue, artist, type of event, date, and contact information will comprise the included information.

**Advertising in the Pipeline**

Classified-type ads for member-owned electronic, electric, or pipe organs, and/or pipe organ parts, will be published at no charge. Please limit copy to include brief description, contact name and phone number. Prices will not be listed. Ads may be edited for content and length. Mail ad copy to address above. Other advertising is not accepted.

# President's Message



Sixty-some of us thoroughly enjoyed the 'Summer Social' on July 14th, as Russ and JoAnn Evans so graciously opened their home, and Wurlitzer, to us. Don Feely presented a very well rounded and fun concert with commentary to match. The weather cooperated nicely allowing a social get-together after Don's concert. Thanks Russ and JoAnn. Again next year maybe?

Tom Blackwell has arranged with the Paramount Theatre for PSTOS to make our presence known at their silent movie series. The Paramount even sets up a very nice table in the lobby where we display our signs and brochures. I had the opportunity to 'man' our table at one of the movies and it was fun! I was pleasantly surprised to find that many people approach the table with questions about us, pipe organs, or want to tell you that their father played a pipe organ for silent movies in Montana until the 'talkies' came along. Tom has been our representative at most of these silent movie presentations but he's just one person. We'd like to establish a bank of PSTOS members who would be interested in volunteering to help promote our cause at events and various venues. Your PSTOS Board is discussing a portable video kiosk that could be set up almost anywhere. The possibilities are endless. If you'd like to help please call Tom or any Board Member. Thanks.

In September we will, again, visit St. Columban Church in Yelm where we'll hear Tedde Gibson play Father

Continued next column—

# PSTOS Coming Events

## **Tedde Gibson at the Pipe Organ, plus the Famous Yelm Luncheon Buffet**

Reserve now for another memorable day at Yelm, with TEDDE GIBSON at the Robert Morton, and the famous buffet lunch served by the ladies at St. Columban Church. For tickets—page 6.  
**September 15th, 1:00 PM**

## **Another fun PSTOS Halloween Party**

A fun event at Haller Lake Community Club. More details later.  
**Sunday, Oct. 21, 2 PM**

## **Annual PSTOS Christmas Party**

Another happy holiday event with great entertainment and marvelous food. Haller Lake Community Club  
**Sun., Dec. 2, 2 PM**

## **Owen Cannon to perform**

Our Scholarship recipient in recital at Trinity Lutheran Church, 6215 196th St. SW, Lynnwood. See details next page and plan now to support our young scholarship whiz kid!  
**Sun., Aug 19, 7 PM**

## **Watch this space for all the PSTOS events being planned for 2002!**

## **There will be no Board Meeting in August**

Terrance's beautiful Robert Morton. We'll also partake of the 'Church Ladies famous Luncheon Buffet' – announced by the 'dinner bell.' Don't miss this one – coming up Saturday, September 15th.

—Barbara Graham

## Full house enjoyed the July Summer Social with DON FEELY

It was standing room only as Don Feely presented an extremely enjoyable program on the Evans Wurlitzer July 14th. Included in his offerings were theatre organ favorites, tunes reminiscent of his days as staff organist at Portland's *Organ Grinder Restaurant*, and favorite classical numbers. He did a marvelous job of utilizing the resources of the instrument including the many orchestral sounds, piano, and the various percussions.

Don leads an active musical life in

the Portland area where he teaches music to middle school children, is music director at a large church, and also engages in "extra-curricular" directing of adult live theatre groups. No wonder he has such a varied repertoire!

Don and his wife, Heidi, were able to arrange care for their four youngsters, enabling them to make the weekend a "mini-getaway."

We look forward to hearing Don again and hope we won't have to wait too long. Thank you, Don, for a terrific program!



TOP RIGHT...Don Feely at the Evans Wurlitzer.  
 ABOVE ...A full house enjoys the program. RIGHT...the weather is perfect for socializing on the patio following the concert.

## OTHER Events of Interest

### Pizza & Pipes at Wenatchee Museum with Brad Miller

The "Good Old Days" are back with requests, sing-alongs & silent movies plus an all-you-can-eat pizza buffet at 127 So. Mission St. in downtown Wenatchee. Phone 509-664-3340 for information.

Sat., Aug 18, 4:30-7 PM

### Hear our Scholarship Student!

Our organ scholarship student, Owen Cannon, will be presenting a recital in Trinity Lutheran Church, 6215 196th St SW, Lynnwood, on Sunday evening August 19th at 7:00 PM. The organ is a Martin Pasi organ and is a very fine instrument in a very interesting contemporary setting. Owen, who will be starting his senior year in high school in September, has been a very busy young man this year. He performed in Buffalo, NY, in February and was able to take a lesson from David Higgs at Eastman School of Music. In March he won the Tri-Cities Chapter AGO performance competition and then played in the student organ competition at the Regional AGO Convention in Eugene, OR, in July. In April he took part in the recording of a Vespers program at Walla Walla College, where he is studying organ. He is an extremely talented and versatile organist and you will enjoy his technique on the organ. Come and hear him perform!



Owen Cannon

### In Memory Of Mary C. Nelson

Enthusiastic PSTOS member, Mary Nelson, died peacefully at home June 8th after a battle with cancer. Mary especially enjoyed Society social events and often attended with fellow PSTOS member Kathy Swedberg. Sincere sympathy is extended to her family and friends.

### Paramount schedules international silent films

The Paramount's fall silent film series will include:

- Oct 29, *Nosferatu*, Germany, 1922
- Nov 5, *Blackmail*, Hitchcock, silent later converted to sound, Great Britain, 1929
- Nov 12, *Man With Movie Camera*, 1929
- Nov 19, *Madame Dubarry*, 1919

## Pages From The Past...

### Alexander Pantages, theater impresario, launched his career in Seattle nearly 100 years ago.

Excerpts from a Seattle Times article by Chet Skreen, published February 6, 1983. From the Wm. Bunch archives.

Alexander Pantages was a theatre legend in his lifetime, who became the multimillionaire king of vaudeville theatres and head of the largest independently owned circuit of motion pictures and vaudeville houses in the United States. But he came from humble origins.

As a virtually penniless Greek immigrant, Mr. Pantages launched his theatrical empire on a very modest basis in Seattle in 1902.

He could neither read nor write English very well and relied on close friends, trusted employees, family members and legal experts to handle his personal correspondence and to read complicated business agreements and documents to him. He never had a partner and never sold stock in his enterprises.

Born on the island of Andros somewhere between 1864 and 1872 (his birth was unrecorded), he left home at age 9 and over the next few years held an assortment of jobs including cabin boy, bootblack, newsboy, waiter and laborer on the Panama Canal when the French went broke in digging the waterway.

Taking an active interest in entertainment and theatricals at an early age, he passed up few dance halls at ports of call on two oceans as he made his way to America. Though he had no formal education, he soon learned what the public wanted in entertainment.

About 1885 he arrived in San Francisco where he took a job in a beer garden. He also worked as an usher, passed out programs and could be termed a theater utility man. He branched out and became a manager in a small way, taking shows and prizefighters to small towns around San Francisco Bay. He later related his intention at that time to own a great circuit.

As with thousands of other fortune hunters, Pantages was caught up by gold fever in the Klondike strike of 1898. Landing in Skagway with no money, he took a job as a waiter in the leading variety hall in Dawson. There he assembled a small stock company which produced such standbys as "East Lynne" and "Uncle Tom's Cabin." He joined several fellow dance-hall employees and performers to open a place of their own. The venture failed.

Pantages induced his on-again, off-again lady love, "Klondike Kate" Rockwell, the Queen of the Yukon, to invest her money in the enterprise and he would manage it. They called their place the Orpheum and soon were offering the gold-seekers the best show in town.

A newfangled toy called motion pictures did not



Near the end of his life, Pantages posed in Los Angeles with son Lloyd, Mrs. Pantages, and daughter Carmen.

amount to much, and that's how Pantages regarded them. In one of his few errors of theatrical judgment he said the flickering films never would replace live entertainment.

In full operation, the Orpheum was said to have grossed the then incredible sum of \$8,000 a day. The end of the gold rush was in sight and, accordingly, in the spring of 1902, Pantages sailed for Seattle, leaving the gold fields behind. He landed here with a grubstake of \$4,000, which he parlayed into millions of dollars in the next 30 years.

Upon his arrival from Alaska, he didn't lose any time in opening a theatre on Second Avenue. He turned the 200-seater into a "cozy" combination of motion picture and vaudeville house, spending \$35,000 on the place, mostly on credit. "People thought I was a Klondike millionaire," he said. "I didn't argue with them"

His Crystal Theatre proved such a success, he opened a second, named after him and with double the seating capacity of his first Seattle house. In 1907 he would open a third, named The Lois, after his wife of two years.

## Pages From The Past...continued

In 1915 he opened the second theatre bearing his name at Third Avenue and University Street — a theatre that later would be known as The Palomar.

A major factor in Pantages' operation was B. Marcus Priteca, the renowned Seattle architect, who eventually designed more than 30 Pantages theaters across the land, and became the theatre man's closest advisor. Priteca once said that Pantages, despite his lack of education, "had a lot of culture and class. He was the perfect host in his home."

By 1909, Pantages' empire, through purchase of other circuits, extended from Western Canada to Los Angeles and as far east as Missouri. Eventually the chain took in Newark, N.J., and Memphis. On some occasions he paid \$1,500 a week to performers in houses where admission charges were in the 10-, 20- and 30-cent range.

The decade beginning in 1910 was an era of unprecedented theatre building. Shortly before World War I, Pantages' major competitor fell on hard times and Pantages was more than willing to step in and take over.

By 1926, with 30 playhouses under his direct ownership and 42 others under his control, one show-business journal declared that Pantages stood out as perhaps the dominant figure in the entertainment world.

In the early 1920s Pantages moved to Los Angeles to be near his talent-booking headquarters in the rapidly developing motion-picture capital. As a personal monument he built the Hollywood Pantages at Hollywood and Vine in 1928.

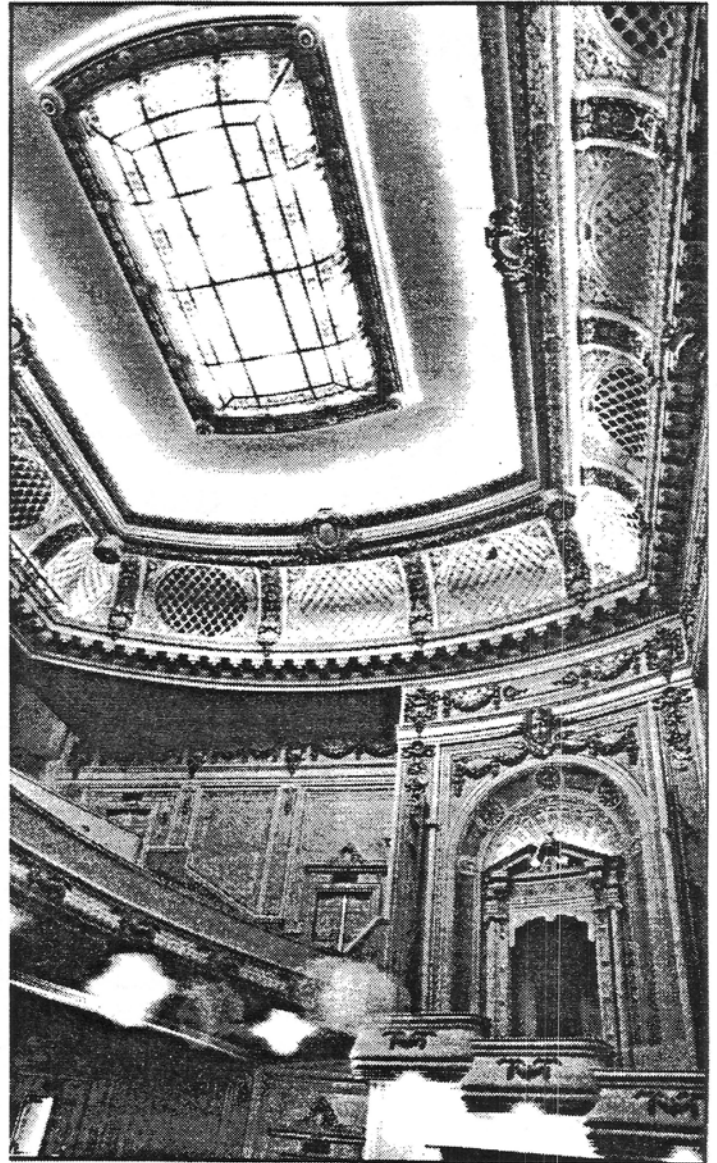
Pantages continued actively as a circuit owner-operator and vaudeville booker until 1929, but by that time vaudeville was on its last legs. Just before the Wall Street crash he sold his circuit to Radio-Keith-Orpheum, some say for \$24 million but others say it was much less.

Pantages died in 1936 in his Los Angeles mansion.

Ironically, Seattle, where the theatrical giant got his start, no longer has any Pantages theatre. The Coliseum has been turned into a clothing store. The Palomar was torn down in the '60s to make way for a parking garage.

Pantages once was quoted as saying:

"When I select a show bill, I realize that I have many different tastes to cater to. There are the children who like animal acts; there are the young people who like singing and dancing acts, and there are the older people who prefer playlets. On our bills we must cater to them all." He often posed as an usher, or some other employee, so he could ask patrons what they thought about his acts.



The interior of the restored Pantages Theatre in Tacoma

Theatrical historians are generally agreed that, apart from his driving ambition, the reason for Pantages' success was that he refused to judge his acts — he let the audience do it for him. His philosophy was that theirs is the taste he had to please.

## What happened to the pipe organs from these two theatres?

The 4/32 Wurlitzer from the Coliseum Theatre (Opus 170, 1918) was purchased from Mrs. Scott Bullitt, owner of KING-TV, by Bob Koons for \$1.00! It was installed first in his Lake City home, and later in Big Bob's Pizzeria Restaurant in Burien. After Mr. Koons' death, the organ was sold to Dennis Hedberg [Portland Organ Grinder] and most of the instrument was used in the Denver Organ Grinder Restaurant. After it closed the organ was broken up and parted out.

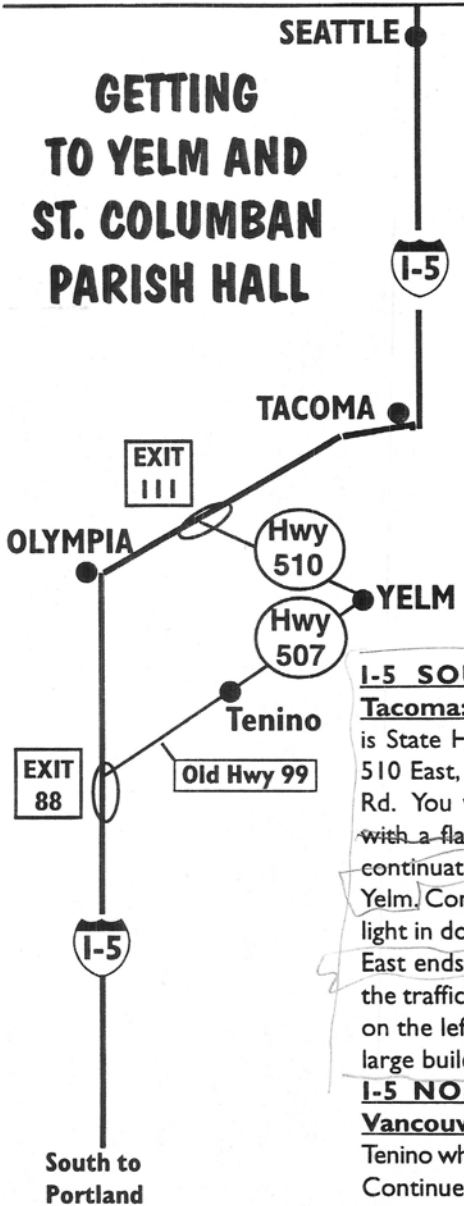
To learn more about the Coliseum Theatre and organ, and to view numerous fascinating photos, go to the following page on the PSTOS.org website: <http://www.pstos.org/instruments/wa/seattle/coliseum.htm>

The 2/16 Robert Morton originally installed in the Pantages Theatre — later renamed the Palomar — was moved to Midway Roller Rink in Tacoma, and later to Rollerland in Renton, which belonged to

now deceased PSTOS member Bert Lobberegt. The rink and the organ burned in 1962.

The Palomar's second organ, a 2/11 Kimball, was moved there from Seattle's Capitol Theatre. In 1959-'60 it was sold to Jim Collier who installed it in the hay loft of his barn at Martha Lake between Seattle and Everett. This instrument was later donated to a church through the National Organ Trust.

# GETTING TO YELM AND ST. COLUMBAN PARISH HALL



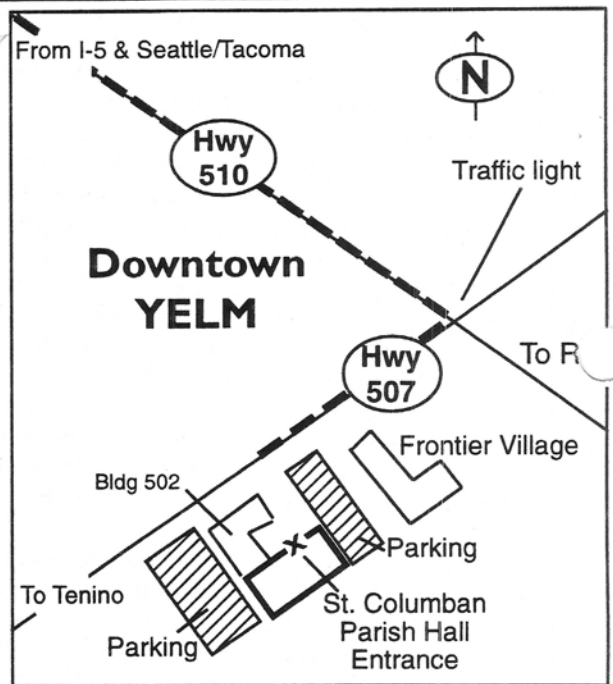
**PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY**  
 Russ & Jo Ann Evans, Newsletter Editors  
 6521 N.E. 191st  
 Kenmore, WA 98028-3453

PRSRT STD  
 Non-Profit Org.  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Bothell, WA  
 Permit #287

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**I-5 SOUTHBOUND from Seattle/Tacoma:** Take Exit 111 onto Marvin Rd. which is State Highway 510 East. Drive 1.5 miles on 510 East, crossing Martin Way and Steilacoom Rd. You will reach a 4-way stop intersection with a flashing light—TURN LEFT. This is the continuation of Hwy 510 which takes you to Yelm. Continue on Hwy 510 East to the traffic light in downtown Yelm. (At this point Hwy 510 East ends and becomes Hwy 507. Turn right at the traffic light onto Hwy 507. The Parish Hall is on the left 0.3 mi. from the traffic light. It is the large building set back from the highway.

**I-5 NORTHBOUND from Portland/Vancouver:** Take Exit 88 onto Old Hwy 99 to Tenino where it becomes Hwy 507 Northbound. Continue on Hwy 507 through Rainier and on to Yelm, approximately 20 miles. Just before the intersection with Hwy 510 in Yelm, the Parish Hall will be on your right.



## TICKET ORDER FORM • Lunch & Tedde Gibson Concert • Sat. Sept. 15 Admission \$10 per person

**PLEASE CHECK ONE**

- A stamped self-addressed envelope is enclosed—  
Please mail my tickets
- I will pick up my tickets at the door—please hold them for me there.

**HERE'S MY ORDER FOR:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Event tickets @ \$10 \$\_\_\_\_\_

Total amt. enclosed: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: **PSTOS**

Mail your order to:  
**PSTOS Tickets**  
 c/o Norman Miller  
 2644 N.W. Esplanade  
 Seattle, WA 98117-2527

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip+4 \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

### IMPORTANT

Orders MUST be received by Sept. 8. We're unable to process phone orders. Orders received without a self-addressed stamped envelope will be held to be picked up at the door. Thanks!