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# 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. PSTOS is a Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society.

Volume 20 No. 9

September 2009

A Chapter of American Theatre Organ Society

## INSIDE—

News from  
President Dave - 2

Coming Events - 2

Regional  
Organ Events - 3

Roosevelt H.S. Organ  
Renovation completed  
and turned over to  
school, Inaugural  
Concert scheduled - 3

New Silent Movie  
organist at the  
Paramount - 3

Pages From the Past,  
fun stuff from  
years gone by - 4,5

Convention news - 6

Paramount Wurlitzer  
news - 6

Coming November 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>

## Theatre Organ Weekend

With England's Internationally renowned

**SIMON GLEDHILL**

### TWO BIG EVENTS!

#### 1 Saturday Theatre Organ Workshop, Bill Keller home, Allen

5-manual Theatre Organ. Near Olympia.

#### Double session—Sat., Nov. 21

1:00–2:15, How to set up the organ  
for different types of music—Where  
and when should you use this and  
that? What are good combinations for  
specific categories of music?

*Simon will help!*

2:30–4:00, How to approach making  
an “arrangement” from a standard  
piece of music. Is there a formula?

What are the tricks? How do you think  
it through? *Simon will tell you!*

#### 2 Sunday Pops Concert at Gig Harbor's Wurlitzer Manor! Sun., November 22, 2:00 PM

#### ADMISSION

CONCERT ONLY		WORKSHOP ONLY	
Members	\$30	Members	\$25
Non-members	\$35	Non-members	\$30
16 & under free w/adult		16 & under	\$10

#### BOTH CONCERT & WORKSHOP

Members	\$45
Non-Members	\$50



**SIMON GLEDHILL**, born and reared in England, began studying accordion at an early age, and electronic organ and piano at ten. When he heard the theatre pipe organ at Blackpool's Tower Ballroom, he was hooked. Locating a private instrument that could be rented by the hour, he was off and running and at age 17, won the Northern Young Theatre Organist of the Year competition, leading to an invitation to make recordings for BBC. A flurry of concert offers soon arrived, launching a performing career that has taken him all over the world. He received the prestigious ATOS Organist of the Year award in 1997.

“That rare combination of flawless technique, impeccable phrasing and an unerring sense of musical good taste,” said Lyn Larsen. You'll agree. Don't miss hearing Simon!

**Mark your calendar now. Ticket order blank will be included in  
your October Pipeline to arrive in your mailbox about September 28th.**

Questions, or to reserve early, phone Ray Harris, 206-546-8959, email [rayh@prosserpiano.com](mailto:rayh@prosserpiano.com)

## PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

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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.

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Paramount Theatre—Tom Blackwell • Wash. Center—Andy Crow

### 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.

**Joining Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society is quick and easy!** For a one year membership, send a \$20 check payable to PSTOS together with your name(s) as you would like them to appear on your name badges, your address with complete 9-digit ZIP code, and your email address (optional) to:

Bill Keller, Treasurer, 9914 Hampshire Ct. SE,  
Olympia, WA 98513-4241.

## PRESIDENT'S Message

**Not-to-be-missed  
Wurlitzer Manor  
event coming  
soon...**

November 22, 2009 brings Simon Gledhill to Wurlitzer Manor for what is likely to be one of the finest performances we have on our calendar this year. This is not to diminish any of the wonderful performances experienced so far this year, but I have a certain affection for Mr. Gledhill's musicianship and his repertoire.

His "Up, Up, and Away" CD is performed on the Warren Performing Arts Center Barton and was one of the first CDs I purchased after returning to the hobby in 2006. From the opening sequence of "Up, Up, and Away" I was taken by his wonderful and unique style.

Listening to British Light Classical music when not into theatre organ, I fell in love with "Sketch of a Dandy" by Haydn Wood and "Melody on the Move" by Clive Richardson. While browsing through the theatre organ catalog, I discovered that these pieces had been performed on the Dickinson High School Kimball (3/66) by our guest performer, so I ordered it immediately and waited impatiently for it to arrive. Stunning. Of course, the rest of the CD (Kavalkade) is excellent and indicative of the wide variety of performance capability at his command.

You are sure to enjoy the experience of Simon Gledhill at the 4/48 Wurlitzer owned and cared for by our friends and supporters Raymond and Barbara. We have lots of room for you and your friends! Surely someone has a birthday and you haven't a clue what to get them.

**Rare chance to learn from a  
master...**

Indeed, as a bonus to this event, if you perform, play, or tinker at the organ, you may like to attend a seminar to be conducted by Simon Gledhill as part of the package. Bill Keller has opened his home to share his magnificent 5-manual Allen on Saturday, November 21 to learn about theatre organ playing. What a great weekend!

**You too can help with the 2010  
ATOS Convention...**

The ATOS 2010 Convention, "Where



## PSTOS Coming Events

◆ **SIMON GLEDHILL and  
THEATRE ORGAN WEEKEND!**

**WORKSHOP on Saturday,  
CONCERT on Sunday.**

Known worldwide to theatre organ fans, Simon comes to the Northwest for his first visit. You'll want him to return!

Saturday afternoon workshop will cover *Registration* during the first half, and *How To Arrange A Song for Theatre Organ* during the second half. All at Bill Keller's home utilizing his 5-manual Allen! Early registration a good idea.

Concert on Sunday at spectacular Wurlitzer Manor in Gig Harbor.

**Saturday & Sunday  
November 21 and 22**

It All Began," is coming up on us quickly. Many details are starting to fall into place, so if you have the wherewithal to volunteer, some choice positions are available. Some of you have already volunteered and to you, thank you.

**Paramount blower motor, and a  
surprise...**

The Paramount Theatre blower motor is likely to be reinstalled by the time you read this, wound to 15HP, and larger fan blades. This will provide increased air for a more stable sound on fuller registrations. Opening up the tank revealed a rather significant battle scar as the result of construction work at the theatre (it is suspected a large piece of steel fell on the blower). While it did not affect its operation, it was a surprise to find small chunks of concrete in the bottom of the tank, too. Timing is everything, one of the bearings was beginning to make noise. Bob Otey hammered that tank into shape, and Barbara Graham went down and did her magic with cleaning up the metal.

**Wedding congratulations!**

Finally, I would like to congratulate Tom and Becky on their marriage, held in San Diego. We wish every day to be a honeymoon for them.

...Dave Luttinen, President

## Other NW Theatre Organ Events

## From The MAILBOX



### ◆ Kenyon Hall in West Seattle

Latest news can be found on the web at [www.kenyonhall.org](http://www.kenyonhall.org) or by email at [kenyonhall@earthlink.net](mailto:kenyonhall@earthlink.net)

### ◆ Lincoln Theatre in Mt. Vernon

Hear the Wurlitzer every Mon/Tue at 7PM & Fri/Sat/Sun at 5PM.

### ◆ Columbia River Organ Club

For info and latest news go to [www.croconline.org](http://www.croconline.org)

### ◆ Bellingham's Mt Baker Theatre

Mt. Baker Theatre Organ Society presents Mark Andersen at the Wurlitzer with a salute to the Roaring 20s. \$10 suggested donation.

**Sunday, Sept. 13th 2:00 pm.**

### ◆ Spokane's First Nazarene Theatre Organ Society

Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month and feature the historic and newly refurbished 1914 Seattle Liberty Theatre Wurlitzer. For up to the minute news and events calendar, go to [www.sfnatos.org](http://www.sfnatos.org)

## Roosevelt High School's Froula Memorial Pipe Organ restoration project now completed; Inaugural Concert scheduled

Many PSTOS members contributed to this worthwhile project. Be sure to attend the inaugural concert October 17th.

The Roosevelt H. S. Organ Team has completed tonal finishing of the organ. Thanks to everyone who helped to make this accomplishment a reality—your efforts indeed represent substantial work.

An informal demonstration of the organ for all volunteers and others took place August 18. Jim Stettner, tonal consultant for the project, played samples from every group of pipes in the organ. This demonstration was followed with presentations by David Locke, organist at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, and Cara Peterson, a 2008 RHS grad. Cara studied organ with Mel Butler while attending Roosevelt, and has completed her first year at Westminster Choir College. She will return to play in the inaugural concert on October 17.

Without the dedication, skills and commitment of all the faithful volunteers,

Dear Editors,

There have been some laments about the parting out of Steve Levin's Style 35. While I don't want to make a case for breaking up instruments it might be beneficial to share some of the details. Wurlitzer made only six 35s. It would be reasonable to ask if this is the case because they weren't popular. This model had nine unit ranks playing from the two full manuals. The three octave keyboard played six straight stops that started at tenor c with five octaves available using couplers. The fact that no instruments were built with this scheme after the Style 35's demise might be significant.

The console is being carefully restored as this is written and will become part of a large installation already in progress. I have seen the work in progress and it is superb. A lot of people will now get to see and play this unusual console since it is no longer in storage and inaccessible.

Another fact is that the regulators, tremulants and windchests are not the same design as later models. They do not interchange with later parts. The regulator sizes make them trem differently and they would not be successful if used in conjunction with later designs. There is a happy result here, however. The Spokane First Nazarene Chapter is restoring the 1914 Seattle

this project would never have been completed. Their faithfulness, skills, and commitment through 31 weeks has made all of this possible. Hopefully, generations of students will benefit from this months-long effort over these months. The organ has now been turned over to Roosevelt H.S.

### Roosevelt H.S. Organ Inaugural Concert Sat., Oct. 17, 2PM

Be sure to put the inaugural concert on your calendar. It will occur at 2 PM on Saturday, October 17. This concert will have four organists, a fantastic program, and a reception. Everyone should plan to come, and please feel free to bring family members and friends as the concert is FREE to all. Located at 1410 NE 66th Street in Seattle.

...Carl Dodrill, Pipe Organ Foundation

Liberty instrument. Experts have advised us that the winding systems are too large and that this is causing problems with tonal results in its present location. The Spokane Chapter has purchased several regulators and tremulants from the Style 35 to correct the problems. These are being rebuilt by the best technicians available. They are exactly like the Seattle Liberty components and we are looking forward with great anticipation to hearing the improvement.

Steve's dream did not come true for him. It is doubtful that anyone could be found now to reassemble the Style 35 to its original configuration. Rather, like medical transplants, major parts of the Style 35 will live on, providing musical enjoyment for generations to come.

Clint Meadway, CPA  
Charter Member, SFNTOS

## Paramount Replaces Long Time Organist

The Paramount Theatre announced in mid-June that it has replaced long-time silent movie accompanist Dennis James as Silent Movie Monday organist. Oakland Paramount organist Jim Riggs was recruited to perform for the June 22 and 29 films and has also been contracted to play for the upcoming November and March series. During his two June appearances, Jim added several personal touches including twenty minutes of up-tempo pre-show tunes as well as some nice "good night" music following the film. Judging by the audience's reaction, this was a huge hit with Silent Movie Monday fans. If you have not attended a Silent Movie Monday film before, consider seeing one of the three films in November, Monday nights starting November 2.

## Nominating Committee for 2010 officers

Tom Blackwell, as Immediate Past President, automatically becomes chair of the nominating committee for 2010 officers and board members. Barbara Graham and Jo Ann Evans have agreed to serve with him on this committee. Recommendations for people to serve on the board may be made to Tom Blackwell at [tom@pstos.org](mailto:tom@pstos.org). Nominations close October 20th.



# Pages From The Past..

## WSU's Robert Morton was installed in the Physics Department in the 1970s

Reprinted from *The Spokane Daily Chronicle*, the following 1978 article tells its story. Photos courtesy of Jim Park.

### Organ Sound Embellished

From *The Spokane Daily Chronicle*, April 2, 1978

There are no trains running in the Physical Science building at Washington State University. It only sounds that way.

The diesel's sound — and that of an old automobile's "ooga! ooga!" — come from an old pipe organ that's been restored for use in classes.

WSU officials said the silent movie era instrument sat around inoperable for more than 35 years after it was donated to WSU by the William Struppeler family. The Strupplers had no use for it when "talkies" replaced the silent films which had played in the family's movie house in Pullman.

But Dr. James L. Park, chairman of the WSU physics department and an accomplished theatre organist, rescued the organ. With the help of professor emeritus Al Butler, Park and their colleagues in physics founded the "organ transplant fund."

Park said the music department agreed to give them the organ, and the fund paid for moving it— three years ago — to the new Physical Science Building.

Restoring the ancient piece, Park found its special sounds and added more.

Now, from the building's large lecture room, students often hear the sound of tom-toms, snare and bass drums, cymbals, a bird whistle, castanets, tambourines, tuned bells and xylophone.

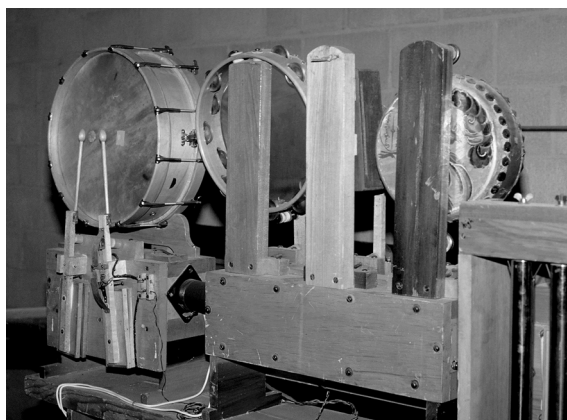


Jim Park at the console.

Park plays the musical accompaniment for silent movies in the communications department's "masters of cinema" course, and uses it in physics classes to demonstrate low frequency sound at high volume, WSU officials said. ■■



The Robert Morton console.



Traps as installed in the physics building in the 1970s.

**Editor's note:** Dr. Jim Park, a longtime PSTOS member and Pullman resident, responded to a request for more information with the following interesting story:

In 1919, in the little college town of Pullman, Washington, P. W. Struppeler opened his first theatre, the Grand; but only piano music accompanied the shows. On February 29, 1928, Mr. Struppeler opened a more elaborate Spanish colonial movie palace, the Cordova; and this house was equipped with a 2/7 Robert-Morton theatre organ that has since been reinstalled in several locations, all in Pullman. When the Cordova first opened with *The Student Prince*, starring Ramon Navarro and Norma Shearer, the *Pullman Herald* reported that the theatre had cost more than \$100,000 and that the organ was valued at \$12,000.

Sometime in the 1950s the Struppeler Organ was given to the public schools, but it was never installed. By sometime in the 1960s it had been transferred to the Music Department at Washington State University, where it was installed twice by an interested undergraduate physics student — first in an old music practice building known affectionately as "Agony Hall" and later in the auditorium of the new Kimbrough Music Building.

The Kimbrough installation was not successful because the pipe chambers were in the attic above the false ceiling of the auditorium, and the organ was practically inaudible. For a time the instrument was effectively abandoned, its pipes in the Kimbrough attic, its console in a warehouse a mile away.

In 1974 the Physics Department was moving into a new building that included a large lecture hall which happened to have a perfect space for pipe chambers. The Physics Department also happened to

**Continued bottom of page 5...**



Pullman's Cordova Theatre as it appeared in 1987.

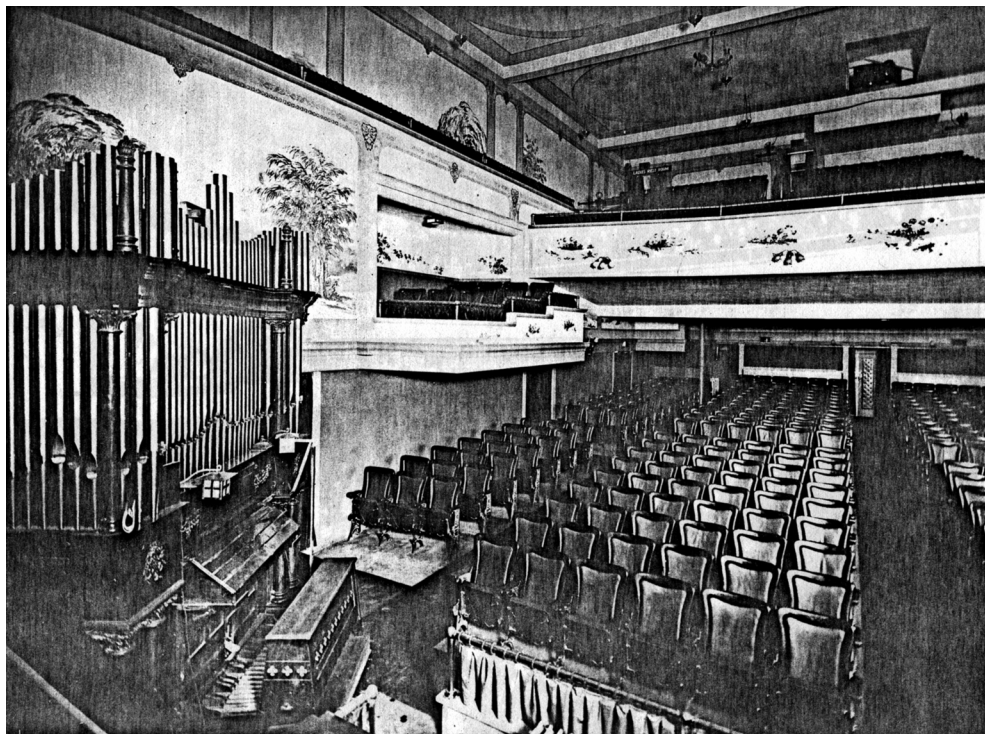
# Pages From The Past...continued

From Spokane's *Inland Herald*, October 23, 1910

## CASINO THEATER REOPENS DOORS AFTER CHANGES

House Now Ranks Among Finest of Kind in Entire West

### PIPE ORGAN INNOVATION



Interior of Spokane's Casino Theater after 1910 renovation, with new Estey pipe organ at left. Seating was increased from 250 to 700. John Q. Clemmer was an early theatre pioneer in Spokane and Seattle.

The friends and patrons of John Q. Clemmer, owner and manager of the Casino Theater on Riverside Avenue, received handsome invitations to attend the grand opening of the remodeled theater Wednesday, October 19, and all responded. A very fine opening program was given, the duet from Norma, "Hear Me, Norma," being given by Miss Rose Cole and Miss Nina Cole, who are the singers for the theater now. The others were Mrs. E. J. Pratt, Jr., who formerly sang there, and who first gave a love ballad and for an encore, "A Baby

Grand or Grand Baby." Mrs. Marie Cleveland sang "The Rosary," all songs being accompanied by the magnificent Estey pipe organ, which has just been installed.

### Fine Pictures Shown

The moving pictures shown were "The Broken Doll," "Around Pakin," "Auld Robin Gray," "Outwitted," all very good. The films are changed twice each week.

While the theater has been enlarged, taking the store formerly occupied by the flower and millinery store next door,

and the entire place reseated and all the improvements made, the place has been closed only 10 hours, the evening performances never stopping. The walls are prettily frescoed with autumn leaves on a pale blue background and the hangings are dark green.

The curtain for the films remains unchanged, but the seating capacity has been increased from 250 to 700 and the chairs are very comfortable, leather-upholstered affairs, with the blessed relief of having no candy boxes to catch in the clothing. The aisles are broad and there is room to move everywhere without discomfort.

### One Box Provided

There is one box with three tiers of seats on the right side of the house, and the balcony is as commodious and comfortable as the lower floor, the same price for either floor. The acoustics and ventilation are perfect, and the theater in every way is one of the most up to date in the West. It has cost Mr. Clemmer over \$10,000 to enlarge and put in the beautiful new fittings, but he has not spared expense in any way.

Mr. Clemmer has the finest moving picture house in Seattle, with pipe organ and everything the latest in design. He has been running the Casino in Spokane for two years and has made many friends by the manner in which his house has been conducted. He determined to give only the best in the picture line and has adhered to that policy.

### Fire Escapes Provided

He was not satisfied until his theater was remodeled with regular theatrical lighting system, fire escapes, nine exits, two upstairs and seven downstairs. Another convenience is the clock placed above the box next to the film curtain, where the singers stand.

Mr. Clemmer has put his ushers in neat tan uniforms handsomely braided and, in fact, has left nothing undone which would add to the appearance of the Casino Theater or to the comfort of its patrons. ■■

### WSU Robert Morton continued...

have two professors who were theatre organ enthusiasts, Ed Donaldson and Jim Park, who proposed transferring the organ from Music to Physics, where it could actually be played.

For the next couple of decades the

Struppler Organ did indeed enjoy a renaissance in the Physics Department, where it was often used to accompany comedy shorts shown on Moms Weekend and for school groups. A number of silent feature films were presented over the years; and in 1986 a busload of Seattle ATOS members attended one of these shows. The organ

was also played in acoustics and cinema history classes.

After the retirements of Donaldson and Park, the organ was little used. Sometime in the 2000s, in connection with a remodeling project, the electrical power to the organ was inexplicably severed and has not been restored. ...Jim Park, 7/13/2009

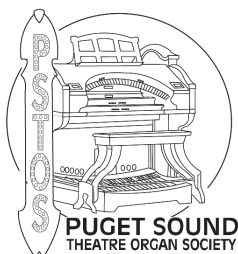


**Be on board for the big  
ATOS Theatre Organ  
Convention!  
Volunteer now...  
It's great fun!**



# **PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY**

Russ & Jo Ann Evans, Newsletter Editors  
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## **2010 Convention Countdown**

The slate of 2010 artists and venues is nearing completion. We had originally hoped to visit the 5th Avenue Theatre for our digital organ concert, but this may not be possible due to stage construction projects occurring at the theatre during July 2010. Several alternate venues are under consideration at this time. Confirmed venues include: First Nazarene Church, Spokane; Museum Theatre, Wenatchee; Paramount Theatre, Seattle; Everett Theatre, Everett; Lincoln Theatre, Mt. Vernon; Mt. Baker Theatre, Bellingham; Oaks Park Skating Rink, Portland; First United Methodist, Portland; Cleveland High School, Portland; St. Columban Church, Yelm; Temple Theatre, Tacoma; Calvary Christian Assembly, Seattle; Tahoma Studio, Maple Valley and Wurlitzer Manor, Gig Harbor. Confirmed artists include: Nathan Avakian, Tony Fenelon and John Atwell, Scott Foppiano, Simon Gledhill, Richard Hills, Jonas Nordwall, Donna Parker, Jim Riggs, Walt Strony, Dave Wickerham and Lew Williams.

Tom Blackwell,  
2010 Convention Chair

## **Project update!**

## **Paramount Theatre WURLITZER**

In early July, Bob Otey of Kent Washington, together with members of the PSTOS Publix organ team, removed the Paramount's organ blower motor and two fans for repair. The fans had developed stress fractures near the hubs due to 80 years of metal fatigue and this was a serious safety issue. The blower is getting new bearings and windings.

Bob also repaired damage to the blower tank incurred during the theatre's remodel in the mid 1990s. Other organ work leading up to the November silent film series will include: replacement of rusted ferule clamp screws on the Brass Saxophone and Brass Trumpet with duplicate stainless steel hardware, re-leathering of the primary valves in the Solo chamber and replacement of the secondary pneumatics on the three high Solo pressure ranks: Tuba Mirabilis, Tibia Clausa and Post Horn.



Bob Otey and the Paramount blower.

*Tom Blackwell, Paramount crew chief*

**Are you on the list of helpers for the 2010 Convention? Join your friends and pitch in. It will be a great experience! There are many diverse tasks, some small, some large. Learn all about it. Send an inquiry to Tom Blackwell at [tom@pstos.org](mailto:tom@pstos.org)**