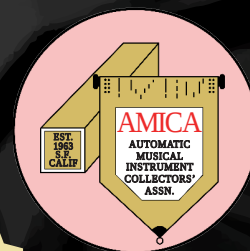
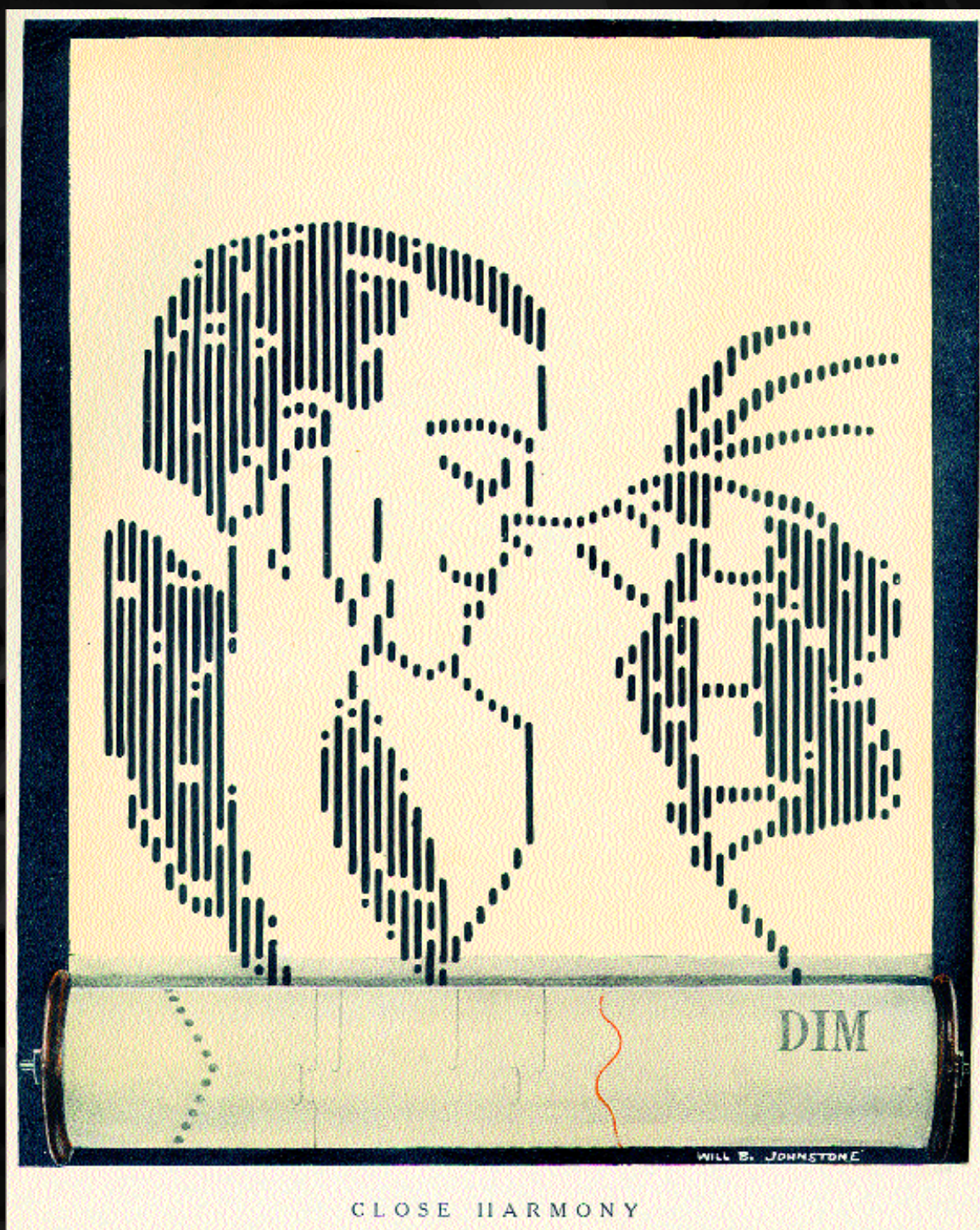


THE AMICA



AUTOMATIC MUSICAL INSTRUMENT COLLECTORS' ASSOCIATION

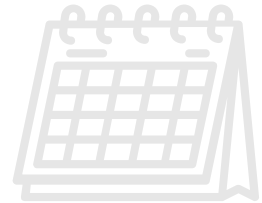
BULLETIN



CLOSE HARMONY

Northern Lights Chapter

Hey Northern members, mark your calendars for our next meetings:



EVENT: Northern Lights Chapter gathering

DATE: Tuesday, May 20, 2025

LOCATION: Cafesjian's Carousel, Como Park, Saint Paul, MN

SPONSOR: Tracy & Merrie Tolzmann

EVENT: Northern Lights Chapter Meeting

DATE: August 9, 2025

LOCATION: Big Lake, MN

SPONSOR: Gary Goldsmith & Alex Stolitza, jointly with MBSI

EVENT: Northern Lights Chapter Meeting

DATE: September 28, 2025

LOCATION: Minnetonka, MN

SPONSOR: Susan & John Ellingson, jointly with MBSI

EVENT: Northern Lights Chapter Meeting

DATE: November 23, 2025

LOCATION: Glenville, MN

SPONSOR: Kiven & Cheryl Lukes, jointly with MBSI

CORRECTION: The “Northern Lights Meeting at Skyrock Farm” report in the March-April edition of *The AMICA Bulletin* had erroneous information regarding the Ruth 38 facade acquired by Skyrock Farm. **The correct information is that Bill Nunn negotiated the purchase of the original Ruth 38 facade from the estate of its European owner.** The facade was in storage in Custer, South Dakota, in the collection of Rosanna and the late Bill Harris, and they received no remuneration for their part in the transaction.

CHICAGO CHAPTER

Reporter: Ken Walczak



The palatial estate house on the Sanfilippo estate

On Saturday, December 14, 2024, members of the Chicago Chapter of AMICA joined with members of the Lake Michigan Chapter of the Musical Box Society, the Carousel Organ Society of America, and the Silent Film Society of Chicago for a Holiday Party at the Sanfilippo Estate in Barrington Hills, Illinois. The Sanfilippo Family and the Sanfilippo Foundation graciously extended the invitation for the party which began in the afternoon and extended into the late evening.

The party began in the house, which is of palatial size. There was an overwhelming array of mechanical musical instruments, all of which were restored to their original condition or better. Best of all, the instruments were played to the delight of the visitors. Starting in the lower level, there was a display of stationary steam engines which were demonstrated using compressed air. Several gambling machines, including a roulette wheel and a gaming table, were on the floor waiting for someone to spin the wheel or roll the dice for fun. There were a number of slot machines with cans of change provided by the house, for those who desired to try their luck without any risk of needing to visit Las Vegas. A large oak bar was there with "sober-insuring" refreshments. A great number of nickelodeons and orchestrions graced the walls of the lower level. Of particular interest was the Raimey Banjorchestra which was a reproduction based and built on original plans since no original instrument could be found.



Listening to one of the many large orchestrions

Above the lower level, were an enormous number of antiques with another array of operating nickelodeons, plus a Mason & Hamlin reproducing grand piano which also serenaded the attendees. A docent was able to operate and demonstrate the capabilities of this finely restored musical instrument. True to its nature, its tone was full and subtle and was termed the "singer's piano" by a member of the Chicago Civic Opera. Many of the attendees were able to enjoy a performance by this fine instrument.

The main music room and theatre offered an entrance to the Perfume Passage Streetscape with its late 19th century atmosphere and window displays, including a perfumery with a collection of over 3,000 perfume bottles and a perfume distiller. The bottles ranged in age from ancient times to the present. An ice cream shop was also available for viewing in the Perfume Passage, as well as, numerous window displays.

In the theatre room, many large orchestrions and antique phonographs were on display. The large bass organ pipes from the theatre organ were readily visible along some of the wall areas. Tours of the organ chambers were conducted so that participants could view the thousands of pipes that were to provide the accompaniment to the silent film. After the viewings and demonstrations, everyone assembled in the theatre for a silent film accompanied by the mighty Wurlitzer 5/80 pipe organ. Then, Gregory Leifel provided an introductory speech, followed by Jeffery Sanfilippo who also provided a welcoming speech. Marty Persky and Jay Warren, the famed silent film organist, added a few words. Topping it all off, was a lecture by Professor Dr. Annette Bochenek of Purdue University, explaining the details and background of the film "Peter Pan". Jay Warren did a superb job of providing the accompaniment and sound effects for the film on the Wurlitzer 5/80 theatre organ and grand piano. Jay performed the accompaniment as a true virtuoso and master of the theatre organ.



Participants studiously viewing the collection of artifacts in the shop of the Perfume Passage

After the film, everyone went to the Carousel Pavilion. A social hour preceded the dinner. After the social hour, the participants feasted on a sumptuous buffet dinner of prime rib of beef and chicken kiev. Topping off the dinner, was a holiday cake for dessert. There were 24 fairground, dance and street organs for entertainment. Holiday tunes were played throughout the evening. There was a chance for everyone to ride the 1890 Eden Palais salon carousel. The grand finale of the evening was the "Battle of the Organs". The organs that played, were the 110 Gavioliphone fairground organ and the Wurlitzer 180 military band organ. These two instruments were among Jasper Sanfilippo's favorites.

The evening ended with the participants wandering off to their homes or respective motels after experiencing a wonderful afternoon and evening. The memories and the desire to see and hear more of these wonderful instruments will linger on, but there is a recourse. The AMICA and MBSI Convention will be held in the Chicago area from August 20 - 24, 2025. It will be the opportunity to view and enjoy the magnificent Sanfilippo collection plus numerous other fine collections.



Ice cream shop in the Paris street scene



Looking down the aisle at the collection of thousands of bottles in the Perfumery



Margaret Bisberg & Richard Van Metre, AMICA Chicago Chapter president & vice president, respectively, listening to the music of an orchestrion



Bear Schultz explaining the Autoharp to participants



Observers listening to the Banjorchestrian and observing the roulette wheel



The excitement of the slot machines (nickels provided) was a real attraction



Part of the extensive array of antique phonographs



Gregory Leifel welcoming the participants



Jeffery Sanfilippo welcoming the participants on behalf of the Sanfilippo family



Marty Persky discussing the silent film presentation



Professor Bochenek of Purdue University providing the background for the silent film "Peter Pan"



Jay Warren at the mighty Wurlitzer providing information about the film



Film being shown with Jay Warren at the keyboard of the mighty Wurlitzer



The Eden Palais carousel with its gold leaf and all of its magnificent art work



The fabulous tower clock in the Carousel Pavilion ticking the time away



Ken Walczak admiring the Springfield Rolls Royce which was made in the United States of America



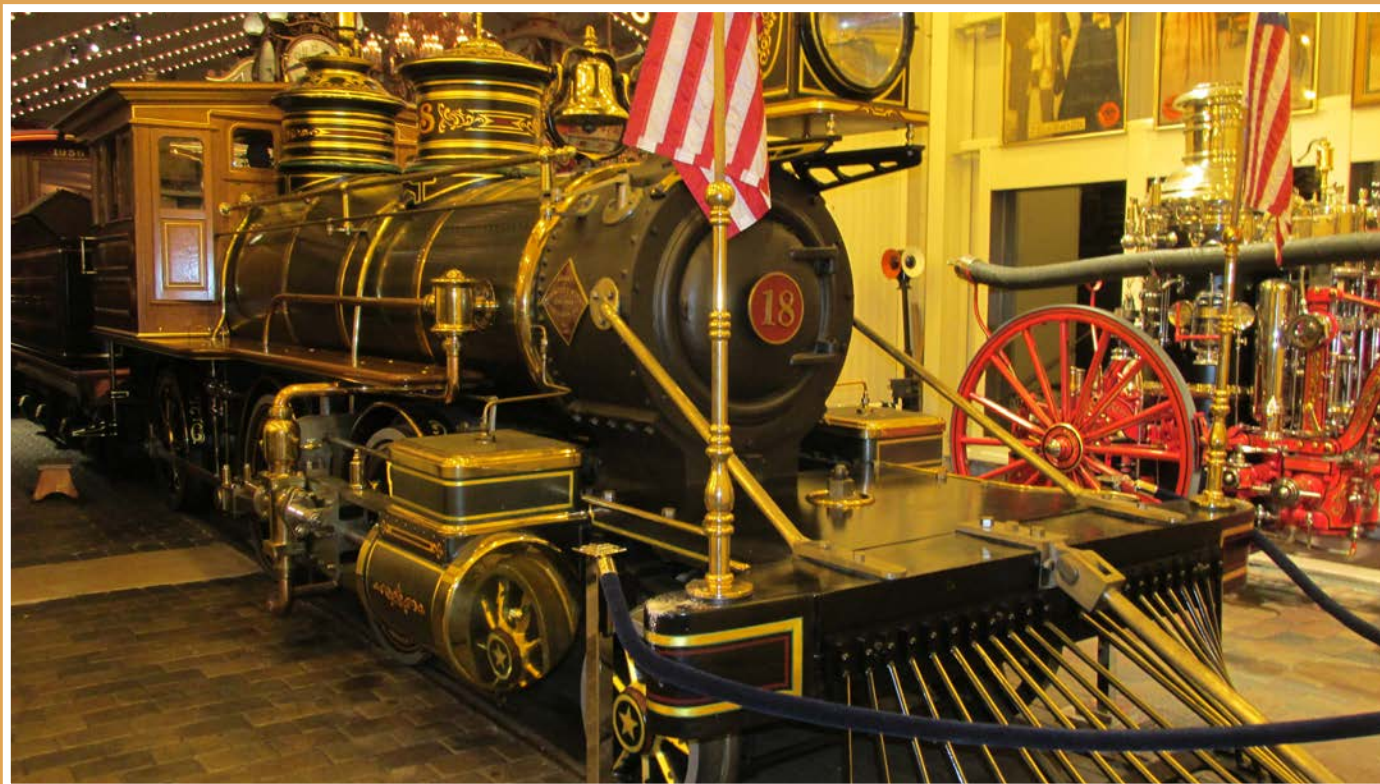
The sumptuous buffet with prime rib and chicken Kiev for the participants



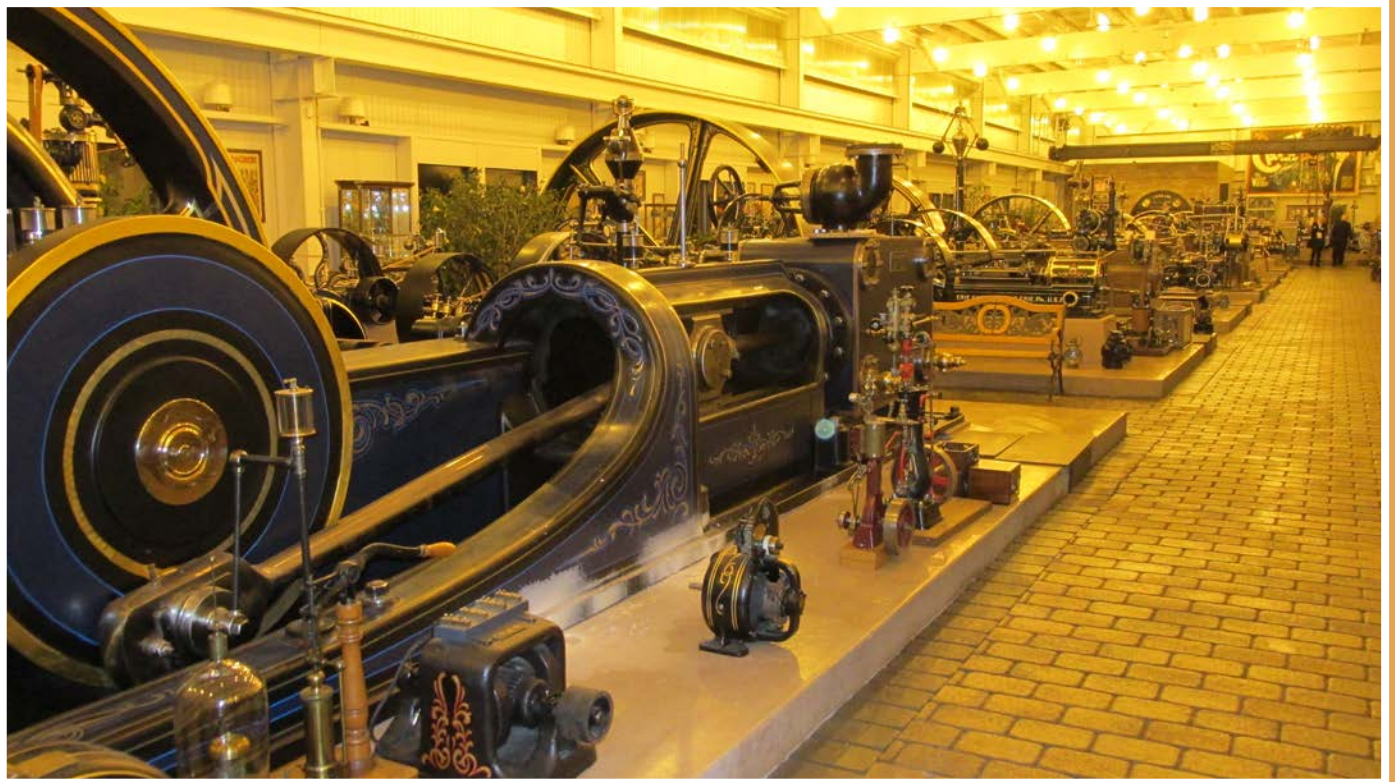
Mel Septon & Kathy Stone enjoying the wonderful meal with musical accompaniment



Riding the horses on the Eden Palais carousel



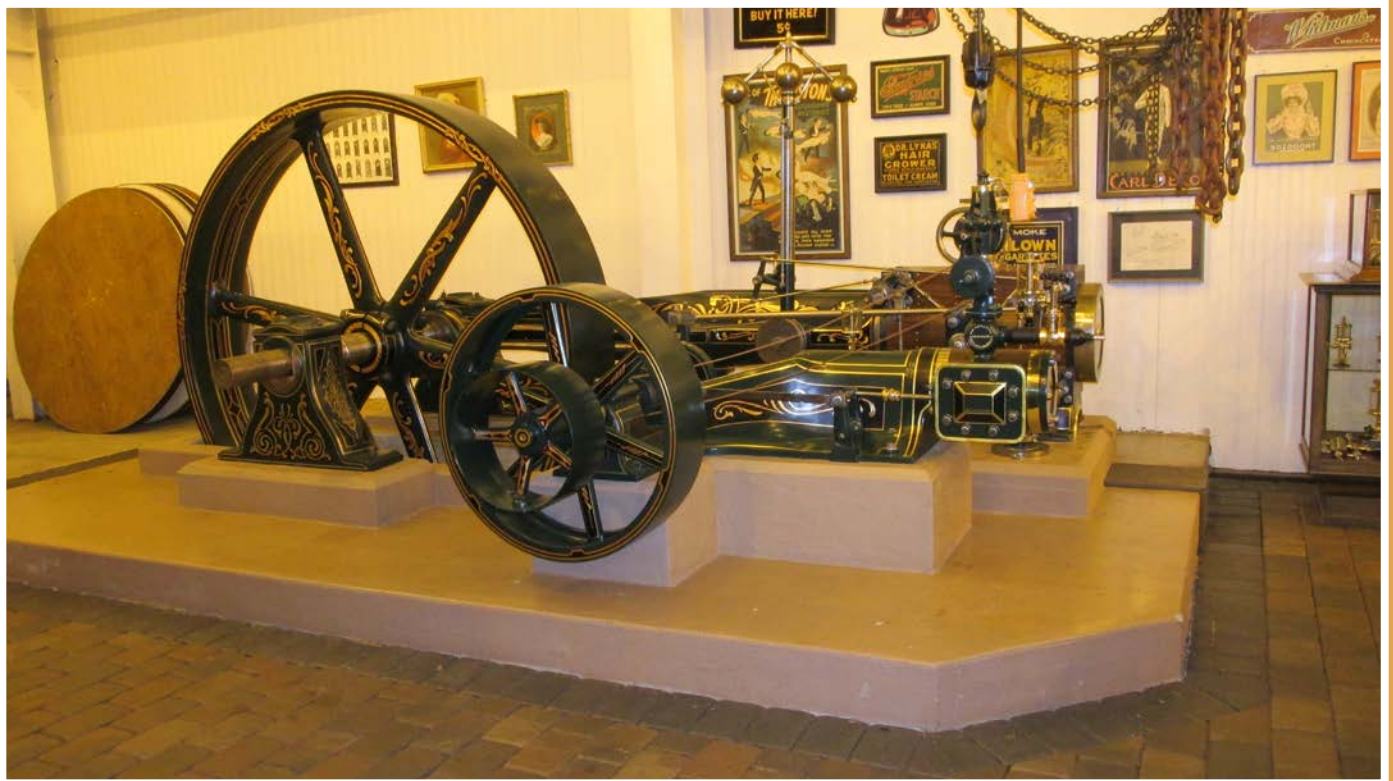
Gleaming brass steam locomotive awaiting someone to climb into the cab and ring the bell



Block long display of shining and polished steam engines



Beautifully restored and painted steam roller



Two polished and restored stationary steam engines



The carousel organ with partial view of horses and teacup