

Keep the Ragtime Playing

Recent events and economic conditions are affecting everyone, but as they say 'the show must go on'! With that in mind, please consider making a donation to the Scott Joplin Foundation. For as little as \$25 you will receive one ticket to the Donor's Only party held during the Scott Joplin Festival on June 3, 2006 at the Katy Depot and be recognized in both the Festival Program and on the Scott Joplin Foundation website. Every dollar you donate is 100% tax deductible and goes directly to support the Foundation and the Ragtime Festival. As you have read, the Performance Committee is working very hard to bring in many entertainers, several new to the Festival and it is through the generous support of individuals and businesses that we are able to offer an exciting lineup each year. Also check to see whether your company offers a matching program for charitable contributions. We have some donors that are already doing this and in essence, it doubles the amount you donate. Please refer to the back page for the various levels of donations available and the corresponding rewards. Thank you in advance for your generous support!

Around the Office

The Foundation office and Ragtime Store are operating under fall and winter hours which means that we are open Monday – Friday, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm (central time). However, there are times when the store will be closed due to meetings and such. The Store is very excited to now offer music related gifts in addition to our music items. Our first venture into gift items will feature pillows, blankets, martini glasses, and small beaded purses. A bit of a wide variety but we feel these will compliment the products we already offer and provide a place to find gifts for fans of music but perhaps not ragtime music. (Do these people really exist!!) Stop by the store and have a look around – if you happen to be close enough.

The Ragtime Store inventory is also being put online. Yes, you've heard it for months or years, but it is actually going to happen. The web designer has the information and is getting the page done as quickly as she can. With this will come the ability to purchase items with credit cards online – through a secure site of course. This also means that you can order and pay for Festival tickets online as well. There are bound to be a few glitches in the beginning but we hope this will make shopping at the Store and purchasing Festival tickets easy and convenient. Be sure to check out the new gift items, perfect for the fast approaching holiday season.

These are the two biggest projects that will affect you directly. Indirectly, the Foundation is working on creating a new database system to improve accuracy and information gathering. Also in the works is a way to better distribute Festival brochures. Currently, the larger cities in Missouri are fairly well covered. But there have been request to get more information to other areas and other parts of the country. This is where our loyal fans can help out. If you are willing to distribute brochures in your area (and some have already expressed interest), please call the Foundation office: 660-826-2271 or 866-218-6258 (toll free). Brochures are typically in the office by January. That's all for now!

Changes on the Board

October brings about the beginning of a new fiscal year for the Foundation and with that, changes to the Board of Directors. Jo Ann Neher has happily passed the President 'hat' to Steve Fort after serving in that capacity for several years. Judge Don Barnes, recently retired from the bench, now has more time for his hobbies and for that we are very grateful as he takes on the roll of Vice President. He and Steve have both hit the ground running with their new positions. Lucille and Larry will continue on as Secretary and Treasurer for they continue to enjoy their duties and have the time to perform them. For this we are also grateful.

We have two new members: Katherine Menefee and Michelle Schubert. Many of you will recognize their names as they have been involved with the Festival in past years. Katherine typically was seen volunteering her time in the Ragtime Store which is an invaluable contribution. She will now be helping us as we introduce a few new items to the Store. Michelle has mentioned that she has a few fund raising ideas! And with her interest in dancing (you will see her name as one of the winners the past few years), could there be a dancing fund raiser in the future? Perhaps a "Dancing with A Board Member" competition! I know there are many of you who would pay to see Bill and Larry going head to head on the dance floor!

We always hate to lose Board members but we understand that everyone faces time constraints from home and work. We look forward to having these two new members to bring in a fresh perspective and new ideas.

We Hear You!

The following are a few highlights from the survey conducted during the Festival. Many items were listed more than one time, some things are beyond our control, and several are trying to be worked in the best we can for next year. Things you liked:

- Everyone had a favorite performer
- Dancing, dancing, dancing – at the VFW, in the evenings, on better surfaces – you love to dance!
- Dueling pianos – the faster the better
- Free venues, concerts, lectures, donor party, etc., etc.
- Friendly people
- Relaxed pace
- Musicians willing to share knowledge
- After Hours
- Courthouse Music Swap
- Everything

Things you think can be improve to some degree:

- Better transportation between venues

- Keeping schedules on time
- More promotion of dance events
- More singles for dancing with
- Better maps to locate venues
- Better promotion in nearby towns
- Return to Gazebo site, perhaps for youngsters and open piano time
- More musical gifts in store
- More two piano numbers at concerts
- Best performances at end of day leaving little time to clean up, eat, and get to the evening shows – especially Saturday, scheduling should be improved
- A whole lot of others things we don't entirely control

We do appreciate you taking the time to fill out the surveys as this is the only way for the Foundation to hear your complaints, praises, and overall impressions. However, there are many times we hear that different people love and hate the exact same thing. That sure makes it hard for us to make everyone happy – but we are sure trying!!