

**BIOGRAPHY: *KEN DOUBLE, PRESIDENT/CEO OF THE
AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY***

It is not often that one gets paid to have fun for a living. It is rarer still when having fun and getting paid for it professionally happens twice in life. Such has been the good professional fortune of **Ken Double**, the President and CEO of the American Theatre Organ Society.

Until recently, music was always the “second career,” almost an afterthought due to his 32 years in broadcasting. The Chicago-native grew up with five brothers in a sports loving family, but Ken was more enamored of the play-by-play announcers than he was the athletes, and as early as age six, was mouthing the words sitting in front of the television, “practice” broadcasting the games he watched.

He parlayed that interest into a Degree in Radio-TV from Butler University in Indianapolis, and began his broadcast career that included NBA and Big Ten basketball, NHL, IHL and AHL hockey (including three championship teams), the worldwide radio broadcast of the Indianapolis 500 Mile Race, and hundreds of other events. The award-winning broadcaster finished his career with 17 seasons of hockey play-by-play, including a brief stint with his beloved hometown team, the Chicago Blackhawks.

Ken's parents made sure all six of the boys were introduced to some kind of music, and for Ken, it was organ lessons starting at age eight. About the time he was getting bored with that, and a high school radio station was providing broadcast opportunities, a school field trip took him to the Pickwick Theatre in Park Ridge, IL and a chance to play the Wurlitzer theatre organ, and it was for him as it is for so many, that “WOW!” moment.

Several weeks later, the same teacher who guided students on the field trip took a group to hear Gaylord Carter at Chicago's famed Oriental Theatre and Ken was truly hooked. He steered lessons in the theatre organ direction, including one year of studies with legendary organist Al Melgard, where Ken took his lessons on Wednesday afternoons at the Melgard studio, and then met his teacher later that night for the Blackhawks hockey game at the old Chicago Stadium. Talk about careers coming full circle.

While Ken pursued his broadcast career, he continued playing the organ. As a college senior, he provided music for sporting events at Market Square Arena in Indianapolis; worked summers as the organist at the famed Tommy Bartlett Water Show in Wisconsin Dells; later, had a stint subbing at the Paramount Music Palace in Indianapolis; and while working his very first TV job in Lafayette, IN, helped install the Mighty Wurlitzer at the Long Center, raising money, doing publicity, performing concerts and booking and promoting other shows at the former vaudeville house. He premiered that organ in 1982 and has been playing annual concerts there ever since.

Ken Double has been the Master of Ceremonies for no fewer than 18 ATOS annual and regional conventions. He has performed concerts at nine annual and regional convention events. He has toured Australia and New Zealand four times. And in addition to his hundreds of concerts since his debut in Ft. Wayne, IN in 1978, he has a dozen recordings to his credit, including his latest two - **TRIBUTE**, which features Ken at the 3/66 Dickinson Kimball with trumpet soloist Skip Stine - a much-heralded, widely acclaimed recording; and **THE HOUSE ORGANIST PLAYS**, recorded on the Hulko residence organ in Carversville, PA.

He accepted the top post at ATOS in the summer of 2007, and a year later, the Board of Directors asked Ken to accept the newly created position of President and CEO. He has been working diligently to raise funds, raise awareness, create new and exciting programs, and help steer the 55-year-old organization in a new direction to ensure its growth and existence for another 55 years and more.

Broadcaster, musician, entertainer, MC, administrator, PR man, and even “crooner” occasionally, Ken Double has enjoyed “having fun and getting paid for it, not once, but twice!” As the song says, *“Nice work if you can get it.”*