

# THE MEGAPHONE

An Organ of the Rascals, Rogues, and Rascalions

Ides of March, 1996

Number 6

## Rascals Hold Second Annual Ball Group's First Charity Event Launches Era of Good Works [!]

59 Rascals and friends congregated at the Birmingham Gallery, a former Presbyterian church on Pittsburgh's South Side, for the Second Annual Rascals' Ball.

Completely undaunted by the sacred history of their surroundings, the Rascals arrived in their most elegant finery in an futile attempt to impress friends and significant others. Several dashing men even sported tuxedos. Although there was no official vote, **Jake Horner** was declared "best dressed" for wearing some



Barry Lavery and Don Kellander enjoy a Siamese cigar.



The Rascal Quartet

sort of dishrag around his neck.

The evening began over wine and cheese as Rascals and friends filtered in from the snow. The now-traditional Wrapped Scallions were supplied by **Bill Baierl** in his last-ditch effort to drum up votes for his Rascal o' the Year campaign. Apparently he felt that his sacrilegious campaign literature from the "Pope" was not sufficient.

Dinner was served and devoured. Toasts were made to **Jeff Campbell** for chairing the Ball Committee, **Greg Scheer** for his musical leadership, and, most importantly, to the women

Ball — cont. from p. 1

behind the Rascal for their patience and support.

Dennis Looney called the wrong number while ordering a pizza from his hotel room in South Carolina and was connected via speaker phone to the Ball. He expressed his regret for putting his job above the Rascals and wished us well during our Sophomore event.

The Ball this year had the noble goal of establishing the Caesar Grossi Music Archives in the Burgettstown Community Library. We met Caesar in the video documentary about Burgettstown that Greg Scheer and Dan Morrison produced in 1994. Caesar's many religious and secular compositions deserve to be preserved for their historical value. A foundation has been established to oversee the Archive. The

Board of Directors of the Caesar Grossi Music Archives Foundation is composed of Greg Scheer, representing the Rascals, Lynn Taucher, representing the Burgettstown Community Library, and Claudia Couch, Caesar's daughter, representing the Grossi family. Mrs. Couch will be the director of the foundation.

Greg presented Mrs.

Couch with an oversized check for \$250 as the initial funds for the foundation. Rascal Treasurer, Bill Baierl, was heard complaining that the two foot wide checkbook is unwieldy and unsightly.

Quartet. Bill Baierl gave his unique insight to the various pictures of events we enjoyed throughout the year.

Greg Scheer felt like he was robbed at the Mass Challenge last year and appealed to the Ball participants by singing his Nothing Song, which won him just that: nothing. The Rascal Quartet ended the year-in-review with a reprise of "Interesting Thing," including the world premiere of the verses written about the 1995 quarterly meetings.

Lenny, the winner of last year's Mass Challenge, was brutally murdered last August, when the pickle jar of water he called home was poured out in an effort to clean up. His friend and landlord, Jeff Campbell, was presented with the Jonathan Z. Landgraf Prize by Jerry and Liz Landgraf. Luckily,

Jeff was up to date with his tetanus shots. The Landgrafs were presented with Jonathan Z. Landgraf Prize No. 1, set in a frame with a photograph of their son, whose contributions to the Rascals inspired the creation of the prize. Later in the evening, the Landgrafs were named honorary members of the Order of Rapsallions.

Jeff Campbell at the 50th RR&R Reunion



"This one is my J. Z. Landgraf Medal."

After the presentation, the Rascal Quartet, consisting of Greg Scheer, Jeff Campbell, Jack Brice, and Jake Horner, "Bread of the World," written by Caesar for the Bellefield Presbyterian Church choir.

The slide show year-in-review presentation was started by a rousing rendition of "Interesting Thing" by the Rascal

Ball — cont. from p. 2

The winner of the Rascal o' the Year award was announced by **Jeff Sivek**. **Bill Baierl's** last minute food campaign worked and he was tied with **Jeff Campbell** for the award.

Being suave and debonair men, it was decided to settle the matter in the only fair way, arm wrestling. Jeff lost — big time — and Bill was named the 1996 Rascal o' the Year.

Greg Scheer, the 1995 Rascal o' the Year, presented the coveted and beautiful trophy to Bill, whose wife, Lisa,



Donna Lowry having more fun than a Presbyterian should.

complained the trophy did not match her living room.

**Dan Morrison**, Director of the RR&R Lair No. 1, was surprised by a humidior, presented by the Rascal in appreciation of his years of hard work and service to the cause. Our own master craftsman, **Jake Horner**,

constructed the humidior and then used the opportunity to drum up business for building more. Dan is still trying to figure out how to strap the thing to his wrist.

The Rascal Quartet lead the crowd in singing James M. Hubbard's "My Last Cigar" as many first cigars of the evening were lit. It is to be noted that a number of women present took this opportunity to dip into the humidior as well.

Those not addicted to nicotine joined the band, Amaryllis, returning for its second Rascal performance, in some vigorous and

complex contra dancing.

All in all, the evening was a resounding success. In supporting the Caesar Grossi Music Archives, the Rascals have made their first effort to serve the greater community. As we continue to pursue the extraordinary in the ordinary, the heroic in

the mundane, and the historic in the forgotten, we will find others like Caesar Grossi, who deserve our recognition and honor.

~ Jeff Campbell

## The Roanoke Debacle

### The Rascals Win Some and Lose Some

On Saturday, January 6, 1996, **Jeff Campbell**, **David Dunn**, **Jake Horner**, **Don Kellander**, **Dan Morrison**, and **Jeff Sivek** met in Roanoke, Virginia in the Blizzard of 1996.

They stayed at the Best Western Inn at Valley View, in a mall near the Roanoke Airport. Don Kellander and his wife, Ann, arrived about 4:00 pm. Arriving shortly thereafter, were two carloads of Rascals. In the one was Jake Horner, his wife, Missy, and their children Jonathan and Christy and in the other was Jeff Sivek, David Dunn, and Dan Morrison. Jeff Campbell arrived solo, having been in Washington to visit his paramour.

Don and Ann had spent two pleasant days in Charleston, West Virginia, whence they left at 11:00 am Saturday in a snow storm that became progressively worse as they approached White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia.

Roanoke — cont. from p. 3  
From White Sulphur Springs to Roanoke, driving was a battle.

The Horner family and Jeff Sivek met at Dan Morrison's house at 5:00 am and traveled in tandem to pick up David Dunn in Eighty Four, Pennsylvania. Traveling south into West Virginia, the two cars encountered snow and worsening conditions shortly after Parkersburg.

At 6:00 pm, Carl Plantinga and Peter Fosl escorted the Pittsburgh delegation to the site of the meeting.

The roads were choked with snow, which continued to fall heavily.

When the group arrived at the restaurant, only four of the Virginia group were present: Carl Plantinga, Peter Fosl, Benedict Goodfriend, and Sanford Gurian. The mayor of Roanoke had planned to attend and present the Pittsburgh delegations with Roanoke crystal stars. But the snow and the his health kept him from coming.

The Roanokers were a hospitable, sociable, and interesting bunch of rascals. Carl teaches film studies at Hollins College, located near Roanoke. Peter teaches philosophy at the same school. Benedict is a violinist in a string quartet of some repute, and Sandy is an industrial planner.

Jake ordered a steak that weighed a good twelve ounces and was about an

inch thick. The staff of the restaurant treated the proto-Rascal group with care, catering to the group's whims. The waitress was a substantial, Pennsylvania-Dutch looking lady.

The evening's presentation was made by Dan Morrison who offered a slide show on Orélie-Antoine de Tounens, founder of the Kingdom of Araucania and Patagonia. He also reported on the work he is doing with the North American Araucanian Royalist Society which promotes the study of the Kingdom of Araucania. At the meeting, he wore the gold medal he was recently awarded by Prince Philippe d'Araucanie, the current head of the Royal House of Araucania.

After the presentation and dinner the group sang "Carry Me Back to Ole Virginny"<sup>1</sup> and "My Last Cigar." Jake broke out the cigars, and all settled into conversing in the best of conversational tradition that reminds one of the Algonquins or the eclectic group that met with H. W. Longfellow and Justice Oliver Wendell Homes in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

At about 10:30 pm the group disbanded and the Pittsburghers were escorted back to their snow-bound inn.

The intention of the visit to Roanoke had been to charter a new lair. This did not occur as the Rascal Constitution requires at least six men to charter a lair. The four who did attend the meeting expressed lively interest in establishing a lair. Dan produced a letter of intent, which the four Roanokers signed.

On the morning after, 18 inches of snow covered the ground, and not a bit of the snow surrounding the inn had been touched by plow nor shovel.

The Virginia State Police were asking people to stay home to give road crews time to make the roads passable. As it was clear that no one was going anywhere, the Rascals resigned themselves to being snowbound for at least one day. The sole exception to this wise resignation was Jeff Campbell, who could no longer endure the absence of his lady love.

Jeff worked with herculean effort to clear his car and struck out into the snowy wasteland. A couple hours later, he returning on foot, having gotten as far as the access ramp to the interstate highway, where he became inextricably stuck in deep snow.

The inn provided breakfast of coffee, orange juice, a wide variety of donuts, Danish pastries, and muffins.

In the afternoon, David Dunn accompanied by a

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<sup>1</sup> Also sung were some of the Dante lyrics written by Dan Morrison, which were later censored from the Rascals' Ball by the Sensitivity Committee.

Roanoke — cont. from p. 4 couple of intrepid Rascals unbeknownst to the rest of the group, walked a snow-bound mile to a local Kroger's where they stocked up sumptuously. Around 4 o'clock they invited the group to join them in the lobby for dinner. Don "just happened to have" a twelve-pack of Red Dog beer in the trunk of his car, which he apparently carries in case of emergencies when he needs some "antifreeze" while on the road.

The Rascals also extended their hospitality to the guests stranded guests.

At 8:00 pm the Rascals was again summoned to the lobby, where they regally dined on TV dinners. After dinner, Dan again presented his slide show on Orelie-Antoine de Tounens — this time for the Rascal families, hotel staff, and other stranded hotel guests.

The Rascals stayed up late that night and swam in the pool, smoking too many cigars, and drinking too much beer.

On Monday morning the group ate the last donuts. These were supplemented by the Kroger purchases. Jeff Campbell contributed peanut butter and sausage that his father bought for him during a recent visit to

Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

At 10:30 am on Monday Jeff Campbell, who had walked back to the interstate earlier that morning to retrieve his car, left the inn to meet his lady love and escort her back to Pittsburgh. At 11:00 am the snowplow appeared and

having troubles getting up the hill. Mysteriously, after they began moving again they found that the hill was in passable condition and that the excuse provided for the stall did not make sense. Soon traffic stalled again. 45 minutes passed, then there was some movement. Another five miles or so and traffic stopped. This time the rumor was that Pennsylvania roads are closed.

Governor Ridge had closed the roads in 47 counties, including Westmoreland, until 6:00 am Tuesday, to permit snow-removal crews to clean the highways. Stranded in their cars, trucks, campers, people began pulling out blankets to settle in for the night.

Don and Ann shut off the motor of their car, intending to restart it and run the

heater intermittently during the night. In about an hour, however, traffic began moving. This time they found that, as traffic progressed, it began to thin.

The Horner and Sivek cars exited at the first sign of road-blockage, and made for the nearest motel, which was booked solid. Within a half hour, however, a room was had in Martinsburg, West Virginia, a town playing host to many other stranded travelers.

The Horner/Sivek group



freed guests at the inn.

Don and Ann were the first to leave after the roads were plowed, soon followed by the others. They made their way north on I-81, from where they planned to take I-70 west and then US 30 west to Pittsburgh.

As the Kellander car approached the West Virginia border, traffic stopped just south of a not-too-difficult hill, where they waited for an hour. Rumor along the line of stalled cars was that vehicles were



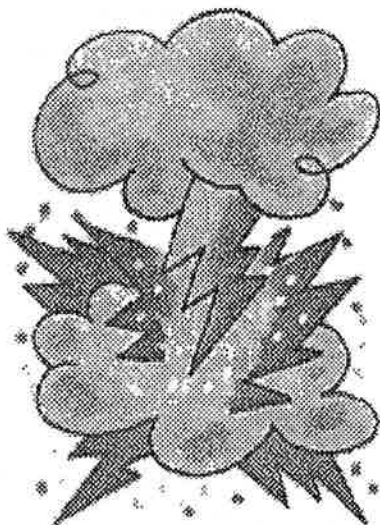
Roanoke — cont. from p. 5  
ate at an over-crowded Chinese restaurant, grateful to have anything to eat.

At Hagerstown, Maryland, Ann and Don headed west toward Breezewood, Pennsylvania, where they stopped for a midnight meal. Told by the waitress they were not allowed on the road and if the state police stopped them, they would be fined \$90, the Kellanders set out on US 30 in pursuit of home. Luckily, they saw no police. At a small service station east of Somerset they were told again of the chance of arrest.

They reached Dormont at 3:00 am Tuesday after 15 hours on the road.

The Horner and Sivek cars got home around 3:00 pm on Wednesday.

After a trip full of perils, all is well. We are glad our representatives accepted the trouble of the Mother of All Blizzards and returned safely to The 'Burgh.



*Don Kellander*

## RR&R Lair No. 2 formed in Roanoke

The second Lair of the Rascals, Rogues, and Rapsallions has been formed in Roanoke, Virginia. The organizer of the lair is Prof. Dr. Carl Plantinga, brother of Prof. Dr. Harry Plantinga, who was a charter member of the Pittsburgh Lair.

Joining Carl in this venture are six other intrepid and adventurous Roanokers, including the four Rascals who attended the inaugural meeting in January. In addition to Carl Plantinga, present at that meeting were Peter Fosl, who teaches philosophy at Hollins College, Benedict [Bendy] Goodfriend, a violinist engaged with a local quartet, and Sanford [Sandy] Gurian, an industrial engineer. Other charter members of the Roanoke Lair are William Kraus, Eric Trethewey, and David Dvorscak.

Peter Fosl's name has been placed into nomination for the unfilled position of General Secretary of the RR&R. The General Secretary is the chief executive of the Central Administration of the RR&R and is elected by all lairs together.

The creation of a second Lair is an important moment in the history of Rascaldom in that it obliges the society to fully form all constitutionally mandated parts. Thus, now that there

are two lairs, a Central Administration, which facilitates communication amongst the several Lairs, must be brought into being. This consists of the election of a General Secretary, who then, in turn, will appoint other central offices and committees as he sees fit.

Also exercising its constitutional role for the first time is the Ephorate, which is responsible for issuing and holding lair charters. All the members of the Ephorate were present at the January meeting in Roanoke and will be present again at the April meeting, at which time they will present the new group with their charter.

The charter itself will be designed and hand lettered by the RR&R's own multi-talented master craftsman and calligrapher — a man of many surprising abilities, **Jake Horner**.

The creation of the lair is the culmination of several months of conversation and negotiation between Dan Morrison and Carl Plantinga. Carl initially became interested in the RR&R from stories of Rascal meetings he heard from his brother, Harry. The stories were appealing enough that Carl wanted to becoming a part of the fun.

The guest list for the first meeting to be conducted under their own steam has 33 names already, excluding members of the Pittsburgh lair. A healthy attendance can be expected.

## Flag Travels to Hot Tub Convention

On February 15, 1996, the RR&R flag departed for its furthest destination to date: Tucson, Arizona.

The flag was carried in the loving arms of **Mark Miller** and **Lee Wolfson**, who fulfilled their secondary obligation to present a paper on psychotherapy with the elderly at an American Geriatric Psychiatry Association meeting. These obligations did not interfere with their primary obligation: to find a fitting site for raising the flag.

The bold adventurers scaled the heights of Sabina Canyon, flag in hand and cigar in mouth, until they reached the highest point, at which they unfurled the flag in all its glory.

After hours and hours of treacherous hiking, during which they were constantly harassed by rattlesnakes, coyotes and the relentless sun, they returned to the visitors center, where they ran the flag up the pole along side Old Glory.

Following their workout, our heroes spent several hours in the hot tub with single malt scotch and Macanudos.

Although this adventure precluded their attendance at the Ball, Lee and Mark were able to acquaint the flag with the mysteries of the southwest desert.

~ Lee Wolfson



Lee Wolfson and Mark Miller hoist the RR&R Flag atop Sabina Canyon

## RR&R in the News

Rascals and RR&R related events have come to the attention of the news media several times since the last edition of *The Megaphone*.

*The New York Press*, an arts and entertainment weekly similar to the *In Pittsburgh*, ran a cover story about Orélie-Antoine de Tounens, the founder of the Kingdom of Araucania & Patagonia. Now, Orélie-Antoine is not a member of the RR&R, but his biggest fan, Dan Morrison, is.

The article, which ran for several pages and quoted Dan at length, reviewed the history of the Kingdom of Araucania and the currently activities of the North American Araucanian Royalist Society, which was founded last year by Dan Morrison and Richard Shull.

The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* ran piece on Dennis Looney and his Dante class. Evidently the writer took his class and was very impressed by Dennis's ability to clarify the opaque.

*The Record-Enterprise* of Burgettstown and McDonald ran a short item on the 2nd Annual Rascals' Ball and the Caesar Grossi Music Archives endowed by the proceeds of the ball.

Finally, Mike Pelligrini of the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* did a piece on the RR&R, which included a photo of Jeff Campbell's losing the Rascal o' the Year arm wrestling match to Bill Baierl. The story was picked up by the wire services for national distribution.

Q. How many members of the Sensitivity Committee does it take to screw in a light bulb?

A. [redacted] on the [redacted] in [redacted]!

■ 2019 4th Quarter Report

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First person to translate this text wins a box of Macanudo Maduros.

Rascals, Rogues, and Rapsallions
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