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For some it might only be a job, but for Joe Pittaluga, collecting and fixing old phonographs is an avocation and a life-style because he's smitten with...

Turntable Delight

By ANNA HOYT
Of the Emerald

The phonograph's 100 anniversary might have gone unnoticed by many, but for Joe Pittaluga of Springfield, who boasts the largest antique phonograph collection in the area, it was quite an occasion.

Pittaluga accumulates mostly "outside horn model" phonographs. He owns 35 to 40 of them, with a wholesale value of \$15,000. That's not including cabinet or inside horn models, of which he has between 50 and 100.

"Almost all outside horn models are worth over \$100; I've paid as high as \$400 for one," claims Pittaluga.

Pittaluga owns the Paramount Trading Post, a second-hand store in Springfield. He became interested in antique phonographs when a junked one missing several valuable parts was taken into the shop.

He decided to fix it himself.

That was more than five years ago, and he's been taking in repair work ever since.

"I charge a flat \$5 plus parts for repairing, and I sell the original steel needles, 25 in a pack, for a half dollar," he claims. "I do it more for the contacts than for a profit; it's a hobby — the second hand store is a business."

Most of Pittaluga's connections are by word of mouth. "If a phonograph shows up within 70 miles of here, for sale, I hear about it," he claims. He gets calls from all over the country.

Restoring phonographs can take anywhere from a few hours to two years. "The whole thing is trying to find original parts — when I build a machine for a customer, I use all original parts."

"I buy phonographs in any condition, even if they've been run over by a tractor trailer, because there is always one part I can use," Pittaluga explains.

"I'm one of the few guys in the country still rebuilding machines for different people. Very few people are left that have the inclination to do it, because parts are so hard to find."

"I also collect the kipper dog statues," Pittaluga explains. Kippers are dogs with the cocked head, listening to 'his masters voice' from old RCA ads.

"They can be worth from \$3 to several hundred dollars, depending on model, age and size," he adds.

Pittaluga has to thank Thomas Edison for his hobby. One hundred and one years ago Edison invented a way to record sound on a tin foil cylinder, which eventually evolved to wax.

"They actually recorded by attaching a cone-shaped horn into their machine, and yelled into it," Pittaluga explains. "Each song was individually recorded, and the artist would sign his own record. Eventually they set up a bank of recording machines, and could record



Photo by Dennis Hickok

as many as 5 or 6 records at a time."

Starting in 1901, records were mass produced. Edison wanted an unbreakable, high quality record, with a better tone quality than anything else. A quarter-inch thick disc gave him the desired results.

Edison records utilized "hill" and "dale"-type vertical sound waves and had to be played on a diamond or

sapphire needle. Regular 78s on the other hand, had zig-zagged grooves and could be played on any needle.

Today's stereo records use both methods, one for each track.

So if you ever get tired of your \$1,500 stereo system, you can always dig out your old kipper dog and your wind-up phonograph and become a collector.

Environmental center fights for existence

By MELISSA HILTON
Of the Emerald

The Environmental Studies Center (ESC) is making a comeback after six years of steady decline.

Founded in the early '70s with a budget of \$13,000 from the College of Liberal Arts, the ESC has had its budget reduced to about \$2,000 and is dependent on volunteers to operate.

"The center itself is in a fight for its life," Paul Hamilton, center co-director claims. "We feel we provide a lot of services which won't be available if it's shut down. ... This might happen unless students and faculty get behind the Center and make it work."

At present, the ESC has three main func-

tions. It is a 3,000 volume lending library, a referral service and a center for course advising.

Hamilton, who became co-director last month, is increasing the number of hours the ESC is open and "generally upgrading the professionalism."

His future plans include, "trying to bring campus environmental groups together in a formalized fashion," Hamilton says.

He also hopes to form an advisory board, and is working toward fulfilling the center's original purpose when it was created: to start an environmental studies curriculum at the University.

Hamilton has a degree in environmental studies and is now a graduate student in

interdisciplinary studies in the Wallace School of CSPA. Hamilton holds the only work study position funded for the ESC.

At present, the remaining staff members are co-director Marjorie Williams, a volunteer who works half-time in the science library, and one student volunteer.

The ESC is eager for more volunteers. "The more the door is open, the more use it's going to have," Hamilton explains.

Students will be able to earn academic credit by serving as combined staff-researchers for the ESC spring term. A list of faculty members willing to sponsor projects is available there.

The ESC library includes 50 current periodicals, a pamphlet and clippings file

and catalogs of colleges that offer environmental studies curricula. It has information on everything from noise pollution to nuclear power.

The library was used by 30 people in January, and 45 just in the first half of February. Hamilton expects the use of the library to increase further as the center hours are increased.

The center's library also has current Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) for public comment. If you provide the stamp, the center will provide the writing materials and address for you to send in your comments on an EIS.

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