

American Guild of Organists Newsletter

Utah Valley Chapter #928
2007-2008

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Chapter Officers

Dean

Nancy Christensen
801-754-5378

moose_muzik@yahoo.com

Sub-Dean

Ruth Ann Hay
801-375-2124

ruthann_hay@byu.edu

Newsletter Ed.

Jeanine Lepinski
801-523-5944

jeanine.lepinski@gmail.com

Treasurer/Registrar

Joan Barnett
801-375-7880

jobarnett@emstar2.net

Website Editor/ Historian

DeeAnn Stone
801-373-5788

ddstone@renewamerica.us

Photographer

Lillian Heil
801-377-6076

ihheil@gmail.com

Publicity/Public Relations

Rob Stilmar
801-794-0874

rob_stilmar@hotmail.com

BYU Faculty Representative

Dr. Don Cook
801-422-3260

doncook@byu.edu

BYU Student Representative

Shinji Inagi
801-319-1479

ishinji@email.byu.edu

Members-at-large

Jill Adams
801-768-2686

jilladams@email.com

David Chamberlin
801-756-8396

david@chamberlinmusic.com

Claire Rogers
801-374-5310

quillingcote@worldnet.att.net

Lella Pomeroy, CAGO
801-491-0950

gpacookie@aol.com

Deans Message

Can you believe it is April already? My goodness the year is flying by. I can tell it's Spring. I can tell from the sounds of the cats making dates in my back yard, the signs advertising "free puppies" in my neighborhood. I have even considered staying away from Relief Society to avoid catching what is obviously contagious by the growing tummies of the numerous women sitting around me. It must be the water. The crocus in my yard are showing their little faces through the snow. It's time to hang the wasp catchers back in my yard, to avoid the big spring multiplication that is inevitable around here among all stinging insects. I even saw a box of kittens at Wal-Mart on Saturday, and it took all of my energy to keep from exercising motherly instinct to bring the orphans home. I got home, and thought now would be a good time to begin washing windows. Thankfully, a freaky snowstorm on Sunday quashed that idea. The urge is there, but who wants to? Washing windows is such a drag! Again, it's a "Spring Thing".

My understanding is that we have several nominees for the positions in our chapter of the Guild. How exciting that is! I am looking forward to finding out who these wonderful people are that have chosen to help keep our group together by their thoughtful service. I will try to pass on what little knowledge I have gleaned from the experience to my successor. I have to admit, however, most of what I have done has been by the seat of my pants, in total abject ignorance, and with the amazing support of wonderful colleagues. I would not have succeeded without them. My appreciation goes out to each of them.

This month is our Super Saturday. I hope all of you will come and participate in this wonderful event! Last year was an absolute smashing success, and this year promises to even outdo last year! Please hang an advertisement in each of your Ward Buildings and invite any that may wish to attend. The experience will be wonderful and one to remember.

Don't forget our May closing event. We are looking forward to the presentation by Franklin Ashdown. It will be exciting to hear from him and enjoy each other's company for the last time this AGO year.

It's a little sad for me as I watch the coming end of my term as your Dean. I have not been able to attend our meetings as much as I would have liked. My health significantly has limited me in how much I am able to do now, but I have enjoyed my term very much! I have truly grown to love each and every one of you, and the sacrifices you make as you each pursue your love of the organ. I have recently also come to appreciate the "two-edged sword" of being a trained organist in the Church, where we may not be fully appreciated for what we know, and what we do. Above everything, we do what we do because we love it. It is our gift, our joy, and each of us wishes to share that with others. However, it seems that all of us will have to continue our quest to educate, and try to inspire others in what organ music is all about. Sometimes we will fail. It is frustrating and painful. But we continue. One day maybe that ignorance will change. But for now, we are here for each other.

I look forward to seeing you at the May event. I would like to attend our Super Saturday, but unfortunately I am no longer able to walk very far, even with my handicap placard it is just too far. But, I will be with each of you in spirit.

Spring is in the air. The earth is renewing itself! Open your hearts and your eyes, and look to the heavens, and remember, the music is in your head, it's in your heart, it's in your soul. Share it. It's a prayer, more precious than all the words you could speak. It communicates on a level words will never reach.

Here's to the music!
Nancy Christensen, Dean

April 26th, 8-2: Super Saturday Harris Fine Arts Center, BYU

May 20th 7:30: Frank Ashdown will give a presentation on his compositions at the **Provo Tabernacle**. He will be assisted by Don Cook, David Chamberlin, and James Drake.

Felix Hell will be giving two concerts, a short one at Libby Gardner Hall on Fathers' Day, **June 15th**, and a full length one on the **17th June** at the Tabernacle. To learn more about these events go to the Salt Lake AGO chapter website at: <http://www.slicago.org>

BYU Student recitals

Felipe Dominquez

Friday April 4th, 7:30 p.m.

Provo Central Stake Building
5th North 12th West

Lydia Meyers Wilcox

Saturday April 12, 7:30 p.m.

Cathedral of the Madeleine

Thomas Watkins

Senior Recital

Saturday, April 12, 9:00 p.m.

Cathedral of the Madeleine

Organ Area Recital

Monday, April 14, 5:00 p.m.

Madsen Recital Hall

Rachel Crawford

Tuesday, April 22, 4:00 p.m.

Provo Tabernacle

Lindsay (Corless) Peterson

Sophomore recital

Wednesday, April 23, 7:30 p.m.

Provo Tabernacle

Quote of the Month

Dr. Ronald Staheli, Professor of Music at Brigham Young University, given at BYU Music Workshops, 1998: "You don't have to be perfect to be wonderful."

Two Unique Organs

Submitted by Meg Griffeth

"Historical organ builders in Northern Europe had cast their pipe metal on sand, a practice unheard of in modern times. This practice was standard until 1700, except for the French speaking world. Metal on sand cools more quickly, with the result that, during solidification, the metal develops a different crystal lattice and becomes much harder than in modern pipe metal. The result is an organ pipe which behaves, acoustically, more like a historic example than anything attempted in the modern era." In 1994 a Dutch organ builder restored a small organ in Magnuskerk, Anloo with this process. "It is the first organ to be restored using new pipes cast on sand and planed to be the correct thickness by hand."

Another unusual organ made completely of wood pipes is the Esajas Compenius Organ (1609) in the Fredriksborg Castle in Hillerrod, Denmark. In the 19th & 20th Centuries, it was common to make many ranks of pipes in wood. Hardwoods produce a sound that is precise and clear. Softwoods give a more relaxed sound. Plywood is another option because it can resist splitting and cracking and has a sound indistinguishable from solid wood. I wondered why an organ would be made of all wood pipes and if humidity of the organ in Denmark would have a problem with keeping it in tune because of that location being surrounded by so much sea water, so I asked Dr. Doug Bush about this. He said that he has played this Compenius organ at this famous castle and "the wooden pipes produce a distinctive color and the overall ensemble effect is wonderful. Humidity is a disadvantage if the climate is one with constantly changing humidity levels. Since this chapel is almost next to the seashore, the humidity is very stable and so the organ is not greatly affected . . . tuning is needed only occasionally, as with any organ. The organ certainly makes a beautiful aesthetic statement, and perhaps that was the goal." (Sources: Choir & Organ Magazine, March/April 2008 issue, "The Organ Encyclopedia" by Douglas E. Bush & Richard Kassel, and Dr. Doug Bush)

**AGO NATIONAL ELECTION
PLEASE EXERCISE YOUR
RIGHT AND PRIVILEGE
TO VOTE!**

1. By mail: Fill out and mail the ballot between pages 56 and 57 of the April issue of The American Organist.

2. Online: Go to <http://www.intelliscaninc.net/organists> (Tip: If you enter https, you will probably be routed to the incorrect site.)

Your membership number is on the left, above your name on the address label of the magazine.

Proposed officers for our local chapter are:

Dean—Mike Carson
Sub-dean – Gayle Farnsworth
Secretary – Karl Kamper
Treasurer – Joan Barnett
Newsletter editor –Carol Dean
Historian – Florence Hawkinson
Educational concerns – Lori Serr
Student representative – Felipe Dominquez
Member-at-large – David Chamberlin
Member-at-large – Ruth Ann Hay
Member-at-large – Lella Pomeroy
Member-at-large – Claire Rogers

If you are a registered member, and haven't received an e-mail with the ballot you can vote by e-mailing your votes to Ruth Ann Hay ruthann_hay@byu.edu

**Madeleine Festival of the
Arts and Humanities**

April 6th, 8 PM Bach and Beyond: The Music of Leipzig by Calmus Ensemble.

April 13th, 8 PM. Monteverdi's Vespers: University of Utah Singers. There will be a pre-concert lecture by Jeffrey Kurtzman of Washington University at 7 in the Cathedral's Scanlan Hall.

April 20th, 8 PM. A Tapestry of African-American Song: Christina DeVaughn with the Salt Lake Chamber Singers.

April 27, 8PM. Vivaldi, Verdi & Vaughn Williams: The Cathedral Choir and Chamber Orchestra.

May 4, 8PM. Olivier Messiaen and the Language of Mystical Love: Dr. Douglas O'Neill performs *L'Ascension: Quatre Méditations Symphoniques* and *Les corps glorieux: Sept visions brèves de la vie des ressuscités*.

May 11, 8 PM Red Rock Rondo: A musical Trek Through Zion Canyon: Kate MacLeod and Hal Cannon with the chamber folk music ensemble Blue Haiku.

For more information on the Madeleine Festival visit their website at www.saltlakecathedral.org/festival.php