



Pipeline

American Organist Guild—Red River Valley Chapter

Volume 28, Number 2
December/January/February
2012-13

Message From the Dean

GROW THE GUILD!

"Grow the Guild", a grass-roots effort to strengthen American Guild of Organists' membership nationwide, is a partnership between the National Committee on Membership Development and Chapter Support and local AGO chapters. It is a friendly challenge to chapters: Increase membership by 5%, and you could earn your chapter a \$500 prize. The challenge runs through May 31, 2013. We are automatically registered for this challenge. Any new members that we receive in our chapter will count for this campaign.

To grow our membership by 5%, we would need 2 new members. That is a do-able number! When you consider that, if each one of us invited a friend or colleague to consider membership in AGO, only two of us need to succeed, and we would be eligible to win a \$500 prize from AGO! And consider this: If we all invited someone to join and succeeded it would double our membership.

All individuals interested in the organ are invited to join AGO. Membership is open to everyone, regardless of religious affiliation or musical ability. Let potential members know of the many benefits and opportunities offered by AGO, on both the chapter and national levels. Remember to consider: Music Students, Choir Directors; Organ Enthusiasts; Community Arts supporters; Clergy and Denominational Leaders; Pianists; Music Teachers. The AGO is NOT JUST for organists!

For further inspiration, visit Member Benefits on the National website (<http://www.agohq.org/membership/>)

Together we can "Grow the Guild!"

Sally Harmon, Dean, RRVAGO

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Board Meeting Notes

Minutes of the RRV/AGO Board Meeting

October 5, 2012

The board meeting was called to order by Dean Sally Harmon. Other members present were Alpha Roeszler, Ruth Discher, Bill Tweten, Sonia Carlson, Robyn Vinje, and Michael Olson (host for Houlihan concert).

Ruth Strawn, treasurer, was unable to attend the meeting but had sent her report electronically earlier. We have \$7,743.80 in the checking account, \$2,818.96 in the CD, for a grand total of \$10,562.76.

Ruth Discher submitted bills totaling \$24.21 for *The Pipeline*. Robyn moved that we approve these bills for payment, Alpha seconded the motion, which carried. It was noted that most of the newsletter is sent electronically, but it needs to be mailed to six people.

First Friday Luncheon

Who Everyone is Welcome!

When First Friday of the Month at Noon

Where Fryn' Pan
302 Main Ave, Fargo

Chapter Officers

Dean: Sally Harmon

Sub-Dean: Sonia Carlson

Secretary: Robyn Vinje

Treasurer: Ruth Strawn

Board Members at Large

2013: Ruth Discher

2014: Alpha Roeszler

2015: Bill Tweten

Board Meeting Notes

Minutes of the RRV/AGO Board Meeting October 5, 2012 (cont.)

Sally announced that Norma and Curtis Halverson have moved to Rosewood Nursing Home. She also announced that she was able to present a check for \$549 to Norma from the sale of her music. Some of the Christmas music she donated to the Music Teachers Association.

Ruth Discher brought up the issue of ads in *The Pipeline*. The charge is \$50 for each ad. The treasurer sent a letter to prospective advertisers earlier, and will send a letter again. It was agreed that if advertisers paid last year, they won't have to pay again this year since there were no issues published. *The Pipeline* will be published this year in September, November, February, and April. The next issue will feature an interview with Sonia. Alfred Burt, composer of choral music, was suggested as a possible feature also.

It was announced that First Congregational Church in Fargo is looking for a choir director.

Gethsemane Episcopal Cathedral in Fargo has changed the date of the program *Celestial Sounds* to Sunday, April 14th, rather than the 7th. This is part of the church's concert series, and Michael Barone of MPR and host of Pipedreams will be the host, although he will not be playing. Sally will check with Jay about organists and what our role will be.

The current membership list will serve as our directory this year. It is being compiled by Ruth D. and Ruth S., and will be published in *The Pipeline*.

Something else that might be included in the newsletter is music events around town. Members are asked to notify Ruth D. of upcoming Christmas events. Sally mentioned that Carols at Candlelight will be presented at First Presbyterian Church on December 16th, and is open to the public.

Sally reported that she received by e-mail a mandatory

reporting form for our tax exempt status. It is form 990-N, and is for organizations with gross income <\$50,000. The deadline is November 15th. Sally will forward the form to Ruth Strawn and see if she can complete and submit it.

Sally announced that the national AGO has a program whereby a chapter increasing its membership by 5% will be eligible for a \$500 drawing. This is a challenge to us, and Sally will write about it in the newsletter.

The Christopher Houlihan concert is scheduled for Sunday, October 21st, at First Lutheran at 4:00 PM. Michael will arrange for tables to be set up by the west and east entrances of the church. He will also contact Carolyn Hensrud regarding the programs.

The next board meeting will follow the First Friday Lunch on November 2nd.

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Vinje, secretary .

Board Meeting Notes

Minutes of RRV Chapter of AGO Board Meeting November 2, 2012

The meeting was called to order by Dean Sally Harmon at the Fargo Fryin' Pan following the First Friday Lunch. Other members present were Sonia Carlson, Ruth Strawn, Ruth Discher, Alpha Roeszler, Jim Gurney, and Robyn Vinje.

Jim Gurney presented the tentative program for the Christmas Sing-a-long on Monday, December 10th, at Messiah Lutheran Church, at 7:00 PM. He and Bill Tweten are co-chairs. He asked for volunteers for organists to play the carols, and also was given suggested names of potential players. It looks like a very interesting and varied program with a number of people and groups performing. Robyn moved, and

Board Meeting Notes

Minutes of RRV Chapter of AGO Board Meeting November 2, 2012 (cont.)

Ruth Discher seconded, that Carolyn Hensrud be authorized to spend as much on The Forum ads for the sing-a-long as she spent on the Houlihan concert. Motion carried.

The treasurer's report was submitted electronically to the board members prior to the meeting. She stated she has not received the bills for the Houlihan concert from The Forum yet. At this time the checking account has a total of \$6,332.03, and the CD is worth \$2,818.96, for a grand total of \$9,150.99.

Ruth Discher announced that the current membership list will be in the next issue of *The Pipeline*. There was some discussion regarding possible articles, and we will continue with interviews of chapter members.

Coming events to be noted are Carols by Candlelight at First Presbyterian Church on December 16th at 6:30 PM, and the noon concerts at the Fargo Theater which will be given nine week days before Christmas. Lance Johnson and Michael Olson are among the organists presenting those.

Alpha noted the article that had been in The Forum regarding the Celestial Sounds series, including the one in April to be presented by organists from the chapter.

The announced theme is "Those Fabulous French", but Sally suggested we might want to expand that to include composers of other nationalities as well. Sonia thought we might want to call it "Those Fabulous French et al".

Robyn read a report on the Christopher Houlihan concert submitted by Michael Olson electronically.

I was very happy with the size of the audience. Of course, it always could have been more – but those in attendance loved him! I had two friends drive up from the Twin Cities, and there was someone here from Huron, South Dakota (which is probably further than the Twin Cities – or pretty close in in distance....).

Christopher did acknowledge to me that he appreciated and enjoyed the gift basket.

He actually walked back and forth from the Radisson to First Lutheran because he really enjoyed being downtown and he just wanted to get some exercise (Chelsea Chen did the same thing last year, actually!). It's nice to have the Radisson so close to First Lutheran. I put the hotel expenses on my credit card, and Ruth Strawn has already reimbursed me for those charges (\$447.56 for three nights' lodging).

Our church secretary, Magda Fitterer, made the programs and they turned out nicely. I don't remember if we gave her a small gratuity or not last year for making the programs for Chelsea's concert. (Magda did NOT request any payment; I'm simply asking....)

Christopher's program was very impressive since he played by memory!

As most of you know, he performed all six Vienne symphonies in various venues during the summer months. Symphony No. 2 was the ONLY symphony he played by memory, so that was great of him to program THAT symphony for the concert here in Fargo.

I thought the audience was more diverse than in past organ concerts. I saw people there I didn't know, and I also saw people who are not frequent organ concert enthusiasts – so I was happy from that aspect.

If you have any other questions or concerns of me, please let me know.

One other comment: I thought the publicity was incredible for this concert – perhaps bringing in "new folk" to the organ world!

Robyn reported that the North Dakota Council on the Arts is seeking nominations for the ND Governor's Awards for the Arts. The purpose is "to recognize individuals and organizations who have made outstanding contributions to the arts in the state". The deadline for submission is January 14th, 2013, and the awards will be presented at a special public event in

Board Meeting Notes

Minutes of RRV Chapter of AGO Board Meeting
November 2, 2012 (cont.)

Bismarck March 27th, 2013. She suggested that we nominate someone from our chapter. After some discussion, it was recommended that we nominate Michael Olson. Robyn offered to gather the information from Michael and submit the nomination.

Sonia asked about the national bylaw changes that each of us has been asked to vote on. It was recommended that we all vote yes.

There was some discussion on the ads in *The Pipeline*. It was agreed that we would charge \$30 for 4 issues, or buy three and get one free. Boulgers have stated that they will continue to print the paper issues free of charge.

Sally announced that she will be gone for the December and January meetings. She will be in Rochester where her husband will be undergoing treatment at Mayo, and expects to be there 6-8 weeks. We wish them well, and continue to pray for them.

She will give us her address later; they will not know exactly when they will go until 24 hours before he is admitted.

The next board meeting will follow the First Friday Lunch on December 7th.

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Vinje, secretary

RRVAGO Annual Christmas Carol Sing-a-long to Feature International Flare

The annual RRVAGO Christmas Carol Sing-a-long has become a much-anticipated prelude to the Christmas season. This year's program will be presented at Messiah Lutheran Church, 2010 Elm Street N., Fargo on Monday, December 10 at 7:00 p.m. and will include songs, carols and dances from various countries around the world. In addition to performances by local RRVAGO member organists and musicians, featured guest performances will include the exciting 19th Ave. Jazz group from Fargo North High School, the Messiah Men's Choir and Messiah Joy Ringers. Several familiar Christmas carols are planned for audience participation.

This varied program will delight everyone and will certainly help us to focus on the real meaning of this joyous season. We encourage you to invite friends and family.

We continue the annual custom of collecting monetary donations for the Food Pantry. No canned goods or non-perishable items, please.

ATOS Organ Concerts at the Fargo Theater

The local area American Theater Organ Society will be presenting their annual noon-hour organ concerts for Christmas. The dates are December 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19 and 21. Watch the Forum Fargo Theater ads for details and additional articles.

First Presbyterian presents *Carols by Candlelight*

First Presbyterian Church, 650 2nd Ave. No., Fargo, will present it's annual *Carols by Candlelight*. Program on Sunday, December 16 at 6:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

|| Getting to Know You

|| *This edition features RRVAGO Sub-dean Sonia M. Carlson.*

|| It all started the day the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6, 1945. That makes my birthday pretty easy to remember. My mother said I had a deep red "V" on my forehead, and the doctor said that was a "V" for victory!

|| We had a great childhood, my brother (Lance Johnson) and I, living in Fergus Falls, MN and also at Ottertail Lake in the summers. I always sang in church and school choirs, had piano lessons, and played the flute. Most of my activities came to a screeching halt when in the spring of 1958 I had a spinal fusion for rapidly progressing scoliosis. It was determined that polio was the cause, which I'd apparently had as a pre-schooler. Anyway, I had a tutor so I could keep up with school since I was confined to a hospital bed (at home) and wearing a plaster cast from my neck to my thighs, no walking or being upright for six months. Six months and two more casts later I was finally free to wear my clothes normally instead of trying to fit things over a plaster "barrel". Life was fine after that, and I actually never had pain with this.

|| When Lance came home from NDSU (NDAC then) on weekends with arms full of theatre organ pipes and parts, our lives would never be the same. The basement turned into a factory and organ chamber. It wasn't long before I was "working" for him when he needed an extra pair of hands, and I have kept on ever since with organ work... part time, full time and anytime.

|| After I graduated from Fergus Falls Senior High in 1963, I graduated from Fergus Falls Junior College with an Associate of Arts degree, then to Lake Region Hospital School of Radiologic Technology for a Registered Technician degree. Before I started a job as an x-ray technician, Lance hired me full time, and I was very glad to do that...much more fun! Johnson Organ Co., Inc. was then in Moorhead. I was married to Charles Carlson, Jr. in 1969 and divorced in 1976. I also worked as a vault clerk at the State Bank of Fargo Northport from 1970 to 1974, and then as a life insurance underwriter at what was then known as Western States Life Insurance Co. in Fargo, and retired in 2001 when the name was Clarica Life Insurance Co.

|| Currently, I work part time for Lance, in assembly, wiring, staining woodwork, making pneumatics, etc. or working with Mike Johnson on tuning, repair, and installations, etc. which usually involves travel.

|| For hobbies, I have done sewing, oil painting, lots of crafts, community classes, book editing for Lance, and have interests in archeology, ancient and regional history, listening to old-time radio programs, travel...especially to Great Britain, AGO and ATOS (American Theatre Organ Society), attending concerts and ATOS conventions, and, last but not least, hundreds of hours of volunteer labor on the mighty Wurlitzer at the Fargo Theatre.

|| FM Area Music Club to present Program on December 3

|| What would Christmas be without lots of music! The Fargo Moorhead Area Music Club has a feast of music to present on Monday, December 3 at 7:00 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church in downtown Fargo. "Sing and Ring for Christmas" will be performed by the club's Noteables women's choir and a community bell choir, Bellissimo. The event is free and open to the public.

|| The Christopher Houlihan Organ Recital - - - In Review

|| *Written by Bill Tweten*

|| An extraordinary event happened at First Lutheran Church, Fargo on October 21st--- the young American organist, Christopher Houlihan, shared his love of the organ and it's music ---and for an hour, everything in the world was at peace! The Julliard graduate graced us with his amazing musical talent and we also appreciated the kind of passion that he shared about the musical selections---and his passion for the music was clearly evident in his performance.

|| Mr. Houlihan started the recital with March on Handel's "Life Up Your Heads", Op. 15. This organ work by Alexandre Guilmant started with wonderful soft sonorities and crescendoed into a delightful fugue. Here we started to witness Houlihan's amazing phrasing and movement as a performer.

|| Next Christopher shared important "program notes" about his next selection--- Bach's Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, BWV 582. This incredible variations on a passacaglia ground is certainly one of Bach's most well known works. The variations and double fugue put the organist and the organ through the paces! What a wonderful way to hear so many colorful registrations---and a treat to have it played so well.

|| A change in the program led us into the very lovely 2nd movement of the Bach Trio Sonata #5 in C Major. Organists know that these seemingly light and delicate pieces are **devilishly** hard! Bach takes the traditional Baroque Sonata and gives all three parts to ONE musician. So each hand has a melody line as do the feet. So it's a bit like a dance. This particular movement is certainly the more florid one in all the 6 Trio Sonatas. Oh, did I mention that Mr. Houlihan also played this recital entirely by memory?

|| The final selection of the recital - Second Symphony, Op. 20 by Louis Vierne. Mr. Houlihan had recently played *all 6 of Vierne's organ symphonies in one day* --- a feat I couldn't even begin to comprehend! (A note on the composer: This symphony really showed off Vierne's new position at Notre Dame in 1902----at the helm of the mighty Cavaille-Coll organ---Vierne was writing especially for the rich timbres and sheer power of the instrument.) The swashbuckling Allegro movement showcased the firey reeds and full organ sound. Then in a dramatic contrast, the Choral movement was filled with gentle, prayerlike sounds. The third movement "Scherzo" was so delightful I could see everyone smiling very "loudly" at the end. The Cantabile followed by exploring the strings and tremolos of the instrument. And finally, the FINAL movement---which from the start was a "hang on to your seats" kind of ride! Intense chromaticism and bravura flourishes showed great virtuosity. We unstrapped our seat belts and rose to attention as we applauded a wonderful performance!

|| For an encore, Christopher played a Toccata from the 2nd Suite of the 24 Fantasy Pieces written by Vierne.

|| It was a total delight to watch and hear Christopher Houlihan ---- his debut in Fargo will be well remembered. He shared his passion for the organ as he seamlessly and masterfully piloted the Austin organ and for the hour---we experienced hearing one of God's most talented organists in the world today!

Recitals at First Lutheran

Michael Olson will present Christmas organ recitals at First Lutheran Church in Fargo on Tuesday, December 11 at 7:00 p.m. and at Calvary Lutheran Church in Grand Forks on Monday, December 17 at 7:00 p.m. Arrangements of familiar and less-familiar carols will be interspersed with singing of Christmas carols by the congregation.

Ruth Strawn, student of Michael Olson, will present a recital of music for the Advent, Christmas and Epiphany seasons on Wednesday, December 12 from 12:45 to 1:15 p.m. in the sanctuary at First Lutheran Church, Fargo.

If any of you would like to play an organ recital—or a piece in a recital—please let Michael know at (701) 235-4567 ext. 135 or Molson@flcfargo.org and he will get you on the schedule!

|| Second Annual High School Organ Festival & Competition ||

|| to be held in Winston-Salem, NC ||

|| With prizes guaranteed to be at least \$3500 and potentially over \$10,000, UNC-School of the Arts, Salem College, and the Winston-Salem Chapter of the AGO are pleased to announce the Second Annual High School Organ Festival & Competition the weekend of January 24-26, 2013. The festival and competition is open to any High School Senior or younger. The competition will be held at First Baptist Church of Winston-Salem (<http://www.timothyolsenorganist.com/FirstBaptist.html>), and the Festival portion will be held on the campuses of UNCSA (<http://www.timothyolsenorganist.com/Crawford.html>) & Salem College (<http://www.timothyolsenorganist.com/ShirleyHall.html>).

|| This year's competition application requires a CD submitted with letters of reference by **December 14, 2012**.

|| Included during the weekend in addition to the competition is a masterclass with world-renowned Injury-Preventive Keyboard Technique pedagogue, Barbara Lister-Sink; an introduction to Alexander Technique; and a masterclass and individual lessons with UNCSA & Salem College organ professor, Dr. Timothy Olsen, all of which is included in the application fee.

|| Eight finalists will be chosen from the application pool, and will be notified by **December 21, 2012**.

|| For more information and application form, please visit <http://www.timothyolsenorganist.com/OrganCompetition.html>, or contact Professor Timothy Olsen: olsent@uncsa.edu

|| Positions Available — Choir Director ||

|| First Congregational UCC, Fargo, is looking for a choir director to lead the sanctuary choir. The choir participates in Sunday morning worship services which begin at 10:30. Choir rehearsal begins prior to the service at 9:00. For more detailed information, please contact Pastor Kevin Cassiday-Maloney at (701) 232-8985 or e-mail at 1stcongregationalucc@gmail.com.

Composers Corner—Charles E. Ives—The First Great American Composer

Charles E. Ives (1874-1954) is known as the first great American composer. When turn-of-the-century American composers were producing Europe-oriented music, Ives was the independent anticipator of 20th century techniques. His music anticipated by many years the compositional techniques of the most advanced contemporary music-devices that came to be associated with Bela Bartok, Igor Stravinsky, Paul Hindemith and Arnold Schonberg. Thus Ives stands at the musical gateway to the 20th century.

The most important aspect of Ives' music, however, is not his development of previously unexplored areas of compositional techniques, but rather his use of all kinds of musical materials in a very general sense organized into compositions. He did not acknowledge an artistic hierarchy in the various kinds of music.

Charles Ives' compositions were undoubtedly influenced by the musical interests of his father, George, who was active in the musical life of Danbury, Conn., leading bands and choirs as well as giving music lessons.

Ives lived two full lives, that of a life insurance executive and that of a composer. For about 30 years he sold life insurance during the day and composed music at night, on weekends and vacations. Ives partnership with Julian Myrick became one of the most successful insurance partnerships of the time.

The years in which Ives was launching his life insurance career were simultaneously his most productive years as a composer (1905-1916). In addition to several orchestral works, Ives also wrote a number of choral works, both sacred and secular, and several works for organ.

Ives incorporated into his compositions the elements of music which reflected the life he saw around him. As a young person in Danbury, Charles Ives experienced the impressive camp meetings of the Methodists at nearby Redding. He also drew on American barn dances, patriotic songs, popular tunes, marches, gospel songs and ragtime.

At the age of 13, Charles assumed an organist position at the West Street Congregational Church in his hometown. The next year he became organist at the First Baptist Church. Less than two years later he was praised in a local newspaper for his "patient perseverance in his study of the organ" and was congratulated on his "marked ability as a master of the keys". During his fifteen years as an organist, Ives held positions at Yale University, Bloomfield, New Jersey and New York City and was exposed to several liturgical traditions: Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, and Presbyterian. He was therefore steeped in church music idioms which ranged from rural revivalism to metropolitan church worship services. Many of his early choral works were left behind at the churches he served and were eventually lost or thrown out.

Among the several organ variations on hymn tunes and other organ pieces for church written by Ives are:

Variations on *Jerusalem the Golden*; Variations on *America*; Interlude for *Nettleton (Come, Thou Fount of every blessing)*; Interlude for *Bethany (Nearer, my God, to thee)*; Interlude for *Eventide (Abide with me)*; Interlude for *Woodworth (Just as I am)*; *Adestes fideles* in an organ prelude.

Early organ compositions came eventually to exercise a prominent role in his orchestral and chamber works and the inclusion of musical quotations from hymns and spirituals continued throughout his career.

After 1916, Ives' work began to receive public attention. The first recording of an Ives work was made in 1934. In the 1930's most of Ives' support came from fellow composers who not only understood the problems of having new ideas accepted, but also appreciated the complexities, strength, and inspiration of his writing. In the 1940s this appreciation grew among many musicians and among an enlarged listening audience as well. Ives gained world recognition with the winning of a Pulitzer Prize in 1947, and in 1951 the premiere of his Symphony no. 2 was conducted by Leonard Bernstein.

(excerpts from First Great American Composer by Johannes Riedel, in *An American Annual of Christmas Literature and Art*, Vol. 44, published by Augsburg Publishing House)

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RRV/AGO MEMBERSHIP LIST 2012-2013, cont. (as of 11-20-12)

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Upcoming Events

Sunday, October 21, 4:00 pm

Christopher Houlihan Concert, First Lutheran Church, Fargo

Monday, December 10, 7:00 pm

Christmas Carol Sing-a-long, Messiah Lutheran Church, Fargo

Sunday, April 14, 2013

"Celestial Sounds—Those Fabulous French",
Gethsemane Episcopal Cathedral, Fargo

Contact Information

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Publication Title: *Pipeline*
Issue Date: Dec/Jan/Feb 2012-13
Statement of Frequency: Quarterly
Editors: Alpha Roeszler and Ruth Discher

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