



AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

PIPELINE

VOL. 10 NO. 7

RED RIVER VALLEY CHAPTER

APRIL 1994

SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 1994

4:00 P.M.

(Set up time for the bell choirs is 3:00 P.M.)

"RING THOSE GOLDEN BELLS"

**RINGFEST AND MASTER CLASS with clinician
PAT UNKENHOLZ, Bismarck, North Dakota
(formerly a member of the RRV chapter of AGO)**

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
11 NORTH 7TH STREET, FARGO**

Do you enjoy listening to handbells? Do you wonder how to direct a handbell choir? or how to read the music? Would you like to sit in on a learning session with 7 handbell choirs? Do you want to hear some terrific music? Well then, bring a friend or invite your neighbor and **COME TO HAVE A GREAT TIME!**

Following the program a brief business meeting is scheduled to hold the annual election of officers. A quorum is needed to vote!! At present the slate of candidates is: Dean - Marlys Herring; Sub-dean - Jay Herschberger; Secretary - ; Treasurer - John Jahr; Board Member - Robert Hachmeister; Program Chair - Dawn Papenfuss. PLEASE PLAN TO BE PRESENT TO VOTE.

FROM THE DEAN... Do you sometimes feel like an island in your capacity of church musician? Islands are often scattered and separated by large bodies of water - not to mention troubled seas. But sometimes islands occur in chains, linked together in various ways.

Maybe we can think of AGO as the body of water, (calm, I would hope) and its members the islands, chained together by mutual concerns that are addressed in our various programs and social events. These events may even provide "mini-retreats"-time to care, share, and bear each other's joys and sorrows-a support group, if you will.

This is how I see AGO and I'm particularly grateful to a supportive group of officers, board members, and others who have given much time and effort to the chapter. I see a positive picture as I look at the slate of candidates for offices in the coming year. They are people of ability and enthusiasm.

I urge you to be present at the April 24th meeting at First Presbyterian Church, Fargo, for the delightful sounds of handbells and for the election of officers which follows in a brief business meeting. See you there!
-Dean Margery Possehl

EIGHTH ANNUAL MASTER SCHOLA...

Master Schola, an annual music conference incorporating custom designed "hands-on" courses and seminars, will be held from August 9-15 at the Community of Jesus on Cape Cod Bay in Massachusetts. Master Schola '94 offers a select group of America's choirmasters and organists a unique opportunity to improve their skills through practical experiences under the direction and guidance of international masters of the church musician's art.

This year the featured masters include: Miss Margaret Hillis, Director of the Chicago Symphony Chorus, Mr. John Weaver, Head of the Organ Department at the Curtis Institute and The Juilliard School, Msgr. Clement Morin, a member of the Faculty of Music at the University of Montreal, and Prof. Dorothy Richardson, formerly of the Guild Hall School of Music, London. For further information, call Sr. Maria Jackson at 508-255-1094 or at 1-800-252-7729.



SWELL SHADES

FOR YOUR HANDBOOK...NEW MEMBER

Sarah L. Gran (student) (H)218-687-4523
RR 3, Box 109
Erskine MN 56535

We welcome Sarah L. Gran to the RRV Chapter of the AGO. Sarah is a sophomore at the high school in McIntosh, MN. She studies organ with George French of Crookston and is organist at Grace Lutheran Church in Erskine.

SIGNUP FOR CHAPTER PARTICIPATION IN VARIOUS ACTIVITIES IS SCHEDULED FOR MAY MEETING. Be sure to think about this and come prepared to take part.

!!

**WANTED: VOLUNTEER(S) FOR
JOB OF EDITOR OF THE
NEWSLETTER PIPELINE**

If you have questions,
call Mary Tangen, 236-9396.

!!

PIPEDREAMS...Sunday, 9:30 p.m., KCCM 91.1 FM...

4/24/1994..Pomp and Pipes..Powerful music for organ, winds, brasses and percussion, performed in concert at the Meyerson Symphony Center, Dallas, TX.

5/1/94..Buxtehude and Bach at Holy Cross College..A program of solo organ and sacred chamber music performed in Worcester, MA.

5/8/94..Going On Record..A survey of recent recordings, focusing on sonic and emotional appeal and variety.

5/15/94..Igniting the Flame..Celebrating the new 91-rank N.P Mander tracker-action organ, installed to great fanfare a year ago at the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola on Park Avenue in New York City.

5/22/1994..Homage to Marcel Dupre..Unusual compositions and extraordinary performances in tribute to the great French teacher, composer, and virtuoso.

MUSIC LISTENING CONTEST

Once again, the Red River Valley Chapter will sponsor the Music Listening Contest in conjunction with the 2nd Annual Trollwood Classical Music Weekend, June 4 and 5. This contest will be one event of the KCCM-sponsored weekend. Also represented throughout the weekend will be the F-M Opera, the F-M Symphony, the Tri-College Percussion Ensemble and others.

The Music Listening Contest is scheduled for early Sunday afternoon at the Barn Stage and anyone is welcome to take part. Enter as a team (any number will do).

A few Guild members will be contacted to help with crowd control and general management. Prizes will be offered by Schmitt Music, a co-sponsor. The First Place winner(s) may select a piece of music to be played on MPR while being duly lauded as the contest winner.

Michael Olson and Marlys Herring are pleased to be working toward the contest's creation along with Karen Nitzkowski and Diane Wolter of KCCM, and Carolyn Altmann of the Fargo Park System (Trollwood).

-Submitted by Marlys Herring

CHAPTER MINUTES..Red River Valley Chapter, March 20, 1994, Peace Lutheran Church, Fargo. Following an informative program by Craig Proehl: "Converting piano players to organists," and Jan Childs: "Controlling performance anxiety," the chapter held a brief meeting.

Dean Margery Possehl reported that the nominating Committee (Brad Steen, Rod Rothlisberger, Jack Close, Margery Possehl), has had no success yet in securing candidates for the available chapter offices.

The membership was informed that the "Executive Board approved paying the registration fee (\$300) for the July '94 National AGO Convention for the newly elected chapter Dean. Lance Johnson moved and Mary Tangen seconded that we do so. Passed.

Thanks to Dawn Papenfuss, Norma Halverson, and Sue Clambey for a delightful "green" lunch in honor of St. Patrick.

Respectfully submitted,
Marlys Herring, Secretary

MAY MEETING - NOTE THE DATE CHANGE

A potluck is planned for May 14, 1994, at 5:00 p.m. at the home of Grant and Carolyn Hensrud, 130 S Woodcrest Dr, North Fargo (beyond the VA Hospital). Bread, beverage and utensils provided. **Sort through your music and bring all discards to the potluck. Come and find some treasures.**

HOHMAN RECITAL/WORKSHOP REPORT

Approximately 125 people were in attendance at Dr. Frederick Hohman's organ concert at First Lutheran Church on February 11. A reception followed, hosted by the Red River Valley Chapter of The American Guild of Organists. Twelve people attended the workshop the next morning. Both events were enthusiastically received.

Dr. Hohman's special expertise is in turn-of-the-century organ music, which includes orchestral transcriptions and concert hall repertoire. His emphasis is on American and English composers of the time. We learned about appropriate and typical registrations based on organ tastes and instruments and venues of the time.

Dr. Hohman's recital was underwritten by First Lutheran Church. The fee was \$700 and \$631.50 was taken in. The workshop was a part of the F-M Communiversality, with an artist's fee of \$100. Dr. Hohman's appearance was included in all publicity, mailings, and brochures which emanated from the Communiversality office. Our chapter paid for his Radisson stay (\$179.85), and the recital programs (\$109.25). "In-kind" man-hours were also tallied from the chapter in planning the event.

Thank you to Michael Olson and first Lutheran Church for their support and unimpeded use of their facilities and organ. Thank you to Ann Zavoral and the Communiversality office for all their help and gracious cooperation. Thank you to George French for writing a grant to the City of Fargo, from which we received \$294.

-Submitted by Marlys Herring

BOARD MINUTES..March 20, 1994, Peace Lutheran Church, Fargo. Present: Margery Possehl, Craig Proehl, Marlys Herring, Ardis Witte, David Childs, Joan Bystol, Mary Tangen.

The secretary's and Treasurer's reports were not read, noting they had appeared in the newsletter.

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Marge reported that no one has agreed to run for any of the open positions. She asked for ideas. Some discussion ensued. The committee will continue to search for candidates for four offices, one "at large" board member, and a 94-95 program chair. Additionally, Mary Tangen has asked to be relieved as *Pipeline* editor, effective at the end of May.

Our chapter has received a grant for \$294 from Lake Agassiz Arts Council. This is 1994 City of Fargo funds.

The meeting was adjourned. Craig Proehl and Jan Childs delivered presentations on "Converting piano players to organists" and "Tips on relieving performance anxiety" respectively.

Respectfully submitted,
Marlys Herring, Secretary

THE DEAN'S SPOUSE SPEAKS OUT

I suppose that due to the great variety within a typical AGO chapter membership there are as many opinions as to the current state of the RRV AGO chapter as there are members' perspectives. No one asked me, but I am compelled to offer just one more--that of husband of the Dean.

My wife, the Dean, assumed her position last year and thus began for months to come a topic for dinner table discussions in our household that has revealed something of the character of the local chapter and its membership, as well, I might add, as that of the Dean herself. Both proved interesting.

As everybody knows, musicians across the board are a different lot; but certainly as a sub group, organists occupy a special prominence enjoyed(?) by few others. I know because I married one. My theory is that organists have unquestionably earned this special attention. Unlike the requirements to play any other musical instrument where only a couple of hands or even three or four fingers will do, organists have the audacity to feel they must throw in every conceivable (almost) body appendage available from toe to nose in order to be musically respectable. It is really no wonder that there is a certain amount of schizophrenia in all organists' lives. Recognizing this makes the job of comprehending the scope and mission of the AGO a little easier, but not much. Only those of us in the Spouse of the Dean category are privy to a perspective that you ordinary AGO members could neither handle nor, much less, understand.

Dinners at our house usually are divided into three parts; a glass of wine, the main course and maybe a dessert. If in time we happen to be anywhere near an AGO event either before or after a deadline is approaching for a newsletter or grant application, there is a serious emotional toll to be paid. There are alternating periods of utter disgust, followed by expressions of relief, and finally, gratification or even elation. I must confess that the period of disgust ordinarily scores much higher on the emotional meter than either of the other two, or so it seems. If things have not gone well, organizational breakdowns, workers not following through, poor attendance at meetings, or--the one I hear most--"silly little personality differences," it is discussed during the serving of the wine. The timing of this is fortunate as the wine helps to smooth the rough edges.

The "personality differences" discussion can easily overlap into the main course of the dinner and often does. The conversation centers around issues of intolerance, loyalty, or dedication as they relate to the organization's purpose for being. It is very deep and profound stuff for a dinner table setting, especially if one overdid it on raw onion or Tabasco sauce. If time permits, the discussion will inevitably drift to what is presumed to be the sad state of affairs to which organ pedagogy has fallen; that because of the dearth of organ students, churches and congregations of the future will have to settle at best, for an electric guitar or maybe even an accordion to lead their worship services. A rather sobering thought!

But at dessert a mellowness begins to creep in and there are references to a number of the positives that have been happening, such as the member who along with two of her students traveled 150 miles one-way to hear a recent AGO recitalist perform; or the news that a grant has come through; or so and so has accepted the program chairmanship; or how a certain clinician stressed the importance of the techniques of proper hymn playing, etc. etc.; all good signs of organizational growth to gladden the heart of any Dean.

As I think back on those many dinner time discussions on AGO issues and concerns, I remember I contributed little to the conversation other than a nod of affirmation here or a grunt of disbelief there. This was due at least in part to the fact that your Dean does much of her thinking aloud and doesn't afford much opportunity for interjection. However, thanks to my dinner time education, I now feel more like a veteran able to respond to most any crisis the local chapter may face short of playing the organ myself, that is.

It is in this context that I, in my unique position, feel compelled to speak out on behalf of all us spouses of the deans, past and present. As we see it the AGO mission, "to promote a higher quality of church music and to enhance the status of all church musician," (loosely quoted) is still worthy of support. The emphasis on non-denominational organization and planning remains critical to its function and its dedication to worship enhancement through the use of quality music and better training of church musicians gives real purpose and direction.

(continued on page 5)



Don't forget to hear the
handbells on April 24,
4pm.



But the disturbing thing that immediately became obvious to me as the Dean's spouse (and certainly to any Dean's spouse) was the lack of reference to this mission. As any good spouse of a Dean would tell you, local organizational meeting format has much to do with the task of how best to achieve missions goals. Certainly one of the organization's purposes is to furnish a platform on which musicians can display their performance abilities as an inspiration to all. But most of us spouses recognize how easy it is for a chapter to fall into that trap, particularly if it comes at the expense of other goals. Attention to other details, musical and otherwise, of the worship service or in the life of a church musician such as professional ethics, basic knowledge of organ construction, or practical tips and discussion of service playing, etc, is important too.

Would a broader scope of workshops/lectures/perfor-
mances better serve the membership? Is there a
need to attempt to narrow the approachability gap
between the member organist who, at the drop of a
hat, can impeccably race through a Widor "Toccata"
and another who is struggling with the pedaling on a
simple hymn? How friendly is AGO to prospective
new members? And what of the future of organ
playing and organists and music of the church in
general? I don't mind telling you this is a major
scare for us spouses. Is there really a crisis and, if
so, what should the RRV Chapter be doing about it?

The spouse's perspective has been ignored for too
long. These are issues that every AGO member had
better face squarely before it is too late. Imagine, if
you will, singing "For All The Saints" to the accom-
paniment of a harmonica!!?

-Dewey Possehl, spouse of the Dean



On the horns of a dilemma

All cartoons in this issue are
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AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS
Red River Valley Chapter
P.O. Box 2223
Fargo ND 58108

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Pipeline Newsletter of Red River
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Lloyd Collins - Sub Dean
Marlys Herring - Secretary
Craig Proehl - Treasurer
Board Members: Gerald Berg,
David Childs, Ardis Witte
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