

Pipeline

American Organist Guild—Red River Valley Chapter

Volume 26, Number 8

October 2009

Message From the Dean

Greetings!

I really love the fall season. Crisp days, beautiful colors of leaves, tree-ripened apples, pumpkins and squash, combines in the fields, the

annual migration of the birds, for me there is something enchanting in the winding down of summer. After the race of trying to get to every single possible outdoor activity during the warm months, I almost have time to sit back (momentarily any-



way) and take stock of myself, my pantry, my warmer clothes, my music stacks, and anthem lists.

I am quite fond of the meditations of Susan Cherwien (wife of David) and want to share the following with you this month taken from the collection entitled Crossings (MorningStar Music Publishers):

A HARVEST OF NEW THINGS

The seasons can teach us:
the burnished leaves
the ripening grain
the dying green –

The seasons can teach us:
the winter sleep
the dark rest underground
the cool time of waiting –

The season can teach us:
the split soil
the emerging shoot
the bright awakening.

The seasons can teach us:
new things will come
lo! New things will come
but death is part of the process
blowing behind is part of the newness
cool darkness and waiting prepare the spring –

The seasons can teach us:
new things will come
ah, new things will come.

(Behold, I make all things new,
says the Lord.)

As I reflect on this poem I am immediately drawn to reflect upon our Guild chapter. We too are in a season of change; a time of transition. Several years ago the RRVAGO presented a wonderful, exciting, regional convention. Memberships were at an all-time high, excitement was in the air, and hopes for the future abounded.

Reality has now set in. Memberships have declined at the rate of 18% for the past 4 years! The very technology that was meant to make our lives more simple has also served to drive us apart by keeping us more busy with other areas of our lives: at work 24/7 in some cases. We find we have precious little time to spend together with our families and our friends, let alone our professional activities such as the Guild. Yet it is by these professional relationships that we grow and nurture each other in our daily work. We share stories of mishaps and accomplishments, of new scores both good and bad, and we realize we are on a journey unique but also parallel to others.

So what does this have to do with RRVAGO? It seems that we (RRVAGO) are in the season of dark rest, a time of waiting as described by Susan. A look at our programming for this year supports this. We have an extremely limited number of RRVAGO-sponsored events scheduled. One could even argue that really NOTHING at all is being done at all in terms of bringing the organ into the RRV area. The reality is that we are keenly aware of our current situation and doing everything possible to continue to do business as we "re-tool" our image bringing it more in line with 21st century technology and concepts.

As an example at the September general meeting a motion was passed to limit the board to 3 at-large members rather than 6, bringing the total board size from 10 down to 7.

(Continued on page 3)

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: Peggy Johnson

Sub-Dean: Anna Goodin-Hayes

Secretary: Michael Olson

Treasurer: Open

Board Members at Large

2010: Gaylord Fagerland, Steve Eneboe

2011: Anna Goodin-Hayes, Erich Knapp

2012: Open

Board Meeting Notes

On Thursday, September 17, 2009 the following members of the AGO board met for discussion: Peggy Johnson, Erich Knapp, Anna Goodin-Hayes, Bill Tweten, and Michael Olson.

Since only five of the ten-member board was present, this was NOT an official board meeting but discussion took place on a variety of topics and issues. The minutes of the August 20, 2009 board meeting (which WAS an official meeting) were approved.

Bill is serving as interim treasurer. Since we have not had a treasurer since June 30, this is a three-month report:

Beginning balance in checking on June 30 was \$1103.72. Membership dues received since June 30 totaled \$706. One of our CDs matured, and the money was transferred to the checking account in the amount of \$5124.45. Expenses since June 30 included purchasing a gift card from West Acres for Sheila Baumgartner for all her hard work with the PIPELINE each month. National AGO dues in the amount of \$467.50 were mailed. The ad in the Wichita convention program book had not been paid for, and this has now been done (in the amount of \$175).

The current balance in the checking account is \$6291.67. Our other CD has a current balance of \$5648.51. The grand total of all accounts is \$11,940.18.

Michael and Anna will be in charge of the October organ recital and master class presented by Kim Kasling from St. John's University. Dr. Kasling's fee will be \$2500 (\$2000 for the recital and \$500 for the master class the following morning). Ticket prices were discussed. It was decided that adult tickets would be \$10 each, seniors would be \$8 each, and students would be \$5 each. We want the cost to be as reasonable as possible so that all will be able to come and hear this recital.

The organ recital is at 8:00 p.m. on Friday, October 30. The master class is from 10:00 a.m. to noon on Saturday, October 31. These events are at First Lutheran Church.

Peggy read through a list of committees and people to help in various areas. Some of those are as follows: archivist (with the items to be kept at Concordia); publicity (Carolyn Hensrud has done a lot of publicity over the years, and we would love to learn things that need to be done in this area); program committee (we discussed whether this should be done by the board members or if a separate committee should plan the yearly programs); education committee; competition

chair; yearbook and membership booklet; finance committee; hospitality; grant writing.

We have been a member of the Lake Agassiz Arts Council in the past. It was discussed that this group has undergone a name change, but we still need to have a presence in that organization.

During the 2008-2009 season we utilized local talent for our programs in observance of the International Year of the Organ. During this current season we are utilizing a regional recitalist (Kim Kasling) and are also discussing bringing in a national organist in the spring of 2010. We could not contract a recitalist for the spring since we did not have a quorum present to conduct business at this meeting. We are looking at Christopher Houlihan, currently a student of Paul Jacobs at The Juilliard School, to play here in the spring. Paul Jacobs was our last national artist, and he performed here in September 2007.

We discussed items to include in the monthly PIPELINE. We talked about The Organists' Corner where a different church and instrument could be featured each month, as well as the church organist and the music program of that church. We want to always include a calendar of events, especially those having to do with the organ. We need to list "positions available" each month. We realize that the substitute organist list is included in each year's membership booklet, but it would be good to have that list in the monthly PIPELINE as well. (Sometimes it is difficult to put one's hands on the membership booklet!)

Bill is going to check with the advertisers in the PIPELINE to see if they want to continue with ads in this year's newsletter. Individual members could have a business card for advertisement if desired, as the cost is fairly nominal.

The program year begins with a program this Sunday, September 20 at 3:00 p.m. at Gethsemane Episcopal Cathedral in south Fargo. Please bring music for the music exchange. Also, please bring CDs which will be sold at a very nominal cost, the proceeds of which will be used to support the AGO Annual Fund.

The next AGO board meeting will be Thursday, October 15 at noon at Boulger Funeral Home.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Olson, Secretary

Kasling Recital at First Lutheran

The Red River Valley Chapter of the AGO presents Dr. Kim Kasling, organist at the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis and Jehovah Lutheran in St. Paul; and professor of music at St. John's University and the College of St. Benedict, Collegeville, MN, in recital at First Lutheran in Fargo at 8:00 pm, October 30.

Here's a sneak peak at the program: "Prelude in D Major" by Dietrich Buxtehude, "Chorale Variations on Ach Wie Nichtig, Ach Wie Fluechtig" by Georg Boehm, "Prelude and Fugue in F Minor" by J.S. Bach, two works by Jehan Alain, and "Byzantine Sketches" by Henri Mulet.

Admission to the concert is \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors, and \$5 for students. Dr. Kasling will also be giving a masterclass on the morning of October 31, at 10:00 am. Please contact Michael Olson if you wish to participate in the masterclass (molson@flcfargo.org or 701-235-4567, x135).

Organ students and seasoned church organists are welcome to participate! Participation is limited to five so please contact Michael ASAP if you wish to play in the masterclass.

You Can Help!

We have need of the following help to present our October and November programs. We hope to hear from you!

October - Contact Anna Goodin-Hayes
Ushers (6), Hospitality (coffee and rolls prior to masterclass), Master-class students (8)

November - Contact Peggy Johnson
Ushers (2), Hospitality (cookies and punch for reception)

Organist Needed

Organist needed at Christian Science Church in Fargo for 2 Sundays per month, flexible. Sunday Service 10:30 am—No liturgy! No choir! No rehearsals! 15 minute prelude, 3 hymns, collection, postlude.

Contact Vicky Wms Sieben at 701.238.1193 for details.

(Continued from page 1)

This allows us to continue to conduct events contracted last year while easing the burden on the membership to be involved beyond its' current capabilities. Thankfully, for the moment, the crisis of dissolution has averted. The next order of business for the board is to brainstorm ways to bring the chapter forward, to encourage membership from the surrounding region, and to seek programming and educational opportunities that best benefit the membership.

And yes, there are still organ concerts being presented and there are still learning opportunities available (check the calendar of events). They may not include all (or any) of the programs that you have enjoyed in the past, however they are events the board feels can adequately be supported given the resources we have to work with. It is our hope that the limited scope of programming will allow bit of breathing space for the chapter membership as well as a time to reflect and re-energize.

I encourage you to take advantage of the programs offered this fall, and invite you to submit information for the calendar of events so that all

may know of your contribution to the local organ scene.

Finally, we bid a joyous (yet sad) farewell to board member Erich Knapp. Erich has served as member-at-large while a student at NDSU and has just accepted a position in Washington beginning in mid-October. More details are elsewhere in the newsletter, but Erich will be missed for his enthusiasm, his professionalism, and his wonderful rice pudding!

Peace,
Peggy

Upcoming Events in the Region

Take a moment out of your day and support the arts in the region. See below for some great opportunities!

October 30, 8:00 pm

Organ Concert, Kim Kasling

First Lutheran Church

Contact: Michael Olson (molson@flcfargo.org)

October 31, 10:00 am

Masterclass with Kim Kasling

First Lutheran Church

Contact: Michael Olson (molson@flcfargo.org)

November 1, 5:00 pm

Choral Evensong for All Saints (TBD)

Gethsemane Episcopal Church

Contact: Dr. Peggy Johnson (701.866.5993)

November 9, 7:00 pm

Student Organ Recital at Trinity Lutheran Church

November 14, 9:00 am

What Every Organist Needs to Know About the Body

Gethsemane Episcopal Church

Contact: Dr. Peggy Johnson (701.866.5993)

November 20-21, 9:00 am – 3:30 pm

Leadership for Parish Musicians classes

Fergus Falls, MN

Contact: Dr. Peggy Johnson (701.866.5993)

Wednesday Recitals

Michael Olson "and friends" present organ recitals each Wednesday from now through May 26. The recitals are held in the sanctuary at First Lutheran Church from 12:45 to 1:15 pm.

If you would like to play for one of the recitals or play a piece or two for one of the recitals, please let Michael know at molson@flcfargo.org or 701.235.4567 ext. 135.

Are YOU Interested in Taking Guild Exams?

Guild examinations (FAGO, CAGO, COLLEAGUE, CHOIRMASTER, SERVICE PLAYING) will be offered in Fargo in May 2010. If you are interested in taking any of these exams, please contact Peggy Johnson (johnsonorganist@gmail.com) so that we can make preparations and provide you with the latest and greatest study aids.

Knapp Appointed

Erich L. Knapp, a board member of the Red River Valley AGO, has just been appointed to the post of Minister of Music at Grace Lutheran Church in Wenatchee, Washington.

He will lead a vibrant multi-generational music program including conducting 5 adult and youth choirs, two handbell choirs, an orchestra, a brass ensemble, a recorder consort, a soon-to-be-established psalmodikon quartet, oversee a monthly professional concert series, and perform on the church's 2-manual, 15-stop tracker action Werner Bosch German Baroque pipe organ.

The church has a several-second reverberation time and is a primary venue for area performing groups, as well as touring ensembles.

You can view photos of the church at their website:

www.gracelutheranwenatchee.org

Wenatchee is bordered on two sides by the foothills of the Cascade Mountains, and the roaring Columbia River on another, providing ample irrigation for the area apple, pear

and cherry orchards and area vineyards. Wenatchee is touted as the "Apple producing capital of the World."

Knapp has recently completed a Masters in Music in Choral Conducting at NDSU where he has studied organ with Michael Olson. He leaves his position of Artistic Director and Conductor of the 70-voice auditioned Park Rapids Classic Chorale, a position he has held for 10 years. He has led the Chorale on three European concert tours (Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Italy and Norway), which have also featured Knapp in organ recital. Professor Knapp also leaves an adjunct music teaching position at M-State in Moorhead.

Knapp's first assigned duty will be to lead the combined musical performing groups of the church in the celebratory services for Reformation Sunday. An active composer, he has already begun writing arrangements to be used at Christmas for the church choirs, brass ensemble, orchestra, and handbell choirs.

Membership Profile for 2009-2010

We currently have 32 members who have renewed their RRVAGO membership for the upcoming 2009-2010 year. The membership breaks down as follows:

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| Regular members: | 17 |
| Chapter subscribing: | 1 |
| Friends of the AGO: | 9 |
| Special members: | 4 |
| Dual member: | 1 |
| TOTAL: | 32 |

For comparison, in 2008-2009 there we had 40 members and in 2007-2008 there were 48 members.

(Submitted by Bill Tweten, Interim Treasurer)

A very special thank you to our supporters ...



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Upcoming Events

September 20, 2009

General Meeting, Music Swap and CD Sale
Gethsemane Episcopal Church

October 30, 2009 ~ 8:00pm

Kim Kasling Organ Recital
First Lutheran Church

October 31, 2009 ~ 10:00 am

Kim Kasling Organ Masterclass
First Lutheran Church

May 14, 2010 ~ 9:00 am

Guild Examinations

Contact Information

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