



# PIPELINE

American Organist Guild—Red River Valley Chapter

Volume 23, Number 8

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## Water Damages Fargo Organ Company

The Johnson Organ Company shop and office was flooded with 5" of water this past November 1. The water main coming into the building broke and was discovered by Dave Olsen who operates Valley Service in the same building when he came in to work at 6:30 AM.

The pipe shop suffered the worst damage as pipe parts were stored by the floor. An order of wood pipes for Holtkamp was spared as they were all up on saw horses. Machinery for the most part was spared being off the floor a sufficient height. Two

offset chests for the voicing machines, and a reservoir were severely damaged. The office carpeting was ruined and needed to be replaced. The project and service files escaped any damage but over 1,000 photographs had to be carefully dried out.

No new work was damaged as a two manual instrument had been finished just a month earlier.

The company was fully insured for this type of loss.

**DON'T FORGET!** Reminder to all RRVAGO members to return the salary guide survey response. All responses are anonymous. Your response is necessary to assess the viability of our salary guidelines, and as an aid to updating those guidelines. Please mail your response today!

## Message From the Dean

As we enter this busy Christmas holiday season, thoughts of obligations,



schedules, and preparations fill so many people's minds. I know that everyone is so busy during that holidays, it is sometimes surprising that we find the time to do

all the things we want to do. And of course, we church musicians all have duties to perform. Our organs will be playing many Christmas carols and anthems to the congregations of this area. Praise bands will be contributing to the services with their instruments and voices. But I am reminded that a broken organ at St. Nicolas Church in the small alpine village of Oberndorf Austria in 1818 led to the creation of one of the greatest Christmas carols of all time. Joseph Mohr, a priest, is credited with the poem, and his friend Franz Xavier

Gruber, the parish organist, with the melody, which was written for guitar for the Midnight Mass. I am mindful each Christmas that nothing embodies the humility and awe of the Christmas event than a simple guitar, sincere voices, and Stille Nacht.

May you share peace and joy with all mankind this holiday season, ever mindful of that silent night, that holy night. Soli Deo Gloria

Regards,  
Vicky Wms Sieben, Dean

### Organist Guild Lunch Club

- ~First Friday of the month at Noon
- ~Fargo downtown Fryin' Pan Restaurant
- ~Everyone is welcome!

### Chapter Officers

- Dean: Vicky Wms Sieben
- Sub-Dean: Robyn Vinje
- Secretary: Ruth Discher
- Treasurer: Lance Johnson

### Board Members at Large

- 2007: Brad Steen, Dawn Papenfuss
- 2008: Sue Clambey, Sally Harmon
- 2009: Ruth Strawn, Alpha Roeszler

## Letters to the Editor

I would like to thank the Pipeline and Lance Johnson for providing me with insight and understanding regarding the changes that have taken place in the quality of "sacred music" that I have observed in the last several decades.

Perhaps I should explain my background and life experience regarding worship and the music that accompanies it. When I first approached writing this letter I felt that since I was not a performing musician and since I have never been involved in providing music for worship I would be unqualified to comment on the subject. On further reflection I realize that opinions from a

"consumer" might have some credence in this exchange of ideas.

The first time I heard serious music was on a shortwave radio I had when in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. The first music I heard was the famous Bach Toccata and fugue in d minor broadcast by German radio. That sound went straight into my soul and from then on I rejoiced when hearing the sound of the organ and enjoyed only classical music. No Elvis, no Beatles and certainly no Joan Baez ever entered my ear without being rejected as "inferior" and unesthetic! My experience may illustrate that exposure to music at an early age can certainly set one's tastes for

life! How I loved to go to church each Sunday and hear the organ, sing those wonderful hymns and listen to the anthems sung by the choir! I was so fortunate to attend a church that had a good music program and an organist whose postludes taught me to sit and listen until the last chord quit resounding! Indeed I rejoiced to be in God's presence and I heard His voice through music; the one medium that can be great enough to communicate His love!

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Board Meeting Notes

November 17, 2006: The meeting of the RRV AGO was called to order by Dean Victoria Wms Sieben

Those present were: Ruth Discher, Lance Johnson, Victoria Sieben, Ruth Strawn, Robyn Vinje.

Lance moved to approve the Minutes from the October 19, 2006 Board meeting. Robyn seconded the motion and the Minutes were approved as written.

Lance was called on for the Treasurer's report. Two disbursements were made: \$80.00 paid for Lake Agassiz Arts Council membership dues and \$60.71 to Ruth Discher for postage and printing supplies for the Salary Schedule Survey.

\$5000.00 has been placed in an 11-month CD at State Bank & Trust and \$3000.00 has been placed in a money market savings account at State Bank & Trust. The checking account balance is \$742.88.

Lance is in the process of filling out applications for grants from the FM Area Foundation, the Alex Stern Foundation and the Lakes Region Arts Council in Fergus Falls to help cover expenses for the Paul Jacobs recital in September 2007. A late summer mailing will go out to surrounding colleges to help promote the recital as well. A request for donations from RRV AGO members will also go out.

### Old Business

1. Paul Jacob's Recital – Dean Vicky Sieben has been receiving several communications, brochures, pamphlets, etc. regarding Paul Jacobs recital tours. Concentrated planning will begin again for this event in February 2007.

2. 2006-2007 Programs – Copies of posters and bulletin announcements from Carolyn Hensrud and Marty Baumgartner for the December 3<sup>rd</sup> Christmas Carol Sing-A-Long were distributed to the Board members for posting in their churches or any other appropriate place. Planning of the event is in the final stage.

3. List of Churches/Contacts – Work on this project will resume in January.

4. Salary Guide Survey Response – We have received 13 responses. A reminder will be placed in the Pipeline to all RRV AGO members encouraging them to return their survey forms as soon as possible.

5. Recorded Music Committee – Robyn will begin work on this project after the new year.

### New Business

1. Newsletter Advertising Rates – Lance moved that rates should be as follows: 1/8 page (business card size) \$50.00; 1/4 page \$75.00; 1/2 page \$125.00; full page \$200.00. Robyn seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

2. Program Committee – It was decided that the Program Committee become active and start work in January to formulate the 2007-2008 program schedule. A discussion of ideas centered around presenting a series of workshops for new organists and those interested in transitioning from piano to organ, that could include basic hymn playing techniques, touring an organbuilding shop, basic registration ideas, suggestions for well-written easy organ literature suitable for smaller organs and churches, etc.

3. Ruth S. moved that the December 21<sup>st</sup> RRV AGO Board meeting be cancelled due to the busy season for church musicians. Lance seconded the motion and it was carried. The next RRV AGO Board meeting will be held on January 18, 2007 at 4PM at the Boulger Funeral Home.

Lance moved to adjourn the meeting. Ruth S. seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 5:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Discher, Secretary

If you are interested in getting the *Pipeline* delivered right to your email box, please send a message to [rrvago@hotmail.com](mailto:rrvago@hotmail.com) and include the email address that the newsletter should be sent to. For those without email, we will send a printed copy. Please send your information to the address at the end of the newsletter. We encourage feedback as well as submission of articles for publication. Please send your articles by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month to [rrvago@hotmail.com](mailto:rrvago@hotmail.com). We reserve the right to accept, reject, edit or modify any submission.

## Michael Olson to Present Christmas Organ Concerts

As part of the holiday season, *Michael Olson* will be performing three holiday organ recitals:

- Thursday, December 7 at 7:30 PM at First Presbyterian Church in Grand Forks
- Thursday, December 14 at noon at the Fargo Theatre (part of the holiday series of noontime Christmas organ concerts)
- Thursday, December 14 at 7:30 PM at First Lutheran Church in Fargo

## Attention Lorie Line Fans

The Fargodome has an opportunity available for a choir to perform before Lorie Line in the lobby of the Fargodome with the purchase of 20 or more discounted tickets. It is not required that 20 people sing in the choir. Lorie Line's performance will take place at the Fargodome Saturday, December 23 at 8:00PM.

Discounted Ticket Prices: \$45.50, \$38.50, \$31.50

Senior (65+) Discount for top price: \$42.50

Kids (15 & under) discount: \$33.50

If your choir is interested in this great opportunity to share their music, please call LeAnn at the Fargodome at 701-298-2630 to discuss the details.

## Susan Clambey to Share Music

Fergus Falls Center for the Arts presents:

*With a Joyful Song* featuring *Susan Clambey* playing the Mighty Wurlitzer Organ and singing original musical compositions and holiday favorites. She will be accompanied by Mariann Astrup. The concert will be held Sunday, December 10, 2006 at 4:00PM.

Selections include a variety of classical organ pieces, uniquely registered for theatre organ. Vocal selections include Susan's poetry and music, plus familiar Christmas music.

Tickets may be purchased in advance or at the theatre door.

### Musicians Retreat 2007 ~ Blue Cloud Abbey

Marvin, South Dakota ~ January 25-28, 2007

"Upon This Rock I Will Build My Church"

Space is still available! ~ Only \$189.00

For registration information, please contact

David Salmen 605-354-1694 or [Orgn2nr@aol.com](mailto:Orgn2nr@aol.com)

## Theatre Organists to Perform Concerts

The Red River Valley Chapter American Theatre Organ Society will present Christmas concerts at the Fargo Theatre beginning at noon on the following days:

- \*December 13
- \*December 14
- \*December 15
- \*December 18
- \*December 19-22

*(Letters to the Editor, continued from page 2)*

As a college student in the 60's I was a member of no church but attended regularly, sometimes twice on Sundays going from church to church in the Minneapolis area sampling the music programs. Every church I attended, indeed 90% of the churches in the metropolitan area, allowed the organ to reign supreme and allowed music to be the framework on which the worship service was supported.

Let us "fast-forward" to the year 2000 and observe the changes that have taken place in the presentation of music in worship. Remember, I am an "outsider" and am perhaps more able than some of you to see contrasts because I am not daily involved in worship planning and presentation. Daily the changes are small and perhaps hard to discern but my viewpoint is that the changes are shocking and of such a magnitude that everywhere I look today at "sacred music" I see mediocrity. I believed that the purpose

and duty of the church musician and of the product that they deliver is to lift up the hearts and souls of those who come together for the collective worship experience. I seldom see this anymore and I realize that this deterioration in quality is seen in all churches of all denominations.

It seems to many of us that the "contemporary" concept involves the use of musical idiom that will appeal to the average person. We don't want to aim "over another's head" and so we come down to their level. The path to the cross is not easy, it is not simple nor is it easy to understand. The concept of the Trinity is not easy for many to appreciate, nor is the idea of God sending His Son to die for us. Let's eliminate those concepts from our worship, shall we. After all, there are some who might have problems understanding!

Lance has helped me to understand a bit the evolution of the "contemporary" movement

in his writings. We need to reflect on what he says and we need to examine this question and not allow emotion or ego to alter our thoughts.

Most of the contemporary "music" presented in worship can be generated without a sentient human's intervention. CD's and Ipods and sound systems with huge mixing boards do a great job. I see the profession that we call "Church Musician" as becoming an almost extinct entity if the trend continues. Most importantly I don't see that young kid sitting in that worship space drinking in the sounds of that organ postlude until the last note fades! He can hear "rock" and the other common idioms of popular music anywhere, so why is the church musical experience special in any way for him?

Gerald Gysler Parker  
Casselton, North Dakota

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### Upcoming Events

**December 3, 2006, 7:00 PM**

Christmas Hymn Sing  
Peace Lutheran, Fargo

**February 11, 2007, 4:00 PM**

Wedding Music Program  
Grace United Methodist, Moorhead

**March 25, 2007, 4:00 PM**

Piano/Organ Duet Program  
First United Methodist, Fargo

**May 6, 2007, 4:00 PM**

Membership Potluck  
Vicky Wms Sieben Home, Moorhead



### Contact Information

American Guild of Organists  
Red River Valley Chapter  
PO Box 2223  
Fargo, ND 58108-2223  
[rvago@hotmail.com](mailto:rvago@hotmail.com)

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