



American Guild of Organists

PIPELINE

VOL. 7, NO. 4

December 1990

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Happy Holidays to the AGO Family!

Where has this year gone? We all know that the month of December will just flash quickly before our eyes -- and fingers! As I've told some of you before, Christmas Eve is my favorite day of the year -- much more than Easter. I hope that everybody experiences some of the joy and peace of this special time of year, amidst all the hustle and bustle of rehearsals, performances, and services.

In reflecting on the month just past, I want to look at two events -- Kaleidoscope and the Hymn Festival. Jack Close is to be thanked for creating a booth and manning it up in the downtown Skyway prior to the Kaleidoscope event. I very much enjoyed representing AGO by playing the popular Toccata from Symphony No. 5 by Widor. It was great to see so many AGO members in attendance at Kaleidoscope, as well as participating in a number of the "acts". The Hymn Festival, held at First Presbyterian Church, was an exciting and uplifting event. Marge Possehl and Gary Thrasher are to be thanked for their countless hours of time and energy on this project. They also had a hard-working committee behind their efforts. The Hymn Festival is one of AGO's most visible events each year, and keeps our name before the community.

We do not meet in December because most of us are quite heavily involved in church and school activities. In January, though, we have two meetings. On Sunday, January 6, beginning at 4 p.m., we are having a social event at the home of Peter Nygaard, 804 10th Street South, Unit A-1, in Fargo. This will be a potluck event, at which each person will bring something good to eat. Call Peter at 237-0218 if you have questions or concerns about the party. Our meeting in January is on the 27th (Super Bowl Sunday) at 4:00 at Trinity. We will be demonstrating the organ for interested piano students. Be thinking of students you might invite and bring to this program. Afterwards, there will be a short business meeting, and you will be able to go home and watch most of the Super Bowl!

Blessings to each of you now and throughout 1991!

Michael Olson

Minutes of November AGO Meeting

On Sunday, November 18th, several Red River Valley Choirs gathered for an inspiring afternoon and evening of singing led by director Gary Thrasher at First Presbyterian Church, Fargo.

The Annual Hymn Festival featured an interesting variety of old and new hymns from countries all around the globe. In addition to the mass choir hymns, Marge Possehl led several small groups or soloists in other colorful hymns around the church year. The Pentecost Season was presented with symbolic flaming banners, swirling above the congregation.

Between rehearsal and festival, Carolyn Hensrud helped to nourish all participants with a hearty supper.

The Festival choir members presented a rainbow of sound, matched by the rainbow of robes. A mighty conclusion to the stirring event was the singing of the Hallelujah Chorus with the choir surrounding the Sanctuary with majestic sound.

Many thanks to AGO members who planned this marvelous event.

Susan Clambey
Secretary, AGO



EPIPHANY PARTY

Peter Nygaard's Pad
804 10th Street South, Unit A-1
Fargo, ND
4:00 p.m., January 6, 1991

PIPE ORGAN BUILDERS FACE LEAD LOSS CRISIS:

Currently, there is a bill in Congress called "The Lead Reduction act of 1990" which would ban the use of lead in most US industries. The manner in which the bill is drafted exempting many products does **NOT** exempt the pipe organ industry. Lead is the most prominent metal represented in organ pipes and there is simply no substitute available. The American Institute of Organbuilders has begun a letter writing campaign to the federal representatives to exempt the pipe organ industry for this bill.

The basic fear is that children will ingest lead. The biggest culprit has been paint where children lick painted surfaces or eat chips. Pipe organ builders are attempting to explain to their representatives that there is no danger of having children licking organ pipes since pipes as a rule are placed out of reach. (Metal organ pipes contain from 50-80% lead.)

Several builders including this writer have had tests to prove that those handling organ pipes do not ingest lead. Happily, our Minnesota and North Dakota representatives have responded positively and have pledged to help get the pipe organ industry an exemption.

Lance E. Johnson

RENOWNED VOICER JOINS FARGO ORGAN FIRM

Nationally renowned voicer, Phares L. Steiner, formerly partner of the prestigious Steiner-Reck firm, tracker builders of Louisville, Kentucky has been named head voicer for Johnson Organ Company, Inc., of Fargo. This past 10 months he has voiced and finished two instruments for Johnson, the 2 manual, 28 rank organ at First Lutheran Church, Worthington, MN and the 2 manual, 9 rank unit organ for Hope Lutheran Church, Minneota, MN.

Although Lance E. Johnson remains as tonal director, all projects are collaborations with Johnson and Steiner where organ tonal designs are done jointly from the very beginnings of the project. Mr. Steiner continues to reside in Louisville with his family but commutes to Fargo for projects.

Phares L. Steiner is considered one of the ten best voicers in the nation and holds a masters degree in organ performance, has training in engineering and physics, and has designed and finished over 100 organs. Michael G. Johnson, son of Lance is currently completing an apprenticeship in voicing from Steiner.

Sincerely,

Lance E. Johnson, President

AN APPEAL FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

These are excerpts from a letter Michael Olson received from James C. Moeser, National President of AGO:

“We have finally reached the situation where another modest increase in dues will not address the problem. Our cash flow situation is critical, and by sometime this spring we will be insolvent, forcing us to dip into reserve funds to end the year. The long-term implications of this situation are very clear. Either we must increase revenues to cover costs, or we must reduce drastically our programs and activity at the national level...

The simple fact is that, without a substantial increase in our revenues, we shall ultimately have to shut down much of the activity that we believe is absolutely vital -- the Guild's educational and professional concerns activities, endeavors to find and nurture new organists, the publication of our excellent national journal The American Organist... At this writing we do not know exactly how much we shall have to increase the national dues. We are analyzing our financial situation very carefully, and we should know by the first of the year. Official notification will be posted in the February issue of The American Organist...”

(Please read the President's Column in the January issue of The American Organist that explains in a nutshell what this entire situation is all about.)

Advent 1990
LWF P. O. Box 19178
Jerusalem, Israel



“Dear friends,

What joy and anticipation we feel as we await our mail delivery these days, looking for news from our friends from afar. We have seen much brokenness among persons suffering from unrest and violence in the Middle East, many of them friends and acquaintances; we need to hear of and know about the normalcy of life elsewhere....

We are coping and finding strength for these unpredictable days here and are extremely fulfilled in our calling and vocation here in these programs. Greet all mutual friends”.

Love & best wishes,
Mary Ann Johnson

Amahl, and the Night Visitors

The Senior Choir of Trinity Lutheran Church in Detroit Lakes, will present the opera, Amahl, and the Night Visitors by Menotti on December 16 and 19 at 7:30 p.m. There will be a free-will offering with proceeds to go toward the organ fund. The part of Amahl will be double-cast by boy sopranos, Christopher Mohs and Brett Ramstad. Other roles will be performed by Erlene DeCock, soprano; Richard Dunkirk, bass; Rev. Arvin Halvorsen, Brent Johnson and Eric Heyer, tenors. The duo-piano accompaniment will be performed by Pat Benson and Dorothy Koopmann. Music director is Brent Johnson.



MIDDAY CONCERTS AT FARGO THEATRE

From 12:15 to 12:45 p.m., December 10-14 and December 17-21, there will be free organ concerts at the Fargo Theatre. Festive Christmas music will be played by several AGO members, including Lance Johnson, Lloyd Collins, and Michael Olson. Bring a brown bag lunch, or purchase some food while

PIPELINE DEADLINE: January 4, 1991

THANK YOU!!

Thank you so much, Michael Olson, for helping to make Kaleidoscope an artistic and fund-raising success again this year. Your outstanding performance of that whirling dervish of a “Tocatta” added an exciting touch to the program. Thank you also, Judy Sanders, for the excellent coverage in the AGO Pipeline -- we always appreciate such enthusiastic support and promotion from our members.

Looking forward to Kaleidoscope 91!

Sincerely,

Linda Boyd Coates
Executive Director

American Guild of Organists

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JANUARY PIPEDREAMS ON KCCM 91.1 F.M.

Sunday, January 6, 1991 - 9:30 P.M.

PIPEDREAMS with Michael Barone...**On the Move Again:** Alan Laufman of the **Organ Clearing House** discusses the relocation and preservation of historic American instruments. Music by Brahms, Arne, Foote, Chadwick, Rheinberger, and others.

Sunday, January 13, 1991 - 9:30 P.M.

PIPEDREAMS...Butler, Decker, and Welch: three persuasive advocates for the organ play music of Buxtehude, Albrechtsberger, Bach, Rinck, Mendelssohn, and others on the famous Flentrop instrument at St. Mark's Cathedral, Seattle.

Sunday, January 20, 1991 - 9:30 P.M.

PIPEDREAMS...The Road to Calgary: highlights from the recent first International Organ Festival in Canada, including performances by Simon Preston, Gillian Weir, and prize-winners Kevin Bowyer, Matthew Dirst, and Heidi Emmert.

Sunday, January 27, 1991 - 9:30 P.M.

PIPEDREAMS...Mozart, Mostly: arrangements, transcriptions, and revised attributions performed by Gerhard Weinberger, E. Power Biggs, Martin Haselbock, and Jacques van Oortmerssen on historic instruments, some of which Mozart himself visited.

**Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year!!!**

