



Pipeline

American Guild of Organists—Red River Valley Chapter

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2015-2016

Message From the Dean

Season's Greetings to you all! Are you in "Bah-humbug" mood or "Ho-Ho-Ho, Merry Christmas" mood about now? I find myself fluctuating back and forth a little bit these days. The deadlines for choosing music, planning worship, practicing (What, there's time for that?) and the actual performances out in the community that are occurring this time of year can add up and turn me into "Sally the Scrooge." Yet I find myself feeling warm and in holiday happy mode following a worship service that was meaningful (due to prior planning, of course,) or when being greeted by elderly audience members after a Christmas program in a retirement or nursing home.

These contrasts are not unlike Advent season. We plan, we prepare, (we perspire.) The big event is coming and we need to feel ready. But we also need to make room in our hearts for the actual RESULTS that follow our big event. Stay and visit with those whose hearts have been warmed by the Christmas message in song. Happiness is best when shared. Soak up the warm glow from a worship service that flowed together in an organic way and moved those in attendance. Try to linger in the Merry Christmas mood just a while longer before you turn your page to the "next thing."

Our Fargo-Moorhead community has so many wonderful musical offerings

this time of year. I do hope you have time to just be an audience member with no tasks to accomplish for at least one or two of these events. It is good for us to experience the fruits of others' labors now and then!

Let me encourage you to attend our AGO/FM Area Music Club event on Monday, December 7 at 7 pm. This will be our second year of combining with the Music Club to present *A Christmas Carol Ring and Sing-Along* at First Presbyterian Church, Fargo. The Noteables Women's Choir and BELLissimo community handbell choir will be featured groups. Many of our AGO members will be leading the singing of Christmas Carols from the organ. Come. Relax. Sing along. The planning has been done for you! Just come and participate. Here's your chance to change your inner Scrooge into George Bailey (Jimmy Stewart's character in *It's a Wonderful Life*.) We hope you will leave the Sing-along feeling like shouting "Merry Christmas" to everyone!

Merry Christmas to you all,
Sally Harmon, RRVAGO Dean

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: Bill Tweten
Secretary: Robyn Vinje
Treasurer: Jean Roberts

Board Members at Large

2015: Sonia Carlson
2016: Jim Gurney
2017: Alpha Roeszler

Board Meeting Notes

Minutes of the RRV/AGO Board Meeting November 6, 2015

Members present were Dean Sally Harmon, Alpha Roeszler, Jean Roberts, Bill Tweten, and Robyn Vinje.

Sally reported on the progress made on the February 14th, 2016, program, which will be in conjunction with the Arts Partnership's Shakespeare Festival. The AGO program will be at 4:00 PM at Gethsemane Episcopal Cathedral, with the theme, *If Music Be the Food of Love, Play On*. (Shea is the contact person at the Arts Partnership.) There is a participation fee of \$100 which includes publicity, and stamping of the festival passport. The Shakespeare character may appear. There's a Shakespeare song book which we may try to include in our program. All present consented to participate in this festival.

January 23rd is the kick-off event at the Fargo Theater, and Shea wondered if we could provide an organist. It would be a "mini-performance".

In conjunction with the program on February 14th, the board decided it would be nice to include some food and wine. That portion of the event would be catered, which would cost \$500-700. A free-will offering would provide us with approximately half of the cost. Shea will provide catering information to Sally. Jean will talk to Margie Bailey at Gethsemane about the food aspect. We could possibly purchase some or all of the food at Sam's Club; suggestions were individual cheesecakes, chocolates, wine, grape juice, and coffee.

Jean will arrange for the organists, and the Silver Winds could possibly also play. For publicity, Alpha will make the posters, which will be printed by Boulger Funeral Home.

The October 31st Halloween Spooktacular at Trinity Lutheran was a success, with about 80 people attending. It was suggested that we make this an annual event.

The Christmas Sing-a-long will be held at First Presbyterian on Monday, December 7th at 7:00 PM, in conjunction with the Fargo Moorhead Area Music Club. Jill has designed the posters, and will make the programs. We will ask Boulger to also print these posters.

We need an issue of The Pipeline near the end of November, if possible.

Tuesday, May 24th, 2016, has been set for the potluck and music exchange at First Presbyterian.

The next meeting of the board will be Friday, December 4th, at 11:30 AM. The noon luncheon will be at the usual time.

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Vinje, Secretary

From the Steering Committee of The AGO 2016 National Convention “Greetings to your Chapter”

The Houston Chapter of the American Guild of Organists are excited to be hosts for what promises to be an outstanding celebration of our art. Registration opens in October with a special low “early bird” rate for those who are able to register that soon. The main convention website is www.AGOHouston2016.com.

The Convention Headquarters will be at The Hilton Americas-Houston located in downtown Houston. The hotel opened in 2004 and is the crown jewel of the downtown area. Accommodation and transportation details can be found on the convention website. The Pre-convention schedule begins Friday, June 17 and Saturday, June 18. Regular convention activities run from Sunday, June 19, 2016 through Thursday, June 23, 2016. Links for details of any given day of the convention are found at the “Schedule Overview” section of the website.

Some areas of interest being presented are:
Worship—The *Opening Convocation* will be held at St. Martin’s Episcopal Church. Other worship services will be *Halle, Halle: We Sing the World Around*—a service of World Music at First Presbyterian Church; *Services of Choral Evensong*—Christ Church Cathedral and St. Paul’s United Methodist Church; *Season of Praise*—St. Luke’s United Methodist Church.
Workshops—Over 60 workshops will be offered over three days of the convention under these topics:
Professional/Organization Concerns
Reading Sessions—(choral and organ sessions)
Pedagogy and Rehearsal Techniques
Instruments
Repertoire and Performance Practice
Development—(“How to Create Events that Attract and Encourage Teenager Organists” and “A New Kind of Organ Concert: Audience Outreach Through Multi-media” to just name two)
New Music Bayoubüchlein—The New Music

Committee of the American Guild of Organists 2016 convention in Houston is pleased to announce a call for scores for a special convention publication entitled *The Bayoubüchlein*. This is a collection of chorale preludes for solo organ, representing every season of the liturgical calendar, with each prelude based on chorale hymn tunes composed since 1960. The collection will comprise selected works from this call for scores as well as seven preludes previously commissioned by AGO Houston New Music. It is anticipated that as many as 19 works will be selected from this call for scores, for a total of 26 for publication.

Composers of any age and nationality are welcome to submit works that fit the criteria of the competition. All submissions will be evaluated for inclusion by a panel appointed by the AGO Houston New Music Committee. The decision of the panel will be final.

More details including the “Guidelines for Submitted Works” can be obtained from the convention website.

These are just a few general highlights planned for the 2016 Convention in Houston. Any convention, especially one as unique as this one, relies not only on funds from registration costs and advertisers, but also on donors at the local and nation-wide level to ensure its success. General gifts are always gratefully welcomed. For more donation information, please contact:

Daniel J. Fenn, Co-Chair,
Gifts, Grants, and Donations Committee
AGO 2016 National Convention
1302 Waugh Drive, #392
Houston, TX 77019
www.agohouston2016.com/get-nvolved/sponsor

A Christmas Carol Ring and Sing-Along



Presented by F-M Area Music Club
and the
Red River Valley Chapter of the
American Guild of Organists

Featuring BElissimo Handbell Choir,
Music Club Notables Women's Chorus,
And Organists from the RRVC - AGO
Donations will go to the Food Pantry & Music Scholarships

7:00 PM
Monday, December 7, 2015
First Presbyterian Church
650 2nd Avenue North Fargo

Composer's Corner—Alfred S. Burt

Alfred Shaddick Burt (April 22, 1920—February 7, 1954) was an American jazz musician who is best known for composing the music for fifteen Christmas carols between 1942 and 1954. Only one of the carols was performed in public outside his immediate family circle during his lifetime.

Burt was born in Marquette, Michigan. His family moved to Pontiac, Michigan when he was two after his father, Bates Burt, became pastor of an Episcopal church there. At the age of 10, having shown an early interest in music, Alfred received his first musical instrument, a cornet, as a present from his parents. Though he would learn to play several other instruments, including the piano, Alfred spent most of his life playing cornet and trumpet in bands and orchestras, with a special interest in jazz.

Burt studied music at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and graduated with a Bachelor of Music degree in 1942.

A tradition that the elder Burt had begun upon moving to Pontiac in 1922 was the creation of a Christmas card, which he sent to family members and parishioners. On these cards were original Christmas carols, with both the words and music by the Reverend Burt. For the family Christmas card in 1942, Bates asked his son to write the music for that year's carol, "Christmas Cometh Caroling." From then on, Alfred would write the music for the family's Christmas cards, and the "Alfred Burt carols" were born. They are among the few modern carols to address serious spiritual themes.

During World War II, Burt served as an officer in the United States Army. He served with the Army Air Force Band and filled in with the Houston Symphony as a trumpeter. His father sent him the lyrics for the 1943 and 1944 carols from Michigan, and Burt completed the music from his base in Texas.

Burt married his childhood sweetheart, Anne, on October 13, 1945. Finally earning his discharge in early 1946, he formed a short-lived band; after its demise, he and Anne returned to Michigan to spend time with his father. Burt then resumed his career in New York, where he was a teacher and composer.

The 1947 Christmas card was the last collaboration between Alfred and Bates Burt; Bates died of a heart attack early in 1948. Alfred and his wife chose to continue the family Christmas card tradition in his honor.

In 1950 Anne, in consultation with Alfred, asked an old family friend, Wilha Hutson, the organist at Bates Burt's church, to write the annual Christmas poems, which Burt then would set to music. The Burt-Hutson collaboration continued until Burt's death.

Over several years, as the Burts' circle of friends grew, the Christmas card list grew from 50 to 450 people. But still, the carols remained unknown outside the Burts' mailing list.

That changed with the 1952 carol, "Come, Dear Children". Burt finished writing the music during a rehearsal with the Blue Keys, the vocal group with Rey's orchestra. He asked them to sing it so he could make sure the harmonies worked; they liked it so much that they asked Burt if they could sing it at the annual King Family Christmas party. It proved to be a hit among the partygoers, and served to introduce Burt's carols to Hollywood.

Through the early part of 1953, Burt complained of a persistent virus and fatigue. Eventually agreeing a thorough examination, he was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. He spent his final months in California. For the first time, his carols were going to be recorded.

James Conkling, husband of Donna King Conkling, and at that time the president of Columbia Records, was informed of Burt's failing health and organized the project, assembling an all-star choir of Hollywood singers to perform Burt's four-part harmonies. Recording sessions for the older carols took place in late 1953 in North Hollywood with Burt present. Meanwhile, to fill the album, Burt was assigned four new carols. One of them "O Harken Ye", was sent on the 1953 family Christmas card.

Burt finished the last of his carols, "The Star Carol", on February 5, 1954. Less than 24 hours later, he died. "The Star Carol" would be used on the final Burt family Christmas card that holiday season.

|| Special Music Events Coming Up at First Lutheran Church, Fargo ||

|| MICHAEL OLSON is presenting a Christmas Carol Sing at Amor Lutheran Church in rural Battle Lake, MN on Sunday evening, December 13 at 6:30 PM, preceded by a supper at the church at 5:30PM. Come and eat, and then stay and sing favorite Christmas carols!

|| RUTH STRAWN is presenting an organ recital of music for the Christmas season at First Lutheran Church in Fargo on Wednesday, December 9 beginning at 12:45PM. Come and enjoy the music, and bring a friend along with you!

|| NATE KOPPENHAVER is presenting *Variations on a Noel* by Marcel Dupre at First Lutheran Church in Fargo on Wednesday, December 23 beginning at 12:45PM. Come and enjoy the music, and bring a friend along with you!

|| IF ANYONE would like to play one of the Wednesday organ recitals at First Lutheran Church in Fargo, please get in touch with Michael Olson at molson@flcfargo.org and let him know when you would like to share your talents. You may play the entire thirty-minute recital, or perhaps just a piece or two.



Sunday, December 13 at 6:30PM

First Presbyterian Church, 650 2nd Ave N., Fargo

Choirs, Orchestra, Readings and Carols with

Christmas Goodies following - Free and open to the public.



Upcoming Events

Monday, December 7th, 2015, 7:00 PM
Christmas Ring & Sing-a-long Combined Program
First Presbyterian Church, Fargo, ND

Sunday, February 14th, 2016, 4:00 PM
"If Music Be the Food of Love, Play On!"
Gethsemane Episcopal Church, Fargo, ND

Coming in May, 2016
FM Choral Artists and Organ Program
First Lutheran Church, Fargo, ND

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