



Pipeline

American Guild of Organists—Red River Valley Chapter

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Sep/Oct/Nov
2019

Message From the Dean

As I write this letter on Thursday, September 12, we have just lived through the 18th anniversary of 9/11. In some respects, it seems like the event just happened yesterday. For my Wednesday organ recital at First Lutheran, I played piano and organ music of a patriotic nature. The folks who attended the recital were appreciative of the music. As most of us know, you can't go wrong with patriotic music!

It seems to rain and rain and rain some more all the time. I'm looking forward to Monday, September 16 when the high temperature is supposed to be 86 degrees! Maybe summer isn't totally over quite yet...

Speaking of summer, I hope everyone had a wonderful (albeit too short) summertime. I very much enjoyed the regional AGO convention in Milwaukee. I used to live in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin — about halfway between Madison and Milwaukee — back in the early 1980's before I moved to Fargo, so it was great to visit Milwaukee again. It had been a mighty long time. The convention was wonderful — great players, great instruments, wonderful food, and fantastic camaraderie with friends old and new. The next regional convention will be in the Twin Cities in 2021, so PLAN to attend!! The Twin Cities last hosted a regional convention in 1989, and it was more like a mini-national convention. It was incredible!!

The national AGO convention is in Atlanta next summer. Atlanta last hosted a national convention "way back" in 1992. That was a great national convention, and the one next summer should be no exception. The next national after Atlanta will be in

Seattle in 2022. Seattle hosted a great national convention back in 2000 — the year before we hosted our regional convention in 2001. Seattle is a great city as well.

On Monday evening, December 2 at 7:00 PM, the Fargo Moorhead Area Music Club and the Red River Valley Chapter AGO will be co-sponsoring the annual Carol Ring and Sing-Along at First Presbyterian Church in Fargo. Several AGO members will be playing Christmas carols. There is a fantastic bell choir which will be performing, and the Noteables will be singing. Mark your Calendars NOW for this annual event — a great kickoff to the holiday season.

Our AGO chapter, along with the Red River Chapter of the American Theater Organ Society, will be hosting an event entitled Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza on Saturday, March 28. This event will take place at three different venues — First Lutheran Church, First Presbyterian Church, and the Fargo Theater. More details will be forthcoming on this fun event, but mark your calendars NOW for the date!!

And we will have our annual spring potluck and used music exchange in May — more to follow on that event as well.

I hear from a number of concert organists from time to time, wanting to give a public concert. Perhaps it is time once again to sponsor an organ recitalist here? I just recently heard from Felix Hell, who gave a fantastic recital here a long time ago (I believe it was in 2002, the year before the 2003 regional convention in St. Joseph, Missouri). Felix came with his father, both of whom were delightful people indeed. Felix told me (continue)

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: Michael Olson

Sub-Dean: Robyn Vinje

Secretary: Brad Steen

Treasurer: Brad Steen

Message from the Dean

(Continued from Page 1)

that his father died a few months ago, and I was saddened to hear that news.

I am very happy to announce that I am teaching thirty-nine private students this school year, the most students I've taught in many, many years. Of those 39 students, nine of them are organ students for which I am very thankful. I am not going to be playing for church forever, so it's important to begin teaching the next generation of students. Of those nine organ students, one is in middle school, four are in high school, two are in college, and two are adult students playing in their own churches right now.

Thanks to each of you for your ministry of music in your churches. Without music — and specifically, organ music — worship would be very, very different. Worship would be very, very unusual.

And thanks to each of you for your participation in AGO. You need the AGO in your professional life, and AGO needs you! Ask a friend to join the group. Don't forget the First Friday Lunch on the first Friday of each month at noon at the downtown Fargo Fryn' Pan Restaurant. We always get to be "over in the corner" and can eat and converse to our hearts' content. I am unable to attend the lunch now during the school year because I have students on Fridays during the day. In order to teach 39 students, I teach seven days a week (including Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon).

Sincerely and musically,
Michael Olson

Michael Olson "And Friends" Wednesday Organ Recitals

Every Wednesday afternoon from 12:45 to 1:15 PM in the sanctuary of First Lutheran Church throughout the school year from early September through late May, Michael Olson "and friends" perform half an hour of organ music (or sometimes piano music or another instrument).

There will be several "friends" who will be presenting organ recitals the next few months:

October 30—Dillon Swanson, organ student of Jay

Hershberger from Concordia College

November 6—Ruth Strawn, organ student of Michael Olson

November 20—Matthew Clarke, organ student of Jay Hershberger from Concordia College

December 4—Dillon Swanson, organ student of Jay Hershberger from Concordia College.

If anyone would like to play one of the Wednesday recitals, or a piece (or two) on a recital, please let Michael know. Variety is the spice of life!! It is a fairly small but very faithful group of folks who come to the Wednesday recitals. Many of the people stay for a worship service after the recital, so the recital acts as a musical prelude to the worship!

Updates from the RRVAGO Secretary/Treasurer

Financial and Membership Status of the Red River Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists as of July 20, 2019:

Checking account balance: \$5,255.68

Yet to be deducted: \$50.00 payment to the ARTS PARTNERSHIP and \$50.00 payment to AGO ANNUAL FUND for 2018-2019 which were done on Friday, July 19, 2019.

New Balance: \$5,155.68

Membership Numbers: 7 Regular
8 Special
7 Young Organist
2 Dual

24 PAID MEMBERS

Welcome New Members!

Michelle Robinson, who lives in Horace, ND, has joined the RRVAGO chapter under a new category — Volunteer Organist.

About the AGO VOLUNTEER ORGANIST PILOT PROGRAM

In January, 2017, AGO Councillor for Education Don Cook, the Committee on Membership Development and Chapter Support, and the AGO National Council voted to introduce a pilot program that established a new category of membership for (continue)

Volunteer Organist Pilot Program

(Continued from Page 2)

volunteer organists.

This membership will be extended only to those who have attended an educational workshop for volunteer organists hosted by Don Cook. At the conclusion of each workshop, participants who are interested in joining the AGO will submit a Volunteer Membership Form and receive a complimentary six-month membership. Once the Volunteer Membership is processed, AGO Headquarters will send a "welcome to the AGO" email to each new volunteer member copying the chapter dean. After the initial six-month period, volunteer members will receive an offer to continue their membership at a discounted rate of \$50. The dues are to be split evenly between national headquarters and the local chapter, each receiving \$25. This introductory membership includes all the benefits of a regular AGO membership with one exception. Volunteer members may access TAO online, but will not receive a printed copy.

If this program is successful, this new AGO membership category will be available to any musician who earns less than \$1,000 per year while serving as an organist and/or choir director.

If you know of a volunteer organist who would be interested in this category, please advise your colleague to contact Don Cook at doncook@byu.edu for a schedule of upcoming workshops or contact Elizabeth George, Director of Member Engagement and Chapter Development at Elizabeth.George@agohq.org for more information regarding time and location of Don's presentations.

To all members (new and old), WELCOME! We are excited that you have joined the RRVAGO chapter and look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events!

International Organ Improviser Hector Olivera to Play in Rochester, MN October 26, 2019

Get ready to be blown away by virtuoso **Hector Olivera**, recognized amongst the greatest organists and improvisers of our century, at the **Co-Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist on Saturday, October 26, 2019 at 7:30 PM in Rochester, MN.**

Maestro Hector Olivera is a passionate, gifted, and unique musician, whose personal interpretations of both classical and popular music have amazed and delighted audiences around the world.

Born in Buenos Aires, Mr. Olivera's first teacher (his father) encouraged him to begin playing the pipe organ when he was three. Two years later, he was appointed organist of the Church of the Immaculate Conception. At age 5, he played to the legendary Eva Peron. At age 6, he entered the Buenos Aires Conservatory to study harmony, counterpoint and fugue. By age nine, he had composed a suite for oboe and string orchestra performed by the Buenos Aires Symphony Orchestra. In 1965, New York's prestigious Julliard School of Music offered him a scholarship. He immediately moved to the United States to study and three years later launched his outstanding professional concert career.

Throughout his concert career, Mr. Olivera has performed in prestigious venues all over the world. In addition to his solo concerts, Mr. Olivera has performed as guest soloist with orchestras worldwide.

In 1992, Mr. Olivera was guest artist at the AGO convention at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta.

Olivera performed on Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion* and according to Keillor, he "literally stopped the show!"

Most famous for his prodigious technical proficiency and charismatic stage presence, Mr. Olivera's amazing effect on audiences has made many of the most sophisticated and demanding organ aficionados claim that Maestro Hector Olivera is "one of the greatest organists in the world today."

General admission is \$20. You may order tickets online at <https://sj.org/forms/hector-olivera-concert>, by phone at (507) 288-7372 or directly at the parish center. The address of St. John the Evangelist is: 11 Fourth Avenue SW, Rochester, MN 55902. Information about this event can be found at www.sj.org and information on Hector Olivera can be found at <http://hectorolivera.com>

**Northrup Auditorium Newly Restored Pipe Organ is the Star of The
University of Minnesota Northrup Music Series**

Tuesday, October 1, 2019 at 7:30 PM

Branford Marsalis, Saxophone and Jean-Willy Kunz, Pipe Organ

Combining saxophone and pipe organ may seem like an improbable duo, but acclaimed saxophonist Branford Marsalis, specialist of both jazz and classical music, and Jean-Willy Kunz, famed pipe organist and Orchestre Symphonique de Montreal's first organist in residence, have created this crossover concert full of surprising discoveries. *All About Jazz* raves, "Multi-genre music is a global phenomenon today. What singled out this concert from the crowd were the extraordinary virtuosity and rapport of Marsalis and Kunz on two infrequently paired instruments...and their excellent choice of classical pieces that could be readily appreciated by jazz fans."

Tuesday, December 3, 2019 at 7:30 PM

The Chenault Duo—A Holiday Program of Organ Duets

Includes: *Eclogue* by Richard Shephard, *White Christmas* by Irving Berlin, *Nativity Scenes* by Myron Roberts, *Toccata on God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen* by Robert Hobby, *Sleighride* by Leroy Anderson.

For four decades, duo-organists Elizabeth and Raymond Chenault have been performing unique and refreshing repertoire in concerts across the United States and Europe. Named "the World's Premiere Duo-Organ Team" by the Atlanta Journal and Constitution, the Chenaults have commissioned, arranged, and premiered more than 60 organ duets, making "organ music for four hands, four feet" synonymous with their name. Enjoy an evening of popular favorites featuring Northrop's restored pipe organ for a special holiday treat.

Friday, March 27, 2020 at 8:00 PM and Saturday, March 28, 2020 at 8:00 PM

Minnesota Orchestra featuring organist Cameron Carpenter with conductor Akiko Fujimoto

Includes: *Winter Bells* by Polina Nazaykinskaya, *Symphonie Concertante* for Organ and Orchestra by Joseph Jongen, *Cinderella Suite* by Sergei Prokofiev.

The Minnesota Orchestra triumphantly performed in their former home on campus last season and spotlighted Northrop's refurbished pipe organ. They return in 2020 for a concert with guest soloist Cameron Carpenter, one of the world's most dynamic organists.

Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 7:30 PM

In Concert: University Organist Dean Billmeyer

University of Minnesota organist Dean Billmeyer continues to shine a light on Northrop's restored pipe organ with a faculty concert featuring varied works to showcase the color and power of this historic instrument.

Three ways to order tickets: 1. Online at Northrup.umn.edu, 2. At the box office, 3. By phone at (612) 624-2345. Bring a group and save! Gather a group of 10 or more people to attend a single performance and save 15-25% off regular ticket prices. To order, email nropgrps@umn.edu or call (612) 625-1578. Kids' tickets are 50% off for children 17 and younger when purchased with at least one adult ticket (some exclusions apply).

Organist Paul Jacobs to Perform in Minneapolis in 2020

Grammy Award winning organist Paul Jacobs will be performing at **Bethlehem Lutheran Church**, 4100 Lyndale Avenue S., **Minneapolis, MN 55409** on **Sunday, May 3, 2020 at 4:00 PM** as part of the Bethlehem Music Series. This series is the longest running series of its kind in the Twin Cities area. Their eclectic concerts are enjoyed by everyone and offer an opportunity to experience all types of music in a unique setting with great acoustics—and free admission!



Paul Jacobs is one of the great living virtuosos who made musical history at age 23, when he played Bach's complete organ works in an 18-hour marathon on the 250th anniversary of the composer's death. No other organist is repeatedly invited as soloist to perform with prestigious orchestras, thus making him a pioneer in the movement for the revival of symphonic music featuring the organ. An extraordinarily expressive performer and an intensely intelligent musician, Paul Jacobs is helping the King of Instruments retake its rightful place in classical music. Many RRVAGO members will remember Paul's performance and master class presented in Fargo several years ago.

The Bethlehem Music Series program features a pre-concert conversation with the artist one-half hour before the concert. There is no admission charge. A free-will offering will be taken. Refreshments are served in the gallery following the concert. There will be free nursery services available for children three months to three years of age. Free valet parking is available.

A Look Into the Past

Highlights...

AIO CONVENTION

by Lance Johnson and Sonia Carlson
photos by Erik Swee

The 1978 National Convention of the American Institute of Organbuilders, which includes church and theatre organ builders, convened in Moorhead, Minn., October 8th to 11th. The national chairman for the event was Lance Johnson. With 95 in attendance, it was the second largest turnout in the history of the A.I.O. Along with builders from America, there were three from Europe and one from England.

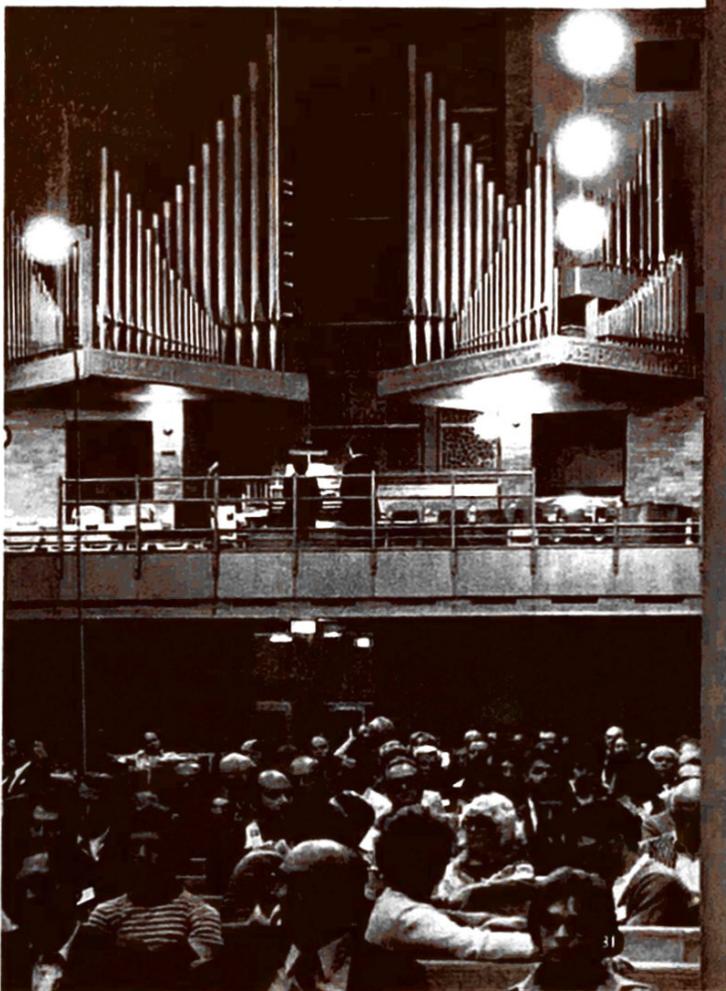
The convention opened Sunday with a bus trip to Gethsemane Episcopal Cathedral, Fargo, N.D., to see and hear the new 3/43 Zimmer organ, which was demonstrated by Dr. Andrew Smith. A lecture followed by Franz Zimmer, the builder.

Monday the builders heard a lecture by Dirk Flentrop of Zandaam, Holland, on the subject of the organ building movement in Europe, with respect to the restoration of historic Dutch organs. The restoration process is done according to a strict set of rules, 90% of the cost paid by the Dutch Government through its Historic Monuments Department.

At noon Monday the organbuilders were bused to the Fargo Theatre, where they picked up a lunch in the lobby and sat down to hear a brief concert on the recently restored 2/8 Style E Wurlitzer. Lance Johnson and Bob Arndt, of Arndt Organ Supply, provided the music. Ted Larson, instructor of the film studies at Moorhead State University, gave a lecture demonstration of the theatre lighting system and stage. Lance Johnson followed with the history of the theatre and the restoration process of the organ, which has been done in a strictly historical manner.

DEC. 1978 / JAN. 1979

Dr. John Ferguson lecture recital at Trinity Lutheran, Moorhead, Minnesota



A Look into the Past (continued)



Dirk Flentrop: Flentrop Orgelbau, Holland, lectures on historic Dutch organ restoration.

The builders then took a bus tour of Fargo-Moorhead to inspect a number of newer church organs, represented by Austin, Casavant and Holtkamp. One of the most interesting facets of the tour was an electronic recording device wired into the 3/32 Casavant (Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Moorhead). Once recorded, the organ itself played back the music. This device was just designed by Peterson Electronics of Worth, Ill.

During the course of the convention there were lecture demonstrations on problems in the organ maintenance industry, accounting methods for organbuilders, performance bonds and insurance for organbuilders, techniques in drafting organ cases and chest layouts, and also a lecture by Hans Knaths,

a West German pipe manufacturer, on reed shallots. Eight manufacturers of organ-related equipment maintained display booths at the Ramada Inn, convention headquarters, which proved to be a very popular spot.

On Tuesday the group rode the buses to Grand Forks, N.D., to see and hear a Casavant tracker and a Skinner organ with electric slider chests and then to Hillsboro, N.D., to hear a Johnson organ.

Tuesday evening the organbuilders were treated to an unforgettable lecture-concert by Dr. John Ferguson (Minister of Music at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis) at the 1957 3/34 Holtkamp organ at Trinity Lutheran, Moorhead. His lecture stressed the problems encountered in preparing the church for this organ and the philosophy behind the tonal design, as built by Walter Holtkamp, Sr.

Wednesday there were more lectures which included another by Dirk Flentrop on the restoration of cathedral organs in Mexico City, which required three years. The convention came to a close that evening with a gala banquet, at which Mr. Flentrop spoke on the fiasco concerning the large tracker organ designed and built by his firm for Carnegie Hall in New York City, but never installed. Another interesting part of his talk was the problem he encountered when shipping his first tracker organ in 1956 to New York

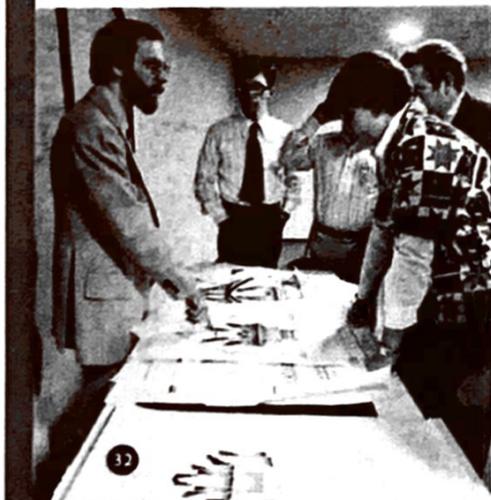


Red River Chapter member Ted Larson addresses convention at the Fargo Theatre.

State, only to find that the construction unions would not allow him to assemble the organ. The unions then assigned to him two steel workers to assemble the frame of the organ, two carpenters to assemble the case and two plumbers to install the pipes!

In conclusion, the convention was termed an unqualified success. It was the first time in the history of the A.I.O. that a theatre organ was included on the organ crawl inspection of organs. Quite a number of builders who have a history of having little use for the theatre organ, were the most vocal about the organ program at the Fargo Theatre. Also, Dirk Flentrop was heard to remark that the Wurlitzer had integrity, was designed to suit the building and had a thrilling sound. □

Lynn Dolson, tracker builder, displays his ink drawings of organ facades.



Organbuilders inspect Peterson solid state recording device for live playback.



In Remembrance of Jean E. Roberts

Jean Elizabeth Roberts, 66, of Moorhead, MN, passed away quietly on Friday, August 16, 2019 in Fargo, ND.

Jean was born to James and Lidia Greig in Niagara Falls, NY, on April 29, 1953. Growing up on a farm in upstate NY, she cherished her early farmgirl lifestyle and later graduated from Newfane High School in 1971. Physical activities remained important throughout her life as she enjoyed playing tennis and running marathons. She pursued her passion for music performance at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY, where she met her husband John Noel Roberts in 1971. Further music studies included a Master of Music degree from the Yale University School of Music and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Texas at Austin.

Jean served as an assistant professor on the faculty at North Greenville College, SC and as an adjunct music professor at Furman University, SC; the West Australian Conservatorium of Music in Perth; Mercer University, GA; Stephen F. Austin State University, TX; and Concordia College, MN. She particularly enjoyed collaborating with students and faculty members in recitals and performing two-piano concerts with her husband.

Her dedication as a church musician grew significantly during her lifetime. She served as organist/choir director at St. James Episcopal Church, Nacogdoches, TX; and Gethsemane Episcopal Cathedral, Fargo, ND. For her, church music was an expression of faith through service rather than a profession.

Jean's positive and encouraging attitude was infectious. Her sincerity and nurturing spirit as a wife, mother, sister, friend, teacher, church musician and collaborative artist will be sorely missed. Now, may the Lord bless her and keep her.

Jean is survived by her husband John Noel Roberts, two sons; Jason Noel Roberts and Jeremiah Thompson Roberts (Allison), and grandson Isaac Noel Roberts. Jean is also survived by her sisters Carol Coulson, Jacqueline Lampman, Lidia Kriwox, and brothers James Greig and Scott Greig. Jean is preceded in death by her parents James and Lidia Greig.

The Funeral Service was held on Saturday, August 24, 2019 at Gethsemane Episcopal Cathedral in Fargo, ND.



Upcoming Events

October 30, 2019 at 12:45pm

“Michael Olson and Friends Wednesday Recital”
Dillon Swanson (Organ Student of Jay Hershberger
from Concordia College)
First Lutheran Church, Fargo

November 6, 2019 at 12:45pm

“Michael Olson and Friends Wednesday Recital”
Ruth Strawn (Organ Student of Michael Olson)
First Lutheran Church, Fargo

November 20, 2019 at 12:45pm

“Michael Olson and Friends Wednesday Recital”
Matthew Clarke (Organ Student of Jay Hershberger
from Concordia College)
First Lutheran Church, Fargo

December 2, 2019 at 7:00pm

“A Christmas Carol Ring and Sing-Along”
First Presbyterian Church, Fargo

December 4, 2019 at 12:45

“Michael Olson and Friends Wednesday Recital”
Dillon Swanson (Organ Student of Jay Hershberger)
First Lutheran Church, Fargo

March 29, 2020

“Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza”
First Lutheran, First Presbyterian, Fargo Theatre
Details to be announced.

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