

THE CLARION

MARCH 2009

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF EASTERN NEW YORK CHAPTER OF
AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

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CHAPTER
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ORGANISTS
CHAPTER ORGANIZED 1920

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CHAPTER WEBSITE
<http://agony.bizland.com>

Check out the Clarion at
<http://agony.bizland.com/clarion>

A MESSAGE FROM OUR DEAN

Greetings to Everyone,

Nomination Committee: David Vredenberg has graciously agreed to chair the nomination committee. Is it perhaps time for you to consider volunteering for an office or committee chairmanship? If you have never done this, or if it's been a long time, please let David know of your willingness to serve. David's email is: dvdvred@aol.com

Our International Year of the Organ has continued with two wonderful Saturday events in February. Jason Roberts presented a fantastic workshop on Improvisation at St. Pius X Catholic Church. We thank our hosts, Charles Jones and Michael Ricchiuti. I have attended several workshops on this topic, and this was the best ever because he focused on three specific techniques: to harmonize melodies in a creative way, to modify hymn tunes for improvising techniques, and to play imaginative hymn interludes. This talented young man ended the three-hour session by improvising on the hymn, Holy Manna, and wowed us all. I attended the National Competition for Organ Improvisation (NCOI) competition at the AGO National Convention in Minneapolis last summer, and when Jason played, I knew that he would win. Most impressive to me is his working knowledge of music theory that inspires his creativity – and his ability to verbalize these techniques for us all.

Outreach Program: Our second February program was the outreach event Charles Jones put together at St. John's Episcopal Church in Johnstown. Charles, doing heroic duty, did a one-hour version of Pedals, Pipes & Pizza, followed by two half-hour sessions: Leading the Choir from the Keyboard and Creative Hymn Playing. I ended the morning with a session entitled Accessible Music for Busy Organists. The audience was most enthusiastic. After all of that, there was a 30-minute recital given by five different people: Charles and I were delighted to be joined by three Johnstown-area organists, including St. John's organist, Bob Hallenbeck, Ed Goodemote, and Malcolm Kogut. We will repeat this program in Glens Falls, and I encourage you to attend on March 14.

A Word about Scholarships: The deadline for applications is May 15. If you have students who may be interested in a \$250 scholarship, please encourage them to apply.

AGO Annual Fund: Have you sent your annual donation in any amount to AGO? Please send your contribution to the Annual Fund and/or the Endowment Fund. I have donated in memory of my teacher, Robert Glasgow, who died in 2008. Perhaps there is someone you would like to remember or honor – this would be a wonderful way!

AGO Gala Fundraiser: Have you seen the wonderful photo of Marilyn Mason in *TAO*? This lively and respected teacher will be honored at the Gala in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on April 19. Please check the website for details. The Gala includes a recital (Prof. Mason will be performing, along with some of her students) and a gala reception. These are lovely events, so if you have any connection to Prof. Mason, please consider either attending or contributing to this fundraiser for the Endowment Fund.

Guild Exams: Please consider adding a few letters to your name, like AAGO! Contact me if you are interested in preparing for and taking a Guild exam. The Service Playing Exam is the easiest, and it is what we do every week.

Barbara Adler, Dean

OTHER EVENTS

Sunday, March 1 at 3:30 PM - Organ Recital and Choral Evensong

The Cathedral of All Saints, 62 S. Swan Street Albany NY 12210

Sunday, March 15 at 7:30 PM - Schenectady County Bicentennial Choir Festival

Music from Bach to Gospel will be sung by the massed choir which will be accompanied by organ, brass, and percussion. Donations will be received to benefit the Schenectady Free Health Clinic, which serves individuals without health insurance. First Reformed Church of Schenectady, 8 N. Church Street, in the Stockade.

Sunday, March 15 at 3:00 PM - Phoenix Bach Choir and Kansas City Chorale

to be presented by Troy Chromatic Concerts on on stage of Troy Savings Bank Music Hall. We of Chromatics, wish to promote this concert among your members in hopes of encouraging their attendance. This group of approximately 40, conducted by Mr. Charles Bruffy, a protegee of the late Robert Shaw, is said to be “simply gorgeous, a stunner in all respects” - American Record Guide. For group discounts, AGO members should call 273-0038 with reservations by March 10th. Groups of 10 will receive 10% off regular prices of \$40 and \$45. Larger number will receive a greater discount. FREE pre-concert lecture at 2 pm at the Rensselaer County Historical Society.

Friday, March 27 at 6:00 PM - “Peter and the Wolf” (Organ and Narration)

A program for kids of ALL ages, Maury A. Castro will be performing an organ transcription of Sergei Prokofiev’s beloved orchestral work, “Peter and the Wolf.” This piece, written in Moscow in 1936 in the span of just four days, tells the delightful story of a young boy who disobeys his grandfather’s wisdom and takes on a menacing wolf. A bird, cat and duck also engage the wolf, with varying degrees of success. Transcribed by Dr. Scott Schlesinger as a Ph.D. dissertation project at UCLA, the organ delivers this piece fantastically, able to imitate a wide variety of the orchestra’s colors. This is especially true on the recently-restored, three-manual, 52 rank organ at First United. The story will be told by Daniel Rogers of Latham, NY. This concert is given as a part of “Troy Night Out,” a monthly arts and dining event in Troy. March has been designated “Kids Night Out,” so children are especially encouraged to participate in festivities that evening such as this one. The concert is 30 minutes long, and is free with donations accepted. First United Presbyterian Church is located at 1915 Fifth Ave., Troy, NY 12180. For more information, call 272.2771 xt. 14 or visit www.unitedprestroy.org/music/html.

March 29, at 3:00 PM - Piffaro - The Renaissance Band

Piffaro has delighted audiences throughout the United States, Europe, Canada and South America. The ensemble recreates sounds of the professional wind bands of the late Medieval and Renaissance periods using an ever-expanding collection of shawms, sackbuts, recorders, krumphorns, bagpipes, lutes, guitars, harps and a variety of percussion instruments. First United Methodist Church, 603 State Street, Schenectady. The concert is free of charge and all are invited to attend. For more information, contact the church office at 374-4403.

Sunday, April 19 at 3:00 PM - Organ Recital by Giorgio Parolini

Organist of S. Eufemia Basilica, Milan, Italy. Westminster Presbyterian Church, 262 State St., Albany. Freewill offering.

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BUS TRIP, ORGAN RECITAL & DINNER AT WEST POINT

On Sunday, September 13, 2009, area organist Brian Hoffman will perform a recital on the 381 rank Moller organ at the U.S.M.A Cadet Chapel at West Point, NY. A package is available which includes travel by bus from Albany, a recital on the world’s largest church organ, and dinner at the Thayer Hotel at West Point for \$65 per person. For reservations and information, please contact Kathy Nolles at 456-1644 during daytime office hours. More information is available at www.brianhoffmanorganist.com

