

## Message from the Dean for April 2016

We look forward to our April 11th members' recital "A Musical Visit to Boston 1870-1910." Various members will perform selected music from Boston that Monday at 7:00 pm. at First Congregational UCC, 1031 S. Euclid in Sarasota. Because many of our members avoid nighttime driving and live some distance away, carpools are highly recommended. Attendees are asked to bring a "teatime nibble." Jim Johnston will be presenting the program, which features a two-manual Jaeckel tracker.

Our Feb. 23rd "Ask the Experts Lunch" was a success. It was well attended and provided excellent opportunities for colleagues to share their professional concerns. Among them is the fact that our chapter has many excellent organists with too few opportunities. Churches have gone belly-up due to declining attendance. Others are selling off assets to fund big, executive clergy salaries. Others have decided to go with amateur musicians and praise teams, having little use for classically trained organists. Instead of drawing on local talent, still other churches have been turning to national searches when a position opens. Early this year, somebody observed that, out of some 11 excellent organists on our executive committee, only two were working steady church jobs.

Our March 20th Thomas Murray recital at Bradenton's Christ Church Episcopal drew a crowd of around 200 people. The program was varied and featured many compositions not often heard. Many thanks go to resident Organist-Choirmaster Dick Benedum for his diligent work in organizing and publicizing this concert. A number of us also attended a luncheon on March 19th at which Dr. Murray shared professional concerns and anecdotes from his long career as a concert organist. He also noted that his career as a recording artist went back to the "black vinyl years."

Dr. Murray is University Organist and Professor of Music at Yale University, where he has served on the faculty for 32 years. He has taught many of the leading performers of a younger generation. He has won numerous awards. Dr. Murray has appeared in recitals and lectures at six national conventions of the AGO, which named him International Artist of the Year for 1986.

Our chapter has a nominating committee to recommend officers and board members to serve through the 2016-2017 season. Officers include dean, sub-dean, treasurer, and secretary. In addition, the three board members whose terms will expire in 2016 need to be replaced with three others, whose terms will expire in 2019. Also, we need one person to serve until 2017 and another member to serve on the board until 2018.

Soli Deo Gloria,

Carl Parks, Dean