



Montre

Newsletter of the Sarasota-Manatee Chapter
of the American Guild of Organists

September 2016

OFFICERS

- Dwayne Grace, Dean ■ Nancy Siebecker, Sub-Dean
- Kathy Master Pendergrass, Secretary
- Susan Crumpler, Treasurer

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- Paul Adams ■ Michael Bayus ■ John Ferreira
- David Guyet ■ Bill Holt ■ Jim Johnston
- Phyllis O'Keef ■ Carl Parks ■ Fr. Fred Robinson
- Barbara Roth-Donaldson

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Chaplain ■ Fr. Charleston Wilson

Placement/Substitutes ■ John Ferreira

FROM THE DEAN

Ah, September! Temperatures begin to fall. Schools are in session. Church choirs resume rehearsals. Snowbirds begin to trickle down from the North. Traffic increases. Personal calendars become filled with responsibilities. To Do lists get longer. Concert and Artist Series commence. And the Sarasota-Manatee Chapter of the American Guild of Organists begins its 59th season.

To open our 2016-2017 season we've arranged an event where you can peruse some used music, enjoy some snacks, greet friends and colleagues, and enjoy a program of theatre organ music.

The 1927 organ (Wurlitzer Opus 1569) was built for the Florida Theatre, Jacksonville, and was originally a 3 manual, 15 rank instrument. In 1996 the Manatee Theatre Organ Society (MTOS), a chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society, purchased the instrument. An agreement with Grace Baptist Church, Sarasota, allowed for its installation in the sanctuary and MTOS added ranks to make the organ suitable for church use. Opus

1569 is now a four manual, 32 rank instrument.

Organist Bill Vlasac will entertain us with a program that demonstrates the variety of organ stops we don't hear on Sunday morning. Some of you may remember Bill from his days as one of the House Organists at the Roaring 20s Pizza & Pipes in Ellenton.

So, if you think a Tibia is a bone in your leg or you've never heard a Kinura, then you certainly should join us on Monday, September 19, 6:30 pm, at Grace Church, 8000 Bee Ridge Road, Sarasota, for Pipes and Bites.

Know a church musician who is not an AGO member? Give them a call! Bring them along!

Dwayne Grace, Dean

FROM THE SUB-DEAN

And now for October! Saturday morning, October 29, brings an opportunity for you choir directors and your singers to come to Venice Presbyterian Church, 825 The Rialto, Venice, from 9:30-11:30 am to participate in a session for sharing techniques and literature. Eight presenters will bring and lead anthems in a variety of styles and voicings, from unison to SATB.

The list of eight anthems will be available for you to take with you as well as a larger list from which we selected the eight favorite anthems.

(continues on next page)

Don't miss Tristan Rhodes' offering
THE RESCUE: An Organist's Nightmare
on page 3.

Reservation deadline is Friday, October 21, 2016 to Jim Hawkinson at: jhawkinson@tampay.rr.com or by calling 941.794.8757 or 941.524.8633. You may leave a message with your name and the number of singers attending.

Invite your choir members and enjoy the morning with us!

Nancy Siebecker, Sub-Dean

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members:

William Feigley, Wayne Fisher,
Barry Lockard, Nancy Metivier,
Steven Phillips, and Carroll Vincent

UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

Pipes and Bites, Bill Vlasak, Organist ■

Monday, September 19, 2016 at 6:30 p.m..
Grace Community Church
8000 Bee Ridge Rd., Sarasota

Please join us for a social get together in the fellowship hall, followed by a program presented by professional theater organist Bill Vlasak. Here is a chance to catch up with "old" friends and meet new ones while enjoying the great genre of theater organ music. There will be a table of used organ music to peruse during the social.

Choral Techniques and Literature ■

Saturday, October 29, 2016 at 9:30 a.m..
Venice Presbyterian Church
825 The Rialto, Venice, FL 34285

A 2 hour choral event for sharing techniques and literature at Venice Presbyterian Church. Eight presenters will each bring and lead an anthem in a variety of styles and voicings, from unison to SATB. Reservation deadline will be Oct. 21.

All choir directors and choir members are welcome!

FUTURE CHAPTER EVENTS

Organ/Piano Concert, Jeremy Fisell ■

Friday, January 13, 2017 at 7:30 p.m.
St. Boniface Episcopal Church
5615 Midnight Pass Rd, Sarasota

Members admitted free.

Organ Concert, Dextor Kennedy ■

Sunday, January 22, 2017 at 4:00 p.m.
Christ Church of Bradenton
4030 Manatee Avenue West, Bradenton

Kennedy recently won the Chartre competition. Members admitted free.

New Schantz Pipe Organ Introduction ■

Monday, February 27, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.
Siesta Key Chapel
4615 Gleason Avenue at Ocean Blvd, Sarasota

Cynthia Roberts-Greene will present the new Schantz followed by Cynthia and your officers playing useful preludes/postludes. Program to be followed by dessert bites.

Bach Concerti for 4 Harpsichords ■

Sunday, March 5, 2017 at 4:00 p.m.
Christ Church of Bradenton
4030 Manatee Avenue West, Bradenton

Exciting program with rarely performed concerti... for 4, 3, and 2 harpsichords at Christ Church, Bradenton. Members admitted free.

Organ Concert, Ken Cowan ■

Sunday, March 26, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.
Church of the Redeemer
222 S Palm Ave, Sarasota .

Members admitted free.

Organ Concert, Vincent Dubois ■

Wednesday, April 19, 2017 at 7:30 p.m.
First Congregational United Church of Christ
1031 S Euclid Ave, Sarasota

Vincent Dubois was recently appointed titular at Notre Dame, Paris.

Members admitted free.

Annual Chapter Banquet ■

Monday, May 22, 2017

St. Armand's Key Lutheran Church
40 N Adams Drive, Sarasota

Dinner and a "spiritual evening" with artist Manny Cadet.

THE RESCUE: An Organist's Nightmare

Being a touring artist is fraught with challenges beyond those of delayed or canceled flights, traffic jams, no-show limousines, torrential rain, snow storms, hurricanes, the tuning crew arriving a day late eating up your practice time, pistons and toe studs that are unpredictable, mice eating the leathers, crescendo and expression shoes that malfunction, the ever-present fear of ciphers and the list goes on and on. We've all had some or all of the above happen to us in the course of our careers. But no touring catastrophe I've had in the past matched the challenge I faced in playing a benefit recital for a small, but thriving and growing MCC church on this season's Lenten concert tour schedule.

The concert was on a Wednesday night – Ash Wednesday to be precise. I arrived in town on Tuesday mid-morning expecting to have unfettered access to the organ for the balance of the day and all the following up until an hour before concert time.

I knew what I was getting into having seen the sad state of the old electronic 'church' organ two months earlier, but I'd been assured by the church that a qualified electronic organ technician would give the 'ol' girl' a thorough going over to be certain all the contacts were clean, all the keys, stops, pistons, pedals, toe studs and expression shoes were properly operational and that there was no electronic 'hum' or speaker crackle. I know for certain the church hired, at considerable expense, a reputable electronic organ technician to guarantee that the old organ was fully functional and in good condition before I arrived on Tuesday to practice.

While I supervised the moving of the old console from its hiding place in the corner of the apse to front and center - manuals and pedal board facing the nave at a slight angle for best audience viewing - I muttered in relief, "It looks perfectly presentable." I knew this was not the organ's first home. It had served elsewhere until a better instrument, perhaps even a pipe organ, had replaced it years earlier. I knew also, that this organ had been certified fully operational and in excellent condition when it was purchased by the present church a few years back. Seeing the woefully outdated console I wondered what it must have been like when the present congregation first heard it – how amazed and in awe they might have been hearing the opening notes of its inaugural prelude in their church and how robust and enthusiastic the choir back then would have sung "Lift High the Cross," or perhaps, "For All the Saints" as they began the procession. Back then donor's eyes would have welled, and chests would have expanded with pride.

The bench was put in place and the helpers left me to my madness. I flicked the on switch, activated a few stop tabs and played a chord. Nothing! "Give it time; it's been sleeping," I assured myself to quell my anxiety. Some fifteen minutes later the organ found its voice. One stop at a time I played a chromatic scale from C1 to C61. Of the dozen stops I chose – four for each division of the organ - none were without startling blemish: dead notes, notes that spoke slowly or barely spoke at all. I held a chord and worked the expression shoes to hear a cacophony of crackling noises. "No, NO, NO," I yelled in a crescendo of raging horror and marched myself to the church office building.

The pastor's door was open when I told the secretary, "I need to speak with the pastor NOW." Before she even pressed the intercom the pastor walked into the outer office. Thoughtfully he listened as I told him my findings. He was stunned, horrified and shocked at my litany of organ malfunctions. Totally confounded the poor man blurted, "We had the technician here all Saturday

morning. He said everything was fine."

There is nothing better than "show 'n' tell" to drive home a point. The pastor kept pace with me as I briskly walked through the courtyard and into the narthex – my heels digging into the pavement registering my outrage at the organ's condition.

It didn't take more than thirty seconds before the pastor got my point. He asked in dismay, "What can we do?" Trying hard to keep my composure I told him, "We have two options: One, to cancel the concert, or two, the church will have to rent a digital organ." I knew from experience all piano and organ companies have 'loaners' for performances where an instrument is not available.

We retired to the pastor's office to thoughtfully consider our options. I was all for canceling. "Oh no," pleaded the pastor, "the concert is the crowning climax to our Ash Wednesday observance and launches us into Lent. We have a supper at six and your concert at seven-thirty. More than half the congregation has reserved seats to hear you play! The congregation would be SO disappointed. We've been publicizing and looking forward to your concert for the past month." "Okay," I relented, "Then we have no choice but to call the local Allen and Rodgers companies and see if they have a 'loaner' on such short notice." While I felt put-out when he asked if I would champion the search, I appreciated the logic that he knew absolutely nothing about an organ or what we needed. So there was no unrealistic expectations on his part, I was sure to add, "Don't expect this to be a freebee." Before I even asked, having heard the gist of our conversation, the secretary handed me the slip of paper with telephone numbers.

I first called Rodgers but the line was busy. I called Allen. As succinctly as possible I explained to the manager our dilemma and our need to have a rental replacement by the following day. The manager sympathized and when he said, "It MAY be possible," my heart beat fast with hope. "Where are you located?" he asked. When I said, "Sarasota on ..." he cut in saying, "I'm sorry but our

warehouse is in Miami. There's no way we can get a loaner organ to you by tomorrow. Maybe by the end of the week, but not tomorrow." Crestfallen I thanked him for his kindness and as I hung up I whispered, "O PLEASE, God," and redialed the number for the local Rodgers franchise. The phone rang twice before a man's voice answered, "Central Music." "Is this Nelson Newby?" I asked. "Nope," said the cheerful chap. "You need to speak with my dad." "Is he available?" I urged. "He's on another line. Give me your number and he'll call you back in 20 minutes."

I nervously doodled on a pad all the while wishing time would move as fast as the rhythm of my anxious heart. The church office was busy - the phone ringing off the hook. Every time it rang my blood pressure spiked. "Mr. Rhodes" said the secretary at last, "Line two." I recognized Nelson's voice and re-introduced myself. "I know you," he said chuckling. "We spoke at the Orlando Liturgy Conference last September. What's up?" Indeed we had spoken in Orlando and he patiently listened to my tale of woe.

"Boy, you are in a pickle! Well, our three manual concert organ isn't scheduled to go to the Straz Center for a couple of weeks. We could loan you that organ; would that do?" "Would that do?" I yelped, "that would be fantastic!" He asked, "When do you need it?" Meekly I murmured, "Today?" Nelson's chuckle built into a great bellowing laugh at my absurdity. "While the organ is here, my movers are in the Miami area; they're coming back tomorrow. When's the concert?" "Tomorrow at seven-thirty." "They may be able to be on site by noon." "Noon it is," I confirmed. As Nelson jotted down the church's address I soberly told him, "This is not a wealthy parish." He blew me away saying, "We won't charge for the use of the organ, but the church will have to pay for the two mover/ technicians and gas for the round trip from Clearwater." The pastor who had been privy to this conversation gave me a 'can do' nod and I assured Nelson, "Whatever it takes."

I was at the church at 10:00 Ash Wednesday morning. The pastor and I cleared the performance area. I would need every second to set pistons and toe studs and expand my repertoire registrations for three manuals. I especially needed ample time on the Bach Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor and the Durufle “Fugue sur la nom d’Alain;” both require complicated stop changes. Those are tough pieces!

Two p.m. arrived and no truck. I was so hungry the Formica on the table top next to me was beginning to look pretty tempting. I invited the pastor to join me for a late lunch to keep both our minds otherwise occupied. He left instruction to call immediately when the truck arrived. When the call came I was grateful there were no squad cars on the roads I traveled!

As I careened into the church parking lot at 4 p.m., the truck’s bay doors were open and the bay empty. Running into the church I saw the two strapping Newby mover/technicians connecting cables to the console and stacking speakers. “I’m SO glad to see you,” I yelped in glee. “We couldn’t get here sooner,” soothed the driver. “We’ve been on the road since 6 this morning,”

I was actually grateful that the organ wasn’t the three manual instrument I expected, but a fine two manual eliminating manual changing problems. It was another hour before the technician said, “How about giving it a test drive?”

I had an hour before people arrived for dinner - helpers were already setting up tables at the rear of the nave for the Ash Wednesday supper – barely enough time to set rudimentary combinations and run through the opening bars of each piece on the program. The Rodgers organ with its floating positiv performed like a champ and I liked the palette of tonal colors. [Digital sampling has come a long way.] The packed audience must have liked it too because they jumped to their feet and gave it a standing ovation. When next I saw Nelson Newby I told him, “You need to put Newby to the Rescue on your next batch of business cards.

Thank you, Nelson.

Triston Rhodes

PUBLISHING EVENTS

If you would like to publish an event on the website, please contact or email Bill Holt (wholt2@tampabay.rr.com) at least two weeks prior to the event. You may also leave a follow up message at the chapter email below. Posting your event flyer link is also available for a small charge. Note that all events posted on the website will automatically be included in the Montre.

Please refer to the Events section at the Chapter website: <http://agosm.org/community-events.html>

CHAPTER INFORMATION

Website ■ agosm.org

Here you’ll find the full chapter calendar of events the Deans’ message, as well as the other concerts and events of interest planned for the wider Manatee and Sarasota county areas.

We have added links to a map of all the posted event sites for the convenience of our members and guests. Just click on the address link below the event description and Google Maps will take you there. Once the map software takes you there you can easily get directions to the event site by typing in your address. It’s simple and easy to use, especially if you are using Google Chrome for a browser.

I encourage you to take time to explore all it has to offer.

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