

**THE BIRMINGHAM CHIFF**  
**...off the old blockflute**



*Birmingham Chapter of  
The American Guild of Organists  
December 1, 2010*



Jamie McLemore, Dean

**December 2010**

Dear Chapter Members,

It is very difficult for me to believe that the first 10 years of this New Millennium have passed. I guess we can say that we are all like good wine - "we get better with age!" I certainly hope so! As times flies so do the demands of church and school musicians, especially this month. There are so many wonderful and varied musical programs this month here in town. If you have a chance, please take the opportunity to attend a few of these. I always enjoy being a person "outside" rather than "inside" at some of these.

Our Epiphany Party will be held on Monday, January 10, 2011 at the home of Jeff Johnson and Sonny Williams. This event will begin at 6:00 PM. We will send a postcard

and email out to our members with directions to their home in Forest Park.

Reservations to the party must be made by Friday, January 7, 2011. Please send your reservations to Charles Kennedy at [kennedy@catherdraladvent.com](mailto:kennedy@catherdraladvent.com) or by calling him at 226-3505. This party is a great way to begin your New Year.

The POE brochure is almost ready to print! Our Secretary, Sherelyn Breeland, did a FABULOUS job with the layout and you will all like the logo designed by Rodney Davidson on the front. All of the faculty and venues are in place. The committee has worked diligently to make sure we have everything covered. The POE's that were held this summer were all full with waiting lists. Because of this, we have increased our registration to 30 students! It's a little scary thinking about 30 teenagers that we have to be in charge of, but with help from everyone we will make this a very successful POE. We will have much more information about this in the January and February issues and how you can help.

I wish you all a Glorious Christmas, Happy Hanukkah and a Very Happy New Year! I look forward to seeing you at the party.

Cheers!  
Jamie



Dear Members,

I have written previously about the AGO Pipe Organ Encounter (POE), which our chapter will be hosting from June 12-17. As stated on the national website, "POE is a 4 to 5-day regional event organized by a local AGO chapter under the sponsorship of the national organization." It was developed by the Guild as an outreach program to young organists (ages 13-18), and can essentially be thought of as an organ camp. Thirty students will be accepted from among a larger number of applicants (there is always a waiting list), and will be taught lessons each day by fifteen teachers (two students assigned to each) who have been chosen by the Birmingham Chapter's POE committee. The lessons will be held in local churches and other venues. There will be lectures, masterclasses, recitals and organ crawls, among other activities. The students will be housed in one of the Beeson Woods dormitories at Samford University. Our chapter has never before hosted such an event – an undertaking which is in some ways similar to planning for a regional convention (though with far fewer people involved and not nearly so complicated). The success of these POEs has been considerable, leading a number of young people to choose the organ as a major area of study in College. This will, I predict, be one of the most important things we have ever done as a chapter. You will be hearing more about the POE in the coming days. More information about the POE program can be found at the following web address: <http://www.agohq.org/education/index.html>.

Last month (November 6) we hosted a splen-

did and absorbing masterclass taught by organist Ludger Lohmann at the Church of the Ascension in Vestavia Hills. Four participants played for Professor Lohmann, and the two hours scheduled for the class proved only too short for the immense wealth of information and musical and artistic insight offered in this class. This was followed up by really fine performance by Professor Lohmann the next day at Independent Presbyterian Church. I would be remiss in not offering hearty congratulations to a marvelous program centered around Psalm 94 by Jeff McLelland and the Independent Presbyterian choir on November 14, which included a commissioned work by Grayston Ives, a commissioned hymn by Thomas Troeger (our AGO national chaplain), and the Reubke Sonata (brilliantly played). Finally, on November 21 we were treated to a beautiful, colorful and brilliant performance by Alan Morrison as the final recital on IPC's Aeolian-Skinner.

During the past few weeks I have been spending time at the home of our recently deceased chapter member and my former teacher, Ted Tibbs, helping his sister Margaret Molina sort through and organize the immense amount of musical items. Many items of interest to our chapter archives, in particular recordings of various organ recitals performed here in Birmingham over the years, have been found. The experience has served as a poignant reminder of the great gift we have in our teachers and our mentors, and has given me a renewed urgency to carry forward the legacy of my teachers.

As mentioned by Chapter Dean Jamie McLe-more, please be sure to send me your reservations to the AGO Epiphany Party by the Friday before (January 8, 2011), so that we can have a good headcount of how many people to expect.

I trust that, in this busy time of the year, you will discover and experience the peace and joy of Advent and Christmas as you help to bring it to others through music.

Charles M. Kennedy  
Sub Dean

Dear Colleagues,

The **2011 University of Alabama Church Music Conference** will take place on **Friday, January 21 and Saturday, January 22, 2011**.

Dr. Pamela Decker, the featured artist for the conference, is Professor of Organ/Music Theory at the University of Arizona in Tucson and Organist at Grace St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Tucson. Dr. Decker will perform works by Bach, Liszt, Locklair, Yukl, Whitehouse, and Decker. Dr. Decker is an exciting performer and you will not want to miss her concert on Saturday afternoon at 4:30 pm or her workshops/masterclasses.

The Festival Concert at 7:30 pm on Friday evening in the Moody School of Music Concert Hall features the First-Place Winner of the 2011 UA Organ Scholarship Competition, Dr. Faythe Freese, School of Music faculty and the University Singers. A free wine and cheese reception will immediately follow the concert.

Saturday, January 22 workshops feature Pamela Decker, Susan Berg, Susan Fleming, Faythe Freese, Marvin Latimer, David Ouzts, Paul Richardson, Jenny Mann, Shelly Meggison, Diane Schultz and Stephen Schaeffer.

The workshops include the following topics/titles:

- Organ Masterclasses
- Church Music and Music Education, Blessed be the Tie that Binds
- Vocal Masterclass
- Connecting the Bible and Hymnal
- Rejoicing with Winds!: Sacred repertoire for flute, oboe, bassoon, organ and piano
- Improvising and Composing in the Twenty-first Century
- So What's new? Preludes, Offertories and Postludes for Organ
- Children's Choirs: Building Healthy Singing Techniques
- Musical and Liturgical Resources for Celtic Worship
- Worship in the Celtic Style
- Old and new from me to You – A Choral Reading Session

Please view the 2011 University of Alabama Church Music Conference brochure located at: <http://music.ua.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011-Church-Music-Conference.pdf>

**Earlybird Discount?** Register online **before Friday, January 14** at: <http://music.ua.edu/departments/organ/church-music-conference-pre-registration/>

I look forward to greeting each and every one of you at this year's conference.

Sincerely,  
Faythe Freese, D.M.  
Professor of Organ  
The University of Alabama

## Chapter Calendar

Sunday, February 13, 2011  
Recital: Raymond and Elizabeth Chenault  
Cathedral Church of the Advent  
Recital 4:00 p.m., Reception Following

Monday, March 14, 2011  
A Memorial Tribute to H. Edward Tibbs,  
Dinner 6:00 p.m., Business Meeting 6:30  
Program 7:00 p.m.  
Southside Baptist Church

Monday, April 11, 2011  
Student Recital and Installation of Officers  
Dinner 6:00 p.m., Business Meeting 6:30  
p.m., Program 7:00 p.m.  
St. Paul's Cathedral

Monday, May 9, 2011  
Work Session for Pipe Organ Encounters  
Dinner 6:00 p.m., Business Meeting 6:30  
p.m., Work Session 7:00 p.m.