



THE BIRMINGHAM CHIFF ...off the old blockflute

The Birmingham Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

February 2016

A Word from the Dean

Hello friends,

I hope that you got some much deserved rest over the holidays and that your year is off to a fantastic start. Sherrie and I enjoyed spending the evening catching up with you at the Epiphany Party. We missed those of you who could not make it. The meal was delicious and most filling!!! Nathan Smock always does a great job of organizing our meal times.

As we look ahead to the new year, we have a great line-up of chapter programs for the spring. We will start the year with a program led by Fred Teardo, Director of Music at the Cathedral Church of the Advent. Fred will demonstrate the art of Choral Accompanying in the Anglican tradition. This should be an insightful evening, whether you are an active Anglican/Episcopal musician, one who subs occasionally in an Episcopal service, or one who uses anthems that have Anglican/Episcopal roots. Many of our choirs sing anthems by composers from the Anglican tradition such as Herbert Howells, William Matthias or John Rutter. Personally, I am looking forward to this event and I hope you will join us at the Cathedral Church of the Advent on the corner of Twentieth Street and Fifth Avenue North at 6:00 p.m. for dinner, followed by a brief chapter meeting and the program at 7:00 p.m. The dinner will be catered by Full Moon Barbeque. Reservations will go on-line January 31. Let me encourage you to bring a friend, especially a prospective chapter member.

We are planning a couple of Pedals, Pipes and Pizza events for this spring. The first will be held at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa on Saturday, February 20th. Faythe Freese is the contact person for this event. The second will be held at First United Methodist Church in Anniston on Saturday,

April 16th. Christopher Henley is the contact person for that event. If you know of any young person (pre-college) who might be interested in such an event, please encourage them to contact one of these folks for details.

Wishing for you a most productive and joyful year!!!

Dan

AGO Certifications

The American Guild of Organists was chartered in 1896 by the Board of Regents, University of the State of New York, to administer a comprehensive series of examinations for professional certification. Through the Professional Certification Committee the Guild offers the following certificates: **Service Playing Certificate** (SPC), **Colleague** (CAGO), **Choir Master** (ChM), **Associateship** (AAGO), and **Fellowship**(FAGO).

The full testing schedule, requirements, repertoire options, and applications for all certification exams are in the July 2015 edition of **TAO** (which is online at <https://www.agohq.org/current-issue>) and at <https://www.agohq.org/certification>.

Contact Sam Burke at smb54pipes@aol.com or Faythe Freese at faythefreese@earthlink.net to schedule an exam date.

Our chapter is again one of the testing centers for the Southeast Region with Dan Lawhon serving as coordinator.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

The Julian Family Christmas Recital

On December 17th a large, appreciative audience of family, friends, and co-workers gathered in the beautifully decorated sanctuary of Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church to hear the family of chapter member Rachel Julian share their musical abilities.



Karl, Rachel, Katrina, and Kyle

When asked about the origin of the annual program, now in its 14th year, Rachel replied:

The recital began in 2002 as a fulfillment of my dream that I was playing the Widor "Toccata" and a sense that I needed to get back to playing the organ. I had been a music major in college and loved the organ. After college I played the organ on Sundays to help put me through medical school. I played regularly for a church for eight years when we moved to Birmingham in 1984. I played very little after that until I had the dream. I had never played the Widor "Toccata," but decided I would like to do so now. So I began practicing regularly and performed the first annual recital by myself and ended with the Widor. Soon after that, my daughter, Katrina Booth, joined me in the recitals playing the organ. She did not play during the four years that she was doing her residency in internal medicine in Chicago. She moved back here several years ago and has rejoined the recital. My two sons have been doing it for about 4 years now. I feel very blessed to have children that want to play with me in the recital.

Preparation and planning for the recital goes on all year. Rachel says "I use it as an opportunity to learn some bigger pieces that I haven't had the chance to play yet and would not be able to play for a church service." Each performer chooses their music and Rachel works to get a balance of musical styles in the program. This year's program opened with Kyle playing a lovely setting of "He Is Born" on French horn, accompanied on piano by Rachel. Katrina followed with a Frescobaldi "Introduction and Toccata." Rachel then played the Bach "Fugue in D Major" BWV532/2 and Sowerby's "Comes Autumn Time." Karl's piano selections were Chopin's "Nocturne in E Flat" and Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata." Among the other pieces were Rachel and Katrina playing an organ duet of "What Child Is This." Katrina ended the program with Webber's "Phantom of the Opera."

I asked Rachel about the musical training of the family, what part music has played in their lives, and what they've chosen as their professions. She responded that each one began piano lessons at age six, following the tradition of her family when she was a child. They practice as they can with their busy lives, and busy they are:

Karl manages and teaches at the Oyama Karate dojo in Homewood. He is married and has three children. He wants his children to know that he can play the piano and plans to have them all take piano lessons at a young age like he did. He majored in theater in college and then taught English in Japan for three years before coming back to Birmingham.

My oldest daughter, Katrina Booth, majored in chemistry and then entered medical school at UAB. She spent four years in Chicago doing a residency in medicine, then returned to Birmingham to do a fellowship in geriatric medicine and then was recruited to be on the geriatric medicine faculty at UAB Medical Center a few years ago. She is married. She took a few organ lessons in high school and then more regularly during college. She studied piano until she graduated from high school.

My youngest son, Kyle, majored in aerospace engineering at Georgia Tech and is now working on his Masters in astrophysics and aeronautics at Stanford. He took piano lessons through middle school and French horn lessons sporadically from

fourth grade through high school. Kyle plays the piano but has really excelled on the french horn. He is playing in the wind ensemble at Stanford.

Kyle has a twin sister Kirsten who we have not persuaded yet to join the recital. She played flute well in middle school, then got involved in competitive dance and the school dance teams. Kirsten graduated from Auburn in May and is working as a physical therapy technician at Brookwood Hospital.

Mom Rachel is also a busy lady: She's a part-time psychiatrist at UAB Medical Center and at the Methodist Counseling Office.

When asked if this event was just for fun and an opportunity to do something as a family group, Rachel answered "I view it as a gift to our family and friends who attend. For the reception following the recital, I make Swedish Christmas cookies that I grew up enjoying (my family is all Swedish). People that come to the recital talk about it being a Christmas tradition for them and won't let me stop doing this." It was clear from the enthusiasm of the audience there will be many more recitals to come!

FEBRUARY CHAPTER EVENT

Please make plans to attend the February 8th chapter meeting hosted by Fred Teardo and Charles Kennedy at the Cathedral Church of the Advent. Full Moon Bar-B-Que is catering the dinner which begins at 6:00 pm. The menu is your choice of chopped chicken or pork, potato salad, slaw, and half moon cookies. Cost per meal is \$12.00.

Online dinner reservations will be available on the chapter website's home page January 30th or by contacting Mike Burt at (205) 201-3838 or treasurer@birminghamago.org. Reservations close at midnight Saturday, February 6th.

Comings and Goings

Dr. Gail Hasson has accepted the position of Organist at St. Mark United Methodist in Northport. She previously served as organist and handbell choir director at Covenant Presbyterian in Tuscaloosa for 18 years.

THIS AND THAT

Check it out: *Ask Aunt Wilma* and the AGO YouTube channel

The National AGO website has two recent additions. *Ask Aunt Wilma* features Dr. Wilma Jensen answering submitted questions in an online-video column. The current question concerns the Adagio of *Franck's Chorale No. 3 in A Minor*. Past episodes are also available for viewing. To submit your questions or comments or see her response to previous questions, just go to <http://www.agohq.org/ask-aunt-wilma>.

The AGO YouTube channel has playlists on certification, snippets from regional conventions, workshops by Bill Porter and Tom Trenney, lectures on organ pedagogy evolution by Ann Marie Rigler, and excerpts from the master series DVDs (including Marilyn Mason, Gerre Hancock, Fred Swann, Catherine Crozier, Marie-Claire Alain).

These are fun and instructional and give live insight into some of the premiere performers and teachers of the organ and church music world.

National Convention in Houston, June 19 – 23, 2016

Online registration is now available at the convention website <http://agohouston2016.com/>. Links to details of all aspects of the event are also available on the site.

Reminder: Our Chapter Scholarship Competitions

This year's *Minnie McNeil Carr* (for high school age students) and *Myrtle Jones Steele* (for students of college thru age 23 as of August 1, 2016) *Scholarship Competitions* will be held on Saturday, April 2nd, 2016, at The Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Vestavia. Applications for either competition should be received by March 15th, 2016. See <http://www.birminghamago.org/Scholarships.html> for guidelines and application forms. You may also contact Ms. Natalie Tally, chair of the Competition and Scholarship Awards Committee, at ntally@me.com.

Please spread the word to teachers and encourage qualified applicants to apply for these scholarships.

SCHEDULED CHAPTER EVENTS 2016

February

Choral Accompanying in the Anglican Tradition

Monday, February 8, 2016
Cathedral Church of the Advent
Dinner 6:00 PM; Business meeting 6:30 PM; Program
7:00 PM

Pedals, Pipes & Pizza

Saturday, February 20, 2016
University of Alabama
Contact Faythe Freese for info

March

Workshop with Huntsville Trinity Handbell Quartet

Monday, March 14, 2016
Trinity United Methodist Church, Homewood
Dinner 6:00 PM; Business meeting 6:30 PM; Program
7:00 PM

April

Student Recital

Monday, April 11, 2016
Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church
Dinner 6:00 PM; Business meeting 6:30 PM; Program
7:00 PM

Pedals, Pipes & Pizza

Saturday, April 16, 2016
Anniston First United Methodist Church
Time to be announced
Lunch will be provided
Info: <http://www.adventbirmingham.org/kennedy@cathedraladvent.com>

May

Literature Sharing

Monday, May 9, 2016
The Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Vestavia
Dinner at 6:00 PM at area restaurant; Business
meeting and program following dinner

FEBRUARY OPPORTUNITIES

See Online Calendar of Events for Complete Listing

February 1-7, 2016: IPC's Religious Arts Festival

This year we will experience the beauty of Art from various centuries – 16th century French and English music, 19th century American Landscape paintings, music and stories of the Civil War, 20th century art of IPC, 21st century dramatic depiction of 1st century Joseph – all condensed into a week of arts events offered as a gift to the city of Birmingham to the glory of God.

Monday, February 1: 7:00 PM , Great Hall

"A Century of Heroes and Saints as Depicted in the Art of IPC"
Joe Chesnut, speaker

Tuesday, February 2: 7:00 PM, Great Hall

One-man Drama: "Father to the Stepson: The Story of Joseph"
John Maxwell, actor

Thursday, February 4: 6:30 PM, Great Hall

Annual Religious Arts Festival Banquet
Program: "God's First Temples: Expressions of the Divine in 19th-Century American Landscape Painting"
Graham Boettcher, presenter

Friday, February 5: 7:00 PM, Great Hall

Performance: "Songs and Stories of the Civil War"
Bobby Horton, musician and storyteller

Sunday, February 7: 3:00 PM, Sanctuary

Concert: "The Field of the Cloth of Gold"
Orlando Consort and the IPC Choir

The brochure has a full description of each topic:

<http://ipc-usa.org/files/113/Music%20and%20Arts/Religious%20Arts%20Festival/RAF%20brochure2016.pdf>
Info: <http://www.ipc-usa.org/jmclelland@ipc-usa.org>

February 28, 2016: 3:00 PM

Choral Evensong Service of Lenten Reflection and Recital – Independent Presbyterian Church
IPC Camerata and organist Mark Hayes
Info: <http://www.ipc-usa.org/jmclelland@ipc-usa.org>