



# THE BIRMINGHAM CHIFF ...off the old blockflute

## The Birmingham Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

April 2017

### A Word from the Dean

Hello Everyone,

I hope you are doing well and are having some time to relax. It is always good to see you folks and to catch up with what is happening in your life. We enjoyed a wonderful recital and meal at Southside Baptist Church this last month and want to thank Sarah Heaslett for hosting the event and Nathan Smock for arranging the meal. Alex Binford, Tyler Canonico, Matthew Edwards and Christopher Henley played an exciting and varied program that showcased the wonderful Holtkamp Organ. It was ironic that our meeting was on Saint Tibb's Day and Southside Baptist is where Ted Tibbs, former university organist at Samford University, served for over 40 years and was instrumental in the design and installation of this wonderful instrument.

As we look forward, we have a great program lined up at East Lake United Methodist Church on Monday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Barry Norris will host us at the church with guest artist John Schwandt. They will give us a tour of the East Lake organ on which Barry did much of the design and work. This should be an intriguing and educational event. We hope you will be able to join us.

Our POEA is shaping up nicely. We have a world class faculty and many promising young students already registered. The steering committee is busy finalizing details. If you would like to know how you might help support this effort, please contact any of the steering committee members. They are Alex Benford, Sherelyn Breland, Mike Burt, Tyler Canonico, Matthew Edwards, Faythe Freese, Christopher Henley, Dan Lawhon, and Nathan Smock. If the audition recordings are any indication,

we will have the opportunity to hear some fine playing from the young artists who are the future of our profession.

Sincerely,  
Dan

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### APRIL CHAPTER ACTIVITY: EAST LAKE ORGAN TOUR

**On Monday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Barry Norris will be our host at East Lake United Methodist Church, 7753 1st Avenue South Birmingham, 35206.** We'll begin the evening at 6 PM with dinner prepared by Franklin Biggs (formerly of *Homewood Gourmet*) and Food Services Director Juanita Jones. The entree will be Pork Tenderloin with vegetables. We'll enjoy a seated meal, with members of the choir as hosts.

During the business meeting, **Bruce Ludwick will present the tentative 2017-18 Calendar of Events** for the chapter's review and discussion. This will include the program topics and presenters, the budget for each month's activities, and the locations of the meetings.

**Dr. John Schwandt**, Associate Professor of Organ and Director of the American Organ Institute (AOI) at the University of Oklahoma School of Music, will join Barry in demonstrating and providing a description of the East Lake organ as it has evolved over the years.

**If you'd like to carpool to East Lake, please email Dan [dean@birminghamago.org](mailto:dean@birminghamago.org) or Sherelyn [secretary@birminghamago.org](mailto:secretary@birminghamago.org).** We'll park at Baptist Church of the Covenant (2117 University

Blvd. Birmingham, 35233) and leave around 5:40 PM to go to East Lake. If you prefer to meet us at East Lake, park in the lot on the corner of 78th Street and 2nd Avenue South (the lot behind the church) where security will be provided. Enter the glass doors in front of the one-story office building in the alley. There will be signs posted to guide you.

We look forward to seeing you Monday evening!

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### REMINDER: SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION

There are two applicants for the **Minnie McNeil Carr Scholarship**. The competition will be held on *Saturday, April 22, 2017, at 2 PM* at The Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Vestavia Hills. Cole Vick, student of Faythe Freese, and James Kirk, student of Karen Krekelberg, will be competing for the \$500.00 award. The competition is open to the public.

For additional information email Ms. Natalie Tally at [ntally@me.com](mailto:ntally@me.com) or check the website <http://www.birminghamago.org/Scholarships.html>.

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### ELECTION FOR 2017-20 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CLASS

**Online voting begins Sunday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, for the 2017-20 class of the Executive Committee.** Sign in to the Members' Corner of the chapter website [www.birminghamago.org](http://www.birminghamago.org) to cast your ballot until **midnight Wednesday, May 10th.**

**If you prefer an absentee ballot or to vote in person, please contact the secretary, Sherelyn Breland, at [secretary@birminghamago.org](mailto:secretary@birminghamago.org) or 205-664-1373 (home) or 251-455-0967 (cell) as soon as possible to arrange this.** The election concludes on Saturday, May 13th prior to the Tuscaloosa organ crawl. **We encourage you to vote online if possible.**

Nominees are **Faythe Freese, Debby Holmes, Rachel Julian, Bill McElwee, Paul Mosteller, Russell Nelson, Brent Nolte, David Robertson, and Cathy Shelton.** From this group, three will be elected to serve a three-year term on the Executive Committee.

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### Congratulations, Christopher!!!

**Christopher Henley**, senior organ major at the University of Alabama and long-time student member of our chapter, has been selected as a member of *The Diapason* magazine's '20Under30' class for 2017. The 20 members were chosen from 110 nominations for this award which recognizes young talents in the fields of organ and harpsichord performance, organ and harpsichord building, carillon, and church music.

Christopher is in good company: Brian Anderson and Weston Jennings also earned this recognition. The May issue of *The Diapason* will include further information about the 2017 class members. Visit <http://www.thediapason.com/videos> to watch the video announcement.

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### POEA Steering Committee Update

Dear members of the Birmingham Chapter:

Once again, on behalf of the steering committee for the Pipe Organ Encounter Advanced (POEA), I am pleased to give you an update of our progress! Our committee has been processing registrations from students, arranging logistics, and securing funding.

My experience with Pipe Organ Encounters began in the summer of 2009 at Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia. During the course of the week, I encountered several young organists who have remained friends and colleagues, to this day. While POEs are wonderful outreach programs, POEAs are designed for the serious high-school student studying organ. For the student, this is a wonderful opportunity to interact with others who share the same passion for the organ, as well as a chance for them to connect with professors across the nation.

The first POEA I attended was held at Indiana University in the summer of 2012. There, I was fortunate to study with Dr. Christopher Young and Christian Lane. Not only was I able to work with

such knowledgeable faculty, I was able to practice on several instruments in the Bloomington area, attend masterclasses and workshops, and listen to several recitals of the highest caliber. It was during this week that my passion for the organ was validated; the future of the organ seemed to be alive and well. As a high school student preparing to enter college, I was faced with a daunting question, and sadly, one that many of us continue to face: Will the field of organ music continue to advance? Thanks in part to the efforts of the American Guild of Organists, I am confident that our field is in good hands. And you, Birmingham Chapter members, have an opportunity to serve as the host of this experience. During the week, the students who attend the POEA in Tuscaloosa will be rewarded with life-changing memories and experiences. Please consider offering your support in any way possible. Please speak with Dr. Faythe Freese if you have more questions regarding this event.

Thank you, all, for advancing the future of the American Guild of Organists!

Sincerely,  
Christopher Henley

*Note from the POEA registrar: 10 students have registered and we have word of several others who are completing the application process. We are confident we'll soon reach our enrollment limit.*

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### THIS AND THAT

#### **Donated music**

We have four boxes remaining of music donated by Linda Gill's family and several other chapter members. The purpose of the donation was to raise funds for chapter activities. The Executive Committee has given permission to advertise this music to the chapter to encourage its purchase. The music will be available until Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>. At that time any remainder will be donated to the POEA for the students.

See the Current Topics section of <http://www.birminghamago.org/index.html> to view or print an inventory list of the available music. The list will be updated as purchases are made. Contact Shereilyn Breland at [secretary@birminghamago.org](mailto:secretary@birminghamago.org)

to acquire literature you want. This is a wonderful way to expand your personal library at low cost and help meet the financial needs of the chapter to produce programs and activities of benefit to our members.

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### LOOKING AHEAD: MAY CHAPTER EVENT WEST ALABAMA ORGAN CRAWL

Our May program is set for **Saturday, May 13th** and is sure to be an exciting adventure for all who attend. We will be embarking on an organ crawl to see several instruments of interest to our west. A more finalized agenda will be sent out upon confirmation of pending details. We will also set up a survey in the coming weeks to poll interest and verify anticipated needs for travel accommodations.

The general plan is to leave Birmingham around 8 AM and return by 6 PM. If you have been with the chapter for very long, you may have joined in past organ crawls we have taken to Atlanta, Auburn/Opelika, and Nashville, and recall how fun and interesting those trips were. We hope you will consider participating in this delightful end to our program year!

#### Tentative List of Instruments

##### *Tuscaloosa*

First United Methodist - Dyer, 45 ranks, 2015  
First Presbyterian - Letourneau, 75 ranks, 2016

##### *Eutaw*

St. Stephen's Episcopal - Karl Wilhelm, 21 ranks, 1994

##### *Greensboro*

First Presbyterian - Pilcher, 10 ranks, 1904  
St. Paul's Episcopal - Pilcher, 8 ranks, 1900  
First United Methodist - Holtkamp, 15 ranks, 1990

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### 2017 Southeast Regional Convention

Registration continues for our region's convention June 11 -14 in Jacksonville and St. Augustine, FL. Visit <http://www.agojax2017.com/> to check the schedule of events , presenters, venues, and to make your hotel reservation.