

PipeNotes

American Guild of Organists – Milwaukee Chapter

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211

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Volume 65 – March 2019



Luther Memorial Chapel

2019 AGO Milwaukee Chapter
Organ Crawl
March 9, 2019

Organs in and around
Shorewood and Whitefish Bay

Schedule:

9:30 am - Luther Memorial Chapel
3833 N. Maryland Ave
Shorewood, WI

10:30 am - Plymouth UCC
2717 E. Hampshire St
Milwaukee, WI

Lunch on your own

1:00 pm - United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay
819 E. Silver Spring Dr
Whitefish Bay, WI

2:00 pm - Christ Church Episcopal
5655 N. Lake Dr
Whitefish Bay, WI



Plymouth UCC



Christ Church Episcopal



3:00 pm - Our Savior Lutheran
6021 N. Santa Monica Blvd
Whitefish Bay, WI

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Upcoming 2018 – 2019 Programs For The AGO Milwaukee Chapter

March 9, 2019 • 9:30 am

Organ Crawl

Come join us in visiting five organs around the Shorewood and Whitefish Bay area, featuring instruments by the Berghaus Organ Company, the Holtkamp Organ Company, and the Aeolian-Skinner Organ Company. Churches include: Luther Memorial Chapel, Plymouth Congregational, United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay, Christ Church Episcopal and Our Savior Lutheran Church of Whitefish Bay

May 5, 2019

100th Anniversary of the Milwaukee Chapter

Annual Meeting

Member's Recital

PipeNotes is Published Monthly submit information to the editor via email at,
pneditor@agomilwaukee.org.

The Deadline is the 20th of the preceding month

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JOHANNUS





The North Central Convention is running!



- The Convention has heightened my awareness of collegiality — relationships among our members. Those who are working on various aspects of the convention, though tired, feel a sense of purpose. One aspect of this is a set of emails that will appear periodically about events in the history of our Chapter. You may see the first one before this newsletter hits your mailbox. Our Convention logo was designed specifically to emphasize our 100th anniversary and our acronym — AGO.

MILWAUKEE 100 YEARS AGO

Sr. Mary Jane Wagner and Liz Walloch hope that these vignette teasers from the first 100 years will bring back delightful memories and flesh out events that we are too young to have experienced. We don't intend to flood your in-box so please don't hit delete without scanning the contents.

- Another facet of relationships — those who serve on committees see each other regularly. I recently realized that a new dual AGO member took a new position in my village (Greendale) and there are 3 AGO members at neighboring congregations. We plan to lunch together at the local ice cream shoppe next week. It's enjoyable and useful to know one's neighbors: for mutual support, to borrow an accompaniment, kibbutz about well-loved choral pieces (and share the octavos), ask for advice or share technical resources. The more we work together the stronger we become as music ministers and professionals in our field.
- Thank you to Mary Radspinner and Gloria Konkel for assisting with the advertising calls for the Convention Program Book. I trust that you either spoke with them or received a voice-mail reminding you of this opportunity to support the Chapter by taking out an ad. I am delighted with those who have sent advertising-copy and encourage you to hop on the band-wagon/organ bench quickly if you have forgotten the deadline. Call me 414-403-1046 to reserve ad-space for your church or studio.
- Executive Board Members — I don't plan to call a board meeting until the 2019-2020 programs are solidified. Audrey Rhinehart and the Program Committee are in process. We'll gather some time between Easter and the Annual Meeting on May 5th to approve the up-coming season. I'll send out a survey as in the past to determine when most of us are available. A number of you are involved in Convention details which involves precious time and demands that we focus on that and be productive.
- The March 9th Organ Crawl is accepting registrations. David Bohn wants a head-count in order to make an adequate number of copies of the organ specs. If you're not sure of your schedule yet you are still welcome. This is another opportunity to re-connect or meet people who share your interests, who walk the walk and talk the talk. Even if you can make only part of the day, please come.
Link to registration for the crawl: [Milwaukee AGO Organ Crawl Shorewood & Whitefish Bay](#)
- On another topic for your reflection...
I just read another Dean's interview with a reporter. Thomas Dressler said: "In traditional art, computerlike accuracy is not a goal. My former teacher, James Boeringer, used to say that true art must include human imperfection. I agree with this and explained to the interviewer that my interpretations of music include intentional imperfections to enhance its effect." Interesting that interpretation might be called imperfection. I listen to many recordings in studying a composition. I'm sometimes repelled and other times engaged by an interpretation. I have to take the experience apart and ask "Why?". What makes them palatable imperfections/interpretations or not acceptable to me? I'm going to chew on this for a long while and hope that it presents food for you too.

Sincere wishes that the weather will be kinder in the coming month.
Cancelled rehearsals have presented challenges that we don't need as we approach Lent and Easter.
Keep your fingers crossed (but not while you're playing).

Sheri

March 2019

**9 (Sat) 9:30 Chapter Organ Crawl
Shorewood and Whitefish Bay
See the front page or
Website for the times, churches,
And instruments**

13 (Wed) 12:15 Valerie Floeter, Piano
Patricia Backhaus, Trumpet
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

17 (Sun) 4:00 Prata Duo
Mike Keegan, Horn
Steve Wolff, Piano/Organ
St. Casimir Church
2600 N. Bremen St
Milwaukee, WI

20 (Wed) 12:15 Paul Kosower, Cello
Michael Batcho, Organ/Piano
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

23 (Sat) 8:30 Gospel Music Workshop
Ms. Lynné Gray, Guest Artist and Director
St. Francis of Assisi Church
1927 N. Vel R. Phillips Ave
Milwaukee, WI

27 (Wed) 12:15 Louis Cucunato, Guitar
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

April 2019

3 (Wed) 12:15 Dr. Solon Pierce, Piano
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

7 (Wed) 3:30 Milwaukee Handbell
Ensemble
St. John's Lutheran Church
809 S. Sixth Ave
West Bend, WI

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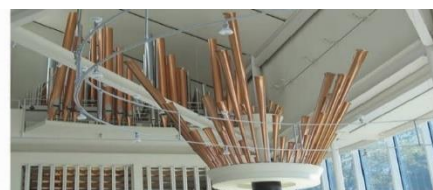
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From the Archives

Liz Walloch, Archivist/Historian

Organ Contests to Student Organist Contests

This month's topic comes from materials found in the archives from the year 1947. It is possible that the contests began earlier, but from what I have found they began sometime in the 1940's. By holding these annual contests, the Wisconsin and Milwaukee Chapter was unaware of their contribution to the history of the chapter by mentoring young musicians to serve the needs of churches in Wisconsin.

From the archives of the Wisconsin and Milwaukee Chapter, I present highlights from the "Organ Contests" and "Student Organist Contests."

Below is the advertisement from 1947 with the invitation for individuals to apply.

ORGAN CONTEST
by the
AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS
Wisconsin Chapter

A Scholarship of TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS (\$25.00) is being presented to the winner of the audition to be held at Kenwood Methodist Church, 2319 East Kenwood Blvd. on January 17, 1948, at 8:00 pm.

Each contestant should be prepared to play

- (1) A pre-Bach number, such as Couperin or similar early composer;
- (2) A Choral-Prelude of Bach, such as "O Man, Bewail Thy Grievous Sin";
- (3) A modern number by Contemporary composers, such as Leo Sowerby, Dupre', Hindemith.

Organ students up to the age of 25 are eligible

Winners to present a recital February 8, 1948.

Register your selections with either of the following Guild members by January 10th -
Mrs. Alfred Cotton, or Miss Mathilde Schoessow.

For this contest the story ends here, as I did not find information who was awarded the \$25.00. In the years that followed, there was not much documented until 1959/1960.

The Chairman of Church Committee, Milwaukee Chapter, and Robert Legler sent out a letter to church Pastors. Here is a section of the letter dated October 17, 1960 expanding on what is now named the "Student Organist Contest."

"Our Student Organist Contest is intended to encourage young musicians to become church organists and to help find student substitute organists for churches. Our first contest (with the new name), held last year, 1959, was highly successful and we are increasing the amount of the scholarships this year. Please publicize the contest among your young musicians of your church. This project is very important for the future needs of Milwaukee's churches."

The winners of the 1961 "Student Organist Contest" played a program at Mount Carmel Lutheran Church on March 12, 1961—
4 pm.

- 1st Place winner \$50.00 Judith Toennes, Student of James Engel
2nd Place winner \$30.00 Mary Jane Wagner, Student of Sister Theophane
3rd Place winner \$20.00 William Stump, Student of Phyllis Stringham

In reviewing the archive materials, there is evidence of a wealth of dedication by the guild to encourage, mentor and promote organ music in worship, recital programs and student organist contests. I paused to recall my music teachers who supported, assisted and challenged me to develop my gift of music. Each of us has much to be grateful for our musical formation by dedicated teachers.

To all guild members who have participated in these "Student Organist Contests," I would like to hear from you and tap into your experience for a future article. Contact me at walloch1952@att.net.

So for now the story on "Student Organist Contests" pauses. Watch for the Media Blitz in April for more interesting finds from the archives.



North Central
AGOYO

Working with Fellow Musicians

David Porth, Chairman

Purpose

Working with fellow musicians is one of the biggest blessings and challenges for a parish's Music Director. This purpose of this article is to reflect on the blessings and provide tactful solutions to challenges when they arise.

Blessings

I recall arriving to my current parish a little less than five years ago to discover that the former director had created a database of instrumentalists within our parish. What a useful resource this has been!

Servant attitude – The servant attitude is very apparent in our congregation and this quality is something that needs to be instilled in *all* musicians in order to carry out an effective music ministry. An easy way to create this attitude is by showing passion towards musical excellence and let that mindset penetrate every rehearsal and service that you attend. Lead by example!

Treasure your people – Relationships and the opportunities to work with the people of your parish are far more important than any grandiose building or vibrant music ministry. As the Music Director, take time to show appreciation for the time and talents that fellow musicians invest into making your parish's music ministry a successful one that is both edifying and uplifting to your members. I have used a simple thank-you card along with a gift card to their favorite store/restaurant as a way to show my thanks.

Fellowship outside the church walls – I have found that providing fellowship opportunities outside of the church walls has led to sincere, close-knit relationships between fellow musicians. Our local German bier hall has been the destination for many of these fellowship events. Of course, this takes extra work and effort on the part of the Music Director, but a simple gathering at a member's house or

local restaurant/pub can add tremendous benefits to the working relationship.

Challenges

Comfortable vs. nervous – One challenge that a Music Director must realize is that the musicians within your parish are more than likely not professionals who play on a consistent basis. With that in mind, it is *crucial* that proper planning, rehearsing, and execution take place when including fellow musicians in worship services. If a musician is not comfortable by the time the worship service takes place, there's a good chance that this person may not volunteer their time and talents in the future.

"Oh, I can't make it to rehearsal tonight!" – How many times have you heard this statement? What is your reaction? I have found myself handling this situation in two ways: 1) getting frustrated and abandoning the original music plans, or 2) understanding that all people lead busy lives and sometimes it takes a few scheduling attempts to make it work for everyone. While reaction 1 would be a typical response, I encourage you to exercise patience and understanding – even when it may be difficult to do so! In my experience, most musicians are agreeable to postponing musical plans (if possible) to a future date when proper rehearsal has taken place.

It's "good enough" – This mentality is all too common in today's fast-paced, rushed society. One of your objectives as the Music Director is to curb this mentality and work towards an attitude of musical excellence. Your fellow musicians will settle for the "good enough" mentality if they see you as the Music Director doing the same. Don't settle for mediocrity! After all, we have been given the important task to lead God's people in song. This task should not be taken lightly and should be treated with the utmost respect.

Soli deo Gloria

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Complete information is available online at **Agohq.org/2019-gala**.

The celebration begins at 7:30 p.m. with a free recital by John Walker at Shadyside Presbyterian Church, 5121 Westminister Place, where Dr. Walker previously served as minister of music (1992–2004). His program will include Guilmant's stirring *March on Handel's "Lift Up Your Heads,"* Virgil Fox's transcription of Bach's *Come Sweet Death*, John Knowles Paine's virtuosic *Concert Variations on Old Hundredth*, and John Weaver's *Sine Nomine*, along with other selections.

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