



THE CIPHER

The Monthly Newsletter of the Grand Rapids Chapter
American Guild of Organists

December 2011

The Executive Committee of
Grand Rapids AGO
2011-2012

Officers

Larry Biser, *Dean*
(lgbiser@att.net)

Chris Dekker, *Sub-dean*
(christopher.dekker@yahoo.com)

Irene Beethe, *Secretary*
(irene.beethe@gmail.com)

Errol Shewman, *Treasurer*
(EShewman@hotmail.com)

Council Members at Large

Marilyn Ossentjuk, 2012
(mossentjuk@fountainstreet.org)

John Tiemstra, 2012
(tmst@calvin.edu)

Ardis Keizer, 2013
(keizerh@msn.com)

Cornelius Huizenga, 2013
(cjhdds@hotmail.com)

Norma deWaal Malefyt, 2014
(norma.malefyt@calvin.edu)

Bruce Klanderma, 2014
(bklanderma@aol.com)

Members Ex-Officio

Joel Gary, *Education Coordinator*
(joel.gary@comcast.net)

Herman Keizer, *Chaplain*
(keizerh@msn.com)

Robert Houskamp, *Registrar*
(bobjoan6387@sbcglobal.net)

Howard Slenk, *Membership Coordinator*
(hslenk@ameritech.net)

Dennis Buteyn, *Webmaster, Cipher Editor*
(dibuteyn@sbcglobal.net)

Verlyn Schultz *Photographer*
(vjsgm@aol.com)

From the Dean

As we bring the old church year to a close and begin a new one, it is a good time to look back at what worked and what might not have been so effective. The same is true for your GRAGO Council. We spent part of our last meeting going over the survey we asked you to fill out. For the most part it was very favorable to our programming which was good for us. One aspect where people wanted to see more variety was in the choice of venues. Our Sub Dean, Chris Dekker went through the last five years and listed churches used and it is our intent to see that list of venues grow. His input was great and we thank him for all his work.

The response to the Anne VanderHeide Young Artist's Recital was overwhelmingly positive and even euphoric, I'd say. It was a wonderful event and the only negative I could discover was that some people could not attend because of rehearsals at their churches. Maybe the next one (we hope) will be scheduled for an evening recital. We had to take Nathan Laube when we could get him as his time in the States was very brief. He arrived in Grand Rapids Saturday afternoon and flew back to Europe on Monday morning. So our options were limited.

I also want to thank our presenters at the Aquinas College meeting. People really enjoyed both workshops. Thanks to Joel Gary for his enlightening discussion into the mysteries of MIDI and to Nick Palmer for the wonderfully informative introduction to Sibelius. It was terrific that they were willing to repeat their sessions so we could take them both in. Our thanks also go to Aquinas College and Barbara Witham McCargar for their support of this program and to Westfield Organs for installing the Allen organ in the Kretschmer Recital Hall for the MIDI sessions. It was a good evening and I was happy to have you at the Aquinas Campus for the evening.

The entire Council and I want to wish you a Christmas full of great music. We hope your season will be one of joy and not too much stress! We'll see you again in January at the harpsichord event at St. Mark's.

Merry Christmas!

Larry Biser



Events of Interest

Friday, Dec. 2 and Saturday, Dec. 3, 8 pm. Calvin College Oratorio Society *Messiah*, G.F. Handel. Calvin College Covenant Fine Arts Center. Tickets \$22-30 at box office. Call 526-6282 for more information.

Saturday, Dec. 3, 8 pm. Grand Rapids Symphony with Grand Rapids Symphonic chorus and Youth Chorus. **Cathedral of St. Andrew**, 301 Sheldon Blvd., Grand Rapids. Music of Handel, Bach, Rutter and others with a dramatic candlelight processional and recessional. [Tickets](#) \$22 plus service charge.

Sunday, Dec. 4, 3 and 6 pm. LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church, 107 LaGrave Ave. S.E. Grand Rapids. The annual Calvin College services of Lessons and Carols will be presented by the Calvin Campus Choir directed by Dr. Joel Navarro and the Calvin Women's Chorale directed by Dr. Pearl Shankuan. The theme for these services is "Evangelists and Canticles," with all of the lesson readings being taken from the Gospels. Dr. John Witvliet is the presiding minister at the 3:00 p.m. service; Dr. Stan Mast serves as presiding minister at the 6:00 p.m. service.

Sunday, Dec. 4, 3 pm. Basilica of St. Adalbert, 701 Fourth St. N.W. **Advent Lessons and Carols.** St. Adalbert Choir, Peter Kurdziel. Free.

Sunday, Dec. 4, 4 pm. Park Congregational Church, 10 East Park Place, Grand Rapids. **Christmas Concert by Park Chamber Choir**, James Metzler, director. Free admission.

Sunday, December 4, 5 p.m. Aquinas College Chorus, Chamber Choir and Valenti Handbell Ensemble are joined by Readers from all walks of campus life in this annual, music filled prayer. A Service of Lessons and Carols: Telling the Ancient Story of the Savior's Birth through Scripture and Song. **St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 1449 Wilcox Park Drive**

Sunday, Dec. 4, 6 pm, Second Congregational Church, U.C.C., 525 Cheshire Dr. N.E. Grand Rapids. **Carols by Candlelight.** This 63rd annual family friendly program will feature carol singing and musical selections by many instrumental and vocal ensembles. Freewill offering for a charitable cause. Reception following.

Monday, Dec. 5, 8 pm. Grand Valley State University Arts Chorale with faculty and students. *Gloria* by Antonio Vivaldi. **Fountain Street Church**, 24 Fountain St. N.E., Grand Rapids. Free admission.

Saturday, Dec. 10, 3:30 and 7:30 pm. Hope College Dimnent Chapel, 277 College Ave. Holland. **Holiday Celebration Concert with Holland Chorale.** [Tickets](#) \$5-18 or call 616-395-7890.

Sunday, Dec. 11, 6:30 pm. First United Methodist Church, 227 E. Fulton, Grand Rapids. *From Darknes to Light: Readings and Music for the Season.* Free.

Sunday, Dec. 11, 7:30 pm. Basilica of St. Adalbert, 701 Fourth St. N.W. **Grand Rapids Symphony Youth Choruses Concert.** [Tickets](#) \$5-20.

Tuesday, Dec. 13, 7:30 pm. Mayflower Congregational Church, 2345 Robinson Rd. S.E., Grand Rapids. **Embellish Handbell Ensemble** *'Tis the Season to Embellish.* [Tickets](#) \$5-12 or call 616-915-0134

Saturday, Dec. 17, 6 pm. First United Methodist Church, 227 E. Fulton. *Jazz Lessons and Carols with Macnaughton Blvd.* Free

Sunday, Dec. 18, 7 pm. Aquinas College Kretschmer Recital Hall, 1607 Robinson Rd. S.E., Grand Rapids. *Messiah Sing-along* with Chamber Choir of Grand Rapids accompanied by members of the Calvin Community Symphony Orchestra. Free—bring your own score.

Music at Mid-day Park Congregational Church. 10 East Park Place. Concerts on Tuesdays from 12:15-12:45 p.m. Cost: **FREE.** Lunch served from 11:15 am – 1:30 p.m. for \$5.00. Homemade Soup, Salad Bar, Bread, Beverage and Cookie.

Dec. 6 – Grand Rapids Christian High School Chamber Chorale
 Dec. 13 – East Grand Rapids High School Madrigal Choir
 Dec. 20 – Phyllis Miner & Carol McNally, piano four-hands
 Dec. 27 – NO CONCERT
 Jan. 3 – Jay Round, hammered dulcimer
 Jan. 10 – Larry Biser, organ

Grand Rapids Chapter AGO Treasurer's Report October 17 - November 21, 2011

	<i>Revenues</i>	<i>Expenses</i>	<i>Balance</i>
Beginning Checkbook Balance			\$4,174.96
Revenues			
October Dinner	\$570.00		
VanderHeide Fund (Pipelines, \$1400; Young Artist Recital, \$2600)	\$4,000.00		
Total Revenues	\$4,570.00		
Expenses			
October Dinner Catering		\$(600.00)	
October Dinner Punch Bowl		\$(16.00)	
October Program (Balance of fee)		\$(350.00)	
Pipelines - Video		\$(1,113.00)	
Young Artist Recital - Fee		\$(2,600.00)	
Young Artist Recital - Food and Lodging		\$(431.00)	
Young Artist Recital - Blue Lake Radio		\$(195.00)	
Total Expenses		\$(5,305.00)	
Ending Checkbook Balance (11/21/11)			\$3,439.96
Savings Account Balance (10/31/11)			\$3,224.04
Endowment Fund Balance (11/18/11)			\$37,620.47

Organ of the Month

If you would like your instrument to be featured in an upcoming issue of *The Cipher*, please contact Dennis Buteyn at dlbuteyn@sbcglobal.net with a history of the organ and specifications. We would also like to have representative recordings that we can post on our website and link to in the article. An example of this is from the article in the October *Cipher* about the organ at Calvin Christian Reformed Church: <http://grago.org/chapter/Cipher/Cipher1011.pdf>
Contact Dennis for more information.

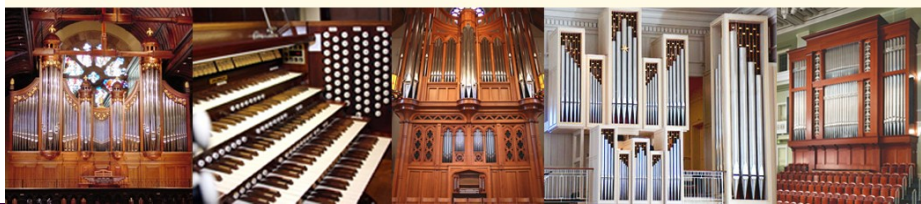


THE NASHVILLE CHAPTER IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE...

WWW.AGO2012.ORG IS NOW LIVE!

Everything is there: Daily Schedules
Artists & Repertoire
Workshops
Venues with Organ Specs
Banquet and Entertainment
and most importantly...
Online Registration

Visit today. Register today.



Building a PASSION for PIPE ORGANS through PIPELINES

By Larry Biser



In 1995, Grand Rapids AGO member, Laura Bartleson, a teacher at Seymour Christian School, submitted a request for a grant from the Arts Council of Grand Rapids for a program she designed for her school. The program was called PIPELINES. That year, the funds granted were used to study pipe organs school wide, using science, math, history, etc. It was an exciting program. At one point the entire student body, about 300 students in kindergarten through fifth grade, was bussed around town on a big "organ crawl."

Another member of the Grand Rapids Guild, Shirley Boomsma, heard about the program and contacted Ms. Bartleson with some ideas she had for possible expansion of the program. Bartleson shared with Boomsma the materials which were used in the Seymour Christian School program and the lesson plans the teachers had used. Ms. Boomsma reimagined the program as a project for the Grand Rapids AGO, using the same title and many of Laura's ideas, and made it into the demonstration concert for fourth graders we continue to this day. In recent years, Joel Gary has been charged with making the arrangements for this program, contacting area schools, arranging for the video presentation, and for AGO members to perform for the event, which includes someone to accompany the silent film clip. This year, Joel Gary, who played for the silent movie was also the announcer for the day when the seven hundred students filled the church.



Funding for the program originally came from the chapter treasury and contributions from chapter members. Gifts to help fund the program have also been received from local arts program supporters Charles and Stella Royce and Edith Blodgett, plus a one-time grant from the Arts Council of Greater Grand Rapids. More recently, aid has come from the Anne Heyboer Vander Heide Fund of the Grand

Rapids Community Foundation. Anne Vander Heide was an organist who gave sixty-two years of service to Burton Heights Christian Reformed Church before stepping down at the age of eighty-one. She was one of the early members of our AGO chapter. Recently, Anne's son, Stuart, established the fund to honor his mother's lifelong love for music and people. Income from the fund will provide ongoing support to this program of our AGO Chapter and to the St. Cecilia Music Society, two organizations that greatly enriched Anne Vander Heide's life, and continue to enhance the lives of others. Each October or November, fourth-graders from a different quadrant of our greater Grand Rapids area are invited to this entertaining and informative presentation. The program features many fine area organists performing on the five-manual, 80-rank, organ at Central Reformed Church. Central Reformed Church's staff and congregation have been instrumental in making this program work by allowing the use of the space and providing rehearsal time for the organists.



Jonathan Tuuk at console; Larry Biser, Narrator

Daniel Burton's *Rex: The King of Instruments*, a composition with narration, has always been a big hit with the kids.

Organ builder, James Lauck, from the Kalamazoo area, demonstrates the inner workings of the organ -- the wind supply, bellows, reservoir, wind chest with pipes on it, and the keyboard-- using a model he built.





A 3-rank "human organ," three rows of four children, each person in the row given a pipe of a specific pitch, and each row having pipes of a certain rank, are each individually coached in producing a good sound on their pipe, and then finally, with a little direction from Mr. Lauck, they play *Mary Had a Little Lamb* for the breathlessly waiting audience. It always brings down the house!

Another feature of the event is a showing of a silent film with organ accompaniment. This Laurel and Hardy film clip is another highlight of the presentation, On several occasions we have also included organ duets.



Jimmy Hecksel, student of Paula Sullivam

This year we also included one of our Student AGO members, David Heinze, playing Bach's Toccata in D Minor.



Live video cameras are focused on the performers, and the demonstrations, and the images are displayed on a large rear-projection screen in the front of the church ensuring everyone has a good view.



We are currently researching the possibility of compiling a DVD of the presentation to give to teachers so they may better prepare their classes for the experience. We also hope to supply additional materials to the teachers for use in preparing for the organ outing. We are often told by students that this is the first time they have encountered a real pipe organ.

PIPELINES has earned a reputation in area schools and is in high demand by music teachers, some of whom have made the organ a regular part of their curriculum as a result of attending our program. We have had the pleasure of watching some of those piano student who were invited to play their pieces on the organ develop into fine organists in their own right. Perhaps our organ encounter was the seed which led to this flowering. The Grand Rapids AGO Chapter is proud of the unique and successful educational program we offer to our local schools.



All photos by Jill Hecksel