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Grand Rapids AGO
2013-2014

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THE CIPHER

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

January 2014

From the Dean

“Behind the Scenes”

The month of January’s to-do list is always huge, isn’t it? We need to pay off the credit card and we need to lose weight. We need to re-prioritize what’s important to us and set a new, fresh set of goals. The list goes on and on. Certainly not all of these apply to every one of us, but each year I make a concerted effort to turn the focus of my life outward. That is – after the craziness of Christmas parties, Advent and New Years worship services, and thousands of other things, I try to focus less on myself and more on others. January is a great time to remind ourselves that the world really doesn’t revolve around us, and that there are many other people making just as great of an impact on the world as we are.

With this thought, I call your attention to the many dedicated individuals who serve in various capacities on behalf of the Grand Rapids Chapter AGO. Many of them do their work in an incredible way with little or no attention or recognition. I certainly don’t intend to mention every person who contributes, for this list would be the length of a novel. However, a few individuals are particularly deserving of our gratitude.....

Dennis Buteyn: How many of us excel in music, graphic design, and selling pianos? I can think of only one. For almost as long as I have been a member of the AGO, Dennis has been selflessly giving his time to publish the CIPHER, our chapter’s newsletter. Not only does he scour the community for upcoming events, news, and other happenings, but he also has an incredible knack for making the information attractive and compelling. A few short sentences cannot possibly thank Dennis enough for the hundreds (if not thousands) of hours he has given to our chapter, but the vitality and health our chapter is in large part due to his efforts.

Lois Ripma: Considering the fact that I have a difficult time making lemonade from a box (with directions) or mixing a cocktail, Lois Ripma’s delicious punch kicks off our monthly meetings with energy and class. No matter the venue (or whether the par-



ticular destination has any of the resources needed to pull off such a feat), Lois delivers every time.

Larry Biser: All of us have talents in specific areas, but not many of us can do many different things excellently. During the past few years, Larry has served in many capacities, including two years as Dean, two years as Registrar, and in his current position as a board member. He is administratively strong, detail-oriented, creative, and musical – all perfect traits for someone serving in a leadership role in the AGO. This chapter would be a much different place if it wasn't for the efforts of Mr. Biser.

Errol Shewman: A necessity in putting together an excellent year of programming in any AGO chapter is a competent treasurer. Errol has fulfilled this position for many years and counting, and has done great job keeping the books straight in addition to guiding each changing Board through practices of good stewardship.

If you're like me, you may not have taken the time to step back from the busyness of life to reflect on the efforts of our colleagues. Now is your chance! It takes a team to build a dream, and it's very clear to me that God has placed these individuals in this place at this time for the betterment of the Guild.

Yours,

Chris



Events

Friday, January 10 and Saturday, January 11, 8:00 p.m. DeVos Performance Hall Grand Rapids Symphony . An episodic first half of show-stopping poems and rhapsodies, featuring Baritone Rod Gilfry, gives way to Brahms' grand first symphony; this work took 21 years to complete and is considered an homage to Beethoven, often called "Beethoven's 10th." Justin Brown, guest conductor. [Tickets](#) start at \$18.

Friday, January 31 and Saturday, February 1, 8:00 p.m. DeVos Performance Hall Grand Rapids Symphony. Rachmaninoff *Piano concerto No. 3*; Mussorgsky: *Prelude to Khovanshchina*; Tchaikovsky: *Capriccio Italien*; Borodin *Polevetsian Dances*. David Lockington, conductor; Andrew Von Oeyen, Piano [Tickets](#) start at \$18

Music At Mid-Day from Park Church

Concerts begin at 12:15pm. They last roughly 30 minutes. There is no cost for the concerts.

Lunch is available both before and after the concert. 11:15 am – 1:15 pm for \$5.00

Each week homemade soup, salad bar, bread, beverage, and fresh cookies are served. We hope you will join us!

Jan. 7 Stephanie Wiltse, mezzo-soprano, Nancy Summers, oboe, Philip Pletcher, piano

Jan. 14 David Wells & Friends, trombonist and vocalist

Jan. 21 Patrick Coyle and Phyllis Miner: Four Hands, Four Instruments!

Jan. 28 Diane Penning, soprano, Robert Byrens, piano

A Concert of Choral Music by Grand Rapids Composers

Monday, January 20, 2014, 8 p.m.

Calvin College Chapel

The Grand Rapids Chapter of the American Guild of Organists will present an evening of choral music by five Grand Rapids composers. This event is co-sponsored by the [music department](#) of Calvin College and the [Calvin Alumni Association](#).

About the composers



Raymond Haan is a composer of music for organ, choir, handbells, and other instruments, whose music is performed throughout the United States and in other countries. From 1960 to 2013 he served as organist and Director of Music at Cutlerville East Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He was an organ student of Joseph Sullivan, Director of Music at St. Andrew's Cathedral for many years. After his studies at Calvin, Mr. Haan attended the University of Michigan. He is a member of the American Society of Composers and Performers. Howard Slenk will conduct the music of Raymond Haan, and Norma de Waal Malefyt will play his "Organ Hymn" on the chapel organ. Two of Raymond's Christmas anthems, with accompaniment for handbell choir and organ, will open the concert.



Roy Hopp is Director of Music at Woodlawn Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan and Adjunct Professor of Choral Music at Calvin Theological Seminary, where he directs the Calvin Theological Seminary Choir. He graduated from Calvin with a Bachelor's degree in Music Education and from Michigan State University with a Master's degree in Choral Conducting. He did further studies in church music and composition with Richard Hillert at Concordia University in River Forest, Illinois. Over one hundred of Mr. Hopp's compositions have been published. His hymn tunes can be found in over 40 hymnals and collections in the United States, Canada, England, Wales, and Scotland and his choral compositions in the catalogues of Augsburg Fortress, earthsongs, GIA, Kjos, Morning-Star, and Selah. A listing of those anthems may be found at roy-hopp.com. Mr. Hopp will conduct the two anthems he has chosen for the concert.



Nicholas Palmer serves as the Director of Music for the Cathedral of Saint Andrew in Grand Rapids, Michigan and as organist for the diocese. The cathedral parish, now served by the Paulist Fathers, is going through its first year as a community made of long-standing parishioners, including a large Hispanic community, and worshiping members of the Paulist community. Nick has written a number of psalm settings, choral meditations (anthems) and other liturgical pieces, but he also writes concert music for orchestra, chorus, and chamber ensembles. Additionally, he records underscore for short film, documentaries, commercials, and even video games.



Jonathan Tuuk is currently Director of Music and Organist at Mayflower Congregational Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He has been an organ instructor at Calvin and is a published composer of choral music. He has concertized in Europe and the United States, including appearances at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., the University of Michigan Organ Conference in Ann Arbor, the Grand Rapids Symphony, the AGO Region 5 Conventions in 1985 and 2005 and the AGO National Convention in 2006. His principal teachers were Dr. John E. Hamersma of Calvin and Dr. Marilyn Mason of the University of Michigan. Larry Biser will conduct two of Mr. Tuuk's anthems he has selected for the concert as he accompanies at the organ.



Larry Visser is Minister of Music and Organist at LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He holds degrees from Calvin, where he studied with Dr. John Hamersma, and from the University of Michigan, where he earned the DMA in organ performance under Dr. James Kibbie. In 1994, Mr. Visser won a finalist medal at the prestigious organ competition, the "Grand Prix de Chartres" in Paris and Chartres, France. He composes both organ and choral music, receives commissions from various churches and individuals, and is published by Wayne Leupold Editions, GIA Publications, and MorningStar Music Publishers. He is a frequent recitalist in Grand Rapids and has produced three recordings of liturgical music for his church, as well as recordings of his organ playing.

Helen Hofmeister Hawley will conduct one of his hymn concertati and an anthem he has selected for the concert as he accompanies at the organ and piano.

Details for January Meeting

The thirty-two-voiced GRAGO choir that is singing at the concert will be our and the college's guests for dinner on January 20. Because of the tight schedule, there will be no punchbowl, and dinner will begin at **6:45 p.m.** instead of the usual time. Dinner will be served in the undercroft of the Calvin Chapel. Please arrive early because we are anticipating a large turnout.

If you have not been called by a member of the Executive Council for your dinner reservation by Wednesday, January 16, you may reserve by emailing agodinner@grago.org or by calling our Errol Shewman at 456-9232. Cost of dinner is still \$15.

