

A Letter From the Dean

Dear AGO Members and Friends,

You may have noticed that the newsletter didn't appear in November or December. My apologies, in case you were missing it. It was a busy time of the year!

I'm inspired this morning (Saturday Dec 21) to right the wrongs of the past and get an early start on January's newsletter, mostly because of our AGO caroling gathering last night. Unfortunately, a number of you who wanted to attend had colds or other sickness, but we had enough of us for a respectable carol sing. Norene had thoughtfully brought along the words for two songs Dave requested, as his favorites (including all four verses of O Holy Night, not necessarily everyone's favorite who is singing!) Both outside Dave's door, and in Mike's dining room at the Inn at Freedom Village, we sang through some carols, and even my kids joined in pretty well. Dave clapped after each song, said thank you, and was grateful that we were singing his favorites. Mike sang along with all the words, on every verse, even adding harmony and the bass line of Joy to the World (remarkable, given the state of his language use since the stroke). Every one of us left feeling glad we'd made the time to do this. As with so many things, it's easy to feel overwhelmed with the rest of life, and wonder why we're adding one more thing at a busy time – but some things really do make a big difference for others, and don't ask that much from us.

Afterwards, in the Inn, we chatted with one of the activities directors, who told us that though Mike's piano is right outside his room, and they have other pianos throughout the building, they cannot get volunteers to come in and make music for the residents there. The four of us gathering around her all expressed willingness to come in and play hymns and other music for the residents, and I've wondered if it would be possible to coordinate a list of folks who are willing, make up a schedule, and have someone visit once a month, or every other week to play music. Mid-morning is a good time for the residents, but I had the sense that they would welcome anytime that would work for a volunteer, for any amount of time.

Might you be interested in offering this? Between AGO members, and some others (Elizabeth would like to encourage organ students at Hope to do so next semester when she is filling in for Huw! - maybe you also have a student who would do this?), I imagine we could get a list, and set up a sign-up sheet, so that no one person had to go more than they'd be willing or interested, but there could be regular keyboard music happening for Mike, and the other residents.

I'll keep thinking about logistics of how to set this up, but if you are interested, could you send me a brief email, letting me know that you'd like to be involved?

In other news, we are celebrating Epiphany with a gathering at Linda's home on Sunday, January 5 at 6pm. Bring an appetizer or dessert to share. Linda makes the best snacks – always tasty and beautiful for the eye as well! (I know she's embarrassed about me raving on over them, but it's true!) Each year, we've had a small group, but have always enjoyed ourselves at this annual event. Spouses, children and grandchildren welcome. Hope to see you there!

We will also start talking in the new year about the Organ Academy that Bob Houskamp introduced to our group in September. Be thinking if you know anyone (young person, or older) who would appreciate three lessons free as an intro to the pipe organ.

ALSO, be pulling out your Larry Visser favorites for our March meeting – he will be with us that evening, and we will be playing his compositions and hearing from him.

Best wishes for this holiday season. May your organ light be bright enough that you can see all the notes during the candlelight verses of Silent Night, and here’s hoping for some time after all the services have ended for some stillness for each of us as well. Rhonda

2019-2020 Holland AGO Program Schedule

Mon, Jan 6 – Epiphany Party! - Linda Fulton’s house, 957 Songbird Lane, Holland (Linda makes the BEST treats ever!)

Tue, Feb 4 or Feb 11 (TBA) – Clergy-Musician Forum at First Reformed with Rick VanOss and Dan Gillett

Mon, March 23 – Local Composer Forum with Larry Visser at Second Reformed in Zeeland

Mon, April 20 – The Aging Voice with Linda Dykstra at Hope College

Mon, May 18 – Handbells with Larry and Carla Sue at Third Reformed

June, TBA – End of year Potluck

Chapter Officers for 2019-2020

Dean - Rhonda Edgington

Sub-Dean – Linda Fulton

Board Members – Roberta Kraft, Rick Van Oss

Ex Official:

Treasurer - Gordon Bruns

Newsletter Editor - Paul Dalman

Website – hollandareaago.org

2019-2020 Calendar		
Mon Jan 6, 6:00 p.m.	Epiphany Party	Linda Fulton's house, 957 Songbird Lane, Holland
Tue Feb 4 or Feb 11, 7:00 p.m.	Musician-Clergy Relations: Rick Van Oss and Dan Gillett	First Reformed Church, Holland
Mon Mar 23, 7:00 p.m.	Local Composer Forum with Larry Visser	Second Reformed Church, Zeeland
Mon Apr 20, 7:00 p.m.	The Aging Voice with Linda Dykstra	Hope College
Mon May 18, 7:00 p.m.	Handbells: Larry and Carla Sue	Third Reformed Church, Holland
Jun TBA	Annual Picnic	TBA

