

A Letter From the Dean

Dear Members-

Happy September to you – I hope this newsletter finds you looking forward to the start of church and school program years with some cheerful anticipation, even though this new beginning always brings with it stress, deadlines, and increased responsibilities. With our daughter entering kindergarten, I am looking forward to 7 entire hours of time to myself each day, to practice, organize our family life, and... be your AGO dean! (among other things).

Your board met this summer, and we were pleased to welcome a few new members – Jim Folkert, and Roberta Kraft – and we welcome Julia Collingsworth to the position of sub-dean, as Steve Jenkins steps down, after two years of good ideas and service. Steve continues to man our Facebook site, so if you have church music-related news, contact him to be included. We also welcome Hope organ student Jonathan Bading to the board this year.

The board has been working to get the program year in place. While there are details yet to be pinned down, we are looking forward to the events this fall which have been planned.

Thanks for reading, and for being involved, in whatever ways you are and can be, in our chapter. YOU are a valued and important part of our chapter, and the local organ scene here in Holland, and we all can learn so much from one another – so we hope to see you around soon!

Rhonda

Fall 2015 AGO Events

Here's the quick run-down for the fall – see below for more details on our upcoming events.

Tues, Sept 22 – 7:45 pm (dinner at 6:30 at Russ') – Playing the Notes Not on the Page – Steve Jenkins at Grace Episcopal Church

Monday, Oct 19 – 7:30 pm – Boys Choir of Mainz (Germany) – St. Francis Catholic Church - Co-sponsored with the Muskegeon AGO Chapter – we will be helping with ushering and the reception

Monday, Nov 9 – 7:30 pm – Kola Owakabi (U of M Organ Prof) – Preludes and Postludes: Some Hidden Gems – Third Reformed

[Sunday, Nov 8, 3 pm – Kola will play the Rietberg recital at Third]

Dec – date TBD – a sneak peak at the new Casavant at Hope College – hosted by Dr. Huw Lewis and David Roossien – I know many of us are looking forward to seeing and hearing this new instrument, and this will be our private chance to see the organ before the big inaugural activities in the spring. As part of those activities, Huw has shared the dates for some of the planned festivities, by a number of renowned recitalists – mark these on your calendar!

Feb 9 – Huw Lewis and Andrew Le – Official inauguration of the new Casavant and Steinway

March 1 – David Baskeyfield – Casavant
April 5 – Clive Driskill-Smith – Casavant
April 19 – Greg Crowell – Kingston harpsichord

In the coming months, look for more info about our January party, a presentation by new member Micah VanderHill on posture at the organ, our members recital, and another potluck!

Our first 2015-16 Event

Please plan to join us for our opening meeting on Tues, Sept 22 at Grace Episcopal Church, for a presentation entitled – Playing the Notes Not on the Page. Our own Steve Jenkins will give us all some tips for improvising, applicable for organists with varied experiences improvising. For those interested, some of us will meet beforehand at Russ' restaurant on North River Avenue for dinner together at 6:30, with our program beginning at 7:45pm. Steve is a gracious, helpful teacher, with lots of practice improvising in various settings and situations, and we're looking forward to learning from him, in this practical and applicable program.

In Memorium

It was with sadness this summer that we learned of the deaths of two of our long-time and faithful chapter members – Joy Huttar and Jean Pierson. Jane Bosko has written a lovely eulogy for Jean, and I've written down approximately what I said at our last April members recital, when we honored Joy as a member of our League of Distinguished Service.

In Memory

Jean D. Pierson

November 27, 1929 - August 1 , 2015

Jean Pierson, our colleague and good friend, had numerous heart health issues in the past several years, but she never lost her positive attitude and love for life. She was a dedicated member of the Holland AGO chapter who always had a sparkle in her eye. Whenever we gathered for a program, concert, or social event, if Jean's health cooperated, she was there. Jean was especially helpful to me when I was Dean of our chapter. She was always willing to provide a treat, lend an ear and offer encouragement and appreciation for whatever we did. She was a thoughtful and understanding friend.

Jean's musical gifts were recognized early in her life. She taught music in schools, played organ and piano, directed church choirs and bells, played saxophone, loved to sing and at one time played violin with the Holland Symphony. Working with choirs brought Jean great joy. After relocating to the Holland area she shared music with the congregations at First United Methodist and First Presbyterian Church. Always interested in playing, she recently performed organ and piano duets with a close friend at First Presbyterian.

Jean was a breast cancer survivor who was active in Reach to Recovery, a group that helps other breast cancer survivors. She loved cooking for family and friends, reading good books and recently following the Detroit Tigers.

Jean will be missed. Memorials may be directed to the Holland Symphony Orchestra's "Youth Orchestras" programs.

Joy Huttar

Joy served for 27 years as organist at Grace Episcopal Church in Holland. In 1978, during a last-minute ecclesiastical emergency, she stepped in to play the hymns on a Sunday morning, and then was asked if she would continue as organist. Joy had played piano since childhood, but had only a brief period of organ lessons. Wishing to deepen her knowledge, in 1979 as their youngest child was in fourth grade, Joy enrolled as a BA music major at Hope College, where husband Chuck was a professor, and daughter Julia was a music major also! They shared a few music classes together during that time. Later, Joy worked to take and pass the Colleague Exam of the AGO. She has been a member of our chapter since its beginning. She and Chuck have been members of Grace Episcopal for almost 50 years. Joy retired in 2005 from Grace, and was inducted into our League of Distinguished Service in 2015. She and Chuck have been faithful attenders of many programs over the years, and all who knew her appreciated Joy's keen wit and welcoming manner.

Chuck Huttar asked to pass this note along to the chapter :

I have always enjoyed the fellowship of you folks -- while at the same time feeling a bit of an outsider since I have no keyboard skills (except on the computer, and those rather limited ones). I always thought of my accompanying Joy to such events as a sort of date night. And often when we went to program meetings, I found it a learning experience, especially the ones related to hymnody (and I have long contemplated a book on that subject, but whether that will end up as reality or mere pipe dream remains to be seen). No doubt I'll run into some of you around town from time to time (especially at concerts) and consider it my good luck. And I hope that the Holland Chapter will continue to flourish.

Elizabeth West asked to share this with the chapter:

I have told a few of you, or you may have heard through the grapevine, that I am leaving my position at Trinity Lutheran in Grand Rapids. In fact, Sunday, 8/23, will be my last day on the job.

Below is an excerpt from the article in Trinity's August newsletter announcing my resignation and that Larry Biser will be replacing me, as well as taking on Director of Music responsibilities.

"With her letter to the Council Executive Committee, Dr. Elizabeth West stepped down from the bench as Trinity's Organist. The last couple of years have been a sometimes challenging transition time in marriage and family, and Elizabeth has chosen to honor her vocation in family. Trinity has been well served by Dr. West.

After a series of meetings with worship and music staff, the Executive Committee and the Congregational Council resulted in the opportunity to welcome Larry Biser into the role of Director of Music, effective August 30. Larry will continue to direct hand bell choirs at Trinity, but he will add the duties of our principal Organist and provide oversight to our overall music ministry as Director of Music. Larry assumes this part-time Director of Music role at Trinity after serving in that capacity for 40 years at East Congregational Church in Grand Rapids. We are pleased to note that Elizabeth West will continue to relate to Trinity, serving as our Associate Organist when Larry is unable to serve.

Please join us on August 23...."

There are no hard feelings between the church and me. Basically, I had thought that church music would be the perfect mommy job, but it hasn't worked out that way for me. I am not good at working from home, either practicing or planning. To continue in my job, I would have needed to put Jonathan in daycare about 20 hours a week, and I didn't want to do that. As it was, he had babysitters for 8 hours a week last year, but that was not nearly enough time.

Saturdays were stressful for all of us because we were trying to pack in errands, chores, practicing, and maybe fun, and we were all dreading the marathon of Sunday. I am sad about resigning, but I am sure

that I'm not leaving church music forever. Tim and I will keep talking about what works for our family. My new title at Trinity means only that I will be first-string substitute there. I'll continue to teach my two high-school organ students at Trinity and to play for several weddings there this fall, and I will still accompany a little at Hope. After the new year, I will be available to sub for church services in Holland.

So there are the details. Just a new stage of life.

Job Announcement from Phillip Konczyk, the music director at St. Francis Catholic Church in Holland.

St. Francis de Sales is a vibrant, young, multicultural and multilingual Catholic Community just blocks from Hope College in downtown Holland. We are seeking applicants for an assistant organist/pianist. Commitment: One or two masses per weekend as scheduled (regular service times are 5:00 Saturday, 8:30, 10:30 and 12:30 Sunday), with additional opportunities available.

This is a stipended position.

The ideal candidates will have high level of proficiency in accompanying congregational song on both piano and organ and in a wide range of musical styles, and the ability to improvise and adapt on the fly as is often required in liturgical music. Willingness to occasionally accompany the 12:30 Spanish mass (most of the musicians are fluently bilingual, so there is no requirement to speak Spanish). Familiarity with liturgical worship is helpful but not a must.

Send résumés to Phil Konczyk, at pkonczyk@stfrancisholland.org

Notes From Your Newsletter Editor

If you haven't renewed your membership for 2015-2016, do it now.

This issue is being sent to everyone who was a Holland chapter member for 2014-2015. The next issue will be sent only to members who have renewed their membership in the AGO Oncard system for 2015-2016. Please continue to support the AGO and your local chapter by your continued membership.

Please keep your AGO Oncard member information current.

Prior to the national AGO implementation of Oncard you used to mail your membership application and renewal forms to David Roossien who would then mail copies of your forms to AGO headquarters. We then used the information on your forms to prepare our chapter's annual Membership Directory. Now, with Oncard, we can extract the information from the headquarters database to compose our local directory. So please be sure you keep your Oncard information current.

Note that if you want our directory to include your employers and positions you can include two such entries. Merely fill in the "Organization Name" and "Title" blocks in the Address 2 or Address 3 sections of your Oncard data. We will include this information in our directory.

This year we expect the Oncard renewal process will go much smoother than last year and we plan to publish the 2015-2016 directory very early in the fall.

Paul Dalman

Chapter Officers for 2015-2016

Dean - Rhonda Edgington

Sub-Dean - Julia Collingsworth

Secretary - Judy Koeman

Treasurer – Gordon Bruns

Board Members - Roberta Kraft, Jim Folkert

Hope College Student Board Member - Jonathan Bading

Hospitality - Mike VanDoornik

Newsletter Editor - Paul Dalman

Website – hollandareaago.org

2015-2016 Calendar		
Tue Sep 22, 7:45 p.m.	Improvising : Playing the Notes not on the Page - Steve Jenkins	Grace Episcopal Church (Join us at 6:30 for dinner at Russ' North River Avenue)
Mon Oct 19, 7:30 p.m.	Boys Choir of Mainz (Germany)	St. Francis Catholic Church
Sun Nov 8, 3:00 p.m.	Annual Rietberg Recital - Kola Owakabi	Third Reformed Church
Mon Nov 9, 7:30 p.m.	Preludes and Postludes: Some Hidden Gems - Kola Owakabi	Third Reformed Church
Dec TBD	Sneak Preview of the new Casavant organ - Huw Lewis and David Roossien	Hope College Jack H. Miller Center for Musical Arts
Jan TBD	Annual Chapter Winter Potluck and Party	TBD
Tue Feb 9	Official Inauguration of the new Casavant and Steinway - Huw Lewis and Andrew Le	Hope College Jack H. Miller Center for Musical Arts
Tue Mar 1	Organ Recital - David Baskeyfield	Hope College Jack H. Miller Center for Musical Arts
Tue April 5	Organ Recital - Clive Driskill-Smith	Hope College Jack H. Miller Center for Musical Arts
Tue Apr 19	Kingston Harpsichord Recital - Greg Crowell	Hope College Jack H. Miller Center for Musical Arts