

American Guild of Organists
Central New York Chapter

Vox Onondaga

September - October 2014

Features:

- Dean's Message
- Sub Dean's Calendar

What You Missed:

- OHS Syracuse 2014
- AGO Boston 2014

Calendar:

- Many exciting recitals this fall!

World-Famous American Boychoir



Thursday, December 4th - Our Lady of Pompei/St. Peter Church
301 Ash Street, Syracuse

Doors open at 6:30 P.M., Concert begins at 7:00 P.M.

Reserved Seating: \$40 - \$35 - \$25

For tickets and information: 315-422-7163

Membership Corner

Jim Stanley

AGO ONCARD

Still haven't renewed your AGO membership? Log on to [ONCARD](#), National Headquarter's new dues collection website. In just a few minutes members can pay their dues by check or credit card, update their personal information, search for other Guild members, and make contributions to the Poister Fund. A link to ONCARD may be found on National Headquarter's website at www.agohq.org. Jim Stanley is our chapter ONCARD liaison. Please feel free to contact him by phone at 315-637-3980 or via email jstanley@twcny.rr.com with any questions you may have.

Welcome to our newest
members!

Jason Comet, Joshua Corcoran,
Joel Morehouse, Kyle Ramey,
Mary Sugar, Julia Tucker, Jared
Shepard.

*"Like family, we are tied
to each other. This is
what all good musicians
understand."
- Billy Joel -*



Dean's Message

Abel Searor

Dear Colleagues:

It is my honor and privilege to serve as the dean of the Syracuse AGO Chapter for the next two years. During this time I hope to become more well acquainted with each of you. After all, this is your guild, not mine, nor the Executive Committee's. We are here to serve you. Please do not hesitate to reach out with your thoughts, concerns, needs, and desires in the coming year. As we start the new academic year I have a few thoughts to share.

School has begun and summer is now but a memory. I have been thinking of the new beginnings that this time of year offers. As church musicians we, like school teachers (another job that many of us have or have had) have the opportunity to relax over the summer with a lighter work load, no choir rehearsals, a convention, a sabbatical or simply some much needed rest and relaxation.

This summer I was able to escape Syracuse on a few occasions to go hiking. Anyone that knows me knows that I am not exactly an outdoors person. However, I discovered that I indeed enjoy hiking and the views at the top of the climb, combined with a few moments of quiet reflection. All of these make the climb worth the effort. As all of this relaxation comes to an end I find myself clinging to the peaceful moments that I found throughout the summer. In attempting to retreat to those places in my memory, I came to the realization that what we do in our jobs as church musicians and music teachers is a great deal similar to hiking.

We practice, we rehearse our choirs, we slave over piles of books trying to find the perfect literature to accompany the scriptures for that specific day. Then, Sunday arrives. Just like the trails, you never know what kind of situation you are walking into. Even if you've been there before (that week even) you can never be certain that things are exactly the way that you left them. The climb through the service can be a bit taxing. We've all sat through sermons and announcements that seemed as though they would never end. But then you reach that moment in the service, a hymn, an anthem, the postlude that takes you to a new place; that mountaintop experience where as the last notes of the final cut off die away you experience those few precious moments of silence that can reset your spirit for just a moment, no matter how brief, to a place of serenity. It is these moments that remind us why we made the climb and help us to see that it was worth it. May the start of the new church year give you many mountaintop experiences and may you find those moments of peace to get you from one week to the next.

Syracuse AGO
Chapter Executive
Committee

Officers & Members at Large
2014 - 2015

Dean: Abel Searor
Sub Dean: Vincent Guarneiri
Treasurer: Armand DiScenna
Secretary: Deborah
Cunningham
Publicity: Gail Ferat
Membership: James Stanley
Newsletter/Webmaster:
Ryan J Boyle
Placement: Ben Merchant
Chapter Advisor: Will Headlee

Members at large:

Class of 2016
Tim Davenport
Steven Medicis
Wayne Skinner

Class of 2018
Phyllis Fye
Julia Tucker
Annie Laver

*"A painter paints his pictures
on canvas. But musicians
paint thier pictures on silence.
We provide the music, and
you provide the silence"*
- Leopold Stokowski -



Subdean's Message

Vincent Guarneiri

Hello Syracuse AGO members! We have an exciting list of events lined up this year for the organist and organ-loving community. Along with the recitals presented around the area, we have a few fun and several educational events we hope will be well supported! As always, please keep Ryan Boyle, our newsletter and website editor, up to date by sending any other events to agonewsletter@kernerandmerchant.com. Please see our list of chapter events below and feel free to contact me with any questions! vincent@cnyorganist.com

- Wednesday, October 1, 2014 8:00 PM – Amanda Mole, 2014 winner of the Poister Competition will present a recital in Setnor Auditorium, Syracuse University
- Friday, October 24, 2014 6:00 PM – Joseph Downing will open his home for Dinner, and an Anthem Sing. Bring 12-20 copies of an anthem you've discovered in the past few years that was a hit with your choir! Please RSVP to 424-0783
- Sunday, November 16, 2014 4:00 PM – Alan Morrison will perform in Hendricks Chapel as part of the Malmgren Concert Series.
- Saturday, December 6, 2014 6:00 PM – Stay tuned for more details on an Outreach Recital at St. Mary's Church in Cortland
- Sunday, January 11, 2015 – Syracuse AGO 12th Night Party! We'll have a potluck dinner and a movie night at Holy Cross Church in Dewitt. More details to follow
- Sunday, February 8, 2015 4:00 PM – Robin Jenkins, second place winner in the 2014 Poister competition, will perform a Rising Star Recital at Hendricks Chapel
- Tuesday, March 17, 2015 8:00 PM – Andrew Henderson will present an organ recital in Setnor Auditorium
- Saturday, April 11, 2015 – Poister Competition
- May, 2015 TBD – We will be planning a one day bus trip to one of the largest pipe organs in the world! We'll let you know as this develops.
- Friday June, 5th 2015 – Syracuse AGO Banquet, annual meeting and Recital at First Presbyterian Church, Cazenovia.

Chapter Website

www.syracuseago.org

Our website is undergoing an overhaul. Please bear with us though this transition. We are moving to a format which allows for easier updating and the inclusion of multimedia. Still featured are:

- Regularly updated spreadsheet of substitutes
- Direct email to webmaster
- Submit events directly through website
- Complete list of chapter officers with contact information
- Much more!

Call For Content

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform local AGO chapter members of organ and choral related events taking place in the Central New York area. Not only do we seek announcements of upcoming events in the area, but we gladly except reviews of local events as well.

"Musicians don't retire; they stop when there's no more music in them."

- Louis Armstrong -

What you missed...

Armand DiScenna

2014 AGO National Convention - Boston

The 2014 AGO National Convention was held in Boston this year, from June 23-27. Enduring unseasonably hot temperatures (verging on 90), nearly 1700 members converged in Boston for a veritable feast of concerts and workshops. Kath, Mom, and Aunt Ange decided to come along for the ride; they would sight-see and come to some of the concerts while I attended the convention.

Arriving in Boston late Monday evening after a long drive, my spirits were immediately uplifted and restored by a beautiful service of Compline at the newly renovated, 1890s Romanesque, St. Cecilia Parish Church. As sung by Beneficia lucis, an interdenominational a cappella men's ensemble directed by James Busby, the service was an irresistible combination of vocal purity and prayerful devotion.

Tuesday morning, Scott Dettra and Craig Cramer gave concurrent recitals across Copley Square from each other, Dettra at Trinity Church, and Cramer at Old South Church. Both churches are visually stunning, venerable old wood-timbered houses of worship. Opting for the Cramer concert, I was rewarded with his usual spirited and impeccable performance. His concert featured seldom-heard yet beautiful 20th century pieces by Auguste Fauchard, Toni Zahnbrecher, Ethel Smyth, and Max Reger.

In my free time, I explored the cooling fountains found in Copley Square and in the interior gardens of the Boston Public Library. The air in Boston seemed amazingly clean. Evidently, the Big Dig and a multitude of low-cost rental bicycles have done much to reduce auto emissions in the city.

That afternoon, I attended a workshop on "Practical Hymn-Based Music for Organ and Instruments," presented by Joe Burgio. Many worthy pieces were demonstrated, with the purpose of engaging and encouraging both the young and not-so-young amateur musicians in their congregation to share their musical gifts. Joe now resides in the Chicago area, is doing well, and sends his best to all of his former colleagues in Central New York!

Tuesday evening, I ventured into Cambridge to catch a concert by the Handel & Haydn Society (dir. Harry Christophers & John Finney) at St. Paul's Church. Stepping through the portals of St. Paul's, I was immediately impressed by the Roman basilica-influenced church, with its long rows of

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Organ Recital

Al Fedak

Sunday, October 19th,

3:00 p.m.

United Church of Christ

Norwich, New York

Free and open to the public, reception to follow. Contact the church office for more information at 607-334-3434. Free parking available in the city lot on Hayes St, adjacent to church lot. Handicap access at the rear door.

*"Music expresses that which cannot be put into words and that which cannot remain silent."
- Victor Hugo -*

What you missed...

Armand Discenna, AGO National - Boston

Continued from page 4

columns, barrel vault, and bas-relief friezes. St. Paul's held special meaning for me. It is well-known for the high quality of its chanted liturgies, and it was long the domain of Dr. Ted Marier, director of St. Paul's Choir School, editor of two hymnals, and long-time professor of Gregorian Chant and the Ward Method at Catholic U. in D.C.

The Handel & Haydn Society offered spirited and rousing performances of a cantata by CPE Bach, and a motet and a Missa Brevis by JS Bach. What most impressed me was the fact that the chorus and instrumentalists had already performed this music 90 minutes earlier; they had the energy and training necessary to present both performances flawlessly in well-nigh 80-degree weather !

Wednesday morning, I was privileged to present a paper on "Gregorian Chant: Bridge-Builder to Ecumenism" --- an examination of chant-embedded music composed for Protestant worship, shedding light on a mutually-shared musical heritage --- which was well-received. Special thanks to Bob Anderson, Lee Johnston, Julie Pretzat, and Will, for the use of your hymnals!

Wednesday afternoon, I again returned to the beautifully renovated, acoustically resplendent St. Cecilia's, this time to hear Blue Heron, a mixed a cappella ensemble led by Scott Metcalfe. Specializing in British and Franco-Flemish music of the Renaissance, Blue Heron performed a motet by Nicholas Ludford, secular songs from the Fayrfax MS and Henry VIII's Songbook, and the Missa Spes Nostra by Robert Jones, performing each work with a moving combination of vocal clarity, precision, and infectious joy.

On Wednesday evening I traveled down to the First Lutheran Church of Boston, a fairly modern church (1950s) for a service of Lutheran Vespers. The ensemble Canto Armonico (dir. Dr. Ulf Wellner and Cheryl Ryder) predominantly used settings of 16th and 17th century Lutheran music. It was with some considerable surprise that I got to hear works set or compiled by Franz Eler, a significant composer / editor I had studied for my presentation, who was a key figure in the transmission of chant into the Lutheran service. The instrumental and choral forces of Canto Armonico were spread out in an upper gallery of the church, and the frequent call-and-response between instrumentalists, choir, and congregation was truly a moving experience !

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What you missed...

Armand Discenna, AGO National - Boston

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Chapter Historian

The Executive Committee of the Syracuse AGO Chapter is looking for a volunteer to serve as chapter historian. The main responsibilities of the historian will be to collect a copy of the program from each chapter event for archival purposes and to keep a hard copy of the minutes from Executive Committee meetings and the Annual General Meeting. These materials will be kept in our archives at the Kerner & Merchant workshop. The historian will not need to attend all of the chapter events. If you are interested in assisting with this project, please contact Abel Seator.

"Music expresses that which cannot be put into words and that which cannot remain silent."

- Victor Hugo -

While on my way to the next organ concert, by John Scott, I ran into my old Music History prof, Dr. David Fuller, and we chatted about the old days at University of Buffalo.

John Scott's concert was held in the Gothic splendor of the Church of the Advent. The heat of summer was made worse by the packed conditions in the church, but my spirits were lifted when I ran into Will Headlee, Christopher Marks, and Chris' wife Jessica. A kind couple made room for me near a breezeway, and the concert commenced. Dr. Scott spoke a few times between pieces, and his wonderful accent and winning manner set us all at ease, in the face of the high temperature. His concert consisted primarily of both challenging and unusual pieces, including works by CV Stanford, Frank Bridge, William Matthias, Michael Berkeley, and a piece especially commissioned for the 2014 convention, Patterns, by Nico Muhly, whom Dr. Scott called upon to take a bow.

On my way back to the hotel, I met a Nigerian organist who is playing at a Presbyterian church outside of Toronto. Boston 2014 was truly an international convention !

Even though the heat was oppressive, the multitude of fabulous choices of performers, venues, and workshop topics, combined with numerous helpful and friendly musicians, made the 2014 Boston AGO Convention a truly memorable and rewarding experience overall !

Syracuse Area Events



- Amanda Mole -

Poister Competition Winner's Recital
Auditorium, Setnor School of Music
Wednesday, October 1st, 8:00 P.M.

Originally from Holden Mass, Amanda is currently a DMA candidate studying with David Higgs at the Eastman School of Music.
Program TBA.

Syracuse Area Events



- Robert Kerner -
Organ Recital
First Baptist Church, Hamilton
Sunday, October 12th, 3:30 P.M.

Featured composers include J. S. Bach, Pachebel, Clérambault, Dupré, Bruhns, Barber, Johnson, Franck.

The concert will be followed by a free reception in the downstairs church parlor. The organ, Opus 217 of the Estey Organ Company of Brattleboro, VT, has been significantly rebuilt and enlarged by Kerner & Merchant Pipe Organ Builders. A recognition of the Kerner & Merchant patnership, will also be part of the program.

Robert Kerner, a native of Pennsylvania, received both Bachelor of Music Education and Master of Music degrees from Syracuse University.

In 1975 he co-founded, with Ben Merchant, the firm of Kerner & Merchant Pipe Organ Builders. He moved to Rochester in 1981, where he was employed as the pipe organ and harpsichord technician at the Eastman School of Music until 2010.

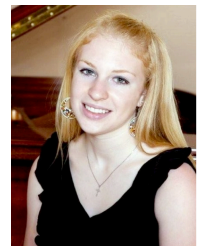
Robert served as organist and director of music at May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society in Syracuse from 1975 – 1986, and at Lake Avenue Baptist Church in Rochester from 1993 – 2013.

Organ Scholarship

In an effort to encourage young people to study organ, the Syracuse AGO chapter and Park Central Presbyterian Church are each committing \$500 a year towards an organ scholarship. We are looking for other churches to help sponsor the scholarship on a yearly basis. If you, or your church are interested in helping, or if you know of a student who might want to apply for the scholarship, please contact Ben Merchant at 463-8023. Thank you!

"Music expresses that which cannot be put into words and that which cannot remain silent."
- Victor Hugo -

- Jillian Gardner -
Organ Recital
Cathedral of the
Immaculate Conception, Syracuse
Sunday, October 19th, 3:00 P.M.



Jillian Gardner, a senior at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music will present a concert on the Cathedral's Roosevelt Organ. The program includes works by Bach, Widor, Langlais, Vierne, Messiaen, Guilmant and others. Tickets are \$5 and can be purchased at the Cathedral office or at the door. Please visit the Cathedral music website for the complete concert program and further information about Ms. Gardner and Cathedral Arts.

syracathmusic.org/cathedralarts Phone 422-4177, ext. 31.