

March 2015

The American Guild of Organists

San Francisco Chapter Newsletter

Letter from the Dean

by Simon Berry

Dear members:

Your executive board has been struggling with some decisions recently that will affect how the chapter is managed over the next few years. We are ready to hear your views and consider them before we vote at our March 9th Board meeting. All members are welcome to come to board meetings as auditors. At this upcoming meeting we will allow time to hear from any member who wants to be heard.

Chapter Management: For the past many years our management structure has included a Dean (who chairs meetings), a Sub-Dean (who manages the program), a Sub-Dean elect (who plans the next program), a Secretary, Treasurer and Members at Large. The Sub-Dean elect is elected by members in a vote and automatically becomes Sub-Dean next year. The vote for Dean is a separate vote and is not associated with the Sub-Dean position.

Over the past few years we have had difficulty in recruiting people for the position of Sub-Dean elect; this year is no exception. Many past Sub-Deans have retired, exhausted, and will not entertain the idea of another position on the Board, although they have a great deal of institutional knowledge and gained experience with Chapter Management. The Program Committees are disbanded at the end of each program cycle and do not form part of the next committee. Once again our institutional knowledge and experience in management of the program is lost every year.

At our February Board meeting several people expressed frustration with the job of Sub-Dean and its heavy workload. We are now seeking ways of altering the job description to make the position more attractive.

From recent discussions — and the January Round Table discussion meeting — it is clear that we need to organize fewer programs each year, and that more of them should be collaborative events with other institutions and groups. For instance, an organ recital may be jointly sponsored by a church or temple with a successful recital program. This should not be a surprising conclusion to

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HOT OFF THE PRESSES! Important Membership Information

from Pat During, Membership Chair

In a letter sent via email on February 10, 2015, AGO Executive Director James Thomashower and AGO Manager of Membership and Chapter Relations Leah Semiken announced new dues rates (a \$3 increase in each membership category), effective April 1, 2015. Details below include the option for new and reinstated (lapsed) members to avoid payment of the increase by joining now through March 30. Membership year for such enrollees will commence on the first of the month (February or March) in which they join the Guild.

If you are interested in receiving a copy of the entire letter (reviewing continuing and NEW membership benefits), or have questions, please contact Pat During, ps7drng@aol.com.

Email from National

The AGO National Council has established new dues rates for all dues categories. The new rates will appear on the April 1 renewal notices that AGO Headquarters will send to current chapter members renewing for the 2015–2016 membership year. These rates are \$100 for Regular members; \$75 for Special members; \$40 for Student members; and \$75 for Partners. The new rates reflect a \$3 increase in each membership category, with \$2 being retained by each chapter and \$1 allocated to National Headquarters.

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Submission deadline for the **April** issue is **March 10**

Dean's Column

by Simon Berry

Very recently I attended Nerd Nite in Oakland at the invitation of a colleague from Seattle. He's a public speaker and an organist and was slated to give a talk on the pipe organ to a group of over 150 nerds all in their 20s and 30s. The nerds have a slogan – be There and be Square – which perfectly fits their intense interest in all things nerdy. Here's a quote from their website:

Nerd Nite is a monthly event held in more than 80 cities across the globe during which several folks give 18–21-minute fun-yet-informative presentations across all disciplines – while the audience drinks along. And there are often bands, acrobats, trivia, and other shenanigans as well. Imagine learning about everything from math feuds or the science of the Simpsons to the genealogy of Godzilla or debunking beer myths, while having a few or a few too many. 'And yes, we know this is an ugly website, but Nerd Nite isn't really about aesthetics anyway'.

My colleague's talk was prefaced by a scientific explanation of how node points form in organ pipes and how the number of notes is related to pitch (octave). He went on to show examples of the famous organs around the USA (Wannamaker; classic organs in Seattle and a theater organ). Later he took questions, such as 'Do all consoles have the stop knobs in the same arrangement?' He's given similar talks at Nerd Nites in Seattle, Vancouver and Kansas City. The Bay Area Nerd Nites are planning a field trip to see an organ builder.

It was a fun evening and one where lots of people had fun and learned something about our beloved instrument (with beer and great food). Because of our cultural shift away from religious organizations, many of the nerds were seeing pipe organs and hearing them for the first time! It was a wonderful way of supporting the instrument.

So there are over eighty cities with Nerd Nite events each week. Could it be that one of us gets involved to spread the good news of pipe organs through these very happy events? If you get involved, don't hesitate to ask for support with slideshows and recordings.

Nerd Nite SF is on the 3rd Wednesday of the month; Nerd Nite East Bay is on the last Monday of the month. See nerdnite.com

The Exposition Organ Exhibit at The Palace of Fine Arts

from Vic Ferrer

Friends of the Exposition Organ, formed in 2001, is a citizens' group dedicated to protecting and finding a home for the Exposition Organ. 'Friends' has been given a rare opportunity to raise awareness of this great musical treasure by being invited to participate in the PPIE100 Centenary celebrations held at the Palace of Fine Arts 'Gallery Building' (formerly the Exploratorium). Our exhibit will last from 2 months to a year and will showcase the 1963 organ console, video loop, façade projection, handouts, and a plaque of Austin parts that were displayed at Festival Hall in 1915. Also featured is an unique pipe demonstration loaned to us by Jack Bethards of Schoenstein & Co. The Exposition organ was installed in Festival Hall by Schoenstein & Sons who then moved it to the Civic Auditorium where it was dedicated by Edwin H. Lemare in 1917.

YOU CAN HELP

Friends of the Exposition Organ needs volunteer docents to provide a human interface with the public. We are asking volunteers to commit one 5-hour weekend day per month – beginning in late February. We are committed to an exhibit of two months with a possible extension through December 2015.

Docents will participate in a high profile exhibit sharing their love of pipe organs and organ music with the public. This is a unique opportunity to help bring attention to the Exposition Organ.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact:

Justin Kielty at 415-621-5166 or
Justin@ExpositionOrgan.org

Vic Ferrer at 415-334-4700 or
Vic@ExpositionOrgan.org

Mailing List: Please sign up for our mailing list at:
www.ExpositionOrgan.org

Donate to our exhibit: Please contribute to our crowd funding campaign to help support this important exhibit at: <http://igg.me/at/QrySYXAKZd4>



a new concert series

Arts Under the Spire

First Presbyterian Church
of Oakland

featuring

the Rosales Opus 16
Pipe Organ

\$5.00 suggested
donation

Ronald Ebrecht, Organist Sunday, March 15, 2015 @ 4PM

Mr. Ebrecht is the University Organist and Artist in Residence at Wesleyan University in Middletown, CT. He will present a pre-concert lecture (3PM) on recent Durufle research. He will bring us music composed by Durufle, Liszt and Franck.

'Discovery' organ recital Sunday, April 26, 2015 @ 4PM

Two young organists will perform, including a new work by SF Conservatory graduate Justin Ralls, commissioned by the National AGO Student Commissioning project.

2619 Broadway (at 27th), Oakland, CA 94612 (510) 444-3555, www.firstchurchoakland.org
Contact Dr. Cyril Deaconoff, Music Director, for information: cyril@firstchurchoakland.org

Membership, *from front page*

The new dues rates will take effect on April 1 for those who join the Guild for the first time either as Chapter members or as Independent members, or who reinstate as either Chapter members or Independent members after their memberships have lapsed. Please note that new members and those who wish to reinstate their lapsed memberships can join now through March 30 at the current dues rates before they increase on April 1.

Separately, the National Council has authorized the National Headquarters to initiate a "rolling membership year" for those who are joining a chapter for the first time or reinstating after their membership has lapsed. This means that a member's expiration date will be one year from the date on which the member joined; i.e., on the anniversary of the join date. Under this plan, all current chapter members will retain their July 1–June 30 membership year as long as they renew by September 1. For new and reinstating members, however, the membership year will commence on the first of the month in which the member joins the Guild. Independent members, like TAO subscribers, have always followed a rolling membership year and will continue to do so. ~~~~~

SFAGO Board Meeting Summary, February 9, 2015

from Arthur West, Secretary

The SFAGO Executive Board met at St Dominic's Church in San Francisco. The topics of discussion included:

- The chapter's finances — which are in good shape;
- The difficulty of the transition to the OnCard system as it impacts our finances and membership database;
- The 2014/2015 program - which is in good shape financially but which has also had to cancel an upcoming program due to lack of interest;
- The website upgrade process – it appears that the result will be an improvement and will be enjoyed by all;
- The operating procedures — the difficulty that they present the board with moving institutional knowledge forward from one election cycle to the next. This is an ongoing conversation that will require the input and thoughts from the membership and the board.

Members are invited to attend our next board meeting on Monday, March 9th, to be held at Faith Lutheran Church, 20080 Redwood Road, Castro Valley, CA 94546.

If you have any questions or comments please contact a board member for further details. ~~~~~

IN MEMORIAM
BERTRAM FRANCIS SCHOENSTEIN,
1917–2015

from Jack M. Bethards

Bertram Schoenstein, 97 years old, died January 8, 2015, in San Rafael, California. Born September 11, 1917, Bert was the eldest remaining third-generation member of the pioneer San Francisco organ building family. As a youngster he helped his father, Louis, in the organ business, but coming of age in the depth of the depression when there was little prospect for the organ business, he began a 40 year career as a master painter and decorator. During World War II he served in the Army Air Corps. After retiring he achieved his dream of a second career in organ building with Schoenstein & Co. from 1978 to 1995.



Bert was a natural mechanic and practical problem solver. In addition to running the paint and finish department, he devised many clever fixtures and tools for the other departments and maintained plant equipment. Also a natural musician, as was the family tradition, he played the violin in several orchestras and ensembles including the Deutscher Musik Verein. Among his many mechanical interests was antique car restoration specializing in Model T Fords.

Bert is survived by children Karl and Heidi, five grandchildren and three great grandchildren. A memorial mass was celebrated at Nazareth House Chapel on January 17, 2015.



SFAGO Program for 2014–2015

Saturday, September 20, 2014, 7:30 p.m.

“Our Souls Inspire...”

An Act of Worship for AGO members and friends
with music for Organ, Brass and Choir
Inspirational Address from Dean Alan Jones & Installation of Officers
Followed by a reception
Christ the Light Cathedral, Oakland

Saturday, October 18, 2014, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Masterclass Workshop on movements from a Couperin Mass
Jean-Baptiste Robin
St Mary’s College Chapel, Moraga

Sunday, October 19, 2014, 4:30 p.m.

Celebrity Recital
Jean-Baptiste Robin
Followed by a reception
St Mary’s College Chapel, Moraga

Saturday, November 22, 2014, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

St. Cecilia’s Day Hone Your Skills Workshops
New Music for Organ • New Music for Voices • Wedding and Funeral Music
Transposition for AGO exams • Improvisation Masterclass
With refreshments and lunch
St John’s Episcopal Church, Ross

Monday, January 12, 2015, 7:30 p.m.

Dean’s Roundtable Discussion of Professional Issues
Followed by a reception
St Dominic’s Church, San Francisco

Saturday, February 7, 2015, 7:00 p.m.

Choral Evensong and Presentation on RSCM Voices for Life scheme
Susan Jane Matthew, The St Paul’s Choir,
including Choir School boys and girls
St Paul’s Episcopal Church, Burlingame

Sunday, March 15, 2015, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Workshop with San Francisco Chorus & Short Concert
Chorissima Hall, Hayes Street, San Francisco

Sunday, April 26, 2015, 4:00 p.m.

Celebrity Recital
Nigel Potts, organ & Sarah Taylor, mezzo soprano
Elgar’s Sea Pictures
Followed by a reception
Grace Cathedral, San Francisco

Tuesday, May 26, 2015, 6:15 p.m.

Dinner, Annual Meeting and Members’ Recital
First Congregational Church, Berkeley

Letter, from front page

anyone experienced in chapter management, but it is easy to forget how to be successful.

Another idea is to have a program committee that exists for longer than the current program year. Consider having a six member committee with a roll-over of two members each year. Additional members with specific strengths could be added. This change would help maintain institutional knowledge in the program committee.

The third change would be to elect a person for a three-year period who will be Program Chair in the first year (developing a program with a program committee), be Sub-Dean in the second year (carrying-out that program with the program committee and assisting the Dean), and becoming Dean the third year. Once again this will help create more institutional knowledge of the chapter. Currently the Sub-Dean is in office for two years, and the Dean can be elected for up to three years. The current Sub-Dean does not become Dean unless elected to do so. Frequently our Sub-Deans have been too fatigued at the end of their two-year office to run for Dean.

New Website: Our new website is in the information gathering stage and we have to make a few decisions about elements that have been sometimes private information for members but could also be open to the public to view. To make these determinations, it may be helpful to consider the nature of the Chapter: is it mainly an organization to benefit members or mainly to benefit the organ-loving public and employers, or is it a mixture of the above?


- Should our newsletters become available on the website for all to view? We know that *The American Organist* magazine is available free to members and for purchase to non-members. Our newsletter, though beautifully produced, is not in the same league as TAO; I don't think

they would sell! Should we keep them private, or make them available one month after publication (to allow members first chance at job listings)? Is this beneficial to the organ world in general?

- In recent years we've posted job advertisements in blog form (also in our monthly newsletter). The blog form has the advantage of always being current and is updated whenever an advertisement is received. It's a service to our members. It's also a service to many employing institutions in the Chapter and beyond. Should we hide this blog of advertisements from all but members?
- We maintain a list of substitute organists. This is clearly of benefit to both our members and the employers. If it continues to be a members only list, so that employers cannot view it, does it give maximum benefit? If we made this list public we would ask permission from all on it to do so or offer to remove their details.

Please respond! We would like to hear your opinions about these four items before the March 9 Board meeting, as follows:

1. **Chapter Management:** Sub Dean Elect leads Program Committee (with roll-over of 2 members each year) to increase continuity, institutional knowledge. (Yes/No/Reasons/Suggestions)
2. **Newsletters:** Private/Public
3. **Job Advertisements:** Private/Public
4. **Substitute Lists:** Private/Public

Use this email address: sf.ago2015@gmail.com, or snail mail to Simon Berry, 2390 Bush Street, San Francisco, CA 94115. 

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Newsletter Departments: *Send your entries to the appropriate editor; all submissions due by 10th of the month preceding publication*
Events Calendar Listings: Brian Swager, 415.551.7866, sfagocal@gmail.com
Job Placement & For Sale Listings: To be announced
Obituary Listings: To be announced
Newsletter Articles: George Morten, 209.565.6660, sfago-editor@att.net

2014-2015
Last updated 12/22/2014

Bay Area Concert Calendar

Collected by Brian Swager

2015 March

Events, dates, times, and locations are subject to change without notice. Compiled from flyers, press releases, and listings submitted by members and organizations. SFAGO is not responsible for errors, although every effort is made to be accurate. Submission deadline for the April issue is **March 10**. Send event listings to sfagocal@gmail.com. For the most up-to-date calendar, visit www.sfago.org, click on **SFAGO Bay Area Concert Calendar**.

Recurring Venues

Churches and institutions offering programs on a regular basis have been assigned abbreviations so as to save space in our listings. Abbreviations are listed below with the full name of the venue. When no city is stated, San Francisco is assumed.

CPLH: Calif. Palace of the Legion of Honor

CSMA: Cath. of St Mary of the Assumption

FPC-O: First Presbyterian Ch, Oakland

RP-SR: Resurrection Parish, Santa Rosa

SME-B: St Mark's Episcopal Ch, Berkeley

SPE-BU: St Paul's Episcopal Ch, Burlingame

March

1 Sunday

4pm. Sonora Piano Trio. Music of Mozart and Brahms. Freewill offering. CSMA

4pm. John Walko, Organ. CPLH

6 Friday

7:30pm. John RS Walko, Organ. Music of Felix Borowski and Karg-Elert. Free admission/freewill offering. Free parking in church garage. Reception follows. FPC-B

7 Saturday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

5pm. Choir School Concert. Freewill donation. Reception follows. SPE-BU

8 Sunday

3pm. Isabelle Demers, Organ. Tickets: sfsymphony.org. Davies Symphony Hall

4pm. Steve Cram, Organ; with David Chavez, Tenor. Free admission/\$10 suggested donation. Mission Dolores Basilica

4pm. James Hicks, Organ. Freewill offering. CSMA

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

6:05pm. Michael Bawtree, Organ. Preceded by 5:30 Evensong. Reception follows. SME-B

14 Saturday

4pm. Aaron Nee, Organ. CPLH

15 Sunday

4pm. Ronald Ebrecht, Organ. Music of Duruflé, Liszt, and Franck. Suggested donation \$10. Pre-recital lecture on recent Duruflé research at 3pm. FPC-O

4pm. Angela Kraft Cross, Organ. Freewill offering. CSMA

4pm. Aaron Nee, Organ. CPLH

20 Friday

7:30pm. St Dominic's Schola Cantorum; Simon Berry, Director; Christopher Putnam, Organ. Soloists Matthew Curtis, Tenor; Jace Wittig, Baritone. John Stainer: *The Crucifixion* in the context of Stations of the Cross. St Dominic's Catholic Church

8pm. Anthony Newman, Organ & Harpsichord; Joshua Romatowski, Flute. Bach Birthday Celebration. Tickets \$15-\$50 at americanbach.org. St Mark's Lutheran Church

21 Saturday

4pm. Stephen Main, Organ. CPLH

22 Sunday

3:30pm. Cristina Garcia Banegas, Organ. Hispanic works. \$15 suggested donation. RP-SR

4pm. Stephen Main, Organ. CPLH

4pm. Robert Gurney, Organ. Freewill offering. CSMA

27 Friday

7:30pm. Don Scott Carpenter, Organ. Music of Bach, Brahms, Walcha, Robinson and Rheinberger. Free admission/freewill offering. Free parking in church garage. Reception follows. FPC-B

28 Saturday

4pm. Alexander Ffinch, Organ. CPLH

29 Sunday

4pm. Alexander Ffinch, Organ. CPLH

4pm. Steve Denmark, Organ. Freewill offering. CSMA

Looking Ahead April

3 Friday

6:30pm. John RS Walko, Organ. Music of Gerald Near, William Grant Still, and Herman Berlinski. Free admission. Free parking in church garage. Tenebrae service follows at 7pm. FPC-B

4 Saturday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

5 Sunday

4pm. Alexei Kodash, Violin; Patrick Smith, Guitar. Music of Kodash, Paganini, and Piazzola. Freewill offering. CSMA

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

11 Saturday

4pm. Brian Swager, Organ. CPLH

12 Sunday

4pm. Brian Swager, Organ. CPLH

4pm. Christoph Tietze and David Hatt, Organ. Music of Nicholas Bruhns. Freewill offering. CSMA

4pm. Paul Rosas, Organ. Free admission/\$10 suggested donation. Mission Dolores Basilica

6:05pm. Angela Kraft Cross, Organ. Preceded by 5:30 Evensong. Reception follows. SME-B

18 Saturday

4pm. Jonathan Dimmock, Organ. CPLH

19 Sunday

10am. Choral Liturgy & Organ Rededication. Festive reception follows. Episcopal Church of St John the Evangelist

3:30pm. American Canyon Singers. Cyril Deaconoff, Director. Schubert *German Mass*, Fauré *Requiem*. \$15 suggested donation. RP-SR

4pm. Jonathan Dimmock, Organ. CPLH

7pm. Temple Hill Symphony Orchestra, Choir, and Soloists; Alan Chipman, Director. *Lamb of God* by Rob Gardner. CSMA

25 Saturday

4pm. John Walko, Organ. CPLH

26 Sunday

6pm. Cappella SF; Ragnar Bohlin, Director. CSMA

26 Sunday

4:00pm. **SFAGO Event.** Celebrity Recital. Nigel Potts, organ & Sarah Taylor, mezzo soprano. Elgar's *Sea Pictures*. Followed by a reception. Grace Cathedral, San Francisco



FREE ITEM

Richard Ditewig will donate several volumes of organ music (Sweelinck, J. S. Bach, Samuel Scheidt, Jean Titelouze) and an organist's cassock/surplice to any interested AGO member(s).

Please contact him at: 415-713-8240 or 415-655-9781 or at rditewig801@comcast.net.