

PipeNotes

American Guild of Organists – Milwaukee Chapter

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211

www.agomilwaukee.org • chapter@agomilwaukee.org

Volume 69 – May 2023



AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

MILWAUKEE CHAPTER

WWW.AGOMILWAUKEE.ORG

MEMBERS' RECITAL

ANNUAL MEETING PRECEDING
THE RECITAL

SUNDAY, MAY 7, 2023

2:00 PM ANNUAL MEETING

3:00 PM MEMBERS' RECITAL

First Immanuel Lutheran Church

W67N622 Evergreen Blvd

Cedarburg, WI



Performers:
Dr. J. Craig Sproat
Mike Keegan
Keri Kelly
Nick Renkosik
Karel Suchy
Milwaukee Handbell Ensemble

Music by: Bach, Bedard, Vierne,
Scheidemann, Krebs, Suchy,
Widor, and Tournemire

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AGO Milwaukee Chapter Upcoming Events

May 7, 2023

2:00 Annual Meeting

3:00 Members' Recital

First Immanuel Lutheran Church

W67N622 Evergreen Blvd

Cedarburg, WI

Performers include:

Keri Kelly, Dr. J. Craig Sproat,
Mike Keegan, Nick Renkosik, Karel Suchy
Milwaukee Handbell Ensemble

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May 2023

3 (Wed) 12:15 Alan Hommerding, Organ
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

7 (Sun) 2:00 Chapter Annual Meeting
3:00 Members' Recital
First Immanuel Lutheran Church
W67N622 Evergreen Blvd
Cedarburg, WI

9 (Tues) 7:30 James Grzadzinski, Organ
Church of the Gesu
1145 W. Wisconsin Ave
Milwaukee, WI

10 (Wed) 12:15 James Grzadzinski,
Organ
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

17 (Wed) 12:15 Chandler Dillingham,
Guitar
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

18 (Thurs) 7:00 Praise God with Organ
and Trumpet
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

24 (Wed) 12:15 Simone Gheller, Organ
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

31 (Wed) 12:15 Agnieszka Kosmecka,
Organ
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
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May 2023

May is here, spring is on its way here in Milwaukee, or at least we hope so. It has been a crazy couple weeks of weather, heavy wet snow bending trees causing power outages, a hailstorm that flooded the streets in the Bay View neighborhood. Everyone's schedule during holy week is like the weather that we have had lately hectic running from rehearsal to rehearsal, then one service after another. Not really knowing if you're coming or going. But here we are on the other side, getting ready to finish the choir season and waiting for the weather to decide if it is still winter or if spring is actually going happen here in Milwaukee.

One thing that is consistently happening in the Milwaukee area is all of the music performances by different choirs, orchestras, and individuals. We have members in many different musical groups. If you are in a community choir, orchestra or other musical group consider sending it in to our events calendar, event@agomilwaukee.org. While we can't make it to every event it is great to see and support each other by seeing the events that our members participate in. It also shows the diversity of our members.

We have one chapter event left this year. Our annual meeting of the chapter, and the Members' Recital will take place on May 7th at First Immanuel Lutheran Church in Cedarburg. The annual meeting will begin at 2:00 pm with the recital to follow at 3:00 pm. Performers are Nicholas Renkosik, Keri Kelly, Mike Keegan, Karel Suchy with members of the Milwaukee Handbell Ensemble, and Dr. J. Craig Sproat. I hope you can make time to attend and hear what our members have been learning and performing.

John Schubring



Local Organ in the National News Update for May

FUN AND GAMES: If you've been to the local cineplex lately, you probably heard themes from "The Super Mario Bros. Movie" playing in adjacent theaters. And, if the music sounded familiar, it might be because concert artist **Chelsea Chen** created a clever fantasia several years ago based on the same soundtrack from the classic video game. In honor of the film's release, one [AGO Organ Forum](#) member on Facebook recently shared this YouTube video Chen recorded for **Schantz Organ Co.** in 2015—to the delight of the "gamers" in the group!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1QxFBWGzIcc>



American Guild of Organists
PIPE ORGAN ENCOUNTERS

June 18-23, 2023

Wheaton, Illinois

[Fox Valley Chapter](#)

Wheaton College

Director: David A. Lincoln

630-655-2124

[Email Fox Valley POE Director](#)

[Fox Valley POE website](#)

Registration Deadline: May 15, 2023

Click [HERE](#) to view additional information and view the brochure.

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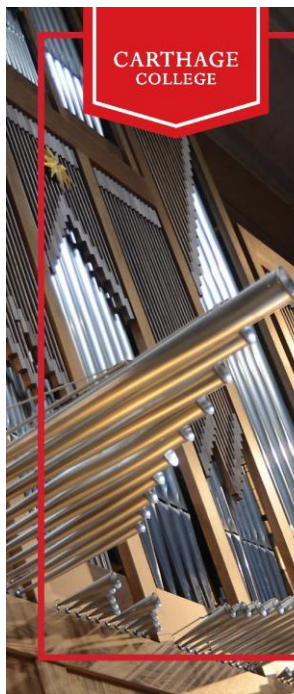


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FROM THE ARCHIVES

Liz Walloch, Historian/Archivist - walloch1952@att.net

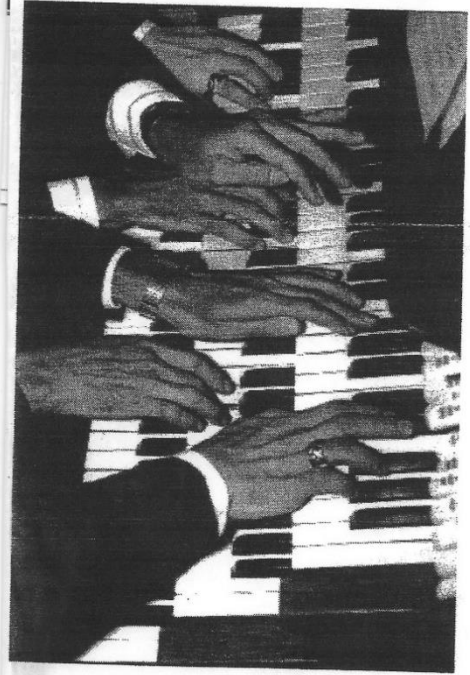
The month of May is filled with numerous celebrations. From National Day of Prayer, Cinco de Mayo, Mother's Day, College Graduations, First Eucharists, Confirmations, Shavuot, Ascension, Pentecost and Memorial Day, it is a month that doesn't pause. It keeps on celebrating and so does this month's article. The year is 1994, the Chapter is celebrating its 75th Anniversary. I selected a few events to recelebrate from the Diamond Jubilee Year!

The date is March 13, 1994, the time is 3 pm, and the location is the Grand Avenue Congregational Church in Milwaukee for the "Composers Festival of Music." In reviewing the materials from this event, the list of composers and performers, I am amazed by all the musical talent within our Chapter and friends. The program highlighted these composers.

Wallace Cheatham	Austrian Variations for Organ and Brass Quartet
John A. Behnke	Variations on "Kum Ba Yah" for Organ
Emily Porter	Hymn Concertato on "St. Patrick's Breastplate"
Hildegarde Fischer	Fantasy for Cello & Piano
Werner Grams	Romanza for Violin & Piano
+Robert Legler	Hymn Variations on Jesu, meine freude
	Prelude & Fugue on BACH for Organ
Viola Goers	Christmas Carols
Dennis Janzer	Stratosuono for Four Organists, one Console

Here are some facts and finds on each of the composer's pieces. Wallace Cheatham's piece was a commissioned work by and dedicated to Marilyn Mason and would be premiered in April in Ann Arbor Michigan. Chapter member Martha Stiehl performed Wallace's composition along with the UWM Brass Musicians. John Behnke's variations on Kum Ba Yah was performed by his student Stephen Hibbard, a Chapter member. Emily Porter's Irish tune, St. Patrick's Breastplate, written for the organ included text from St. Patrick and Cecil F. Alexander, and was sung by the Trinity Episcopal Church Choir. The Fantasy for Cello & Piano of Hildegarde Fischer was composed in 1991 joins previous performances with the Wisconsin Alliance of Composers concert and "Music for Our Time" in 1992. For this concert, cellist Paul Gmeinder joined Ms. Fischer. The Romanza piece by Werner Grams was performed by Chapter member, Thomas Koester on piano and JoAnn Haasler on violin. Mr. Grams is listed on the roster of the Chicago Chapter and holds a CAGO certificate. Life Member, Robert Legler was included on this program with two of his pieces. He passed away in July 1988 having had his compositions published by Augsburg Press. Two Chapter members performed Robert Legler's pieces. David Bahrke performed the Hymn Variations on Jesu meine freude and John Wittmayer performed the Prelude & Fugue on BACH. Viola Goers composed a new Christmas Carol for friends each year as a musical greeting. Scott Riedel performed on organ four Carols of "Christmas Blessing," 1988, "Jesus Christ, Our Savior," 1992, "Sing Praise to God (for Trinity)," 1951, rev. 1966 and "King of Glory," 1991 with Chapter member Lee Erickson as soloist. Dennis Janzer's piece was most interesting and needed four organists to perform! So, Dennis welcomed three additional organists to share the organ bench with him. They were Bernard H. Sans, Jr., Dennis Jon Wolfgang, Carl E. Chadick. See the photo, there seems to be plenty of room on the manuals, but the bench is a bit short!

Busy Hands Are Happy Hands



Dean, Scott Riedel wrote in April PipeNotes "We've been here 75 years, making music for churches, synagogues, concerts and recitals. The Milwaukee Chapter has established a tradition of excellence in programming and furthering the advancement of organ and choral music. Our membership is strong and we have a bold vision for the future. FOLKS IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE AND HAVE FUN..." and the chapter did just that with two events on April 29 and May 1.

TWO EVENTS FOR THE DIAMOND JUBILEE!!

On Friday, April 29 at 7:30 pm the AGO Member's recital was held at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist. "The recital featured John Paradowski, Scott Riedel, Sr. Mary Jane Wagner & John Wittmayer presenting a program of organ literature and hymn tunes and texts spanning the 75-year history of the Guild. The Cathedral's 4-manual 1966 Noehren organ and

spacious acoustics will resound in a program including: Sigfrid Karg-Elert: *Homage to Handel*; J.S. Bach: *Fantasy and Fugue in G Minor*; and *Naji Hakim: Memoire. Hymn tunes sung by the audience*” included “*Milwaukee, of course!, Ebenezer,*

Houston, Holy Manna and Ar Hyd Nos. The hymn texts have been written by authors representing a rich diversity of backgrounds.”

On Sunday, May 1 the Annual Meeting and Election was held at the Oriental Theatre at 1 pm which was followed by a 75th Anniversary Gala recital by Clark Wilson. He is sure to dazzle the audience’s ears playing the 3/34 Kimball Organ with a program of popular and classic showtunes by American composers Richard Rodgers and Cole Porter. The Milwaukee Chapter joined with the Kimball Theatre Organ Society for this gala recital. There was a bonus for the audience of organ improvisation to the silent comedy of the “Music Box” featuring Laurel and Hardy. Dean Riedel wrote that “*the Grand Finale is a Birthday Special you won’t want to miss... we’re planning quite a sensational thriller.*” If anyone recalls what the Grand Finale included, send me an email with the details, my email address is at the beginning of the article.

AGO-Milwaukee 75th Anniversary Shirts

Proceeds (at least 50% of suggested donation) go to upcoming American Guild of Organists- Milwaukee Chapter Projects.

Printed in Red Gold Orange and Black on a White Shirt



As a way to promote the 75th Anniversary, the Chapter had commemorative 75th Anniversary shirts and sweatshirts for order. If anyone has one of these shirts or sweatshirts, I would be interested to hear from you. Send me an email with details for inclusion in the Archives.

Recelebrating these highlights from the 75th Anniversary of the Chapter is like looking at photos from family and friend’s life events. They bring memories forward, emotions and show how life has changed us individually and how our Chapter has grown. The Archives is a wealth of Chapter history that could be the springboard for renewed, refreshed, and refashioned events for future programming. Let’s continue to celebrate, next year the chapter will be 105 years young!

2023 Nominations

Treasurer – Steve Jensen*

Secretary – Mike Keegan*

***currently serving in these offices**

Class of 2025



Mike Jacklin My love of the organ began as a child and has become my life. I have been a member of the AGO off and on for over 35 years. Most of that time was in Chicago, where I lived until 10 years ago when I moved to Menomonee Falls to become the full time Minister of Music at Holy Cross Lutheran. I have now started my 45th year as a church musician, doing everything from sitting on the organ bench, directing music programs, and directing large fundraising concerts. During my time in Chicago, I also worked for the Rodgers Organ Company for 11 years.

When I arrived in Wisconsin, I met Dean Rosko, and was introduced to the Milwaukee Chapter of the AGO and the Dairyland Theatre Organ Society where I now sit as a board member, and fundraising and project coordinator.

The future of the organ is becoming very uncertain! I believe firmly in the fact that you must make an impression on the youth through music. As the music programming in our schools continues to decrease, it lies on our shoulders to ensure that the youth are engaged in music. That means involving them and giving them every opportunity to sit at an organ console to try it and learn. We as an organization must be reaching out to the youth to encourage the instrument and the profession, and that is only done by people that will open their arms and hearts. I learned many years ago that if I wanted to engage the youth, I had to program to them. I had to present to them at their level and make it fun. I feel that we here in Milwaukee and the outlying areas have many interesting instruments to feature to the youth. I would like to see us as an organization start presenting programs to the youth and hope to encourage participation from the AGO membership in doing this. It has to start somewhere so let’s get this started.



Keri Kelly I started violin lessons at the age of 6, and then shortly after I started piano. I was always attending music camps and conferences during the summer (such as Suzuki camp) and in middle school I was apart of a junior orchestra which taught me a lot about chamber music and playing with others. I was blessed to have the opportunity to take singing lessons, sing in a polyphony choir at church, and learn Gregorian chant.

When I started high school, I was especially attracted to chamber music, especially early music and ‘historically informed performance practice’.

I joined the Baroque Ensemble at the University of Whitewater-Wisconsin as a sophomore playing an authentic baroque violin! In the winter of 2020, I started getting interested in organ and I started teaching myself. At this time, I started playing for a few churches infrequently and accompanying choirs. I started formal organ lessons in the Spring of 2021 while working at a few churches as a substitute.

I purchased a harpsichord in August, and most recently in January, an early 1900’s Estey Reed organ. I am hoping to acquire more “historical” instruments such as a clavichord and a fortepiano. I am very interested in instrument restoration, which is very important to know as a musician (especially as an organist!)

I am currently a music performance major at the University of Whitewater-Wisconsin, and I am hoping to study the viola de gamba as my undergraduate research project. I give piano lessons, and I am going to be taking Suzuki teacher training for piano and violin this summer. I am very passionate about introducing children to instruments such as organ and harpsichord, because it’s so important for these instruments to be kept alive!

Tom Koester I currently serve as part-time choir director and organist at Trinity Episcopal Church in Wauwatosa. My most recent full-time positions have included Marquette University Campus Ministry, director of music and director of the Liturgical Choir; Director of liturgy and music for Ss. Peter and Paul, Milwaukee and St. Jerome Catholic Church, Oconomowoc. At St Mary Visitation, Elm Grove, I served briefly as organist and youth choir director. I have performed as organ soloist with the Waukesha Symphony and have served as organist / accompanist for the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and Concord Chamber Orchestra. From 2009-2020, I served as adjunct organ faculty at Carroll University in Waukesha, WI. If elected to the board, I would be honored to serve our organ guild community once again.



J. Craig Sproat Originally from the Outer Banks of North Carolina, Craig Sproat holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in organ performance from the University of Oklahoma. He also studied at Concordia University Wisconsin (B.M.A.) and Indiana University (M.M.) where his teachers included James Freese, John Behnke, and John Schwandt. From 2011 to 2015 he was an Instructor in the American Organ Institute at the University of Oklahoma, teaching private lessons and courses in organ and church music. In 2022 he was appointed Assistant Professor of Music and Director of Parish Music, teaching organ lessons and overseeing the undergraduate parish music program. In addition to his work at Concordia, he also serves as Kantor at Luther Memorial Chapel in Shorewood.

Much of his time in Oklahoma was also spent in the world of musical theatre. From 2015 to 2022 he was an Instructor at the Weitzenhoffer School of Musical Theatre at the University of Oklahoma, where he served as staff accompanist, did some vocal coaching, and music directed productions. Besides playing for numerous productions, highlights at OU include *The Rocky Horror Show* (conductor), *Hands on a Hardbody* (co-musical director/conductor), *Cabaret* (associate musical director), *Spring Awakening* (conductor), and *Pippin* (associate music director). At the Sooner Theatre in Norman, Oklahoma, he also music directed and conducted productions of *Meet Me in St. Louis*, *Catch Me if You Can*, and *Next to Normal*.