



Jim's Jottings

by Dean, James J. Lytton, ChM

It's that time of year! There were seven organ recitals and programs in March and April. Two of the programs were repeated. That is a large number of programs. Three organ recitals were student recitals from UNL. Congratulations to John Ross, Michael Emmerich and Chris Lyons. All of the programs were excellent and very interesting. The symphony programs at First-Plymouth Church received standing ovations. Congratulations to Christopher Marks and Jeremy Bankson. We are blessed to have such talent in the Lincoln area.

It is time to start thinking about the summer. What do you do in the summer? I think that I have done this before, but I do need to refresh myself or I go stale in the fall. It does not need to be anything specific, but just lots of change of scenery and things to stimulate my brain.

So in June, I will be attending the Region VI Convention in Wichita. The next week there is a Pipe Organ Encounter in Kansas City and two of our student members, Cole Sartore and Nolan Pribnow, will be in attendance and I plan to go to Kansas City at the end of the week to hear the student recitals.

In July, I will attend the National Pastoral Musicians Convention in Chicago, and then attend the Hymn Society conference at St. Olaf in Minnesota.

In August, I will be playing a recital in Reno, Nevada. An organ recital takes place every Friday at noon in Reno, 51 weeks of the year (none on Good Friday). Attendance has been a low of three and a high of close to one hundred. The church is right on the river downtown and there are a number of walk-ins for the 30-minute recital. The pay is very modest and people come from New York, from Atlanta, from San Francisco and Los Angeles, and from other places to play on the recital series. While the series is not sponsored by the Reno AGO chapter, they do have a lot to do with the series, and a number of their members play regularly, as I did when I was living there.

When I return from Reno, I hope that I am ready
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Jim Lytton



S U C C E S S ! from "The Organ Sucks!" to "That is WAY COOL!"

by Pam Penner, CAGO

Only two months left in the International Year of the Organ. I hope yours has been a success. There have been so many events that, if you are like me, you have not been able to take them all in. But hopefully you attended what you could, and I hope you accepted my challenge at the beginning of the year that you make a difference in your own church and community.

The organ is a "hard sell" in today's culture. With contemporary music coming into the picture in many churches, it is difficult to get people enthusiastic about the organ, especially young people. Naturally, there are a few exceptions, but generally speaking, the guitars and drums will win out. I think at this point we are going to have to live with that fact, not ignore it. Consequently, organists have to learn to cultivate an appreciation for our instrument. In one of the churches that I serve, I have given an organ recital twice yearly for the past few years. Attendance has been fairly low, even though I tried to gear my program music to be appealing to a general crowd. On average, attendance ranged from 50-60 people. Not bad, you say, for an 'amateur' organist and for little outside advertising.

I decided something needed to change during this year, so I could feel successful in my attempt to promote the organ more in my church and community. So, in the fall, instead of doing a solo recital, I asked our music director and our associate pastor to join me in a recital. They are both vocalists, and they were very excited and willing to do so. It was a lot of work, but quite successful. They enjoyed being able to dig back through their files of music that they did in their college days, and it added a new dimension to the recital, as well as some new faces in the audience! I am not sure what the attendance was on that Sunday afternoon but it was well over 100! Wow – double what I was getting alone, but many people who came to hear the vocalists commented on the great program and the organ pieces. SUCCESS!

Following that concert, the associate pastor approached me about playing "Adagio for Strings" by Barber (incidentally, one of the pieces I played on the recital) during an advent worship service in which he was speaking. He had
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■ DEAN

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to go for the fall. Most of these events will have exhibits where one can find new music or books. Chatting with other attendees is a great way to find new friends and to find new ideas for your church. The Hymn Society has five hymn festivals during the week as well as workshops (called "sectionals" by the Hymn Society). NPM offers recitals and choral programs as well as workshops (called "breakouts"). There are also a number of speeches and lectures, some of which are actually quite interesting.

The board continues to try to grow the membership. Letters have been sent and phone calls made, but the best way to add membership is through YOU, the members. If you can bring a neighboring church musician to one of our programs, then they might think about joining the chapter. People, in the form of members, are the best way to sell the Guild. YOU are the Guild, YOU are the best public relations envoys that we have.

I hope to see you at the May 3 event. And at the two recitals that follow: Annette Richards on May 17 and the Faulkners on June 7. ♪

Sunday, May 17 – 3:00 PM Annette Richards, Organist Cornerstone UMHE Chapel 640 North 16th Street, Lincoln

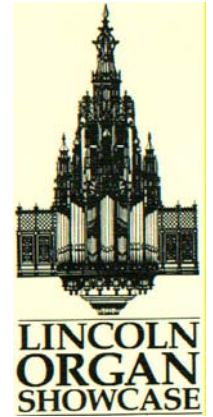
In her work as a music historian and keyboard player, Annette Richards draws on her training in English literature, art history, musicology, and musical performance. Musical and visual aesthetics and criticism are of particular interest to her, as is music in literature, and changing attitudes and approaches to performance



Annette Richards

in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As a performer, Annette Richards specializes in music of the Italian and North German Baroque, and has played concerts on numerous historic and modern instruments in Europe and the United States. She also regularly performs music from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. At Cornell University Ms. Richards teaches courses on eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century music aesthetics and criticism; intersections between music and visual culture; music and the uncanny; the undergraduate history survey; music of the Baroque; and the organ and its musical culture, as well as organ performance.

Tickets: 402.421.0975 or purchase at the door. ♪



■ SUCCESS (Continued from Page 1)

found words about the coming of Christ set to this piece of music. This was the topic of his sermon that morning, and after the message, I played this piece – in the morning services. I would say the attendance for both services was 400! So everyone who attended that morning heard something different than the usual hymns and service music that is normally used. I received many great comments on how the comforting words about our Savior's coming to earth, and set to that music, was so meaningful. SUCCESS!

Not to be outdone, the Senior Pastor asked me a couple months later if I could play "Adagio for Strings" by Albinoni as "background music" to a portion of his sermon. He had found a great story about the use of this music, and it related to the theme of his sermon. So, as he was telling the story, this piece was being played in the background. Many commented on what a great effect that was, and how the music drew them to listen more closely to the story and the point being made. This happened during Lent. Again, probably 400+ were in attendance at both services. Again - SUCCESS! And these two instances of success were not instigated by me, but just being willing and agreeable to do what was asked, has given the organ an entirely new role in this church!

The Music Director approached me in February about playing the Good Friday Service. She suggested a work by John Huston – "Meditations on the Seven Last Words of Christ." She had found it in a stack of organ music left years ago by a retiring organist, and wondered if I could play it for the service. It was a challenge to learn it in a short amount of time, but I was not about to tell her I could not do it! So lots of hours of practice and loss of sleep worrying about whether I could get it ready in time paid off! On Good Friday, this was the bulk of the service. Scripture readings were added between each piece and while the music was being played, a PowerPoint presentation on scenes from the Cross was shown – it was quite powerful, from what I was told. I have not been able to see it yet, but quite effectively enhanced the music, and the music enhanced the visual presentation. Usually the attendance for this service is around 100, but that night we had close to 300 people in attendance. Many people commented on the effectiveness of the music that evening and the success of the ministry during that service.

One of the brass players talked to me the next morning at rehearsal and said he had to force his children to attend that service. He felt they needed to experience "the cross" and they did not want to attend. "Dad – the organ sucks!!" was his son's response. But he went and they sat in the back row. He told me then when I opened the organ up to full capacity the first time, his son got an amazed look on his face and looked at his dad and said "WOW – that's WAY COOL!" What better reaction could I have asked for than that from a 12-year old boy – SUCCESS!

To promote the organ, we have to give extraordinary service, but it's worth it.

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PIPES
ON THE
PLAINS

June 15-18, 2009

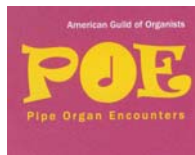
<http://pipesontheplains09.org/>

"The Sacred Hoop"

Donald Callen Freed's, "The Sacred Hoop," is a SAB choral work recently published by Yelton Rhodes Music. According to Freed, "The Sacred Hoop" is a tribute to his mother, Mary Louise Callen Freed (1926-2005), an anthropologist, archaeologist, and a farmer with a broad world view, and an affinity for learning about world cultures. "The Sacred Hoop" is from chapter three of John G. Neihardt's Black Elk Speaks, entitled "The Great Vision." It is one of many visions that Black Elk ©. 1863-1950), an Oglala Sioux, has in response to the brokenness of the Oglala Sioux people. ♪

Sartore & Pribnow to POE

Cole Sartore and Nathan Pribnow, student members of the Lincoln Chapter AGO, will attend the Pipe Organ Encounters in Kansas City in June. Both Pribnow and Sartore will receive another free year of membership in the Guild. ♪



Three FREE Tickets for May 3 ABENDMUSIK

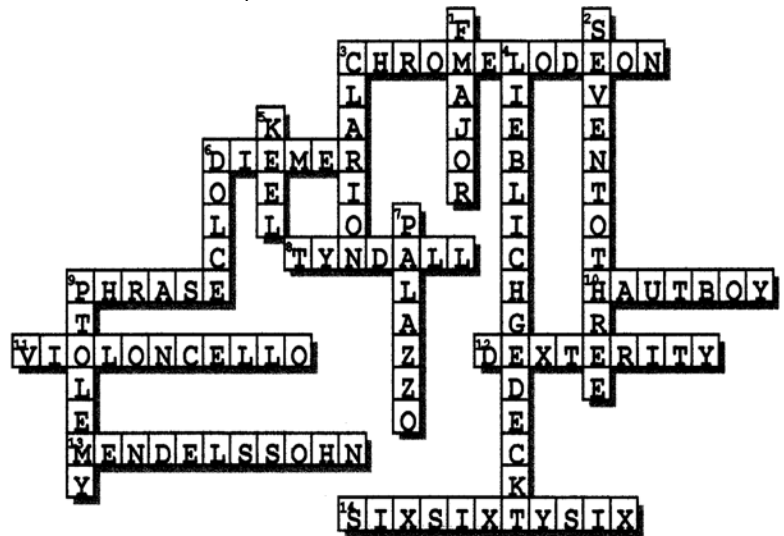
FREE Would you like to go to the Abendmusik: Lincoln Spring Choral Concert May 3 at 4:00 PM prior to our AGO dinner meeting?

Jim Hejduk has three FREE tickets he will give to you. Call him at 402.742.9017. First come, first served. Jim will leave the tickets with your name(s) on them at the Abendmusik ticket table. ♪

Spring

Organ Puzzle Fun #1 – Answers

Susie Cook, author of last month's Organ Puzzle Fun #1, has provided you with the answers to the puzzle.



Look for crossword puzzle Fun #2 in the June issue of *Chiff Chat*.

RCYO ANNOUNCES WINNER

Dan Ahlin – RCYO Competition Coordinator

On March 28th, the Lincoln Chapter sponsored a Young Organists competition, held at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. The sole competitor, Michael Emmerich, of Lincoln, was unanimously awarded first prize. Though there was but one competitor, the judges were not required to award a prize, if they felt it unwarranted. The judges for the competition were Anabeth Gay, Willa Foster-Jones and Dr. Charles Ore. The competitor was hidden from view by the judges, until the completion of the competition.

Mr. Emmerich selected a formidable program that one would expect to hear from a more seasoned organist: Prelude and Fugue in D Major (BWV 532), J.S. Bach – Symphony No. 5 (First movement), C.M. Widor – and, a Psalm-Prelude (Ps. 130), Herbert Howells. But, his performance indicated that he was up to the challenge. My personal favorite was the Psalm-Prelude. Mr. Emmerich had a clear understanding of the text of Psalm 130: "Out of the Depths I Cry Unto Thee, O Lord." The thick, lush harmonies throbbed in his adept hands. In his meticulous registrations gradually building to full organ, the cry for help and redemption by the penitent were painfully evident in the chord clusters. As the organ gradually decreases in volume and settles into registers of string celestes, God's voice is heard; his kindness and mercy has been granted the penitent, and he is at peace.

Michael is completing his junior year at UNL, as an organ performance major, under the tutelage of Dr. Christopher Marks. Upon graduation, he plans to enter into a graduate music program. Michael's previous teachers include Dr. George Ritchie and Mary Murrell Faulkner. Michael will compete in the Region VI competition in Wichita, in June. On behalf of the judges and the Lincoln Chapter AGO board, we extend to Michael our best

(Turn to RCYO, Page 4)

– CALENDAR OF EVENTS –

MAY

- 3 4:00 PM **ABENDMUSIK:LINCOLN** – A Spring Choral Spectacular – First-Plymouth Congregational Church (U.C.C.) – 2000 D Street, Lincoln
- 3 6:30 PM **SPECIAL AGO CELEBRATION DINNER** – First-Plymouth Congregational Church U.C.C. – 2000 D Street, Lincoln – Reservations needed
- 17 3:00 PM **LINCOLN ORGAN SHOWCASE** – Annette Richards, Organist – Cornerstone UMHE Chapel – 640- North 16th Street, Lincoln
- 20 **DEADLINE for June issue of *Chiff Chat*** – Jim Lytton, ChM; 6641 South 57th Street; Lincoln, NE 68516-5226; Phone: 402.421.0975; E-mail: jlytton@gmail.com

LOOKING AHEAD TO JUNE

- 7 3:00 PM **AGO MEETING** – Mary Murrell (CAGO) and Quentin Faulkner (AAGO), Organists – Mary Murrell (CAGO) and Quentin Faulkner (AAGO), Organists – St. Mark's On the Campus, Episcopal – 1309 R Street, Lincoln
- 15-18 **PIPES ON THE PLAINS** – Region VI AGO Convention – Wichita, Kansas

■ **SUCCESS (Continued from Page 2)**

I play at two churches, and a couple years ago, the other church that I play for burned to the ground. They have now purchased another church building and are beginning to feel at home there. The organist who plays the early service there loaned the church his house organ until a decision can be made on what to do about another organ. It is a big decision and a great financial undertaking, but this past year, after much discussion with the "powers that be" and the music committee, the decision was made to purchase a pipe organ, as soon as the funds can be raised. SUCCESS!

I hope that you have had success this past year with your endeavors to promote the organ as well. Now that the year is almost finished, set a few more goals – continue to promote the organ in any way possible. I plan to learn and play one of the organ demonstrators that have been published, Biblically based, and use it in a service on a Sunday morning during the summer. If you can get your Pastor enthused about ministry like this, you have a strong ally. The rewards are GREAT! ♪

■ **RCYO (Continued from Page 3)**

wishes and success in Wichita!

My personal thanks to Jim Lytton (ChM), Dean; Jim Hejduk, Sub-Dean; and, board members Dick Morris and Laura Trotta, for their guidance and assistance with this competition. A special thanks too, to Loretta Love, Director of Music at Holy Trinity Episcopal, for hosting this competition. ♪

Still Looking for Donations

A repeat from the Dean's column in the April issue of Chiff Chat:

The International Year of the Organ has generated some unusual expenses and the board has decided to pay those expenses from some of the chapter's invested funds. But, the board has also made it very clear that we will repay those funds as quickly as possible. Several things are happening and some of the money has already been replaced. We are also working to identify donors to pay for some of the upcoming concerts.

One way to raise some money is that I am willing

to donate \$1,000 to the chapter, PROVIDING that money is matched by chapter members or friends. I am able to do this because of some money that has come from my mother's estate. I know that not everyone can donate a large sum, but if we can get \$5, \$10, or \$25 from a number of people, we can make the goal and the chapter will have \$2,000 more in the bank. If you are interested in making a donation, please send a check payable to Lincoln Chapter AGO – Sinda Dux, 2301 Southwest 18th Street, Lincoln, NE 68522-1923. ♪

June Issue of *Chiff Chat*

Since this May issue is my final issue of *Chiff Chat*, please note in the Calendar of Events the deadline date for the June issue and to whom to mail any submissions for the newsletter. ♪

Lincoln Chapter AGO
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