



## Jim's Jottings

by Dean, James J. Lytton, Dean



Jim Lytton

### A Tale of Two Cities

The year is 2030. The American Guild of Organists has a new executive director. He is anxious to do his job well. So he has decided to visit several cities in the country to see how well the Guild chapters in each city are functioning.

He first visits Clinton, the capital of the state and home to the state university, which has a fine football team and also a small organ department. He discovers that there are about 40 pipe organs in Clinton. "Well," he thinks, "there should be a great AGO chapter in Clinton. Once upon a time there were about 80 members in the chapter." So he begins his investigations. But he can find no one who knows anything about the AGO chapter in Clinton. Finally, he discovers Mr. Overthill, who is the retired organist of St. John the Magnificent Church in Clinton. "Ah, yes," says Mr. Overthill, "there once was a great chapter here. The chapter hosted conventions and workshops and had very good meetings. But as the years went by, fewer and fewer people would attend the meetings. It was difficult to get new members to join the chapter. It was tough to get people to serve on the board. Students stopped attending meetings because there were too many old fuddy-duddies around. So the chapter folded. There was not even anyone who would notify the national office that the chapter had closed." Well, the new executive director was distressed to hear that news. He had counted on Clinton as being one of the better chapters in the country.

So he went off to Royale, in another state. Royale is also home to a university, although with a football team that is not as good as the one in Clinton. And there is no organ department at the university in Royale. "Oh, dear," he thinks, "this is not looking too good." He then discovers that there are fewer than fifteen pipe organs in Royale and not a lot of electronic organs either. Many new churches have been built that do not have an organ at all.

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## No "Official" AGO Meeting in November But . . .

### John Behnke – Organ, Instruments and Praise

Sunday, November 30 – 7:00 PM

First Lutheran Church

1551 South 70th Street, Lincoln

Dr. John Behnke is Professor of Music at Concordia University in Mequon, Wisconsin where he teaches organ and directs The Alleluia Ringers, Concordia's touring handbell choir.

[Masako Nakamura Bacon is a former organ student of Dr. Behnke and played in the Alleluia Ringers.] Behnke is also organist at Historic Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church in downtown Milwaukee, where he plays on an 1878 Schuelke organ.

Dr. Behnke is a frequent organ recitalist, handbell clinician, and festival director. He enjoys composing and arranging having handbell, choral, and organ compositions in print with eleven different publishers in the United States, Germany, and Taiwan.

A 1974 graduate of Concordia-River Forest, IL. he received his M. Mus. in Church Music and Organ from Northwestern University, Evanston, IL. in 1978. His D. Mus. was awarded to him in 1984 by Northwestern University where he was elected into the Alpha Chapter of Pi Kappa Lambda, a National Honorary Music Society. From August 1978 to July 1979 Dr. Behnke studied at the Westphalian Church Music Institute in Herford, W. Germany, where he passed the "A" Exam in Organ with the grade of "1-Excellent."

The program will be hymn interpretations of Dr. Behnke – old and new hymns for organ alone, organ and instruments, organ and instruments and congregational singing. His music is wonderfully accessible, things you might really be able to use.

Don't have tickets? Call the LOS ticket hotline: 402.421.0975. #



John Behnke

## ■ JOTTINGS

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He finally runs into Mr. Growingolder who is the organist at St. Cuthberts-in-the-Mountains Church. Mr. Growingolder tells him that there is a vibrant AGO chapter in Royale. The chapter closed for a few years but was revived in the 1980s. The chapter used to have about 20-30 members but has gone out looking for new members and now numbers around 35. The monthly meetings are well attended and several people have passed Guild exams. They have an annual meeting where members perform music with organ and instruments and the program raises money for the worthy causes. The Royale AGO chapter seems to be thriving.

So the new executive director hopped on his plane and flew back to New York City to ponder the things that he had discovered about the two chapters in two very different cities. #

## First Friday Concert Series Gets Romantic

**Saint Paul United Methodist Church**  
**Friday, November 7 – 12:10 PM**

**Kurt Knecht**, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln graduate student, and music director and organist at St. Mark's on the Campus, Episcopal, will entice the audience on with his collection titled "Romantic Old and New." His music is described as "funky" and "joyous" by the Washington Post and "sinister" by the Tampa Tribune.



Kurt Knecht

His arrangement of the spiritual *Go Tell it on the Mountain* was recently featured at the Kennedy Center by the Grammy Award winning Washington Chorale. His *Manly Men's Chorus* is an international hit and was recently programmed on a series of concerts in Dresden, Germany.

As an eclectic performer, Kurt has been a featured soloist with groups ranging from Smokey Robinson to The Florida Orchestra. As a choral accompanist, Kurt has performed in concert with many of the country's leading conductors.

The concert is free and open to the public. The event will take place in Saint Paul UMC's sanctuary, located at 1144 M Street.

This is the seventh year that Saint Paul UMC has hosted the First Friday Noon Concert Series and this is the International Year of the Organ. More information about the Year of the Organ can be found at <http://www.agohq.org/home.html> #

## AN AMERICAN IDEAL ABENDMUSIK: LINCOLN

**Sunday, November 2 – 4:00 PM**

**First-Plymouth Congregational Church U.C.C.**

**2000 D Street, Lincoln**

Celebrate the land of the free at this stirring pre-election concert of American patriotic repertoire. The Abendmusik Men's Chorus, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Men's Chorus and Grand Island Northwest Men's Chorus will be joined by the Plymouth Brass, Lied Organ and percussion in a glorious tribute to the music that has inspired generations of U.S. citizens. Copland's *Lincoln Portrait* will anchor this moving performance of America's most heartfelt patriotic works.

Tickets – Adults: \$20.00, Senior Citizens: \$15.00, Students: \$10.00 – Call 402.476.9933 to purchase tickets. #



## Organ/Vocal Recital



Pam Penner

Pam Penner, CAGO, will be giving an organ recital on November 9, 3:00 PM, at Eastridge Presbyterian Church. Molly Schmidt – contralto, Director of Music at Eastridge and J.P. Carlson – baritone, Associate Pastor will be joining Pam in a program of classical and sacred music.

The church is located at 1135 Eastridge Drive, Lincoln. #

## AGO an LSO Corporate Sponsor

As members of the AGO, you are eligible for a \$15 discount on single tickets to Lincoln Symphony Orchestra performances throughout the year.

Telephone the LSO office at 402.476.2211, or visit their Web site . . .

[www.lincolnsymphony.com](http://www.lincolnsymphony.com)

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2:00 PM**, Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra presents "Peter and the Wolf" at NWU's O'Donnell Auditorium, 5000 St. Paul, Lincoln. Tickets to this performance for AGO members are \$5 each. #

## From the Archives by Sinda Dux, Historian

Gerre Hancock played a concert at Holy Trinity Church in October 1965 with selections by Bach, Franck, Buxtehude, Haydn, and Messiaen. The program states "The audience is requested to refrain from applause."

In the 1950's a prospective Lincoln chapter member had to submit letters from 5 members okaying that person for membership. In the 1960's the entire chapter membership voted admitting each new chapter member. Sometimes the vote was No, although no reasons were given in the minutes. #

## New Web Site for Omaha Chapter AGO

<http://www.agoomaha.org/>

## Lincoln Chapter Web Site

The Lincoln Chapter AGO Web site has two new items worthy of your reading [[www.agolincoln.org/](http://www.agolincoln.org/)]

- Photos of Christopher Marks and Masako Nakamura Bacon appearing on Friday Live from The Mill in the Haymarket, October 10. They were publicizing the October 19 Organ Spectacular concert.
- Jim Hejduk's review of the recent organ recital by Todd Wilson #

## Windows on Chant: History Theory, & Practice

**Presenters: Susan Ferré & Fr. Anthony Ruff**  
**November 7 & 8, 2008**

Bales Organ Recital Hall  
The University of Kansas, Lawrence  
Information?

<http://www2.ku.edu/-organ>  
[mbauer@ku.edu](mailto:mbauer@ku.edu)  
785.864.9744 #

## Membership Directory Corrections

Dux, Sinda

W 402.472.1178

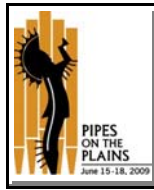


**A program of music  
for the king of instruments**  
Sundays at 8:30 PM – KZUM 89.3 FM

## UNT Organ Conference

The University of North-Texas, Denton, hosted an "Inaugural Organ Conference" October 20-22. George Ritchie, Honorary Lifetime Member of our Lincoln Chapter AGO, presented a lecture "Thoughts on Performance Practices in J. S. Bach's Organ Music."

Also featured at the conference as a 'respondent' to Matthew Dirst's lecture, "Bach's Organ Music as Cultural Signifier from Schübler Chorales to Fantasia," was Quentin Faulkner, also an Honorary Lifetime Member of our Lincoln Chapter. Quentin now resides in Amherst, Massachusetts. #



## "Pipes on the Plains"

**2009 Region VI Convention**

**Wichita, Kansas**

**Convention headquarters: Hotel in Old Town**

**[For your advance planning.]**

After more than a year of preparation, the convention steering committee may now begin to share with you the people and events of our convention. Check out our developing convention Web site:

<http://www.pipesonthepains09.org/>

Featured events and performers:

- ▶ Choral/Brass Festival – John Romeri (Music Director of St. Louis Cathedral Basilica). First United
- ▶ Methodist Church. This opening worship service will feature hymns, anthems, organ with the Wichita Brass Quintet and timpani.
- ▶ Quimby RCYO Competition for young artists

Performances by the featured artists:

- ▶ Jan Kraybill – WSU Marcussen, Wiedemann Hall
- ▶ Wichita Chamber Chorale directed by Robert Glasman – at First Presbyterian Church
- ▶ Fran Shelley/Steve Egler Duo – flute and organ recital at Plymouth Congregational Church
- ▶ RCYO Quimby winner's recital at East Heights United Methodist Church
- ▶ Organized Rhythm – Clive Driscoll-Smith, organ, Joseph Gramley, percussion at Eastminster Presbyterian Church
- ▶ Anna Myeong – Holy Cross Lutheran Church
- ▶ Musica Antiqua – early music ensemble from Iowa State University at Botanica Gardens
- ▶ Brett Valliant – Century II Wurlitzer Organ
- ▶ Lynne Davis – WSU Marcussen, Wiedemann Hall

Workshops presented by clinicians:

- ▶ Lynne Davis
- ▶ Michael Bauer
- ▶ Burton Tidwell
- ▶ Shirley King
- ▶ John Leavitt
- ▶ Jeff Verkuilen
- ▶ Marlene Hallstrom
- ▶ Melody Steed

Worship services:

- ▶ Vespers/evening prayer at St. Mary's Cathedral
- ▶ Compline/night prayer at St. James Episcopal Church
- ▶ Gospel worship with Huron Breaux at East Heights United Methodist Church

Special entertainment by Heart of America Men's Ensemble. #

## New Music Terminology

For anyone with on-line capabilities, you might wish to check out this Web site of new music terminology . . .

[http://www.napervillechorus.org/musical\\_terms.html](http://www.napervillechorus.org/musical_terms.html) #

## – CALENDAR OF EVENTS –

**OCTOBER**

26 2:00 PM **PETER AND THE WOLF** – Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra – NWU O'Donnell Auditorium – 5000 Saint Paul, Lincoln

31 **ALL HALLOWS' EVE (Halloween)**

**NOVEMBER**

1 **ALL SAINTS' DAY (All Hallows)**

2 4:00 PM **ABENDMUSIK:LINCOLN** – An American Ideal – First-Plymouth Congregational Church U.C.C. – 2000 D Street, Lincoln

7 12:10 PM **FIRST FRIDAY CONCERT SERIES** – Kurt Knecht, Organ – Saint Paul United Methodist Church – 1144 M Street, Lincoln

9 3:00 PM **ORGAN/VOCAL RECITAL** – Pam Penner (CAGO), Organ – Assisted by Contralto, Molly Schmidt and Baritone, J. P. Carlson – Eastridge Presbyterian Church – 1135 Eastridge Drive, Lincoln

20 **DEADLINE for December issue of Chiff Chat** – Mike Veak; 536 Pier 2; Lincoln, NE 68528-1461; Phone: 402.817.0830; E-mail: [mveak@neb.rr.com](mailto:mveak@neb.rr.com)

30 7:00 PM **LINCOLN ORGAN SHOWCASE** – John Behnke, Organ – First Lutheran Church – 1551 South 70th Street, Lincoln

## Communications from Two Lincoln Chapter AGO Past Deans

My dear friend, Mike,

I've thoroughly enjoyed receiving the *Chiff Chat* over the years and am especially proud to be included as a "Past Dean." I'm remembering that when we first broke into mass mailing, that it was to our advantage to include people such as me. In recent months, however, I've come to notice that a first-class stamp had to be applied. I was about to send you a book or two of stamps, when I discovered your wonderful Web site. You had published an excellent article by someone from Colorado and I suspected that an on-line version might just be available so I could forward a link to an old friend in NYC. It is, and then I said to myself, "Why not allow Mike to discontinue the monthly mailings; I can easily keep up on-line!" I appreciate the annual membership book, however. It's always fun to see who's still around.

It hardly seems possible that a quarter of a century has passed since we worked so closely together on the *Chiff Chat*, the regional convention, and a multitude of local issues.

We live in a delightful retirement community. I've been quite active in the musical scene, writing program notes for the concert association, serving as president of the chamber music society, and playing the piano from time to time. My general neurological condition precludes much ambitious organ playing, unfortunately, and Tucson just doesn't have the wealth of fine instruments I was accustomed to enjoying in Lincoln.

*Bob*

[Ed. note: Dr. Robert Murray, a Past Dean of the Lincoln Chapter AGO, taught organ at Union College and was also organist at the College View Seventh-Day Adventist Church, where he was responsible for securing the Rieger pipe organ there. Bob was very involved in our 1985 regional AGO convention that was held in Lincoln. Bob and his wife live in Green Valley, Arizona.]

I was surprised and delighted to find that I am still on your e-mail list. I retired from Southern Methodist University (SMU) last June and Ellen retired from her full-time RC position in Plano, Texas.

I would urge you to take as many people as you can to Mary Preston's recital. Mary is a friend of ours, but she is also one of the best organists in the country. Her Vierne CD's are the best out, in my opinion, and she is a lovely person as well. Nice to hear from you.

One of the perks of being an Emeritus professor is that I get to keep my free Internet service from SMU, so my e-mail address has not changed. Dick Morris was at First-Plymouth when we were in Lincoln. He was also in Austin, Texas for awhile and we ran into him at a regional convention there a few years ago. Dallas, of which I am currently Dean, is hosting the Region VII convention next summer, so Ellen and I can empathize with you. Please give our regards to any who might remember us (an ever-shrinking list, no doubt).

*Ken*

[Ed. note: Dr. Kenneth Hart and wife, Ellen, served Westminster Presbyterian Church, while in Lincoln. Ken sent this communication prior to Lincoln's and Dallas' regional conventions in 2007, and also Mary Preston's recital in Beatrice.]

**Lincoln Chapter AGO**  
**536 Pier 2**  
**Lincoln NE 68528-1461**