



PALO ALTO/PENINSULA CHAPTER AGO

Find us online at www.papenago.org and groups.yahoo.com/group/papenago

NEWSLETTER—MAY/JUNE 2011

FROM THE DEAN

Dear Chapter,

Congratulations again to our chapter, especially to Don Mulliken, for a marvelous Quimby Competition for organists under age 25. Our competitors were astounding. Adam Detzner won first place, and Duane Soubrious won second, though they tied at first. It took hours of coordination, practice, and reading of quasi-legal language, but it couldn't have gone much better. Our chapter can be very proud.

May 14 is our next members' recital. This time it will be at St. Matthew's in San Mateo at 2 p.m., where I have never been. Please let Angela know if you'd like to play. Looking forward to another great concert. They always are! I believe it's a lovely Aeolian Skinner there, too.

Thank you for having me as your dean for the last three years. It has been a magnificent experience, and I have enjoyed getting to know you immensely. I will still be around, and hope to see you just as often. Matthew Burt will succeed me as dean, and he will be an excellent dean. I have no qualms about his leadership.

CHAPTER OFFICERS

DEAN: Rani Fischer <ranifisc@gmail.com>

SUB-DEAN: Angela Kraft Cross <krftcrss@yahoo.com>

SECRETARY AND NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Matthew Burt
<mburt@post.harvard.edu>

REGISTRAR AND TREASURER: Jill Mueller
<sjillmueller@comcast.net>

WEBSITE EDITOR: Jay Martin <martinjg@flash.net>

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:

Mary Frances Johnson <wdngltrgy@earthlink.net>

Jay Martin <martinjg@flash.net>

Donald Mulliken <damulliken@aol.com>

David Sheetz <dasheetz@comcast.net>

Keith Wannamaker <keith@wannamaker.org>

Sarah Wannamaker <sarah@wannamaker.org>

CHAPLAIN: Corrie Lassen <coryl.lassen@sbcglobal.net>

REGION IX COUNCILLOR: Leslie Wolf Robb
<lesliewolfrobb@mac.com>

NORTH COAST DISTRICT CONVENER: Joyce Rhodes
<joyce.rhodes@comcast.net>

However, we still have a convention to put together, you and I, for July 4-9, 2011. Though we a co-sponsoring it with the San Francisco Chapter, we have a whole day in Palo Alto, Monday July 4, which we will host. That means we need lots of volunteers. Thank you to those who have already signed up. I will be more specific about tasks in the days to come. These are the areas of need during the entire week: help with technical & computer equipment, baking, setting up refreshments, ushering, introducing workshops, playing the piano at certain workshops ... Well, these are ones I can remember. There may be more. I'm sure we will have a splendid time, but as they say, there's no such thing as last-minute preparation.

This is a big deal! If you want to learn more about the convention, go to www.sfago2011.org. Several people have asked me about attending single days or single events. I believe there is a way to register for individual days on this website now. As far as coming to a single event, I think there are opportunities, but we won't know details until we get closer to July. Please ask me then; drop me an email. Because of limited space and fire codes, we cannot say right now. The convention is almost full now, not surprising since it is in San Francisco and the Peninsula. I think our final capacity is around 400, and we are close!

Again, please let me or Matthew know if you have questions about the convention. There is need for both male and female roommates at the hotel, so let me know, again, if you need a roommate. Carpooling is advisable to the hotel, so start working that out now with your best buddies, or not so best buddies, anyone who's going. As I mentioned in an earlier missive, overnight parking at the Golden Gate Holiday Inn is \$38 per night, which I will try to avoid.

Stay in touch, and thank you EACH for your dedication to the Palo Alto/Peninsula Chapter.

Yours always,

RANI FISCHER

UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENT

MEMBERS' RECITAL

Saturday May 14, 2:00 p.m. at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 1 S. El Camino Real, San Mateo.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Los Altos Lutheran Church is seeking an Organist and/or Choir Director. 10 hours per week; possibility of flexible schedule with use of MIDI. Salary: negotiable, based on experience and qualifications. Send cover letter, resume, and CD/DVD (if available) to: David K. Bonde, Pastor, 460 South El Monte Ave., Los Altos, CA 94022; or to <pastorbonde@losaltoslutheran.org>.

John Knox Presbyterian Church, Dublin, is seeking a part-time organist/accompanist. Salary and vacation are commensurate with experience and desired schedule. JKPC is a very warm and friendly congregation that is looking forward to worship with our new organist. Send resume and cover letter to: Dean Christman, Director of Music Ministries, 7421 Amarillo Rd., Dublin, CA 94568; or to <deanchristman@sbcglobal.net>.

ELECTRONIC ORGAN FOR SALE

2 manual Allen organ, 44 stops. Please contact Judy Lauper for more information: <jalauper@gmail.com>.

POE PORTLAND OREGON FUNDING APPEAL

Portland Oregon Chapter is proud to be hosting the West Coast's only 2011 Pipe Organ Encounter (POE), based at Concordia University Portland, July 10-14, 2011. As you no doubt know, Pipe Organ Encounters (POE's) are an educational outreach program of the American Guild of Organists, designed for teenagers, ages 13-18. They have been a tremendous success – all fully enrolled, and with long waiting lists. Students come locally and from afar—including several from Region IX.

Costs are great in hosting these students, room and board, transportation, scholarships, etc. Tuition covers only about half of the expenses, the remaining amounts are typically met by donations from individuals, chapters, and other generous benefactors.

Would your chapter consider joining our “ranks of donors?” Chapters often maintain a scholarship or education fund for development. A POE would be a really good way to share some of this worthy resource! For example, you would be one of our “angels” by sponsoring a registration of one teen, \$425! All donations will be recognized, large or small, and even \$25 would be “great!”

Your kind donations would gladly be received by: Fred Beal, POE Treasurer, 4731 NE Davis Street, Portland OR 97213-2915. Checks may be made payable to “POE PDX” (i.e., POE Portland). Questions on underwriting or other donations may also be directed to Fred at <fbmfam@gmail.com>.

MISADVENTURES OF A TOURING ACCOMPANIST, PART 2

The Symphony Silicon Valley Choir's second stop on its 2007 tour was Lucerne, Switzerland. We traveled from Montreux through Bern in the morning, arriving in Lucerne in the mid-afternoon.

Anxious to see the performance site, my wife and I had set out to find the Jesuit Kirche. The church was facing the mouth of river Reuss where it entered into Lake Lucerne. The sidewalks and plaza were crowded with people from all over the world, and the traffic was flowing at a steady pace. The famous wooden Chapel Bridge, with its paintings of the history of Lucerne, was just a short walk from the plaza in front of the church. The space around the church was in direct contrast to the narrow streets and crowded stone buildings that were hundreds of years old.

We came upon the church's imposing structure of grey stone columns rising skyward with the space between the columns filled with white stucco. There were two massive central copper clad doors and two doors on either side of the main doors for public entrance and exit. Walking through the doors, we were greeted with the echoes of numerous footsteps of people touring this massive church. There was a sensation of being surrounded by light which was reflected from the white washed walls between the windows. There were also a variety of massive sacred scenes painted on the smooth ceilings and walls. From about half way down the length of the church, we turned around and saw the organ seemingly floating near the ceiling from its position in the second balcony. It was spectacular! I couldn't wait to get my hands on it. The distance from the ground floor to the first balcony seemed at least two stories, and the height from the first to the second balcony looked to be about the same. I was going to get my exercise the next day!

On our return to the hotel, I spoke to the tour director as to the availability of practice time, remembering the previous “adventure”. He assured me that the organ would be accessible an hour before the choir rehearsal on Sunday morning. I relaxed and enjoyed a very pleasant evening.

Early Sunday morning, my wife and I walked to the church again experiencing an amazingly quiet stroll since there were no people or moving cars. The plaza in front of the church was empty and the river was flowing peacefully. We met another tour member who would be recording the concert and wanted to set up his equipment before the rehearsal.



Inside Jesuit Kirche, Lucerne, Switzerland

Our first problem was that all of the doors were closed and locked. The recording tech walked completely around the building, knocking on each door. We were amazed that we could hear the echo of his knocking through the front doors as we waited with his equipment.

Finally, after 30 minutes, a tiny white robed nun opened one of the smaller front doors. We introduced ourselves and walked into the sanctuary.

Through a combination of sign language, her broken English and my limited German, we communicated my desire to practice the organ in preparation for the Mass. The nun unlocked the door to the balcony, and I hurried to the top floor where I discovered another locked door blocking my way to the organ. Fifteen more minutes had passed and there were only 15 minutes left before the rehearsal was scheduled to begin. I hurried down all those stairs to the ground floor only to discover that I was locked in!

I heard familiar voices on the other side of the door, so I pounded on the door and shouted to get their attention. One of the choir members found the nun and she unlocked the door again. I explained that the top door was locked, so she said “OK” and led me back up to the top balcony, pausing several times to catch her breath. She unlocked the upper balcony door, pointed at the organ and then returned to the ground floor.

The organ was exquisite with its faux finished case, gold leaf accent and beautiful pipes creating an elegant symmetrical pattern. There were 41 finely crafted pull stops and I was drooling with anticipation. “Where is the ON switch?” I asked myself. It wasn’t on the front or sides of the case, it wasn’t underneath the keyboards, it wasn’t on the walls of the balcony or near the balcony doors. There was no “ON” switch. The only possible

place left was an opening for a skeleton key that was placed in the front of the case to the right of the keyboards.

Another run down to the ground floor to locate the holder of the keys!

By that time, the choir had begun warm ups in front of the communion rails and I still had not touched the keys. “So much for arriving early!” I thought to myself, once again frustrated by the difficulties I was encountering. I enlisted the help of my fellow tour members to find the nun. We got a set of keys and then I ran back up to the top balcony. None of the keys fit!

Back down to find more keys.....

I was finally given a new set of keys with at least one promising key on the ring. Breathing heavily and trudging to the top balcony again, I selected the correct skeleton key, inserted it, turned the key and at last heard the blowers begin to fill the reservoirs. Unfortunately, I was unable to play because the choir was still practicing downstairs, so I practiced the Bach “Magnificat” silently to get a feel for the keys and the flat pedal board.

The choir finally finished practicing. There were a few minutes available while the choir moved from the front of the church to the organ loft, so I quickly tested the individual stops and then the ensemble sound of the pipes. The organ sound was warm, balanced and satisfying; not overpowering but well able to fill the sanctuary with ease.



T. Paul Rosas playing the 3 manual Metzler tracker organ

The choir gathered to one side of the organ, and we had about five minutes to check the balance of the choir to the organ before the service began. It was exciting to experience the quality of unforced singing which was encouraged by the acoustics, as well as having an instrument that supported the choir so easily. The choir sang beautifully, and it was a calming experience to go through the Mass and have the words of another language wash over all of us during that time.

CONTINUED OVERLEAF ...

At the end of the morning Mass, the priest invited people to stay for our short choral concert, and the choir began to move down the stairs to go to the performance location at the front of the sanctuary. I took advantage of the transition to pull out J. S. Bach's "Toccatina in F" and played the postlude. I normally like to change manuals during the piece to provide a variety of colors, but there had been no time to check balances. So I pulled out the principal chorus on the great, coupled the swell to the great and the great to the pedals, added the 16' reed to the pedals and began playing all of the Toccatina on one manual. It was an incredible experience as the music took over and just flowed! The acoustics supported the runs and the phrasing, and in that moment all of the music made perfect sense. I was thrilled to have experienced that moment and humbled by the incredible work of the organ builders in designing such a beautiful instrument. It was well worth all of those stairs!

The audience appreciated the vitality and diverse styles of the performance. We were all then free for the rest of the day and dispersed throughout the city to find lunch and explore. My wife and I walked across Chapel Bridge, found a wonderful outdoor restaurant and enjoyed our beer and wurst while looking across the river to the Jesuit Kirche, savoring the food and the experience of our travels together.

T. PAUL ROSAS

CONGRATULATIONS ELECTED OFFICERS

**The following have been duly elected to office
in the Palo Alto/ Peninsula Chapter AGO
from July 2011—June 2012:**

Matthew Burt, *Dean*

David Sheetz, *Sub-Dean*

Douglas Franks, *Secretary*

Jill Mueller, *Treasurer*

Glen Frank & Tim Getz, *Members-at-Large (Class of 2014)*

The following members-at-large will continue to serve:

Donald Mulliken & Sarah Wannamaker *(Class of 2012)*

Jay Martin & Keith Wannamaker *(Class of 2013)*

CONCERT LISTING

Sunday, May 22 at 4:00 p.m. Lew Williams, classical/theatre organist, playing Messiaen, Langlais, Vierne, Soler, The Beatles, Henry Mancini, Queen, and Audience Requests. Messiah Lutheran Church, 1835 Valota Rd., Redwood City. Tickets \$20 (\$15 Students, Seniors)

FOR ADDITIONAL CALENDAR LISTINGS *please see the San Francisco Chapter's Bay Area Concert Calendar at the following site: <<http://tinyurl.com/yzcqdf>>.*

CHRIST CHURCH

815 PORTOLA ROAD

PORTOLA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA 94028