

PIPINGS - A Monthly Newsletter

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February 2019 Dean's message



I went to my undergraduate school, Valparaiso University, to honor my organ and organ improv teachers at the end of January. Bill Eifrig and Phil Gehring have both retired, but they responded to an invitation to honor them with a music department meeting with current students, faculty and alums, a concert and dinner. The weather was typical for Valparaiso, "Rain/snow/windy-ana." When I left the celebration the morning after the celebration it was 5 am and -16 degrees with a stiff wind. It was cold outside but the excitement for music, church music, the organ, friends and colleagues warmed the beautiful Chapel of the Resurrection. The "C of R" is a special place for many of us and it didn't fail to deliver. We had a good crowd of well-wishers to hear the Schlicker/Dobson organ. The Dobson renovation of the organ actually completed the original design so playing the organ as it is now was like coming back to an old friend but better. I was reminded why I love church music and why it still excites me. I love the back and forth of music, words and faith. As an undergraduate, my work/study job was to provide music for daily chapel. We moved from chant to metrical psalms, to metrical psalms with percussion to short dramas and back. We improvised complete services that helped us get to the heart of the chorales we sang each week. Our liturgical training was thorough so everything had a purpose. I am grateful to my training now more than ever so it was great to say thank you to two men who helped make it possible. If you have a chance to say thank you to a teacher you remember well, I encourage you to do so. It helps complete a circle and gives the student and teacher a way to reflect on the shared learning experience. I knew that I wanted to say thank you, but I didn't realize how rich the experience would be until after it was over.

I'm looking forward to our fourth WIMFest festival on Sunday, February 10th at 3 pm at [Trinity Episcopal Church](#) in Concord. The Concord Women's Chorus and Robert Barney have put together a stunning program called a "Fountain in a Wood." Such a beautiful concept with music to match. Robert Barney will play BAGO member Christa Rakich's "Hommage à Pachelbel." Other familiar composers are: Gwyneth Walker, KK Davis, Rebecca Clarke, Florence Price and Carol Barnett. These composers deserve to be on many repertoire lists. New composers to us are: Beth Denisch, Ramona Luengen, Ysaye M. Barnwell and the Wailin' Jennys. The concert will be informal and you'll have a chance to ask questions. Come in from the cold and hear some warm music. Free admission and parking.

Merrimack Valley Chapter's 21st Mini Convention on February 23!

It will again be held in the Baptist Church in North Andover, and presenters include Robert Stibler with pointers on involving student and amateur brass players in your music, Susan Ferre on the application of early singing styles in Handel's Messiah, Craig Seaman on the "Care and Feeding" of pipe organs, and Richard Spicer on early publishers and composers of church music in Essex County.

In addition, Spectrum Music will be back with a goodly selection of music for sale, and The Party Connection will again be serving up one of their delicious lunches.

The program will begin with an anthem reading session. If you are interested to present one of your favorite anthems to the group, please let Barbara Owen know (owenbar@juno.com). Click [here](#) for a schedule and registration form.

ORGAN OPEN HOUSES

Old South Presbyterian Church in Newburyport, MA
SUNDAYS FEBRUARY 17 & MARCH 3

Organists, have you ever played or heard THUNDER PEDALS?

You are invited to play the unique, historic 1866 E.& G. G. Hook tracker organ at Old South Presbyterian Church in Newburyport, MA ... just for fun! We know this is a truly unique instrument, and we receive visitors from all over the world who want to come play it. We recently realized that we should make it possible for our nearby neighbors to have access to it occasionally too! [Here](#) is a detailed description of the instrument.



You are welcome to sign up for one, or even two, 15 minute time slots. Click [here](#) to select your time to play during this "open house". We will greet you with some light refreshments, and although this is not a recital, you are welcome to come with some friends to listen to each other, encourage each other, and learn from each other. If you can't find an open time, PLEASE let me know so I can create more time slots, or if you have any other questions, contact me, Debbie Owen, Music Director, at dcowen.mhc@gmail.com.