



En Chamade

Newsletter of the Northwest Arkansas Chapter,
American Guild of Organists
December 2017



From the Sub-Dean...

November has been a busy month, and here we are already plunging into the festive frenzy of December! When the hectic season starts to overwhelm you, may you find time to sit down, breathe deeply and remember with peace and joy WHY we do what we do.

Say, did you happen to catch the Organ Crawl in Rogers on November 11th? It was a happy event, attended by twenty-five folks. We began at Peace Lutheran with breakfast snacks and a greeting by our chapter chaplain, Rev. Melissa Ehrhardt. From the Goulding & Wood (II/22 1981), Ernest Whitmore presented a program of works taking their inspiration from Lutheran hymns, as a nod to this year's 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. Next we caravanned a short distance to see the Kilgen/Redman (II/18 1985) at First Presbyterian and then crossed the road to visit the chapel



Ernest and Marilyn at Rogers Organ Crawl

organ and the sanctuary organ (Temple III/55 2007) at Central United Methodist. Many thanks to the two presenters, Ernest and Marilyn Lee, for speaking to us about the organs and demonstrating their capabilities. AGO members convened for an informal lunch afterward.

After our busy holiday/holy days schedule, we will reunite in 2018 for our next event: *Just Add Pedals??: Organ Basics for the Pianist*. The event will take place on the campus of the University of Arkansas, with rooms, instruments and lecture space provided by the Music Dept. We will need many hands to make this outreach event successful: planning, poster design, shopping for supplies, advertising, day-of registration, presenting a lecture, one-on-one guidance of students at the organ. Be thinking how you may stand ready to help! I will be contacting you in the weeks ahead to enlist your aid. For now, be sure to mark the event on your **2018(!)** calendar: January 27, lobby of Stella Boyle Smith Concert Hall on UA Campus, beginning at 9am.

Blessings as the old year ends and the new one begins,

Jeannie

From the Dean...

Since December is a time that many of us make charitable donations, and since our own guild activities are in hibernation while we prepare our Advent and Christmas services, I thought I should dust off an old column that I wrote but never published relating to charitable giving. It relates primarily to our local NPR affiliate, KUAF-FM. Over the past few years, the station made a decision to gut most of its prime-time classical music programming in favor of more talk radio. A full morning of classical music during PJ Robowski's tenure became one hour when Katy Henriksen took over, and then finally got booted to 8 p.m., when few people are listening to the radio.

A whole bunch of wonderful music programming produced by Minnesota Public Radio was also eliminated, including Pipe Dreams, Performance Today, and Prairie Home Companion. Although Prairie Home Companion doesn't feature much classical music, I'd strongly suggest you stream it on your computer or cell phone to listen to the fabulous music being curated by its new host, Chris Thile.

I truly think that money talks, and so I'm going to be giving to Minnesota Public Radio, after having already canceled my small but sustaining membership with KUAF. There are plenty of other music projects where I'd love to help out, but here are a couple of other choices I've made:

Opera in the Ozarks. This training company for young singers, typically in or

just out of graduate school, has been in operation since 1950. It's a blessing to have such a company in our area, and getting to Eureka Springs for the summer operas is even easier thanks to recent road improvements. Ticket sales make only the smallest dent in operations, which includes resident orchestral musicians in addition to the large core of singers, so they rely on donations to make up the rest.

An organ project of your choice. I chose to support the new Miller-Scott organ now being installed at St. Thomas Fifth Avenue, New York City, since this church meant a lot to my instruction as a church musician while I was a young organist. I encourage you to find an organ you want to support, whether it be a new installation, like at Central UMC in Fayetteville, or just to keep an existing instrument in good shape. There's nothing sadder than seeing a once great organ not being properly maintained.

Any time I choose to give, I'm moved by a mixture of gratefulness to what the organization does and guilt that if I don't give, can I live with myself if the organization diminishes, or goes away? It seems that classical music is not only in decline, but even facing extinction. The imminent closure of Westminster Choir College shows this.

What are some organizations to which you like to donate, and what goes through your mind when choosing to give? Let me know -- I'd be glad to publish in an upcoming issue!

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