



The CYPHER

Newsletter of the Southern Arizona Chapter
American Guild of Organists

Volume 43, Number 3
November 2023

Chapter Website: www.saago.org

Programs at a glance through January 21

Candlelight Concert for All Saints Day

Wednesday, Nov. 1, 7 p.m.
Trinity Presbyterian Church

Cameron Carpenter, Organ

Friday, Nov. 3, 7:30 p.m.
Fox Theatre

SAAGO Showcase Concert

Sunday, Nov. 12, 4 p.m.
Christ Church United Methodist

Evensong Organ Prelude

Sunday, Nov. 19, 4:15 p.m.
St. Philip's in the Hills
Episcopal Church

Bálint Karosi, Organ

Friday, Dec. 1, 7 p.m.
St. Alban's Episcopal Church
Donation

Evensong Organ Prelude

Sunday, Dec. 17, 4:15 p.m.
St. Philip's in the Hills
Episcopal Church

Epiphany Social Potluck

Saturday, Jan 6, 1:00 p.m.
The Highlands Community
Clubhouse, Oro Valley

Pamela Decker's

Accessible Church Music

Saturday, Jan. 13, 10 a.m.
St. Philip's in the Hills
Episcopal Church

Ken Cowan, Organ

Catalina Organ Festival

Friday, Jan 19, 7 p.m.
Catalina United Methodist Church
\$30; \$25 seniors; \$10 students

Evensong Organ Prelude

Sunday, Jan. 21, 4:15 p.m.
St. Philip's in the Hills
Episcopal Church

Showcase Concert Sunday, November 12, 4 p.m.

Christ Church United Methodist
655 N. Craycroft Rd.
Donation, Reception Following

Each year SAAGO, the local chapter of the American Guild of Organists, holds an event to showcase the talents of its members.

With the eponymous title of Showcase, this year's event will feature members Janet Tolman, Carolyn Smith, Lynn Moser, Chris Fresolone, and the duo, Yvonne and Bill Kuhlman. They perform on the church's iconic Schlicker pipe organ—41 ranks, 4 divisions, 3 manuals and pedal, 1980.



Some peeks at this year's Showcase selections: César Franck's "Pièce héroïque" (Lynn Moser), Aaron David Miller's "Sonata" (Janet Tolman with clarinetist Rudolph Rostast), Ad Wammes's "Miroir" (Chris Fresolone), Sowerby's "Come Autumn Time" (duo Yvonne and Bill Kuhlman), Callahan's "Amazing Grace" (Carolyn Smith with pianist Carolyn Rapp). Of course, the program will feature much more! As you can see, chapter members

(continued on page 4)



Chris Fresolone



Lynn Moser



Bill Kuhlman



Yvonne Kuhlman



Janet Tolman



Carolyn Smith

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The CYPHER

Stardust (Dusty) Johnson, Editor (skj5@cox.net)

**Submission Deadlines for the 2023-2024 season
are the 15th of each month.**

NOTE: Chapter members are invited to submit program
information for inclusion in THE CYPHER. We want to include your
programs!

Please send program descriptions, along with pertinent
information—title, date, location, time, brief description, cost, and
photos—to Dusty Johnson, *CYPHER* editor. The information will
appear in the print edition as well as in the online edition. Material
may be edited as needed.

Please email information to

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***To play only what is written is the domain of science. To
realize what is not written is the domain of art.***

—Jean Langlais.

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message from the dean...

Dear Southern Arizona Chapter Members,

Oui, oui! That seems to be the catch word for October. The chapter hosted Dr. Jesse Eschbach, past chair of the division of keyboard studies for the College of Music at the University of North Texas, and a faculty member there since. In a fabulous Saturday morning gathering, Dr. Eschbach shared his knowledge of the schism in the French organ world during the time of Marchal, Widor, and Dupré, his in-depth accounting of the life and career of Jeanne Demessieux, his recollections of Dupré's granddaughter (with whom he spoke), and events witnessed by Marie-Madeleine Duruflé. He is a walking textbook on the French organ scene, as well as of the organs of that period. It is a history filled with intrigue and angst, and we will remember for a long time much of what he said.

Less than a week later we met at Catalina United Methodist Church to hear a stellar recital by Johann Vexo, who lives in Paris and was playing a mass at the time the fire broke out at Notre Dame Cathedral.

The chapter is fortunate to have members who give of their time and energy. An ad hoc committee comprised of Stanley Kartchner, Carolyn Smith, and Joyce Swinehart met on October 14 to review the 2022-23 fiscal year financial records. Finding them in impeccable order, much gratitude goes to our treasurer David Horr. He applies his years of accounting experience to the chapter financial records. Thank you, David!

I hope you will "show up" at the annual Showcase on November 12 at Christ Church United Methodist. You will hear four-hand/four-feet organ duets, piano/organ duets, organ solos, and clarinet/organ pieces. A little something for everyone.

Enjoy this beautiful fall weather!

Dean Janet Tolman

GIVE Thanks
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Chapter and Member Programs through February

Showcase Concert *continued from cover*

Lynn, Carolyn, Janet, Chris and the Kuhlman duo will be joined by clarinetist Rudolph Rostash and pianist Carolyn Rapp. A very interesting program! Remember, the concert takes place at Christ Church United Methodist on Sunday, November 12, at 4 p.m.

Reception Following with beverages and snacks. Come join us!

A Candlelight Concert for All Saints Day: Music of Remembrance and Hope

Wednesday, November 1, 7 p.m.
Trinity Presbyterian Church, 400 E. University Blvd.
Free

A program of meditative and peaceful music presented by Lynn Moser, (keyboard), Christine Harper (flute), several soloists from the Trinity Choir, and handbell players from the Trinity Ringers. Everyone invited!

Cameron Carpenter, Organ

Friday, Nov. 3, 7:30 p.m.
Fox Theatre, 17 W. Congress St.

Cameron Carpenter accompanies "Metropolis" on the Mighty Wurlitzer. Ticket \$20-\$55.

Organ Prelude and Choral Evensong

Sunday, November 19, 4:15 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.
St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church
4440 N. Campbell Ave.
Free-will Offering

The pre-Evensong service organ preludes begin at 4:15 p.m. and are performed on the beautiful Holtkamp pipe organ. They are live-streamed on the church's website www.stphilipstucson.org/livestream.

Johann Vexo, acclaimed French organist, at the console of the Quimby organ at Catalina United Methodist following his virtuoso performance on Oct. 20, 2023

Photo,
Mark Stockwell



Bálint Karosi, Organ **St. Alban's Organ Concert Series**

Friday, December 1, 7 p.m.
St. Alban's Episcopal church
3738 Old Sabino Canyon Rd.
Freewill Offering

Dr. Bálint Karosi has been Cantor and Director of Music, Classical at Saint Peter's Church in Midtown Manhattan since 2015. After winning the 2008 Bach Prize in Leipzig, Bálint has been in demand as a recitalist and clinician worldwide, known for the interpretation of Bach's music and his Baroque-style improvisations.

Bálint has studied at the Liszt Academy in his native Budapest, Hungary, the Conservatoire Supérieure in Geneva, Switzerland, and at Oberlin Conservatory in Ohio. He earned his DMA in composition at the Yale School of Music.



Organ Prelude and Choral Evensong

Sunday, December 17, 4:15 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.
St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church
4440 N. Campbell Ave.
Free-will Offering

Epiphany Party—Potluck

Saturday, January 6, 1 p.m.
The Highland Community Clubhouse
332 West Matterhorn in Oro Valley.

A favorite holiday event which will be celebrated following the holidays, specifically on Epiphany, at The Highland Community Clubhouse in Oro Valley, a new venue for us. This is a wonderful opportunity to wind down from the hustle and bustle of Christmastide, and break bread with your fellow members in a delightful evening.

Pamela Decker's Accessible Church Music

Saturday, January 13, 10 a.m.
St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church
4440 N. Campbell Ave
Note the location change
Light lunch following the presentation

Dr. Decker will present various compositions of her own that would be suitable and accessible for church service use. This is an occasion for members to hear new organ music, look at the corresponding scores, and perhaps update one's own repertoire!

Chapter Programs and Member Programs continued

Ken Cowan, Organ **Catalina Organ Festival**

Friday, January 19, 2024, 7 p.m.
Catalina United Methodist Church
\$30 online, \$25 seniors 60+, \$10 student with ID card.

Ken Cowan is one of North America's finest concert organists. Praised for his dazzling artistry, impeccable technique and imaginative programming by audiences and critics alike, he maintains a rigorous performing schedule which takes him to major concert venues and churches in America, Canada, Europe, and Asia.

Pedals, Pipes and Pizza

Saturday, January 27, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Northminster Presbyterian Church
2450 E. Fort Lowell Rd.

Everyone loves SAAGO's Pedals, Pipes and Pizza event, which is designed to give children and youth a brief introduction to the pipe organ. Students explore the instrument, including the chambers, and receive individual instruction. Watch for further details online and in an upcoming CYPHER.

Douglas Cleveland, Organ **Roy Johnson Memorial Organ Series**

Friday, February 2, 2024, 7 p.m.
Holsclaw Hall, Fred Fox School of Music, U of Arizona
Park Avenue and Speedway and Blvd.
Free

Douglas Cleveland, the John DeLo Faculty Fellow in Organ at the University of Washington, is considered by critics and musicians to be one of America's finest concert organists. He will present a program entitled "The Tradition and Transcendence of the French Organ Symphony." The program will include the *Symphonie II in E minor, Op. 20* by Louis Vierne, movements from *Symphonie V in F minor, Op. 42* by Charles-Marie Widor, and *Evocation (Poème Symphonique), Op. 37*, by Marcel Dupré.

Two to Improvise—Johannes and Susanna Ebenbauer

Friday, Feb. 9, 7:30 p.m.
St Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church
4440 N. Campbell Ave.
Reception Following
\$20; SAAGO members free.

Johannes and Susanna Ebenbauer will present a unique blend of organ works (Muffat, Bach and Frescobaldi), vocal works (Dowland and Byrd) and collaborative improvisation in various styles. Johannes

Ebenbauer was formerly organist and director of music at St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna. Since 2013, he has been Professor for Organ and Improvisation at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna. And since October 2020, he has been head of the Institute for Organ, Organ Research and Church Music at the same university.

David Wickerham, Organ

Fox Theatre Wurlitzer organ
17 W. Congress St.
Saturday, February 17, 7:30 p.m.
Tickets through Fox Theatre

Renowned theater organist, Tucsonan and University of Arizona School of Music graduate, returns to the Fox to play the Mighty Wurlitzer. Mark your calendars now for this very entertaining program!



An advertisement for Red River Pipe Organ Service & Tuning. The background is a black and white photograph of numerous organ pipes of various sizes, arranged in rows. Overlaid on this image is the text "RED RIVER" in large, white, serif capital letters, with a red silhouette of the state of Oklahoma between the words. Below this, "Pipe Organ Service & Tuning" is written in a smaller, white, serif font. At the bottom, contact information is provided: "405-921-1007 (shop) ♦ mail@redriverorgan.com" and "www.redriverorgan.com ♦ John Riester, President". A QR code is located in the lower right quadrant of the advertisement.

Children's Choir Festival.

Invitation to participate in a Children's Choir Festival

Young Voices Rejoice!

Tucson's 7th annual Children's Church Choir Festival

Saturday, February 10, 2024 10 am-3 pm
St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church
5150 Valley View Rd.



The festival is open to all children's choirs in Tucson churches. The day will include rehearsals, games/activities, choir chimes, lunch and a performance for family and friends. Interested choirs can choose to sing individually and/or in the massed choir. Interested directors should contact the sponsoring director Gloria Day (Northminster Presbyterian Church) at gjeanned@aol.com

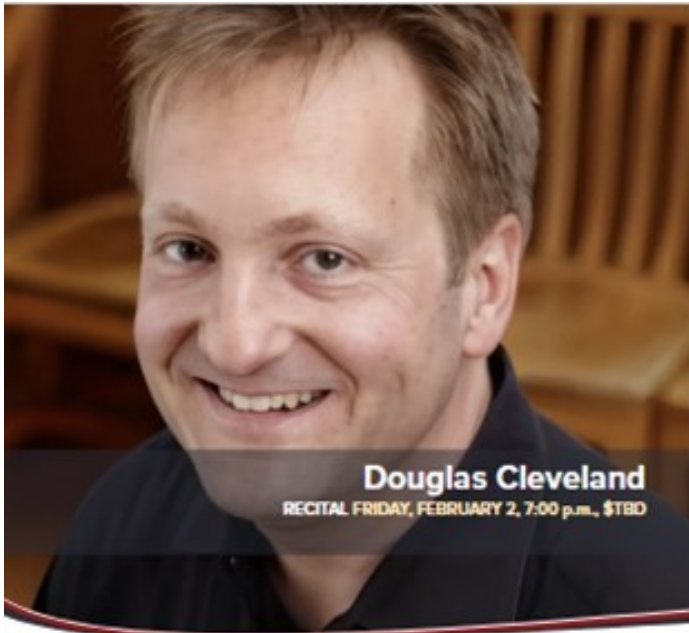
Roy Johnson Memorial Scholarship

Established by the Southern Arizona Chapter of the AGO in memory of Professor Roy Andrew Johnson, the scholarship is available to assist in funding organ study as follows:



- ♦ lessons at any level through collegiate;
- ♦ introductory organ lessons for pianists;
- ♦ Registration fees for an educational event, including a Pipe Organ Encounter (POE);
- ♦ for collegiate level students, registration fees for regional and national conventions of the AGO.
- ♦ for collegiate level students, full membership in the American Guild of Organists, Southern Arizona Chapter.

Scholarship awards for organ study will range from \$350 to \$1500. For educational events, the scholarship will cover the cost of registration.



Douglas Cleveland
RECITAL FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 7:00 p.m., \$18D



Pamela Decker
RECITAL FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 7:00 p.m., \$19

ISABELLE B. HARRIS ORGAN, HOLSCLOW HALL

2023 ROY A. JOHNSON MEMORIAL ORGAN SERIES

The Roy A. Johnson Memorial Organ Series, established in memory of Professor Johnson following his tragic death in 1995, showcases outstanding contemporary organists. Professor Johnson made enormous contributions to the organ studies program, the keyboard area, and to graduate studies during his 29 years at the University of Arizona. The installation of the beautiful Schoenstein organ given by Isabelle Harris, in a hall designed for the organ, was the fulfillment of his vision for a flourishing organ program.

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Recap of Meeting with Jesse Eschbach

The Organ Wars of Paris, with Jesse Eschbach

A major division of Parisian organists and builders erupted in the mid-twentieth century. Those favoring the preservation and upkeep of the Cavallé-Coll instruments were pitted against those favoring the incorporation of the neo-Baroque elements into existing instruments. A major disaster of this "war" was the rupture of the close relationship between Dupré and his "genius" student Jeanne Demessieux. This war was a major theme of the presentation of Jesse Eschbach, professor of organ at North Texas University, to 20 members of the chapter at Northminster on Saturday, October 14. This was based on Eschbach's years of study and living in Paris along with his associations with major French organists of the day --- Alain, Dupré,



Durufilé. In fact, Marie Claire Alain actually lived with him for a time! His presentation was both interesting and fascinating. He revealed that French organists, such as Dupré, were pleased to perform in America, because of the income it generated and because they loved American consoles with their electro-pneumatic action!

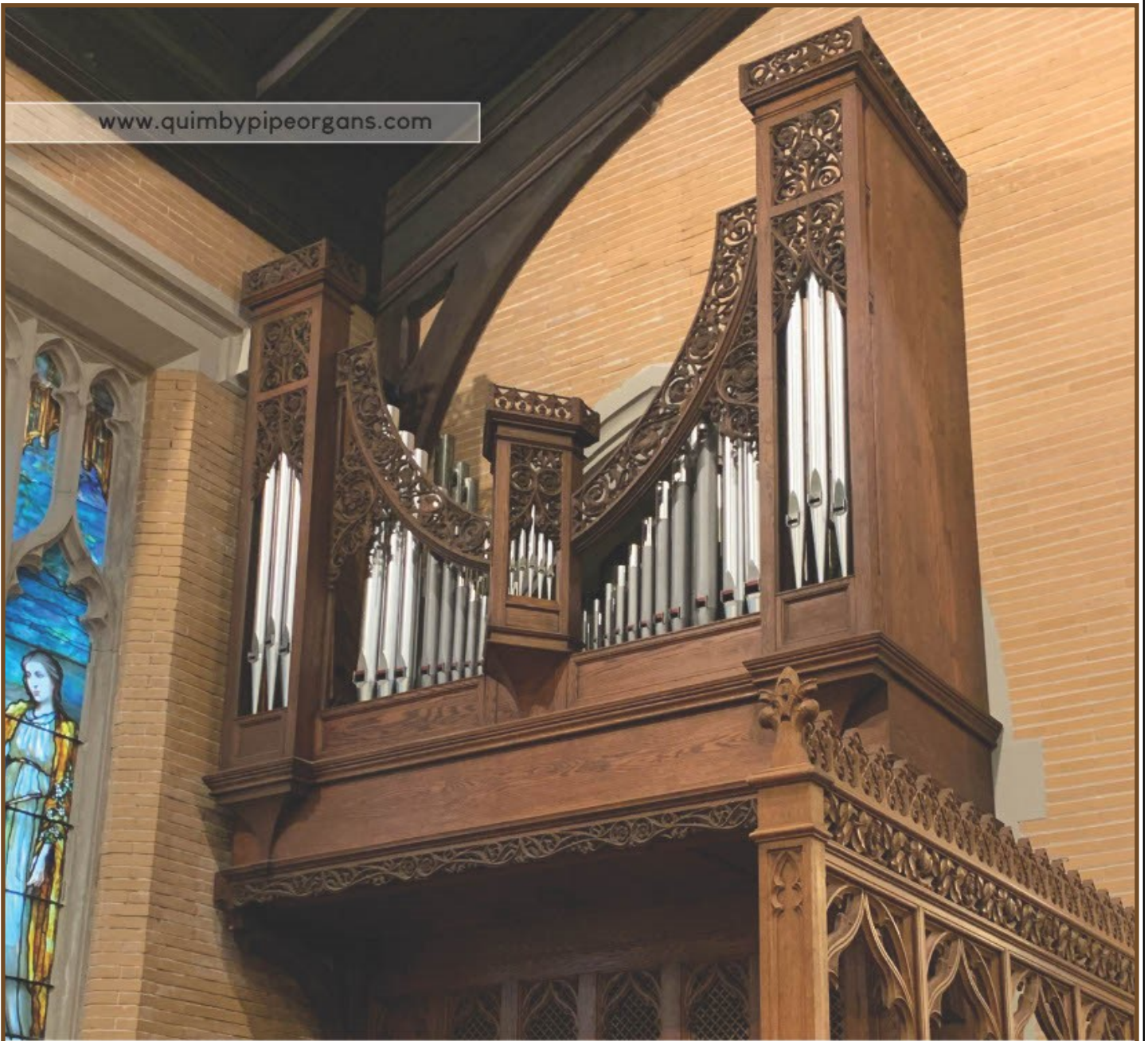
Eschbach's presentation generated much enthusiasm among the attendees who lingered to speak with him and each other. The meeting was followed by a light lunch.



Photos, Dee Schultz



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Membership Renewals

Membership Renewal Information



SAAGO

- We want you to be included in our current Membership Directory. If it's time for you to renew, use one of the following renewal methods.

- Online using your credit/debit card. Go to the ONCARD website and follow the instructions: <https://www.agohq.org/oncard/>

- Also, please take a few minutes to update your information on AGO ONCARD. The email address, home address, and phone numbers listed on that database are used for the membership directory.

- Chapter Friends and those without computer access. Please contact Lars Andersen for information on renewal or joining as a new Chapter Friend (LarsAndersen@tlvc.org) at 520-909-9038.

Membership Directories have been distributed. If you have not received yours, please contact David Horr at dahorr@comcast.net

Welcome New Members

We extend the warmest of welcomes to the following new members

Mariana Mevans
Jessie Jewett
Karen Dahlen

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SAAGO Retirements continued—Dennis Grannan

DENNIS GRANNAN —on his retirement



My Inspiration to study piano, and to eventually become an organist, began as a child listening to my Aunt play the piano. We are fairly close in age and I have always looked up to her. I was a devoted listener, while keeping her chained to the piano bench for hours as I reveled in her music-making.

My formal music studies could not come fast enough so I improvised at home on the piano that my mother played.

I started piano lessons at age seven in Overland Park, a suburb of Kansas City. I added organ studies into the mix while in high school, eventually earning degrees in organ. I was fifteen when I began sharing the organist bench at our home parish.

My piano studies continued as an elective while in the School of Architecture at the University of Kansas. My organ studies were with James Moeser, also at Kansas. The Organ Department gave us an extraordinary opportunity when they invited visiting professors to teach for a semester. I studied with Robert Noehren my junior year and Michael Schneider from Köln, Germany my senior year.

One of the first pipe organs I ever heard was from a radio broadcast entitled, *The Auditorium Organ*, hosted by John Obetz from the World Headquarters of the RLDS Auditorium (now Community of Christ Auditorium) in Independence, Missouri. It was during this time that I had another marvelous opportunity. I was beyond delighted when one day John appointed me as one of the adjunct staff organists, a group of about ten of us that rotated playing the daily organ recitals held there in the summer and weekly during the other months. John's mentorship was deeply meaningful for this young organist. His generosity and engaging spirit remains with me to this day!

I went on to get a Masters Degree in Organ Performance from the University of Iowa where I studied with Delbert Disselhorst and Richard Heschke. I taught organ for the department during my time there.

In 1980 I moved to New York City where I worked for a design company for twenty three years. During that time I served several Episcopal churches as Organist/

Choirmaster. It was then that I decided to take three years to study with Leonard Raver, who was at Juilliard at the time. He was known for his outstanding Bach performances, as well as his penchant for performing contemporary works, many of which he commissioned. I spent my coaching time with him concentrating on the same areas of interest. Some weeks were entirely devoted to Bach and his contemporaries, and other weeks were spent coaching pieces by a variety of contemporary composers! We had our lessons at various churches around town. My lessons were usually at St. Michael's on Amsterdam Avenue, which houses a large Beckerath organ...perfect for Bach studies! Included in my experience during this time was the opportunity to travel with Leonard while on tour, serving as a console assistant. Those were memorable times!

My design career eventually took over, even though I always maintained a church job throughout my time in New York. I loved my work, but both jobs were certainly all-consuming! It was after the events of September 11, 2001 when my partner and I decided to move up our schedule of early retirement to Arizona. I designed our house and it took us just a short while to have the house built. We moved into our home in Saint David in 2004. My first retirement period lasted only five years!

I sort of fell into my current job as organist at Catalina United Methodist Church, where I eventually became the Associate Director of Music. I remember discussing the opportunity by phone. Within a week I had played an audition and was hired almost immediately! That was fourteen years ago! Initially, I figured I'd stay there for just a few years. Then the most amazing thing happened...I had the opportunity to design and oversee the installation of a glorious new organ! That is certainly one way to assure that your organist remains on the bench for a very long time!

I joined the AGO as an undergrad. Living in a major metropolitan area, those of us that had cars would carpool to organ recitals throughout the city and beyond. The majority of these recitals were performed by the major organists of our time, nationally and internationally. I served on many student committees.



Unique Bolo tie slide—gift from Catalina Choir

Continued on the following page

Dennis Grannan *cont.*

I eventually served for two terms as Dean of SAAGO while at Catalina UMC. I would encourage every young person who is curious and interested in the organ to seek out their closest chapter of the AGO. They will find encouraging support and wonderful resources to further their interests, as well as



opportunities to meet and hear many fine organists and organs. I certainly thank all the members of SAAGO for their support of my many projects over the years!

Some have asked, “what on earth are you going to do in retirement?” To use my partner’s expression, “as little as humanly possible!” Seriously, there are books to read, paintings to paint, gardens to tend, demanding walks with my young wire-fox terrier, people to visit and places to explore! And if I’m still bored, there are the six trio sonatas on my music desk that I haven’t learned in their entirety.

I have certainly been blessed. Who, in their lifetime, gets to design and build their own home and then, when a second career falls into their lap, oversee the design and installation of a new pipe organ? Certainly the people of the church have made this my home. As I retire, for a second time, this weekend, I remember with love, everyone I have been honored to work with. So many people have inspired me, so I especially remember them with gratitude on this day.

Dennis Grannan, September 2023

Photo below: Dennis interviewing acclaimed French organist, Johann Vexo, during intermission at Catalina United Methodist Church, Quimby Pipe Organ., October 20.

Photo, Mark Stockwell





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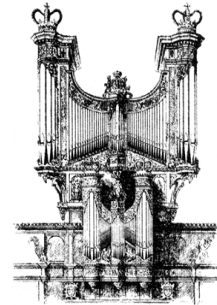
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do not request a printed version will receive *The Cypher* via email. Send information for publication to Stardust (Dusty) Johnson at email skj5@cox.net, or to 2215 E 2nd St., Tucson, AZ 85719-4930. Please type "Cypher" in the subject line. Views expressed in any of the pieces herein are those of the writers and not necessarily those of the Southern Arizona Chapter of the AGO, its officers or members.

FOX TUCSON THEATRE

Our Picture Palace Series includes holiday favorites on the big screen!



The Muppet Christmas Carol
Dec. 2

White Christmas Sing-Along
Dec. 22



Nov. 25
Planes, Trains, and Automobiles

Come early for extra magic! Before every film, our beautifully restored **Mighty Wurlitzer** organ fills the Fox theater with songs for the season.

FOXTUCSON.COM

All films have a 2pm matinee & 6pm evening showing.