



The CYPHER

Newsletter of the Southern Arizona Chapter
American Guild of Organists

Volume 44, Number 6
February 2025

Chapter Website: www.saago.org

Chapter & Member Programs at a glance through March 2

Doug Leightenheimer, Organ
Roy Johnson Memorial Organ Series
Sunday, Feb. 2, 3 p.m.
Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music, Free

Michael T.C. Hey & Christiana Liberis, Organ and Violin Duo
Sunday, Feb. 2, 3 p.m.
Lutheran Church of the Risen Savior, Green Valley

Mid 20th Century Organ Culture
William Kuhlman
Saturday, Feb. 15, 10 a.m.
Northminster Presbyterian Church
Lunch

Alcee Chriss, Organ
Catalina Organ Festival
Friday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m.
Catalina United Methodist Church
\$30; \$25 seniors; \$10 students

Rising Stars, Young Musicians
Ayla Moreno & Bryan Zhang, Piano
Saturday, Feb. 22, 3 p.m.
St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church

Pamela Decker, Organ
Roy Johnson Memorial Organ Series
Sunday, Mar. 2, 3 p.m.
Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music \$10



Mid 20th Century Organ Culture

William Kuhlman

Saturday, February 15, 10 a.m.
Northminster Presbyterian Church
2450 E. Fort Lowell Rd.
Lunch

The 1960s and 70s proved fertile years for realizing the promises of the Organ Reform Movement in the building of organs as envisioned by Albert Schweitzer earlier in the century. Organ enrollment in the colleges and universities was high, and master teachers brought about a renewed interest in performance practice made possible by the "tracker" craze. Professor Kuhlman will touch on a few of the builders and teachers of organ who were vanguards in realizing these "reforms" during these "golden" years. Bill is Professor Emeritus at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, and is member of the Concert Artist Cooperative management, Sebastopol, CA. He taught at Luther for more than 39 years. He and Yvonne are active in SAAGO and Bill is a member of the Program Committee.

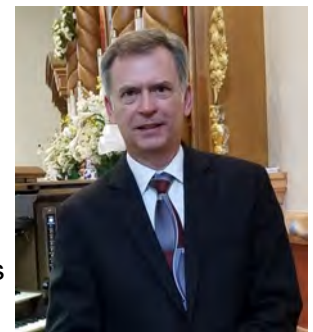


Douglas Leightenheimer, Organ

Roy Johnson Memorial Organ Series

Sunday, February 2, 3 p.m.
Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music, Free

Doug served for ten years as Director of Music/Organist for St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, Tucson, prior to becoming Director of Music/Organist for St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, Palm Desert, CA. He has held positions as organist and/or director of music in churches in North Carolina and Florida as well as serving in AGO leadership positions in the Guild, including SAAGO dean. He is a published composer and recitalist, having been featured with the Wilmington Symphony Orchestra, performing Symphony No. 3 by Camille Saint-Saëns and Symphonie Concertante by Joseph Jongen. He also twice performed in the UA Mildred Flood Mahoney Memorial Organ Concert Series and in the Catalina UMC Summer *In From The Heat* series. He holds bachelor's (organ) and master's (sacred music) degrees and the DMA in choral conducting from the University of Arizona.



Welcome back to Tucson Doug!

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membership directory, which is not a
public document.



The CYPHER

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

Submission Deadlines for the 2024-2025 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

Dusty Johnson, editor, at skj5@cox.net by the 15th of the month. You may also send it via U.S. mail.

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realize what is not written is the domain of art.***

—Jean Langlais.

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Message from the dean...



Dean Raymond playing Rex: *King of Instruments*
with Dave Horr narrating

2025 Is Off to a Great Start!

Several events in the last few days of January have brought to my mind how very important personal connections are. Sometimes our connections are very direct, and sometimes they are within a slightly larger group. Speaking for myself, I am uncomfortable and very diffident with either one. But several recent events have underscored how important, valuable, and... nurturing such connections can be. The year started off with our Epiphany Party & Potluck, always a nice chance to re-connect with friends and colleagues. This year's Epiphany Party also included a fun trivia contest with Bill Kuhlman posing twenty challenging questions about organists, the instrument, and composers. I may have to do some review in case there's another contest at our Summer Social & Potluck!

Then towards the end of January, our chapter held another Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza event. This year's PP&P was at St. Philip's in the Hills. Dr. Jeffrey Campbell was our gracious host and opened the event with Bach's famous *Tocatta and Fugue in D minor* to showcase the Holtkamp/Quimby instrument. We had eight young participants as well as several adult observers and parents. One of the

adults was a local piano teacher who was new to PP&P and who was delighted with it, so I think we may have even more participants in the future as more teachers learn about it.

David Horr and I performed Daniel Burton's demonstration piece "Rex: King of Instruments" with me at the console, and David narrating. Jeffrey, David, Mark Mackeben, and Richard Hockett all helped inform the students and answer questions, but I think the highlight for many was the Orgelkids kit. I'd like to give a big Thank You to the Central Arizona Chapter for loaning us the Orgelkids kit, and to Mark Mackeben and Richard Hockett for bringing it down from Phoenix that morning. With the kit, the participants were able to assemble a two-rank, two-octave pipe organ that they then could actually play!

This spring will include a variety engaging presentations, and exciting performances, so let *The Cypher*, email notifications, and the website help you take advantage of all the opportunities!

Raymond Ryder, Dean

Chapter and Member Programs

Michael T.C. Hey & Christiana Liberis Organ and Violin Duo

Sunday, February 2, 3 p.m.
Lutheran Church of the Risen Savior
555 S. La Canada Dr., Green Valley
Free Will offering

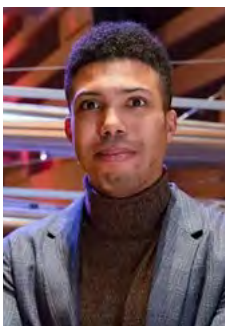
Michael Hey and Christiana Liberis, husband and wife, bring a fresh approach to the organ and violin repertoire, creating vastly different styles and genres of music for these remarkably flexible instruments. They both enjoy careers that include collaboration with other musicians and other styles. Their programs 'dazzle and delight.'



Alcée Chriss III, Organ Catalina Organ Festival

Friday, February 21, 7 p.m.
Catalina United Methodist Church
2700 E. Speedway Blvd.
\$30; \$25 seniors; \$10 students

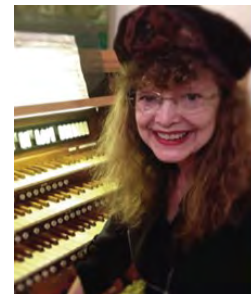
The highly regarded Alcée Chriss returns to Tucson in performance in the Catalina Organ Festival Series. First-prize and Bach prize winner at the 2017 Canadian International Organ Competition, Alcee Chriss III is widely regarded as one of the leading young organists of our time. Previous competition awards include the Firmin Swinnen Silver Medal at the 2016 Longwood Gardens International Organ Competition, First Prize and Audience Prize at the 2016 Fort Wayne National Organ Competition, and First Prize and Audience Prize at the 2014 Miami International Organ Competition. Mr. Chriss serves as University Organist and Artist-in-Residence at Wesleyan University.



Pamela Decker, Organ Roy Johnson Memorial Organ Series

Sunday, March 2, 3 p.m.
Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music, \$10

Dr. Pamela Decker performs her annual faculty recital on the Harris/Schoenstein organ in Holsclaw Hall. Pamela is a prolific composer as well as professor of organ and theory at the University of Arizona. Additionally, she currently leads the composition area. Her compositions have been published by major music publishers and they have been performed in at least 19 countries by musicians from all over the world.



SAAGO

SAAGO—Members' Recital performing repertoire based on chorales, hymns or songs

Sunday, March 16, 4 p.m.
Northminster Presbyterian Church
2450 E. Ft. Lowell Rd.
Reception Following

Members are invited and encouraged to perform in this program, playing the beautiful Quimby organ (Opus 51, III/46). Selections should include music based on chorales, hymns or songs. The program may include congregational singing depending upon the performers' repertoire. There are 10 performance slots available and total performance time should not exceed 10 minutes. For questions regarding selections, the organ, etc., contact Carolyn Smith at cknorrsmith@gmail.com. This is a first come, first served opportunity, so don't hesitate!



To sign up, and reserve your playing time, click [here](#); provide the required information and reserve your performance spot.



Happy Birthday to Handel, Mendelssohn, Widor, Czerny,
Praetorius, Rossini, Corelli, Boccherini, Berg, Parry, & Delibes



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Chapter and Member Programs *continued*—



**SAAGO Anna Lapwood,
Internationally Renowned British
Organist presents**

An Introduction to the Organ

Sunday, April 6, 4 p.m., Free
Catalina United Methodist Church
2700 E. Speedway Blvd.
Free

Internationally renowned young British organist Anna Lapwood has introduced countless people to the organ via concerts and social media. This is a rare opportunity to hear, meet, and see Ms. Lapwood demonstrate how the organ works—and perhaps to play a piece for her suggestions and comments. A limited number of slots will be available.

To ensure a seat at this event, it is necessary to register in advance. Registration information will be included in the March CYPHER as well as online. The registration information will include a place to request the opportunity to play a piece for Ms. Lapwood's review.

Pizza reception will follow.

"She is much more than a gifted organist, choral conductor and social media sensation... she's a star on a mission." The Sunday Times (London)



Anna Lapwood in Concert

Catalina Organ Festival

Monday, Apr. 7, 7 p.m.

Catalina United Methodist Church
\$30; \$25 seniors; \$10 students

The Catalina Organ Festival is proud and excited to present Ms. Anna Lapwood, MBE. Ms. Lapwood is an organist, conductor, broadcaster, and Director of Music at Pembroke College, Cambridge. She is also an Associate Artist at the Royal Albert Hall, London, and an Artist in Association with the BBC Singers. She has introduced countless people to the organ through her concerts and online presence on social media.

Over 200 tickets have already been sold and a 'full house' is anticipated! **BUY YOUR TICKETS SOON!**

CATALINA ORGAN FESTIVAL

Alcée Chriss III

Doctorate of
Music - McGill

**February 21, 2025
Friday, 7 p.m.**



Winner of 2017
Canadian Int'l Comp
Trinity Wall Street,
New York City
Associate Organist

Wesleyan University
Professor & Organist
Conductor, composer



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— FEATURING THE DUO OF —

MICHAEL T.C. HEY & CHRISTIANA LIBERIS

**February 2, 2025 at 3:00PM at
Lutheran Church of the Risen Savior
555 S. La Cañada Dr, Green Valley, AZ
Free Will Offering**



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Pedals, Pipes and Pizza Recap

This year's PP&P was a huge success. Eight enthusiastic young music students and their parents gathered in the sanctuary of St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church. Jeffrey Campbell led the session with a fantastic introduction to the Holtkamp pipe organ, playing Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in d minor*. Then he and Richard Hockett explained the features of the console and described how the instrument works. Jeffrey invited students to sit at the console and play it themselves.

Dean Raymond Ryder played a rap performance of *Rex, King of Instruments* by Daniel Burton with David Horr as narrator. Everyone then went to the Murphey Gallery, where Mark Mackeben (CAZAGO) led the students in building the Orgelkids Kit. This was perhaps the high point of the day. The students sorted the pieces and quickly put together a real working pipe organ, and then they played it! Building the tracker action, two octave, 2-rank (8' and 4') instrument with its own hand-operated bellows is a wonderful activity to teach young musicians how a pipe organ is made and how it works.

Katherine Snodgrass and Mark Stockwell served a pizza lunch with assorted fruit and relish to everyone's

delight. After lunch, all returned to the sanctuary, where each student had the opportunity to play the organ. While *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* seemed to be a theme for the day's music, Sarah Buck wowed the audience with an excellent performance of a classical piano piece. In closing, Raymond Ryder thanked the students for participating and gave each one a certificate. He s;dp thanked the parents and chapter members. Jeffrey Campbell was applauded for leading the program and making the facilities available for this memorable day.

David Horr and Richard Hockett



Jeffrey Campbell and kids



Everyone loved building the Orgelkit.



A few more pics from the Pedals, Pipes and Pizza event



It's a WOW, we did it. Look at that. It took the kids only about 35 minutes to build the organ.

Photos By: David Horr, Mark Mackeben, & Mark Stockwell



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Chaplain's Message



As the new year begins, my thanks go out to all of our hard-working congregational musicians who have worked so hard through the Advent and Christmas seasons. It's one of the highest-intensity parts of the year for choirs, organists, and other church musicians, and a time when you give so much time and

energy so that others have a chance and a place to be still and know that God is God. We now stand in the Epiphany Season, when liturgical and lectionary based churches contemplate the arrival and manifestation of Jesus - the making-known of who Jesus is. Good church music does just that - helps make known and manifest the love and mercy of the Savior.

Due to the lateness of Easter this year, this season is long! I hope you have an opportunity to take some time for yourself and your own renewal before things get busy again toward Lent and Easter. My prayers for all of you in your ministry of music continue, as we walk the roads of Galilee with Jesus, before turning toward the Cross this Lent.

Br. David Benedict Hedges, BSG

Roy Johnson Memorial Scholarship

Students may apply for a 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. Application forms are online at www.saago.org.

You won't want to miss this regional convention so close to home!

World-Class Performances: Concerts by Kimberly Marshall, Richard Elliott, Isabelle Demers, Scott Dettra, Raúl Prieto Ramirez, Bálint Karosi, and more.

Incredible Venues: From ASU's magnificent organs to Camelback Bible Church (recently featured in TAO magazine), experience some of Arizona's finest.

Unique Excursions: Visits to the Musical Instrument Museum, Organ Stop Pizza, and a bus ride to Tucson to see, hear and play two of Tucson's finest organs.

Inclusive Meals: Enjoy two lunches and one dinner, all included in your registration price.

Unbeatable Hotel Pricing: If you want to stay in Phoenix, you can enjoy free breakfast, parking, and included resort fees which are included in the \$139 per night fee at the convention hotel — book now to get in on the exclusive convention rate, especially if you want to come early or stay late to enjoy post-convention events and explore all the great things the Phoenix area has to offer! (Convention registration and hotel registration links at <https://phxago2025.org/>)

www.phxago2025.org



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JUNE 16-19

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For more information contact David Boulton
(undergraduate advisor) at davidboulton@arizona.edu



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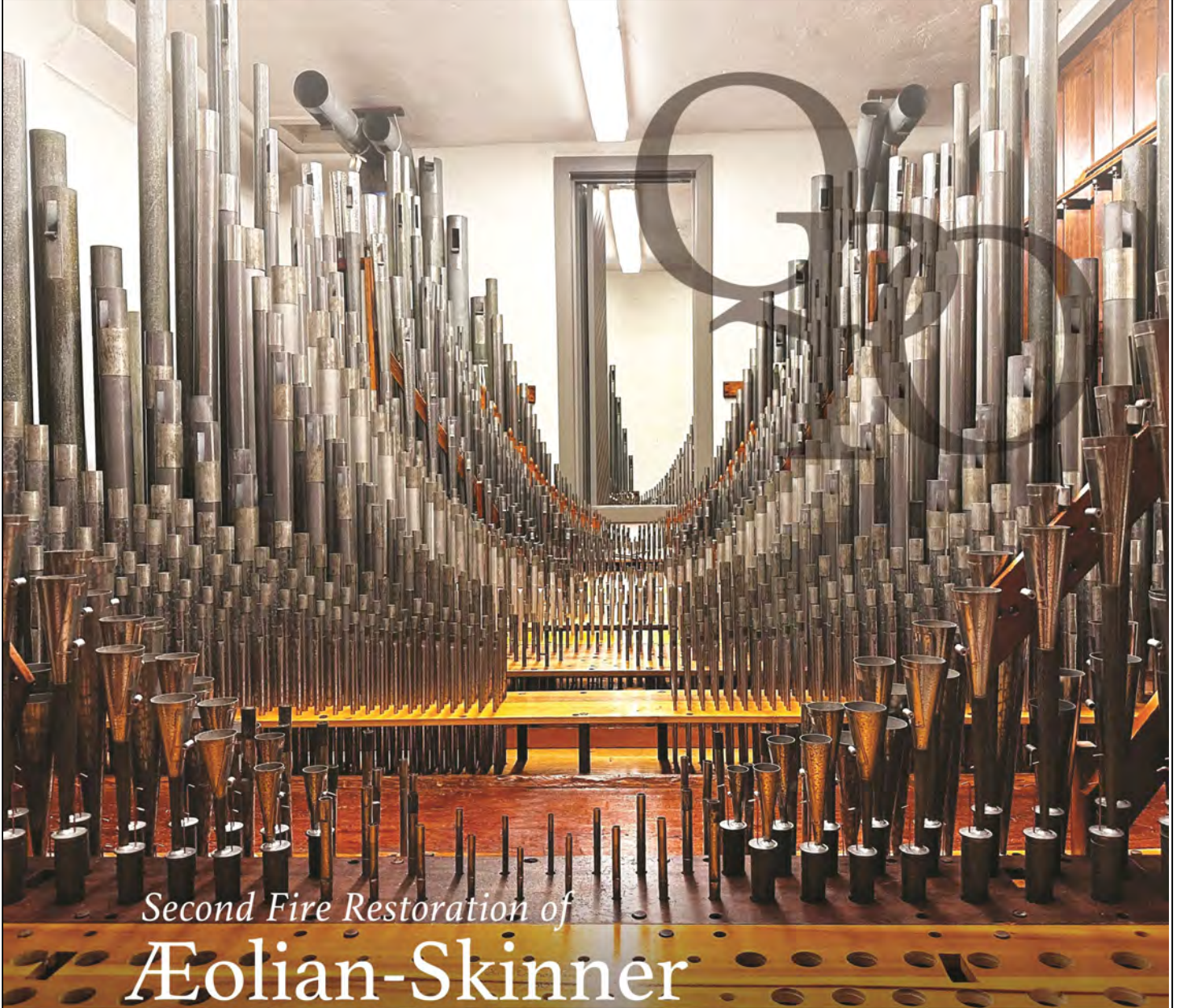
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**Mozart *Requiem* & Paulus
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March 28-30, 2025

Close-Up Vocal Recitals 2025



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**NATION
duo**
February 18



**CHELSEA
HELM**
soprano
April 1



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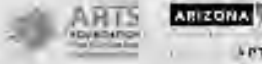
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Publication Information: *The Cypher* is a monthly newsletter published by the Southern Arizona Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. It is distributed to chapter members, organists of Tucson churches and surrounding communities, and deans of all chapters in the West Region (Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Utah, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Alaska, and Oregon, as well as Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Sydney, Australia.).

Southern Arizona Chapter members who 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. 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.

2025 Chapter and Member Programs at a Glance

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Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music
\$10

**SAAGO—Members' Recital—
Concert repertoire based on hymns**

Sunday, Mar. 16, 4 p.m.
Location TBA
Donation

Rising Stars, Young Musicians

Sarah Roland, Cello
Saturday, Mar. 22, 3 p.m.
St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal
Church

**SAAGO—Valerie Harris, How the
West was Won. *Rescheduled to
next season, 2025-2026***

**SAAGO—An Introduction to the
Organ with Anna Lapwood**

Sunday, April 6, 4 p.m.
Catalina United Methodist Church
Free

Orgelkids makes the King of
Instruments accessible.

**Anna Lapwood, Organ
Catalina Organ Festival**

Monday, Apr. 7, 7 p.m.
Catalina United Methodist Church
\$30; \$25 seniors; \$10 students

**Jeffrey Campbell
& Stephen Keyl, Organ**

Sunday, Apr. 27, 3 p.m.
St. Alban's Episcopal Church
donation

**SAAGO—Building Church
Musicians, Raymond Ryder**

Saturday, May 10, 10 a.m.
Christ Church United Methodist

**St. Philip's Sings—Finzi and
R. V. Williams**

Sunday, May 11, 2 p.m.
St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal
Church

Youth of St. Philip's in Concert

Sunday, May 25, 3 p.m.
St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal
Church

**SAAGO—Summer Social
Potluck & Business Meeting**

Sunday Jun 1, 4 p.m.
Colonia Verde Clubhouse

Working the bellows. . . Interesting



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