

The CYPHER

Newsletter of the Southern Arizona Chapter American Guild of Organists

Chapter Website: www.saago.org

Volume 44, Number 9 May 2025

Chapter & Member Programs at a glance through June 20

SAAGO—Building Church Musicians, Raymond Ryder Saturday, May 10, 10 a.m. Christ Church United Methodist

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

Jeffrey Campbell, Organ Friday, May 16, 7 p.m. St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church 800 Taylor Drive, Sierra Vista

All the Bells and Whistles Sunday, May 18, 3 p.m. Christ Church United Methodist

Pamela Decker, Organ Roy Johnson Memorial Organ Series Sunday, May 18, 3 p.m. Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music

St. Philip's Youth 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

Phoenix Convention Excursion to Tucson Friday, June 20, 10 a.m.

Building Church Musicians, Raymond T. Ryder Saturday, May 10, 10 a.m.

Christ Church United Methodist 655 N. Craycroft Rd. Lunch

Dr. Raymond T. Ryder, SAAGO dean and Piano Director, Pima Community College, will address how musicians, pianists particularly, can successfully prepare to transition into service playing, choir accompanying, and leading rehearsals.

Church musicians are made, not born, and becoming a better church musician is largely self-directed, on-the-job training. Few of us start our musical journeys with clear ideas of the steps we would need to take and the challenges we would encounter. Raymond will present



strategies and resources for improving our musicianship skills, and also share repertoire suggestions for pianists and organists (since we often do a bit of both).

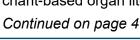
Raymond teaches piano, class piano, Music Fundamentals, and Popular Music in America at Pima. He is organist and handbell director at Desert Skies United Methodist Church, and a performing member of the community supported professional handbell ensemble Sonoran Bells He is a Past President and the Honored Teacher 2014 of the Arizona State Music Teachers Association, as well as a Past President of the Tucson Music Teachers Association. He holds degrees from the University of Colorado, the Florida State University, and the University of Arizona where he studied piano with Rex Woods and organ with Roy Johnson. Prior to moving to Tucson, Raymond was on the faculty of Delta State University in Cleveland, Mississippi, and on the accompanying staff of the Interlochen Arts Camp for nine summers.

Pamela Decker, Organ Roy Johnson Memorial Organ Series

Sunday, May 18, 3 p.m.

Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music

Dr. Pamela Decker performs her annual faculty recital on the Harris/Schoenstein organ in Holsclaw Hall in a program entitled "Sacred to Secular: From the Cathedral to the Zoo." The liturgical seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter are honored with chorale-based and chant-based organ literature by composers of the twentieth





AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

SOUTHERN ARIZONA CHAPTER

P.O. Box 31315 Tucson, AZ 85751-1315

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To contact an Executive Committee member by email or phone, please use your membership directory.

Our chapter has a generic email address:

southernarizonaago@gmail.com.

This email will be checked by an Executive Committee member at least twice daily. You may continue to contact members using their email and phone numbers printed in the 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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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 Colleagues,

This will be a somewhat short column since I'm composing it during a Holy Week (during a busy semester for me at Pima Community College), but I got thinking about some of the things I am reading, or have been reading recently. Even the titles and subtitles convey a lot. One title really intrigues me, although I haven't yet delved into the book very deeply yet is "Music of the Heart: John & Charles Wesley on Music and Musicians (An Anthology)" by Carlton R. Young. With such a title, how could I not be drawn in? The title itself shifts my attitude and helps focus my preparations for Holy Week, and for the Sundays ahead in Eastertide. It also reminds me that I only want to share 'music of the heart' no matter what the context.

Another title that really caught my attention a few years ago is "Talent Is Overrated: What Really Separates World-Class Performers from Everyone Else" by Geoff Colvin. When I first bought it, I had to ask where to find it, and it turned out to be in the Business section, probably because the author is Senior Editor at Large for Fortune magazine. And he does talk about business leaders, but also musicians and athletes such as Mozart and Tiger Woods. After reading it, I adopted it as a required text (along with a piano method book for adults) for my "Exploring Music Through Piano" classes at Pima. I think you'll understand why from some of his eleven chapter titles: "What Deliberate Practice Is and Isn't: For starters, it isn't what most of us do when we're 'practicing,'" "How Deliberate Practice Works: The specific ways it changes us, and how that makes all the difference," and "Great Performance in Youth and Age."

Renée Fleming's anthology "Music and Mind: Harnessing the Arts for Health and Wellness" has chapters by a wide variety of authors grouped under seven headings including "Creative Learning" and "Music as Therapy." The book is sitting patiently (and temptingly) on a side table in my living room...

But before I start delving into her book, I'm reading David Levitin's latest book: "I Heard There Was a Secret Chord: Music as Medicine." His most famous book so far has been "This Is Your Brain on Music," and he is both a musician and a neuroscientist. (He also has written another excellent book entitled "Successful Aging.")

In "I Heard There Was a Secret Chord" Levitin starts by delving into the brain's perception of music, and what that reveals about the elements of music. But later chapters address specific topics such as "Parkinson's Disease," "Mental Health," and "Music in Everyday Life." Such chapter headings making it tempting to jump ahead, but I'm resisting that urge because he has fascinating explanations, observations, and anecdotes on page after page. I find Levitin's style of writing to be very engaging, and I highly recommend this latest book of his!

Meanwhile, it's time to sit down at keyboard today, and at the console the next few days...

Raymond T. Ryder, Dean

Chapter and Member Programs

Pamela Decker, Organ, continued

and twenty-first centuries. Secular music includes a lovely early work by the Swiss composer Frank Martin and Pamela Decker's cycle titled *Animalia Floridae*, which was commissioned by the Tampa Chapter of the American Guild of Organists (AGO) to commemorate the 75th anniversary of its founding. The three-work cycle pays tribute to Florida state animals: the American alligator, the manatee, and the Florida panther, respectively. The liturgical works come from composers of many backgrounds: Ernst Pepping, Jean Langlais, Ethel Smyth, Gerald Near, and Pamela Decker.

Pamela is a prolific composer as well as professor of organ and theory at the University of Arizona, where she also 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.

St. Philip's Sings—Gerald Finzi and Ralph Vaughan Williams

Sunday, May 11, 2 p.m. St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church 4440 N. Campbell Ave. Free/Donations

All are invited to a festival of lush, English works from the last century featuring performances of Gerald Finzi's sublime cantata, *Dies Natalis*, a chamber setting of Vaughan Williams' dreamy *The Lark Ascending*, and Patrick Hawes' effervescent cantata, *The Song of Songs*. Donations support Saint Philip's music ministry.

Dr. Jeffrey Campbell, Organ

Friday, May 16, 7 p.m. St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church 800 Taylor Drive, Sierra Vista Freewill Offering

The concert program entitled "Bach and Friends"

will include works by J.S. Bach, Louis Vierne, Percy Whitlock and Teilhard Susato, all performed on the historic 1949 Moeller pipe organ, the largest in Cochise County. All donations go to the organ restoration fund. For more information please call (520) 226-5574.



All the Bells and Whistles Concert

Sunday, May 18, 3 p.m.
Christ Church United Methodist
655 N. Craycroft Rd.
Free/Donations to the Christ Church Food Bank



The annual celebration of music featuring the Christ Church Ringers Handbells, the Chancel Choir, organ, piano, clarinets, flute, bass with Janet Tolman, organist, SAAGO Past Dean and member John Neve,

CCUM handbell director. Donations to the Christ Church Food Bank will be appreciated.

St. Philip's Youth in Concert

Sunday, May 25, 3 p.m. St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church 4440 N. Campbell Ave. Free/Donations

The musical year is concluded with vocal and instrumental offerings from the Youths at Saint Philips, including folk song arrangements by the Danish String Quartet, and the *Missa Brevis* of Benjamin Britten, from our Saint Nicholas Choir. Donations support the joint UK Residency/Pilgrimage program.

Summer Social and General Membership Meeting

SAAGO—Summer Social and General Membership Meeting at Colonia Verde

Sunday, June 1, 4 p.m. Colonia Verde Club House 2700 N. Camino Valle Verde

The annual members' meeting will take place at 4 p.m. followed by the potluck dinner and fellowship time, starting 5 p.m. Reservation deadline to Dee Schultz is <u>Thursday</u>, <u>May 29</u>. Contact her at 520-343-5343, or E-mail her at: **adschul@yahoo.com**, <u>by Thursday</u>, <u>May 29</u>,

See pages 9 and 10 for details and driving instructions.



In From the Heat, Catalina United Methodist Church



Catalina United Methodist Church 2700 E. Speedway Blvd.

Dr. William Kuhlman Saturday, June 21

Sophie Martinez Saturday, July 26





Lunch served at noon in the Fellowship Hall with the organ recital following in the sanctuary. Lunch is \$20 per person; \$30 for two persons Cash/credit at the door

William (Bill) Kuhlman. Hailed by critics as "a world-class performer" whose playing "communicates musical purpose and excitement," Bill's passion for his art was reflected in a teaching and performing career that spanned a broad range of activities, from concerts to publication of his scholarly works. His past appearances have also included engagements with the famed Empire Brass. He is Emeritus Professor of Music, Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, where he taught for more than 39 years.

Sophie Martinez. Sophie performed in the UA Johnson Organ Series in a program featuring Johan Hammarström, Stockholm Cathedral Organist. Her first public performance was with Dr. Pamela Decker in a piece composed for them by Dr. Decker. Sophie minored in organ at Gustavus Adolphus College and continued her studies with Dr. Eric Plutz, while studying at Princeton Theological Seminary, from which she holds the MTS degree. She studied with Ulrika Ryssmats in Mora, Sweden, while there as an exchange student.



Chaplain's Message



As I write this, it is Good Friday. The congregation I serve is in the thick of it - not least the singers and our organist pouring out their best efforts in heart, mind, and voice. But by the time you read this, the rigors of Holy Week and Easter Day will be past. Your congregations may be quite different, but here we

will be relaxing into the extended joy of the fifty-day Easter Season. But it's here in the midst of it that I am quite grateful for the service of church musicians.

The Book of Common Prayer offers these words prayer for the Fourth Sunday of Easter: "Grant that when we hear [Jesus the Good Shepherd's] voice we may know him who calls us each by name, and follow where he leads." One of the things church musicians do is make music the voice of Jesus - the voice of the Good Shepherd. This Easter, remember this - that the music you offer calls the faithful into the sheepfold where they may safely graze.

Br. David Benedict Hedges, BSG Rector, St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church SAAGO Chaplain

Part-time Music Position: Organist and/or Choir Director

St. Alban's Episcopal Church

Saint Alban's Episcopal Church is seeking talented and dedicated candidates to fill the position of Organist and Choir Director – or two people to fill the positions separately. The ideal candidate/candidates will bring musical excellence, creativity, and leadership to our worship services and a collaborative environment for the choir and congregation.

Knowledge of the classics, a passion for sacred music in the Episcopal tradition, and more contemporary choral music and hymns is an expectation.

To apply, submit a resume and cover letter outlining your experience and vision for music ministry along with professional references and recordings or videos of your organ or choral work to:

Saint Alban's Episcopal Church 3738 Old Sabino Canyon Road Tucson, AZ 85750

Or email to: <u>albanslife@stalbansza.org</u>.
Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

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.



There is still time to register for the Regional Convention—and still time to sign up for the excursion to Tucson. https://phxago2025.org/

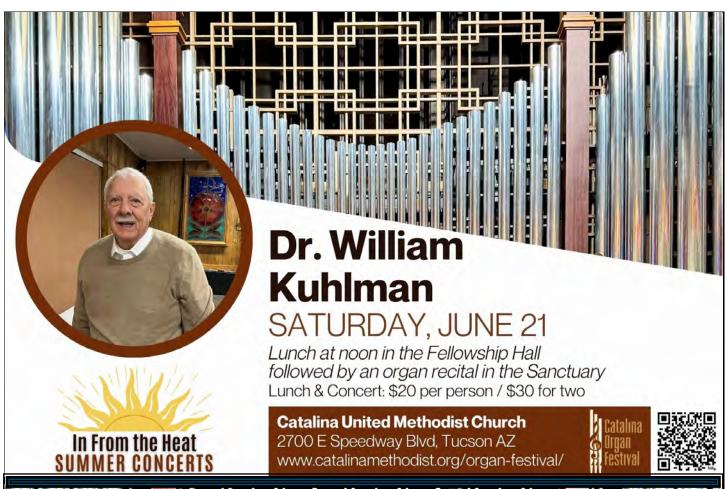
SAAGO Members are invited to join the Excursion to Tucson Friday June 20, 10 a m to 2:30 p m

Friday, June 20, 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church

(10 a.m.) A special program featuring Pamela Decker and Chris Fresolone, followed by open console time and lunch at St. Michael's (free).

Catalina United Methodist Church (1 p.m.) hosted by Mariana Mevans, and Dennis Grannan with a special performance by member Bill Kuhlman.

You are welcome to join this excursion even if you have not registered for the convention. Contact Dusty Johnson (skj5@cox.net) for information.





SUMMER CONCERTS

www.catalinamethodist.org/organ-festival/

Anna Lapwood Recap

Anna Lapwood with performers at the recent Introduction to the ORGAN Event. An enthusiastic audience just short of about 100 was thrilled by her presentation. The program began with a brief Anna Lapwood performance after which the pre-registered performers were asked to present themselves and play their selected compositions. Ms. Lapwood then tutored each of the students as they performed, giving them personal instruction while the large audience listened and looked on.

After the program, everyone was invited to meet Ms. Lapwood, see the organ up close and stay for a great pizza supper..



Anna Lapwood with performers.

Photos, Mark Stockwell



Anna Lapwood with student performer & Dennis Grannan.

CONCERT, APRIL 7.
An enthusiastic audience of about 685 fans heard and saw Ms. Lapwood in performance as part of the Catalina Organ Festival.

They came several different states with high expectations and were not disappointed. Anna is a skillful and artistic performer who reaches her audience with her music, vibrant enthusiasm and personality.

They loved her!

Anna Lapwood performing with the light show to a completely full church, including the chancel, as part of the Catalina Organ Festival



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YOU'RE INVITED!

To the Southern Arizona Chapter of the AGO's

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CHAPTER

SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 2025, 4:00 P.M. 'TIL



At the beautiful club house at Colonia Verde

(David Wachter's and David Horr's community)

2700 N. Camino Valle Verde, off Sabino Canyon Road, north of Tanque Verde (driving directions are on the following page).

- Come and enjoy visiting with your friends in the Chapter for a fun get-together to conclude the 2024-2025 season.
- Annual meeting of the Chapter Members is at 4 p.m., followed by a potluck supper at 5:00.
- Bring your favorite dish for the potluck supper. If you can't bring a dish or beverage, come anyway! There will be enough for everyone.
- Bring any organ music you no longer wish to keep.
- Get to know your colleagues better.
- If you need a ride, don't be shy to ask.

Contact Dee Schultz, 520-343-5343, or E-mail her at: **adschul@yahoo.com**, **by Thursday, May 29,** to let her know what dish you'll be bringing. Utensils and soft drinks will be provided.



Annual Meeting Directions: There are several ways to get to the Colonia Verde club house:

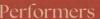
- 1. From the Foothills, drive south on Sabino Canyon Road, through the light at Cloud Road. After crossing Tanque Verde Wash, you will pass three HOA's and then Sabino Baptist Church on the left. Immediately beyond the church, take the next left turn (E. Portal Airosa) into Colonia Verde. Drive one block, cross Camino Valle Verde into the clubhouse parking lot, straight ahead.
- 2. Tanque Verde to Sabino Canyon Road. Turn north onto Sabino Canyon Road. Turn RIGHT at the second street on the right (E. Portal Airosa) into Colonia Verde. Drive one block, cross Camino Valle Verde into the clubhouse parking lot, straight ahead.
- 3. North on Kolb Road (north of Speedway Blvd.), turn right onto new Sabino Canyon Road, cross Pantano Wash, proceed through Tanque Verde, then turn right at the second street on the right (E. Portal Airosa) into Colonia Verde. Drive one block, cross Camino Valle Verde into the clubhouse parking lot, straight ahead.

Please join your colleagues and friends on Sunday, June 1 at 4:00 p.m. for this delightful end-of-season event.



hosted by the Central Arizona Chapter







Ramírez











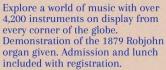
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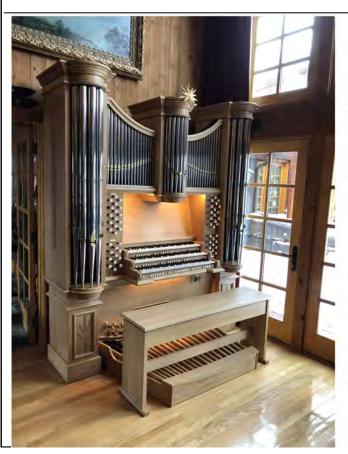
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Professor of Organ and Harpsichord pdecker@email.arizona.edu 520-204-5691

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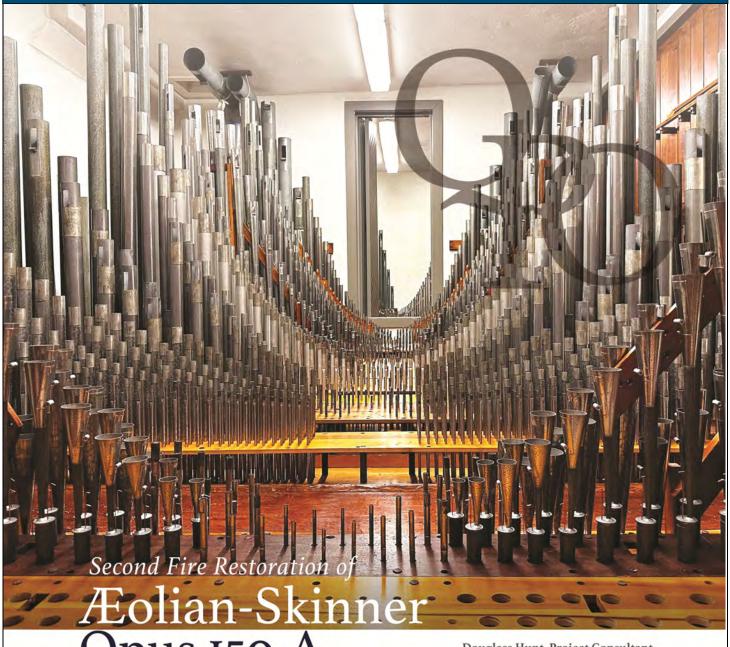
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