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FROM THE EDITOR

Regina Kettering, Editor (editor@pitago.org)

Due to the ongoing pandemic challenges, nationals has cancelled or postponed most of the summer gatherings. Please see page 6, www.agohq.org, or your TAO for more details.

I encourage you to send notifications about online musical events. I have heard people say “I want to see groups perform, but I only hear about them after the fact!” We want to spread the word about what is happening at your church, so send notifications of online as well as in person events. You can also post them on our Facebook page.

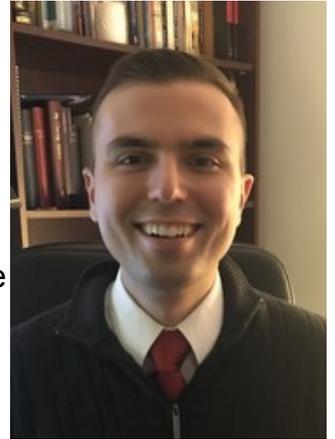
Over the past three months the newsletter has gone electronic. With the switch-over happening earlier than expected, it has kept its older styling. We are planning on optimizing the newsletter for its electronic format. Please let us know what you enjoy about an electronic format. What would make it easier for you to navigate an electronic newsletter? Email suggestions to the editor (editor@pitago.org) by July 31st for consideration.

We thank you for your continued flexibility as we all navigate a very unexpected time. Stay healthy!

DEAN'S NOTES

by Chaz Bowers, Dean (dean@pitago.org)

I'm fortunate to have large windows in my house. Over the past few weeks, I've looked out the window every day and watched, eagerly waiting for the trees to return to their fullness, complete with their lush green leaves. Does it always take so long for the leaves to turn green? In past years, I remember looking outside one day and realizing that everything had somehow turned green, and I missed it! This year, it seemed to be a slow and steady process. I've greatly enjoyed watching Mother Nature work her magic. Even though we aren't yet in the "green phase," I hope that each of you has had a chance to stop and appreciate the beauty of creation all around us this spring. I also hope that we take time, in the absence of being together, to appreciate the beauty of the camaraderie of our chapter and how important it is to each of us.



Thanks to all of you who participated in the joint Zoom meeting with the Pittsburgh Chapter of the National Pastoral Musicians (NPM). On behalf of all of us, I want to thank Amanda Bruce, David Dreher, and Lewis Steele for their wonderful presentation, as well as Ken Danchik and David Dreher for their work in making this presentation possible. Let us also thank Fr. James Chepponis, Diocesan Director of Music for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh, and Kevin Maurer, Chapter Director of NPM Pittsburgh, for their promotion and support of this event as the leaders of the Pittsburgh Chapter of the National Pastoral Musicians.

As you are reading this, many of you will have been, or will soon be, contacted by members of our executive board. This is part of an outreach effort spearheaded by the National Office of the American Guild of Organists to reach out to all our members across the country. Don't worry—it's not a call for money! We want you to know that we miss you, and we look forward to the day when we can all gather together again.

For those of you who purchased standing reservations for the last program year, please write to Aaron Sproul at treasurer@pittago.org if you would like to receive a refund for the March and April meetings. (Kindly remember that the May Meeting was not included in the standing reservation, as the final amount had not yet been determined.) Alternatively, if you would like the remaining balance of your standing reservation to be a tax-deductible donation to our local chapter, you can also let Aaron know that and he will provide you with a receipt.

Our executive board meeting will take place on Monday, June 1, via an online video conference. As far as I know, this is the first time that our board has ever met virtually. One of the discussions that we

will have is how to proceed with programming for the 2020-2021 season amidst the continued threat of the coronavirus. While it is possible that we could be in the green phase by the fall, it is also possible that we could stay in the yellow phase for some time, or return to the red phase if there is a second wave of the pandemic. Ken Danchik, Regina Kettering, and I have already discussed amongst ourselves the possibility of creating a flexible program that could function in any of the following four ways:

1. As normal, with all of our membership gathered at a church for a dinner and a program
2. With those who are able to attend at the venue for the program, and others watching from home via livestream
3. With a skeleton crew consisting of a presenter, host, videographer, and key guild members at the venue, and the rest of the chapter watching livestream
4. Everyone participating via a Zoom meeting presentation

By approaching our yearly programming in this manner, it will be possible for programs to be easily altered to accommodate this constantly changing situation. It will also allow our monthly meetings to resume in the fall, even if we are not in the green phase. Live Streaming or recording our programs will allow our membership to watch them at any time, not just during the meeting time. **If you are interested in participating in the Program Committee for next year, which will meet on Zoom, please contact Ken Danchik.**

The other topic that the executive committee will need to address is the 100th Anniversary of our beloved Pittsburgh Chapter. It is sad to even imagine the possibility that we may not be able to gather together to commemorate this important event. My hope is that we can ritualize this at some point, even if it is not in the fall. We may have to think “outside the box” on how to do this and embrace new technology to gather virtually.

Know that our officers and executive committee will continue to act with the safety and security of all in mind. In no way is any of this ideal. This remains a fluid situation, one that we will constantly evaluate. Stay well, be safe, and let us all remember that we are in this together. Please know of my continued prayers.

Sincerely,

Chaz Bowers
Dean

MAY WITH NPM AND NEXT YEAR'S PROGRAMS

by Ken Danchik, Sub-dean (sub-dean@pitago.org)

Our joint Pittsburgh AGO and NPM Zoom meeting on May 12th was a great success, bringing together members from both very active chapters. You can view an archived recording of the meeting here:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/_5xN7f22m5OSY3QymHHRK0jG7zmeaa8hCFN_vRYmU58XH23t1DH681QSwSOiteX
Password: 0W?muC@1

We are thankful to David Dreher, Amanda Plazek-Bruce, and Lewis Steele for sharing their wisdom and expertise. David Dreher talked about applying for unemployment compensation, and calculating the figure for weekly salary. He advised patience, citing a backlog of applications, and the 1970 software used by the Unemployment Office. Amanda Plazek-Bruce indicated that Zoom, YouTube and Facebook are preferred platforms for online meetings and broadcasts, and urged that music copyright issues be respected when broadcasting online. Lewis Steele stated that changes to tax laws are in flux. He advised keeping an expense and mileage log book in your car's glove compartment, and that mileage traveling to professional meetings and between churches in a cluster all is deductible. Consultation with an experienced tax accounting professional was strongly advised when preparing next year's taxes.

Excellent online learning resources are posted on both aforementioned chapter sites. Take a look – you will see familiar faces, and gain valuable insights from our peers.

On Monday, June 1st, our Chapter Executive Board will meet via Zoom to discuss planning for the next program year. We will need to ascertain member's willingness to meet online for the foreseeable future, and to determine how we will make the decision to meet on location as a group. We will look to the National AGO Office for guidance on these issues. Our chapter has purchased a Zoom online meeting license, and I have agreed to be the "Zoom Master." There is a learning curve to becoming familiar with this technology which I am embracing, and most eager to share with our Chapter. Make sure that your computer is tuned-up and running well, and that you have a connected camera and microphone. A good internet provider capable of live-streaming also is necessary. And, most importantly, during live Zoom meetings, learn to mute your mic when you are listening mode. Then, unmute when you want to speak. Some very interesting audio broadcasts have been experienced when participants didn't realize that their microphones were 'live.'

Lastly, if you have any programming ideas for our coming year that can be conducted 'virtually,' please contact me.

And please, stay safe and healthy!

OAS UPDATES

Edward Alan Moore (director@organseries.com)

Paul Jacobs (originally scheduled for March 15)

Now scheduled for Tuesday, July 28, 7:30 PM at Westminster Presbyterian Church. It is Bach's death date and the 20th anniversary of Paul's Bach Marathon at Westminster

Grammy Award-winning [Paul Jacobs](#), chair of the Julliard School's organ department, is an internationally celebrated organist. Heralded as "one of the major musicians of our time" by Alex Ross of *The New Yorker*, Mr. Jacobs has performed to great critical acclaim on five continents and in each of the fifty United States. Known for playing demanding programs exclusively from memory, he has memorized the complete works of Olivier Messiaen, as well as the complete works of Johann Sebastian Bach, Johannes Brahms, and César Franck. An advocate for new music and an eloquent champion of the organ, Mr. Jacobs has performed numerous premieres of solo organ and organ-orchestra commissions.

Mr. Jacobs will display his brilliance on the [three-manual 81-rank Austin](#) organ at Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Presented in cooperation with Music & Arts Series of Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Tickets available at the door (cash, check, or card). General admission \$12. Student free with valid ID.

[Westminster Presbyterian Church](#), 2040 Washington Road, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15241

Damin Spritzer (originally scheduled for May 1)

A date for the postponed concert has not yet been scheduled, but it looks like Doug Starr will host it at St. Paul Episcopal Church.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM NATIONAL

Memberships can be renewed online at www.AGOHQ.org. Due to the pandemic, staff have been working from home. Even as they come back into the office, there will be a significant backlog. Nationals is requesting members renew via credit card if at all possible, as that ensures your ongoing membership. Checks will be delayed. They are also extending the grace period three months beyond your membership to help members who have been impacted by COVID-19.

CANCELLATIONS: The AGO convention in Atlanta has been cancelled for 2020. Refunds are available, but please consider donating all or part of your convention fees, as the convention still incurred significant non-refundable fees. Anyone with questions can call 404-981-7210.

All FAGO, AAGO, and ChM exams have been cancelled for 2020. Fees will be refunded.

All 2020 Pipe Organ Encounters are also cancelled.

EVENTS

If your events are being moved online, please contact us with the relevant information AND A LINK (or where a link will be posted). In person events are subject to change, based on ongoing circumstances. Please contact the point person or website for relevant information.

Date	Event
12 July 3:30 PM	Organist Josef Solé-Coll in Concert – Josef Solé-Coll is the organist of St. Peter's Basilica - the Vatican. Free admission - an offering will be received. <i>St. Paul Cathedral, 108 N. Dithridge St, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 (corner of Fifth Ave and Craig St)</i> donaldfellows@verizon.net https://ghocatholics.org/ 412-621-4951 x. 28
19 July 3:30 PM	Organist Benjamin LaPrairie in Concert - Ben LaPrairie is the Associate Organist of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. Free admission - an offering will be received. <i>St. Paul Cathedral (address and info above)</i>
26 July 3:30 PM	Rev. Ugo Patti in Concert - Rev. Ugo Patti is the Organist of the Diocese of Bergamo, Italy. Admission free- an offering will be received. <i>St. Paul Cathedral (address and info above)</i>
2 Aug 3:30 PM	Organist Brendan Lowery in Concert - Brendan Lowery is the Organist/Music Director of St. Paul of the Cross Parish in Castle Shannon, PA. Admission free - an offering will be received. <i>St. Paul Cathedral (address and info above)</i>
9 Aug 3:30 PM	Organist James Wetzel in Concert - James Wetzel is Organist/Director of Music of St. Vincent Ferrer and St. Catherine of Sienna in New York City. Admission is free - an offering will be received <i>St. Paul Cathedral (address and info above)</i>
16 Aug 3:30 PM	Organist Hazel Eaton in Concert - Hazel Eaton is Organist and Music Director of the Community Church of Mountain Lakes, New Jersey. Admission is free - an offering will be received. <i>St. Paul Cathedral (address and info above)</i>