

The Trompette

The Newsletter of the Westchester Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

JUNE, 2010

VOLUME 9, #10

From the Dean's Bench...

Dear Colleagues,

As I write this I am still recovering from the overwhelming experience of our final program of the season – “*The Members' Choice Recital*” adroitly crafted by Sub-Dean **Alice Avouris**, and **Dr. Robert Chase**, Co-Chair, Professional Development and Education. What a marvelous afternoon of music and reminiscence! The varied program of our recitalists' favorite compositions featured organists **Kathryn Jones**, **Dr. Jan-Piet Knijff**, **Kenneth Potter**, **Alice**, **Tim Keenan-Devlin**, **Lowell Knauer**, **Judith Abel**, **Laura Ravotti**, **Lana Kollath**, **Meredith Storer**, **Thomas Zachacz**, **Frank Miller**, and our peripatetic host **Andrew Sheranian**, eliciting the rich tones of the III/67 Austin organ; vocalists **JP**, **Judith** and **Karen Longwell**; and harpist Adrienne Knauer – all the music reverberating through the isles and arches of historic Christ's Church in Rye. And all of this punctuated by so many poignant reminders of the warm and kindly spirit who was our friend and colleague **Ralph Burkhart** to whom this program was lovingly dedicated.

The 60+ attendees of the event included several members of Ralph's family who traveled from the Buffalo area to be with us, as well as a large contingent from St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Yonkers where Ralph was organist and choirmaster. The Recital was followed by a reception featuring a wide array of members' pot-luck specialties, all splendidly coordinated by **Alice** and our ever-dependable hospitality helpers **Judith**, **Joyce Gardner**, **Lois Simmons**, **Barbara Smith**, **Edna Schloton** and Mary Stanton, amongst others. We acknowledged the many years of dedicated service of **JP Knijff**, Co-Chair, Professional Development and Education, who has accepted an academic position in a university in Australia.

During the reception it was my privilege to install the elected officers who will be serving the Chapter in the coming year. I offer my congratulations and best wishes to each of you, and I thank the entire Chapter membership for the unwavering support I have received during the past two most exciting and memorable years.

Sincerely,

John

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And Now, a Letter from our New Dean!

This is certainly not the best way to begin – by sending in an article for *The Trompette* after the deadline! My excuse is I didn't give it a thought until after yesterday's *Members' Choice Recital* on May 23rd.

Congratulations and thanks to all who participated in the *Members' Choice Recital* yesterday afternoon (May 23rd – so now you know that this article missed the deadline!) Dedicated to the memory of Ralph Burkhart, our Chapter secretary, the concert was attended by members and friends of the AGO, Ralph's family and members of his congregation from St. Mark's in Yonkers. John Cecconi was the unforgettable master of ceremonies, beginning with his 'cell-phone call' from heaven. John 'visited' with Ralph on the cell-phone, catching up with his activities there, such as biking ("all down-hill in heaven") and the wonderful opportunities for choir directing (plenty of great tenors!). It was sweet, funny and made us tearful at the same time.

Many thanks to all the musicians for their efforts to make the concert a success. We had a wonderful, large group of performers this year. Judy Abel, Alice Avouris, Kathryn Jones, Tim Keenan-Devlin, Adrienne (harp) and Lowell Knauer, Jan-Piet Knijff, Lana Kollath, Karen Longwell, Frank Miller, Kenneth Potter, Laura Ravotti, Andrew Sheranian (our host), Meredith Storer and Thomas Zachacz. *Whew!* I'd love to include information about the amazing music; perhaps we can put the program on the website.

Afterwards there was the induction ceremony, with John thanking everyone else, when really he is the one to thank for all he has done to make this Chapter so active, educational, inspiring and fun. Judy Abel and I as the Sub-dean and Dean (coming up on July 1st) are wondering how we can possibly follow such a skilled leader, and we have just over a month to develop the skills! Well, as a famous author wrote, "There's nothing like practice." And to help us we still have a great team of directors and *ex-officio* board members, although we have lost dear Ralph, our Secretary.

We are very eager to get your ideas for programs. Several interesting suggestions have come up already, and it would be wonderful to have about 100 more, so please speak up or send an e-mail and let us know what you are interested in doing this coming year!

Bye for now,

Alice Avouris

Dean-elect

FAREWELL TO OUR FRIEND, RALPH BURKHART



Ralph Burkhart
July 12, 1946 – May 8, 2010
Chapter Director 2003-2006
Chapter Secretary 2006-2010

Ralph Burkhart passed away peacefully at White Plains Medical Center, where he had been admitted a week previously due to complications from adrenal gland cancer. There will be a memorial service held sometime in June at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Yonkers. When plans are finalized, we will communicate the details to you. Ralph will be remembered by all who knew him as a good-humored, life-loving and selfless individual, dedicated to his music, and to the Chapter. His cheery disposition will be missed greatly. May his smile and the laughter that he brought to all of those whose life he touched remain in our hearts.

-- John Cecconi



Set your browser for www.agowestchester.org this summer to check out our Chapter's Website! It's a kewl place to find a list of current officers, program schedule, photographs from meetings and pix of local organs! We thank Virginia Bender for cre8ing and maintaining a website of which we can be proud.

EMPTY BENCHES

NONE REPORTED.

JUNE & JULY CONCERT CALENDAR

July 13 – Tuesday – 7:30 PM

Summer Sing: *Elijah* ~ John King directing the New Choral Society of Westchester. Music Conservatory of Westchester, 216 Central Avenue, White Plains. \$10, \$8 student includes refreshments and use of score. 914/761.3900.

FROM YOUR NEWSPAPER EDITORS...

Thank you all for your cooperation in getting your material [TO US](#) by the 20th of each preceding month. We want to be able to deliver the Newsletter to you on or about the 1st of each month, and it takes a week or more to finalize the copy and layout, get it to and from the printer, and address, stamp and mail all of the copies.

The Trompette is sent out by email, and by regular mail to those Members without an email address. The electronic versions are sent out immediately after finalization, but processing the printed copies can take a week or more, plus the delivery of the regular postal mail can additionally take a week or more. If you have an email address, but are presently receiving your copy by postal mail, consider receiving it electronically instead, saving the Chapter postage expense. Send your email address to: lysimmonds@hotmail.com

Kindly do not send in items more than once. For the Concert Calendar, include event, date, time, location, cost (if any) and an information phone number. (Incomplete or unclear submissions cannot be printed.) Due to space constraints, articles and notices are edited.

If you have provided a notice for the “Empty Benches” section, please be advised that postings will be carried for 3 calendar months unless we are advised that the position has either been filled or is still active. Newest listings appear first. Listings carried more than one month will be arranged alphabetically by organization and will indicate the month they were first run. We appreciate your cooperation in keeping *The Trompette* accurate and up-to-date.

Send your concert notices, articles, and other materials to:

E-mail: (preferable): (Compose in MS Word, if possible)

Postal Mail: T. Zachacz, *The Trompette*

The Dean and the Executive Board encourage our Members to send informative articles and any other items of interest for publication in the Newsletter.

Thank you!

Lois Simmonds & Thomas Zachacz

Editors,

The Trompette

***Here is the LATEST issue of the
Westchester Chapter AGO Newsletter.....***

Inside:

***A Letter from our Dean-Elect; Concert Calendar; no Empty
Benches ;a Memorial to Ralph Burkhart; a few pix***

**Westchester Chapter of the American Guild of Organists
The Trompette
Lois Simmonds &
Thomas Zachacz, Editors**