

# THE DESERT WIND

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Southern Nevada Chapter  
American Guild of Organists

## Dean's Notes

It's Winter time and today, even in Vegas, it feels like it. But this is nothing like it felt in BrianHead Ski Resort at 22 degrees F. and a snow blizzard with wind chill that felt much colder. Yes, I finally, after 8 years absence from the slopes, went skiing at the invitation of my very athletic daughter and her equally athletic husband. I had the good sense to stay on the "bunny slope," so there was no need for an orthopedic doctor to be on call. But, perhaps it would have been more of a success had I signed up for lessons!

The interesting thing about skiing, to be successful, is to make it downhill as fast and safely as possible. Other things in our world are going downhill also, but not seen as successful: the stock market, the value of the dollar, the job market, the banking system, and on and on. Is it possible for a small non-profit organization such as ours to keep

going in this climate and create success in members and outreach and achievement of goals?

Our numbers at concerts have been increasing, due in main part to the Felix Hell Concert, when we all made a concerted effort to advertise, and had an especially talented artist. The members' Christmas Recital saw a growth because of the positive response to our first concert. Our concert e-mail list has grown appreciably ( to over 190 listings).

Our finances have been experiencing a downward spiral, however. We've spent a lot on artists and advertising, and our principal is shrinking. We can turn that around by encouraging more people inside and outside the guild to be a patron, spreading the cost around a little so that finances don't become an up-hill battle.

The organ recital series committee (Paul Hesselink, Shireen Beaudry-Johnson, and Jan Bigler) have put together another grant for next year's concert series, hopefully receiving enough to pay for some excellent artists, the list of which is in this news letter.

Another way to support your Guild is to attend the CAZAGO's regional convention in Phoenix: "Phoenix Rising," June 22-25, 2009. Information can be found at: [www.AGOinPhoenix.com](http://www.AGOinPhoenix.com). Three of our members: Dr. Paul Hesselink, Jan Bigler, and Dr. Dorothy Riess, are presenters.

By the time I write again, we will have climbed the mountain to Holy Week and Easter services without the aid of a lift!. I hope your Holy Week and Easter experiences are wonderful and rewarding, and that it will all be downhill skiing to the slower-tempered days of summer. Shireen

In this Issue	Page	Page	
Dean's Message .....	1	Chapter Bach Bash .....	6
Duo Majoya Spectacular .....	2	Barbara Finn Recital .....	6
Duo Majoya Evaluation .....	3	Jan Bigler Recital .....	6
Recital Series for 2009-2010.....	4	Performance Anxiety Workshop.	6
Steve Cook's Opus 8 .....	5	Phoenix Rising .....	7
Special News Flash.....	6	Marilyn Mason Gala .....	7

## Duo Majoya - A Spectacular Recital & Workshop

On Friday, February 20 Marnie Giesbrect and Joachim Segger presented a spectacular recital at Doc Rando Hall on the UNLV campus. Their varied program presented a wide range of styles with something for everyone. The program exhibited musicality and imagination, and the ensemble between organ and piano was impeccable. The highlight of the program for many was the Denis Bédard “Duet Suite for organ and Piano,” but one would be hard-pressed to identify one work as “the best.” The program also included the U.S. Premiere of Canadian composer Cheryl Cooney’s “Destinations.” As an encore, Elgar’s “Salut d’amour” was elegantly performed. The entire program exhibited sensitivity and colorful registrations on the organ which always complemented the piano. The Duo Majoya’s fifteen years of performing this literature has made their recitals a feast for the ears!

The program was well-received by an audience of about 190 people.

The Saturday morning workshop in Doc Rando presented helpful insights on the topic of “The Unlikely Marriage of Piano and Organ: Hymns.” The clinicians discussed how the combination of instruments could be used creatively to enhance the worship experience. They demonstrated various ways hymns could be “dressed up” in new garb. There were so many good ideas presented and scintillating conversation among guests and attendees, it was a shame that only 14 people attended. One of the bonuses of the workshop was that the artists “reprised” and discussed several of the works heard on the program the evening before, illustrating what composition techniques work toward a good marriage of the two instruments and how that could be applied to the presentation of hymns in the worship service. The repertoire list for the workshop had somehow not gotten transmitted with the rest of the workshop outline. Marnie and Joachim have promised to send it. If you would like to have a copy of that list when we get it, send a request to [paulshesslink@peoplepc.com](mailto:paulshesslink@peoplepc.com)

For anyone who wondered how Marnie and Joachim came up with the name “Duo Majoya,” here is the inside scoop. M & A are the first two letters of MARNIE and J & O are the first two letters of Joachim. The final two letters are YA! (yes!). The full name also contains the word JOY--- what they hope will come through in their performing. The fact that the name sounds a bit Spanish and exotic is another plus.



# Evaluation Questionnaire for Duo Majoya Results

Of the 190 people attending the recital, we had 109 completed evaluations returned at the end of the recital. The evaluations were overwhelmingly positive. Here are the details:

First time attending an AGO recital:	38	(35%)
First time in Doc Rando Hall	25	(23%)
First time hearing the organ	36	(33%)

(11 respondents had been in Doc Rando but had not heard the organ)

How did they hear about the recital: (all responses tabulated; total percentage exceeds 100%)

E-mail notification	41	(38%)
Flyer	16	(15%)
Newspaper	5	(5%)
TV	1	(0.9%)
Radio	10	(9%)
Previous program	11	(10%)
From a friend	35	(32%)
Other	16	(15%)

(Cited were KNPR website, LVMTA newsletter, UNLV online events calendar, private piano teachers, UNLV and CSN music teachers, Desert Companion, choir director, etc.)

Respondents particularly enjoyed the compositions by Grieg and Bédard, but every work on the program was mentioned more than once.

Statements describing feelings about concert and performers:

I loved it!	72	(66%)
I liked it a lot	27	(25%)
I found it interesting	7	(6%)

(2 of these rated the recital “superb” and 5 rated it “excellent”)

I might come back for another performance	1	(0.9%)
(this respondent rated the program as “excellent”)		
I wasn’t really interested	0	
I wouldn’t come again	0	

Overall rating of the recital

Superb	64	(59%)
Excellent	43	(39%)
Average	0	
Fair	0	
Poor	0	
No rating	2	(2%)

Those rating the recital either as “Superb” or “Excellent” - 107 of 109 = 98%

## Recital Series 2009-2010

Your Organ Recital Series Committee has been working hard to put together the next season of organ recitals. While all the details for the 2009-2010 Organ Recital Series are not in place, and dates have not been firmed up, we think we know who will be coming to perform on the series. (Subject to change, of course!) The artists selected are:

### **David H. Brock**

David Brock maintains an active recital schedule. Recent appearances have included Trinity Episcopal, Reno; St. Mary's Cathedral, San Francisco; The Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, Los Angeles; The Cathedral of St. Philip, Atlanta; St. Paul's Episcopal, Alexandria; and Washington National Cathedral. David Brock is a principal member of TOCCATA (The Orchestra and Community Choral Artists of the Tahoe Area) where he serves as organist, continuo, and rehearsal accompanist to the group.

### **Dr. David Pickering**

Assistant Professor of Music at Graceland University in Lamoni, Iowa, David C. Pickering received the doctor of musical arts degree in organ performance and a master's degree in organ performance and musicology from the University of Kansas as a student of James Higdon. He received his bachelor of music degree in organ performance from Brigham Young University as a student of Parley Belnap and J. J. Keeler. Dr. Pickering is an authority on the organ music of Daniel Gawthrop, Leroy Robertson and Alice Jordan; in addition to his recital he will present a workshop on the organ works of those composers.

### **Sietze deVries**

Sietze deVries is very active as a concert organist in the Netherlands and abroad, with concert tours and master classes that have taken him to Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Denmark, England, and the United States. He has won fifteen different prizes in various national organ competitions, in both repertoire and improvisation. The high point of these activities was winning the international improvisation competition in Haarlem in 2002, where he had been a finalist in both 1998 and 2000. He was recently the featured performer on the nationally syndicated radio program Pipedreams

### **Dr. Heather Hernandez**

Dr. Heather Marie Harrington-Hernandez is Director of Parish Music at Lutheran Church of the Master in Phoenix, Arizona and an Accompanist for the Phoenix Girls Chorus. She was Cathedral Organ Scholar at St. Cecilia's Cathedral in Omaha, Nebraska from 2001-2004. Prior to that appointment, she was a student of Marie-Louise Langlais at the Conservatoire National de Région in Paris, France for two years. She was assistant organist at St. George's Anglican Church in Paris. Heather earned the Doctor of Musical Arts and Master of Music degrees in organ performance at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She has performed in venues throughout the United States and Europe.

### **Annual Advent / Christmas Recital**

The date is December 6, 2009 and the time is set for 7:30 P.M. The location will be Christ Church Episcopal at Maryland Parkway and St. Louis. Members will have the opportunity to explore and present the new 55-rank organ 4-manual Schantz organ to be installed within the next months. While a completion date isn't certain, we are confident that the organ will be fully complete by December.

We are all aware of the financial stresses of the times but are proceeding in faith that we can underwrite the series for next year. Every effort has been made to contain costs and to trim expenses as much as possible. We urge every Guild member to consider making a financial commitment to the series by becoming a Patron. Patrons who have contributed in the past we hope will renew their donations. If you haven't contributed as a Patron in the past, we really need your gift this season. Please consider supporting this project with its outreach to the Las Vegas community.

## Steven Cook's Opus 8 in Bremerton, Washington meets with calamity.

Of some interest to our AGO Chapter members may be the news about Steven Cook's Opus 8. This instrument was built for Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Bremerton, Washington. It was the instrument built immediately prior to the three house organs built for members Jane Dye, Alice Hohenthauer and Paul Hesselink who are the owners of Op. 9 A, B and C. The organ at All Saints Episcopal Church and the house organ owned by member Bruce Behnke were also built by Steven Cook. The Bremerton organ suffered considerable damage on January 28 when a pick-up truck crashed into the church at 50 miles per hour. The crash compromised the structural integrity of the balcony of the church where the organ was installed; keyboards were left lying on the sanctuary floor, and many pipes were dislodged and damaged. Steve was called to remove the entire organ as quickly as possible for safety reasons, and the organ now is in his Seattle shop. It is envisioned that the organ will be rebuilt by Steve. The details below were excerpted from a story on the KOMO-TV-4 website.

### Truck crashes into empty Bremerton church



Photo courtesy: The Kitsap Sun  
BREMERTON, Wash. –

A man apparently suffering from a seizure crashed his truck into an empty church Wednesday morning.

Bremerton police officials say it was around 9 a.m. when the call came about the crash. A police sergeant was first on the scene and found a Ford F-150 pickup truck that was 20 feet deep into the Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, on Veneta Avenue.

The tires were still spinning, filling up the church with burnt rubber smoke.

The sergeant shut off the engine and pulled the driver from the truck. Medics say it appears the driver had a seizure. The man reportedly regained consciousness and was taken to Harrison Memorial Hospital in

Bremerton. On Wednesday night, he was said to be OK.

The crash took out eight rows of pews, as well as a 10-year-old organ that was custom-made for the church. The instrument was valued at \$100,000, but for churchgoers contained greater sentimental value.

Carrie Franklin has been playing the organ five times a week for the last ten years. When she tries to talk about the organ, which now sits in a muzzled mess, tears well in her eyes.

The century-old church building suffered \$400,000 damage. But with insurance, church members said it will survive.



## Special News Flash!

In an effort to involve EVERY member of the chapter, you may be able to double the value of your contribution by becoming a Patron for next season. One of our current patrons has generously offered to match, dollar for dollar, your contribution up to a total value of \$1,000. In order to qualify for the match of your gift you must: 1. Be a member of the Southern Nevada Chapter of the AGO, and 2. Not have been a Recital Series Patron during the 2008-2009 Season. One of the goals of the Recital Series Committee is to achieve a high percentage of the membership supporting the recital series. The goal is 100 percent!

## Belated Bach Birthday Bash -

Saturday, April 18, 6 pm, potluck and birthday cake, at the Bigler's house. Call Jan 898-5455 if you'd like to play something by Bach., and to sign up for potluck. It's a good opportunity to get friends to come and play different instruments with you.



## CLOSING POT LUCK:

Our end-of-the-year social will NOT be held on June 6 as originally planned. We will have this event:

Friday, June 12, 2009

6:00 p.m. for Supper

7:00 p.m.: Dr. Dorothy Riess' Presentation:

“Performing in Our Senior Years”

Location: Home of Doris Francis and Sid Goodman: 381 Kenya Road, Las Vegas, NV, 89123

We will send an e-mail about a contact person to help organize the food later. It will be a lovely evening: SAVE THIS DATE!

## Member Barbara Finn's Junior Recital at UNLV

On Thursday, March 5 at 7:00 P.M. at Doc Rando Recital Hall, Barbara Finn, Director of Music at St. Joseph Husband of Mary Catholic Church, will present her Junior Recital for her Bachelor of Music degree. Her program will be: Prelude and Fugue in A Minor by J. S. Bach, Sonata VI by Felix Mendelssohn and Suite Medieval by Jean Langlais. Come support Barbara and enjoy a fine program.

## Member Jan Bigler's Recitals

Jan Bigler, a student of Dr. Kenneth Udy, will present a recital on Sunday, March 1, 2009 at 5:00 pm in the LSD Chapel located at 3400 West Charleston Blvd, Las Vegas, NV. The Recital will include music by Buxtehude, Walther, Benoit, Boëlmann, Leighton, Rheinberger and Bach, of course.

## Performance Anxiety Workshop

Dr. Dorothy Riess has graciously consented to present a workshop on this important topic. The tentative date is Saturday, March 6, 2010, location TBA later. Be gathering your questions and SAVE THIS DATE for next year.

# HEAR YE! HEAR YE! GOOD NEWS ABOUT PHOENIX RISING!

Monday-Thursday, June 22-25, 2009

REGISTRATION: The early registration fees for Phoenix Rising, the AGO Region IX Festival, have been extended until Saturday, February 28, 2009.

## REGISTRATION FEES, IF POSTMARKED BY FEBRUARY 28, 2009

Regular (or Spouse/Partner) \$295 (\$347 after February 28)  
Special (over 65) \$245 (\$295 after February 28)  
Student with ID \$245 (\$245 after February 28)  
Non-AGO Member or Chapter Friend \$395 (\$395 after February 28)

QUESTIONS? Call Carol Sailer, Registrar, at 623-584-3158 or e-mail her at carol-sailer@cox.net

SPECIAL HOTEL RATES: \$139 per night, available for June 19-29.  
Enjoy pre-festival and post-festival events if you wish.

IMPORTANT: Please book the accommodations through the link on [www.agoinphoenix.com](http://www.agoinphoenix.com) rather than through contact with the hotel directly. If there are any difficulties with receiving the Festival rate, please call the Co-Coordinator, Michael Heap, at 602-234-6967, or e-mail him right away at [mikmus@aol.com](mailto:mikmus@aol.com).



I look forward to seeing you at Phoenix Rising: The Hottest Time You'll Ever Have with fabulous presenters, outstanding instruments and wonderful venues!

Best wishes,  
Frances (Frankie) Nobert  
AGO Region IX Councillor

## MARILYN MASON TO BE HONORED AT RECITAL AND GALA BENEFIT RECEPTION IN ANN ARBOR

Celebration To Benefit the AGO Endowment Fund

NEW YORK CITY — The American Guild of Organists (AGO) will sponsor a Recital and Gala Benefit Reception honoring organist MARILYN MASON on Sunday, April 19, 2009, at 3 p.m., at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

The Recital will feature Dr. Mason and students Deborah Friauff, Joseph Galema, Paul Haebig, and Aaron Tan performing at Hill Auditorium. The recital is free and open to the public.

The Gala Benefit Reception will follow at the Michigan League. Tickets for the reception are \$100 (\$75 tax deductible) and may be purchased online at [www.agohq.org](http://www.agohq.org) or by calling 212-870-2311, ext. 4308. The names of those who purchase their tickets by April 1 will be printed in the souvenir program book.

Display advertising in the program book is offered for full page (\$1,000 and includes two gala tickets) and for half page (\$500 and includes one gala ticket). E-mail [gala@agohq.org](mailto:gala@agohq.org) for further information.

All proceeds will go to the AGO Endowment Fund in Marilyn Mason's honor. The gala is sponsored by the AGO National Council, Eileen Guenther, president, and the AGO Development Committee, Barbara Adler, director.