



**The Windchest
Omaha Chapter, American Guild of Organists**

**Volume 64, No. 4
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Table of Contents

Dean's Message .. 1 & 2
Our Next Meeting 2
Slate of Officers 2
Directory Updates 3
Business Directory 3

Articles of Interest²

Organ for Sale 3

DEADLINE
For the September issue
of
THE WINDCHEST
is
August 15th, 2014

Gina Simpson, Editor
ginas@chirock.com

Dean's Message

A few weeks ago (2/13/2014) I was fired from First Lutheran Church, Omaha. I was given the option to call my dismissal an "honorable retirement," but choosing that option would only mask from the congregation the fact that I was given the old heave ho. So, after 36 years at the console, I gave up my keys, packed my belongings in the cardboard boxes that were on hand for the occasion, and was escorted out the door. I co-existed with that current pastor for ten years, surprisingly enough, but things finally hit the wall.

"So, what's your point?" you say. "Quit bellyaching. It could happen to any of us."

The three manual Casavant in the church is not the best organ in town, but it is a fairly good one as organs go. It was installed around 1959, to serve as a worship instrument and for advancement of the musical arts. It still is in quite good shape, and was still used for one of the two Sunday services, although in recent months it was losing more and more ground to the amplified piano, even at that service. I sometimes think back to the people who paid for and installed the organ. They expected it to be a long term gift for the service of God and the edification of the congregation. And I think of the powerful and wonderful congregational hymns that that instrument can lead. And I feel a responsibility to fight for the organ, for the best of hymns, for the occasional playing of Bach works, for good congregational singing, while trying to minimize the entertainment mentality. And so I was an annoying threat. I was thrown out, but thrown out of a place where I served at the whim of a pastor who thinks she can set the tempos of the hymns when she so desires. Park your musical sensibilities and liturgical knowledge at the door, and bow and scrape to the unmusical, yet dictatorial, pastor.

Continued on page 2

OUR NEXT MEETING

The Omaha Chapter Final Meeting for the season is:

Monday, May 5th, 2014, 6:30 PM

6:30 PM – Potluck Dinner

7:00 PM – Brief Chapter Meeting including Election and Installation of Officers and Director-at-Large

7:15 PM – Markworth Home Theater Organ Presentation featuring:
Jerry Pawlak, Organist for the College World Series

This program is designed for kids of all ages, so please invite your music students or other youth that would like to experience the grandeur of the theater organ.

Location: Markworth Home
13535 North 73rd Plaza

For planning purposes, please **R.S.V.P.** to Gilbert Ward at geward@q.com or 402-391-2168

DIRECTIONS -

Go North on 72nd past the North Interstate and the North Omaha Airport.

Turn Left on Omaha Trace, then left on North 73rd Plaza

The House will be on your immediate left. If you get to Washington County, you have gone too far!

Dean's Message continued

What should you do if you land in a situation like this? Should you throw in the towel and try to find a place that might show you more respect as a worship musician? Or should you hang on as long as possible, trying to do whatever you can for the cause of worship, music, and the organ? I suppose it depends on a lot of factors: stress tolerance, financial situation, the odds of causing damage to the congregation, the odds of causing damage to your sanity, how much you are invested in preserving some of the tradition of the denomination, what indignities you are willing to put up with to have a chance to play on a nice organ. There is no one answer. As members of the AGO it is our desire to further the highest degree of organ and choral arts. As human beings it is our desire to make a living, minimize emotional stress, and avoid losing friends. We sometimes have to choose, and there is often not a clear-cut answer. And sometimes the choice is made for us.

David Schack
Dean, Omaha Chapter AGO

Slate of Officers for 2014-15

DEAN:	David Schack
SUB-DEAN:	Gilbert Ward
SECRETARY:	Carla Post
TREASURER:	Gina Simpson

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE (3-year terms):

Julie Sandene (1st of 3 years)
J. Gordon Christensen (2nd of 3 years)
Laura Palmer (3rd of 3 years)

The Nominating Committee was made up of Michael Kesar, chair, Claire Bushong and David Schack. The election will take place at our May meeting.

Organ for Sale

American Organ Builders
2 manual, full pedal organ with artist's
bench.
Equivalent of 26 ranks plus Mixture.

Ideal for church, teaching or home.

Originally an \$18,000 instrument.
Pristine condition. Asking \$3,750.

Contact Donna Miesbach at 402-330-2474.

DIRECTORY UPDATES

No updates since the last newsletter.

2014 AGO National Convention

June 23 – 27, 2014
Boston, Massachusetts
Agoboston2014.org

OMAHA CHAPTER BUSINESS ASSOCIATES

(712)-251-4101

RICK DARROW
DARROW PIPE ORGANS

721 PEARL STREET
ONAWA, IA 51040

(402) 720-5205

CLAIRE RAE ROEHRKASSE EASON, SPC, CAGO
CHURCH SERVICES, WEDDINGS, FUNERALS

creeason@gmail.com
Home & Answering Machine: 402-652-3366

(402) 593-9400

GREGORY JOHNSON
KEYBOARD KASTLE

7013 DODGE STREET
OMAHA, NE 68132

(402) 488-8644

GERALD OEHRING
CHURCH ORGANS OF NEBRASKA

2701 NORTH 48TH ST., SUITE #3
LINCOLN, NE 68504

(605) 539-1900

DAVID RUSSELL SALMEN
SALMEN ORGANS

38569 HWY. 34
WESSINGTON SPRINGS, SD 57382