

# THE DESERT WIND

Editor: Bruce Behnke © 2012

Issue: May/June 2012



Southern Nevada Chapter  
American Guild of Organists

## Dean's Notes

Dear Colleagues,

This will be my last letter to you, one filled with a lot of information about up and coming events:

### 1) Election of Officers:

The ballots have been officially received and duly counted. Our new officer roster is as follows:

DEAN: Jan Bigler

SUB-DEAN: Paul Hesselink

SECRETARY: Cherrill Hoeft

TREASURER: David Dorway

Members at large for the Executive Board: Eugenia Burkett, Doris Frances, Shireen Beaudry, and Jane Dye. Bruce Behnke continues his wonderful work as our Web-master and as editor of the Desert Wind; Mike Link will continue as our Chaplain.

Many thanks to our out-going Board Members: Alice Hohenthanner, who led many projects and phone committees; Carla Swift, who for a number of years handled all the publicity for the Guild; Margaret Hannah, who helped with baked goods for receptions. We extend our gratitude for your many services.

2) Installation of Officers Event: This will take place at Christ Church Episcopal at Maryland and St Louis on Saturday, June 16, 2012, at 6:00 p.m. We will have the Installation ceremony, followed by a catered dinner provided free of charge by the Guild for its members and their spouses or Significant Others. Entertainment will be provided by Mary Straub's Suzuki violin students.

The Menu will include Baked Ziti with Italian Sausage, Italian tossed salad, Bread Sticks and Lemon Delight Cupcakes.

David Dorway has worked very hard in assembling 2 scrapbooks of the history of our Guild, which he will share with us this evening; he has also organized 12 boxes of donated choral, organ and piano music which we are going to give away at 50 cents a piece! He doesn't want to take any of it home!

This should be a wonderful event. Don't miss it!

\* Please RSVP immediately to Doris Frances at 459-7734 if you and/or companion are attending. We need accurate numbers for the caterer.\*\*\*\*\*

3) Take note of the Bio by Tiffany

Calabro, this year's scholarship winner to attend the POE in San Diego. She is very excited and grateful; and she has the potential and desire to develop her organist's skills.

4) Included in this Newsletter is a flyer announcing a concert I will be playing on Sunday, May 27, at 3:30 at Christ Church Episcopal. I have been taking lessons from Dr. Dorothy Riess, and we decided to share what I have learned. All are invited.

I wish to thank you all for your support and help these last five years. Together we have accomplished some good things. I know you will give this same support and help to your new Dean, Jan Bigler, who has the leadership skills to keep the Guild moving forward and growing. Good Luck, Jan! I will continue to be of service to the Guild on the Executive Board. See you at our June Installation Party!

Warmly,  
Shireen



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## Isabelle Demers performs at Doc Rando on Friday May 11, 2012 7:30 P.M.

To generate more enthusiasm for this concert, I thought it would be nice to interview our next guest artist. Although we didn't actually do this face to face, Dorothy and I submitted questions which were gracefully answered by Miss Demers.

**Dorothy Riess** Did you grow up in Montreal? (I assume you are bilingual.) What do you like most or least about the city?

**Isabelle Demers** I grew up in a suburb of Montréal called Lachine. (Now it has merged with Montréal and is one of many boroughs). Like most Canadians, I did not grow up bilingual; in fact, only 10% of the population is fluent in both languages. While I took English in elementary and high school, I was raised almost exclusively in French, and learned English properly only when I came to the USA some eight years ago.



There are many things to like about Montreal and Quebec; in fact a lot of the province is still rather rural, and I particularly enjoy the magnificent wintry landscapes. Of course, these are best seen from inside a car or a building, but as a kid we spent most of our vacations outside, even when the temperature was well below 0; I keep wonderful memories of playing for hours in the snow with my siblings and cousins.

**Bruce Behnke** What first started your interest in the pipe organ?

**Demers** Unlike many organists, I did not start playing the organ because it attracted me. In fact, I had been a pianist for many years when my mother suggested that I learn the organ; I decided to follow her advice since I knew that a church position could help me pay for my piano studies. At age 16, I thus started learning the organ, and quickly enrolled as a double-major (piano and organ) in college. After graduation, I decided to stop playing the organ, since I was more interested in the piano repertoire; after spending six months without playing, however, I realized that my main interest had shifted from piano to organ, and enrolled at Juilliard in Paul Jacobs' studio.

**Behnke** Who are some of the most influential teachers with whom you have studied?

**Demers** My piano teacher as an undergraduate student – Raoul Sosa – was quite marvellous. He was a great musician – though unfortunately he had lost the use of his right hand in an accident, and also a very good person. I also learned quite a bit from my advisor at Juilliard, Carl Schachter; he was also, in his own way, a great musician, and one of the most intelligent persons I have ever met.

The most influential teacher I have had, however, is Paul Jacobs. When I started my studies at Juilliard, I was more a pianist than an organist, and he taught me almost everything I know about registration, articulation, the use of expression shoes, and so forth. That said, I am even

more indebted to him for the influence he has had on me on a personal level; his devotion to music was, and still is, total, and he was proof that hard work and dedication pay off in the long term. He is also a remarkable human being – very kind and supportive, without an ounce of jealousy.

**Riess** You have memorized a vast repertoire. What are your memorization techniques?

**Demers** I think it is important to avoid relying on only one type of memory. Ideally, one would master muscle (fingers) memory, oral memory, and cerebral memory before playing a work in public. That said, the biggest component of memorization might be confidence; once one gets past fear, it becomes really rather easy.

**Behnke** What are some of the more interesting venues in which you have played?

**Demers** Disney Hall would probably top my list – not only because it’s a prestigious venue and a wonderful instrument, but also because the audience there is remarkably warm and appreciative. This year I’ve also very much enjoyed playing at Davies Hall and the Schermerhorn Center in Nashville. That said, I am mostly interested by instruments, not so much by venues or cities. For that reason, I have very much enjoyed playing at St. Andrew’s Episcopal (Amarillo, TX), Church of the Gesu (Milwaukee), the St. Joseph Oratory (Montreal), and St. Mary the Virgin (New York City), among others.

**Riess** Do you have any special “warm up” routines for your fingers and feet?

**Demers** Not really. Growing up as a pianist, we rarely had a chance to warm up before concerts, and learned to do without. When choosing my programs, I try to have a “warm up” piece at first, for example, a Bach Prelude and Fugue. It’s never easy to play, but certainly less dangerous than starting with Reger!

**Behnke** Who are some of your favorite composers?

**Demers** I am quite fond of Russian composers, with Prokofiev, Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich topping my list. I also like English music (Howells, Vaughan Williams, Finzi) and the French impressionists. In general, however, with a few exceptions, I prefer earlier music – Baroque, Romantic, or Classical – Bach, Mozart, Brahms, Wagner, and the like. Perhaps this makes me rather unoriginal!

**Riess** How do you tolerate your intense travel schedule?

**Demers** Good books are the key! Touring is usually difficult and intense; it involves many hours of practicing and socializing, and then of course there is always the time we waste in airports. I suppose I am lucky in that I have a strong immune system, and can find sleep very easily. That said, all the little disagreements are forgotten as soon as I encounter a wonderful instrument, or meet great, interesting people; my life is much richer through the many organists I have met over the years, and it is something I value very much.

**Behnke** What is the process you use for creating your transcriptions?

**Demers** I always start by listening to the work many times; I find this crucial in identifying what

ought to be heard in the transcription. My next step involves finding a score, after which I usually start memorizing the work directly, without writing it down. Depending on the complexity of the work, it may take me anywhere between a week and a few months before I feel comfortable playing it. The lack of a visual reminder (which is usually the role played by the score) can make memorization more difficult; though I don't have a strong visual memory, I've realized with time that a score nevertheless speeds us, and eases, the memorization process.

**Riess** How do you see yourself in 5 years? Teaching? Research? More concerts? Life in Europe? Marriage? Family?

**Demers** Well I certainly hope I'll still be concertizing in 5 years. As to teaching, I have many projects for my new position at Baylor University, and though planning that far ahead is somewhat difficult, I would like to do a big Reger festival in 2016, centenary of his death. As to family - that is hard to reconcile with a musical career, especially with concerts and the like. For the moment I don't see this as part of my future, but as French Canadians say, only fools never change their minds!

**Behnke** What pieces will you be playing for us?

**Demers** Some Bach, of course – what would an organ recital be without Bach? A few transcriptions – the 2nd movement of Mendelssohn's 5th Symphony, as well as excerpts from Prokofiev's Cinderella; a chorale-fantasy of Reger; and music by two of my fellow countrymen, Rachel Laurin and Raymond Daveluy. Variety is always a key factor in my programs, and I hope that there will be something for everybody in the program above!

*A Concert for Family and Friends*

Sunday, May 27, 2012  
3:30 P.M.  
Christ Church Episcopal  
2000 S. Maryland Parkway  
Las Vegas, Nevada

*Shireen Beaudry-Johnson*

*organ*

Works by J.S. Bach, Brahms, Mendelssohn and Franck

**Friday, May 4, 2012  
7:30 P.M.  
Christ Church Episcopal  
2000 S. Maryland Parkway**

***Creation of Music from the Lyricist's View***

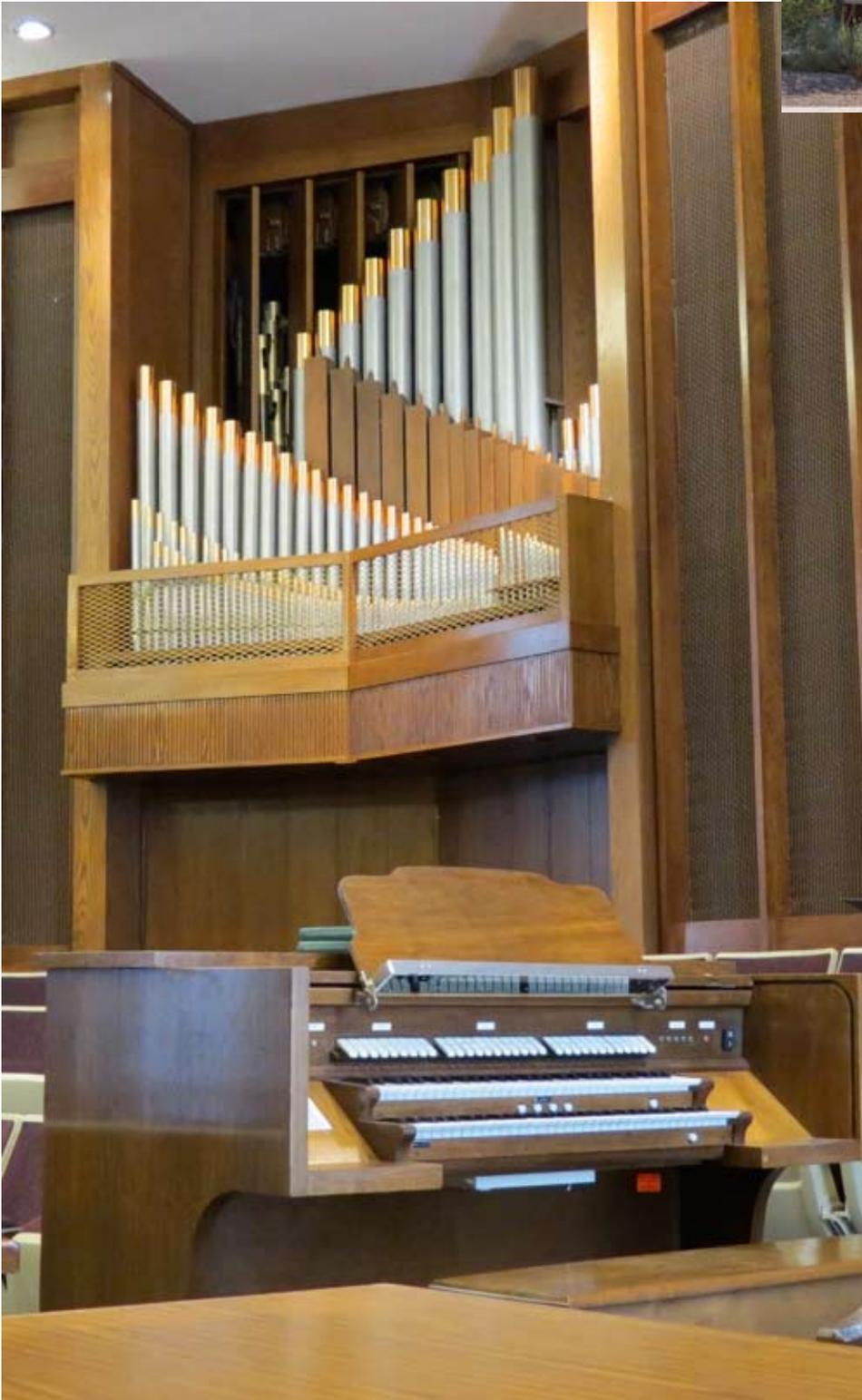
**Susan Bentall Boersma, lyricist  
with the Choir of Christ Church Episcopal**



Susan was born and educated in Michigan and began her study of music with her parents, both of whom were performing artists. Her piano/organ/voice studies continued while attending Hope College. She has served as accompanist for college choirs and touring groups as well as for various solo artists and community choirs. She has led workshops on Music and Worship and has held positions as Pianist, Choral Director and Director of Music Ministries at churches in Michigan, Wisconsin, Vermont and Ohio.

Susan is a published lyricist with more than 50 anthem texts to her credit. She writes primarily with Craig Courtney for Beckenhorst Press. She also collaborates with David Lantz III, Lloyd Larson and Mark Hayes on both sacred and school repertoire. Susan lives in Holland, Michigan with her husband, Dr. James A. Boersma.

Las Vegas Paradise Stake - LDS  
1725 Palora Ave  
Las Vegas, NV 89169



Forty years ago Paradise Stake, under the able leadership of Ethelyn Peterson, entered into a contract with the Wicks Organ Company of Highland Illinois for building a pipe organ. In October of 1972, Opus 5209 was installed by Dick Mitchell of Salt Lake City, Utah and was ready to play. In December of 1972 Robert Cundick played the dedicatory recital and gave workshops for local organists. This was the first organ that Dick Mitchell and the Wicks Organ Company installed in the area and was the beginning of a long list of instruments to come. In 1992 the relays were updated and additional levels of memory were installed as well as the addition of the independent 8 foot Gedeckt on the Swell.

As it now stands, this 12 rank organ is the oldest instrument in Las Vegas playing in its original location. The Southern Nevada Chapter of the American Guild of Organists had their 25th anniversary celebration at the Paradise Stake in 1998. We would now like to thank and congratulate Ethelyn Peterson, Dick Mitchell, Wicks Organ Company and the members of Paradise Stake on the 40th anniversary of this instrument. May it continue to play for the glory of God and the edification of all who hear it.

## Great

1.	Principal	8	61 pipes
2.	Holz Gedeckt	8	61 pipes
3.	Gemshorn	8	from Swell #10
4.	Praestant	4	12 pipes the rest from #1
5.	Nachthorn	4	12 pipes the rest from #2
6.	Blockflute	2	61 pipes
7.	Mixture	II	61 pipes plus #6
8.	Trompette	8	from Swell #15
	Chimes		
	Swell to Great	16 - 8 - 4	



## Swell

9.	Gedeckt	8	61 pipes
10.	Gemshorn	8	61 pipes
11.	Gemshorn Celeste TC	8	49 pipes
12.	Koppel Flute	4	61 pipes
13.	Nasat	2 2/3	61 pipes
14.	Spitz Octave	2	61 pipes
15.	Trompette	8	61 pipes
	Tremulant		
	Swell to Swell	16 - 4	
	Swell Unison	Off	

## Pedal

16.	Subbass	16	32 pipes
17.	Principal	8	from Great #1
18.	Gemshorn	8	from Swell #10
19.	Choral Bass	4	from Great #1
20.	Gemshorn	4	from Swell #10
21.	Pausaune	16	32 pipes
22.	Clarion	4	from Swell #15

Great to Pedal 8

Swell to Pedal 8

4 combination pistons duplicated by toe studs with four levels of memory

Sforzando toe stud



## Robinson Recital Communicates Musicianship

The fourth recital in the 2011-2012 Organ Recital Series presented by Dr. Schuyler Robinson at Doc Rando Hall in the Beam Music Center on the UNLV campus showed the von Beckerath organ to great advantage in its versatility. The program included works by Walther, Sweelinck, J.S. Bach, Franck, Samuel Barber, Brahms, Johannes Mathias Michel, and Duruflé. About 100 people attended this fine recital. (I suspect we “lost” some people to basketball’s “March Madness.”) A reception organized by members Carla Swift and Barbara Giles followed in the lobby. A debt of gratitude is owed to Christian Lentz, our organ technician, who responded on 15 minutes’ notice and



expertly “fixed” the offending note on the swell which wanted to sound longer than the artist wanted! Here is the statistical report on the 70 evaluation forms completed:

First time visiting Doc Rando Hall	7	
First hearing of the Maurine Jackson Smith Organ	13	
First time at an AGO Series recital	18	
Those attending AGO Recitals previously		
1-3 = 7	4-5 = 2	more than 5 = 44

People heard about the recital by:

e-mail = 35    flyer = 8    previous program = 17    from a friend = 25  
other = 7 (Review Journal, website, church bulletin)

Statements:

I loved it = 25 (50%)    I liked it a lot = 27 (39%)  
Found it interesting = 6 (9%)    Wasn't really interested = 1 (1.4%)

Overall rating:

Superb = 33 (47%)    Excellent = 34 (49%)    Average = 1 (1.4%)  
No response = 1 (1.4%)

A total of 11 respondents requested to be added to the e-mail notification list.

A reflection or two on the statistics: There is a real correlation between respondents who comment they have never been to Doc Rando before and their somewhat lower overall rating of the program. Some of these people freely admit they have not been to an organ recital before, are not musicians, and are not organists. My own personal “take” on that is that they really have no concept of the difficulty of playing the instrument, of the many hours of preparation involved and many other factors. And we as organists play so many composers “unknown” to the general public. So, our job is to still try to educate them without “dumbing down” our programs. Looking at the responses on how people found out about the recital, the option most checked was “e-mail notification” (35) with “from a friend” (25). Again, this reinforces the need for all of us to advertise by word of mouth. If every one of us was responsible for introducing a new person to the series, we could double our attendance!

Our final program of the season will feature Isabelle Demers on Friday, May 11 at 7:30 P.M.

in Doc Rando Hall. Ms. Demers has been taking the organ world by storm. A review by Timothy Robson of a recent Demers recital reads:

In the summer of 2008 a largely unknown young French Canadian organist burst onto the American organ scene with a brilliant and memorable performance at the national convention of the American Guild of Organists in Minneapolis. It was the talk of the convention: “Who is she? Why haven’t we heard her before?” Ms. Demers had, in fact, been performing regularly around Canada and the United States. . Isabelle Demers has continued to cultivate an outstanding reputation for herself, building on impeccable academic credentials, including two degrees from the Juilliard School. Ms. Demers visited Northeast Ohio on Friday evening, March 16, as part of the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church organ series in Akron, sponsored by the Akron Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. It was a performance of great virtuosity, originality and spontaneity. You will certainly not want to miss this recital, the final event in the 2011-2012 series. Bring your family and friends!

Paul S. Hesselink, Chair  
Organ Recital Series Committee  
Southern Nevada Chapter, AGO

## New Member

Christian Lentz moved to Las Vegas in 2010. He is from Neosho, Missouri where he grew up in a Methodist Church that had a small pipe organ which he can vividly remember. In grade school, he began piano lessons and became very active in choral groups in high school and college. He was in advanced choirs and show choirs, with such interesting names as the Choraleers and Chromatix. He said, “think Glee”. He attended Crowdel College and Southwest Missouri State University where he received a degree in Vocal Music Education. He moved to Arkansas and pursued other interests, including being a jazz singer in a bar. It was there that he met employees of the Nichols and Simpson Organ building company. He became an apprentice and the firm soon realized his aptitude for voicing and tuning. He worked there 6 years, and was involved with new organ construction, maintenance and tuning. He is a member of the American Institute of Organbuilders. Although he is an excellent pianist, he says that he doesn’t play the organ. He is available for tuning and maintenance work on local pipe organs.



His other interests include scuba diving, model railroad trains, video games, and vinyl records. He currently teaches 9 spin classes a week at Gold’s Gym, 24HourFitness, TheCyclingStudio.com, and Las Vegas Athletic Club.

We welcome Christian to the Southern Nevada AGO.

# DOROTHY RIESS RELEASES NEW CD “MUSIC OF JOY”



“Dr. Dorothy” grew up in a musical family, starting piano with her mother at age four, and dynamics and interpretation with her father, a concert violinist. Changing to the organ at 16, she became a protégé of Mildred Andrews at the University of Oklahoma whose teaching skills resulted in several competition wins including the National American Guild of Organists in 1952. She received a scholarship to study with Marcel Dupre in France who recommended her as”....an excellent and perfect musician with a brilliant technique.”



She was guest organist at the American Cathedral in Paris, and later served two years as organist-choir master of the American Church in Rome, Italy, followed by graduate work in organ at Yale

University. A series of life-altering events led her into medicine and she graduated from The University of Oklahoma School of Medicine in 1969.

After 40 years in medicine, she relocated to Las Vegas and returned to the organ performing on “Pipe Dreams Live from Las Vegas” in 2006. She played her 80th year celebration concert in 2011 at The University of Nevada Las Vegas and a few months later a concert for The American Guild of Organists Region IX at First Congregational in Berkeley, the same venue where she played her AGO winner’s recital in 1952!

The theme for her 80th year was “Music of Joy” and selections for this CD are from both UNLV and Berkeley performances.

Dr. Riess is noted for her gracious stage presence, musicality and interpretation, gifts from her talented parents.

MUSIC OF JOY is produced by RAECD, CD#050711, and distributed by [www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com). Further details at [www.dyriessmd.com](http://www.dyriessmd.com).



1. Fête (Festival)	Jean Langlais (1907-1991)	6:12
2. Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring	J.S. Bach (1685-1750)	3:27
3. Kyrie, God Holy Spirit	J.S. Bach	5:55
4. My Heart Abounds With Pleasure	Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)	3:05
Jesus Meine Freude (Jesus My Joy)	Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1033)	
5. I. Introduzione (Inferno)		8:06
6. II. Canzone		4:54
7. III. Fuga con Corale		10:34
8. Waltz 2 arr. by DY Riess	Dimitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)	4:33
9. Maple Leaf Rag arr. by DY Riess	Scott Joplin (1867-1917)	3:26
10. Transports of Joy	Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)	5:00
		55:36

All selections are unedited performance tracks. #1,5,6,7,8,10 First Congregational Church Berkeley CA, 6 July 2011. #2,3,4,9 The University of Nevada Las Vegas, May 6, 2011.

*Digital recording, photography, case design and production by RAECD. ©2012 All rights reserved. [www.dyriessmd.com](http://www.dyriessmd.com)*

Dr. Riess will perform a similar program in Youngstown, Ohio, at Trinity United Methodist Church, May 6, 2012 at 2:00 PM. The concert organ is a 1947 Moeller originally designed by Alexander McCurdy and considered their “Magnum Opus”. Rebuilt by Schantz in 1987 it features IV manuals, 89 ranks, Antiphonal and Solo Organs and Carillon.

# Tiffany-Anne Calabro

POE Scholarship Winner

Hi. My name is Tiffany-Anne Calabro, and I'm a fourteen-year-old freshman currently enrolled in the Veterinary and Medical Sciences program at West Career and Technical Academy. I do various extra-curricular activities after school, many of which are very musically oriented. I've been dancing tap and jazz/hip-hop for 11 years, Girl Scouts for 10 years, singing in the choir for 9 years, piano for 5 years, violin for 4 years, and organ for approximately half a year.

This year, I was awarded a scholarship to go to the P.O.E. in San Diego since I was the first in the studio to learn the repertoire. I'm very grateful for the A.G.O. Guild Chapter to provide me with this scholarship and the awesome opportunity of being taught by various teachers. I'll be in San Diego for a week in a dormitory, and I even have relations nearby who can watch the concert on the final day. I'm sure it'll be a blast!



## Position Open

St. Joseph, Husband of Mary, Roman Catholic Church  
Choir Director for Adult Choir

Interested individuals may contact Barbara Finn, Director of Music at

## Next Year's Recital Series



October 26 - Richard Elliott

Principal Organist at the Salt Lake City Tabernacle

December 2 - Annual Advent-Christmas Members' Recital

Joyce Jones - January 18

Retired Professor of Music and Organist at Baylor University, Waco Texas  
Thursday afternoon, Jan 17 - Dr. Jones will perform a special organ recital for local young piano students. For details call Shireen at 645-6546



March 8 - Kames Kibbie

Professor of Music University of Michigan and organist to the internet.  
Saturday, March 9 from 10:00 A.M. to noon, workshop on the life and music of Jehan Alain.

Dongho Lee - April 19

Winner of First Prize and Audience Prize at the 2010 AGO  
National Young Artists Competition in Organ Performance,

Put these dates on your calendar and plan to enjoy another season  
of great organ playing and music.

