

# THE DESERT WIND

Editor: Bruce Behnke © 2009

Issue: September/October 2009

## Dean's Notes



Southern Nevada Chapter  
American Guild of Organists

Dear colleagues,

Another concert season is fast approaching, and the summer time of play and relaxation is fast disappearing. As I write this message, I'm riding down to Monterey Peninsula from San Jose to view the poetry and beauty of the Monterey Aquarium -- the last trip of the summer. This July brought the letter from Kathleen Thomerson, FAGO, who is the chair of the Certification Committee at National. The letter said that I have passed the CAGO exam. Glory Hallelujah! It took Three years of my life: the first to pass the performance part, and the last two (ending with the May 15, 09 exam) to pass the keyboard skills section. The exam was uppermost in my mind over almost everything else during those three years. How wonderful to have successfully completed that project!

I'm looking for more candidates to come forward and join the certification process: the value is in the journey. Because of the exam, I've actually begun to be able to achieve a life-long desire: to be able to transpose, modulate, harmonize and improvise: skills which every organist should be able to perform. The exam is the perfect push to begin actively to achieve those goals. Come join me in this journey. If interested, come talk to me for details as how to begin.

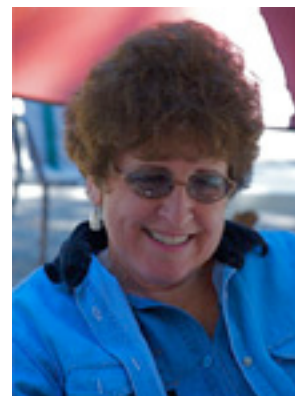
Our new concert series is revealed within. Every event promises to be exciting. I am presently planning a number to play in our Advent/Christmas members recital. If you are so inclined, give performing in that recital some thought and preparation.

Jan Bigler has a blurb within to

be noted on our September pot-luck event: another chance to see and play her very expanded home organ, due to the diligent work of her husband Scott and organ builder Richard Wallace. Come join us for an evening of good music, food and conversation. Please let Jan know what food you are bringing, and if you are playing or not.

We're off and running! I hope to see you at all our guild chapter events.

Warmly,  
Shireen



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**The American Guild of Organists, Southern Nevada Chapter**

## ***Organ Recital Series***

**Sunday, October 25, 2009 – 7:30 P.M.**

***Sietze de Vries***

Winner of more than fifteen organ playing and improvisation competitions, Sietze de Vries from The Netherlands was the 2002 first-place winner of the prestigious Haarlem International Improvisation Competition. His concerts are always extraordinary events.

**Sunday, November 15, 2009 – 7:30 P.M.**

***David H. Brock***

Trained as a chorister at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., Mr. Brock maintains an active organ recital schedule across the U.S. He currently resides in Indio Village, Nevada.

**Sunday, December 6, 2009 – 7:30 P.M.**

***Advent-Christmas Recital***

This year's edition of the holiday recital will again be performed by members of the Southern Nevada Chapter.

**Friday, February 26, 2010 – 7:30 P.M.**

***Dr. David C. Pickering***

Assistant Professor of Music at Graceland University in Lamoni, Iowa, Dr. Pickering earned his Bachelor of Music degree at Brigham Young University, and his Master's and Doctoral degrees in musicology and organ performance from the University of Kansas.

**Friday, April 16, 2010 – 7:30 P.M.**

***Dr. Heather Hernandez***

Currently Director of Music at the Lutheran Church of the Master in Phoenix, Arizona, Dr. Hernandez earned degrees in organ performance from Bethany College (B.M.) and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (M.M. and D. Mus. A.). She is the accompanist for the Phoenix Girls Choir. Dr. Hernandez has presented organ recitals in the U.S. and in Europe.

**Sunday, May 16, 2010 – 4:00 P.M.**

***Organ Plus***

The season finale will present local musicians in a program of works for organ and instruments. One of the featured works on the program will be Marcel Dupré's rarely heard "Variations on Two Themes," Op. 35 for organ and piano, performed by Dorothy Young Riess and Voltaire Verzosa.

***All recitals in Doc Rando Recital Hall in the Beam Music Center on the UNLV Campus***

***Open to the public at no charge***

***The Organ Recital Series is supported through the generosity of Patrons in the community. Contributions are tax-deductible. To become a Patron, send your check made to "Southern Nevada Chapter, AGO" to Dr. David Dorway, Treasurer, 10613 Shoalhaven Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89134***

***This Organ Recital Series is funded, in part, by a grant from the Nevada Arts Council, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.***

## CALLING ALL PATRONS FOR THE ORGAN RECITAL SERIES, 2009-2010

The plans for the 2009-2010 Southern Nevada Chapter Organ Recital Series are nearly complete. Six exciting and interesting programs are planned (see the schedule elsewhere in this Newsletter). We encourage your support of the series by your attendance. Last season, still the best “advertising” for attracting people to the recitals was “informed by a friend.” So, spread the word and bring friends with you to the programs. Most of the time, getting people there the first time is the important break-through to their becoming regulars. Our application for funding from the Nevada Arts Council scored high. Our grant proposal was judged third highest in a field of thirty applicants in our category. We believe that contributing to our favorable rating is the fact that our recitals usually rate a 95-98% “approval” by audience members (checking either “Superb” or “Excellent” on the evaluation form). Under normal conditions the scoring of the grant proposal would have resulted in a grant of approximately \$3,300. Because of the economic crisis with the State Budget, the Nevada Arts Council Grants were cut by 43%. Thus, our grant will yield us a little less than \$1,600. Your recital series committee has been careful in planning the series so that we can end the year in the black. In order to manage that, however, we will need to have your support as a Patron. An anonymous donor has agreed to match (up to a total of \$1,000) all contributions from AGO Chapter members who did not contribute to the series last season, but who do so this season. If you fit into those parameters, your contribution can have a double impact. The designated levels for patronage are:

ff	fortissimo	\$250 and above
f	forte	\$200 - \$249
mf	mezzo forte	\$150 - \$199
mp	mezzo piano	\$100 - \$149
p	piano	\$50 - \$99
pp	pianissimo	\$25 - \$49

The offer from the donor will close September 15, so send your contribution to our Treasurer, Dr. David Dorway, 10613 Shoalhaven Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89134 before the time runs out.

## Southern Nevada Chapter Fall Opening Social

The kids are going back to school, the weather will cool down, the leaves will change colors and that means it's Fall and time for our opening social!

So I'm living in some alternate reality, I guess, but we WILL be having our opening social at our house on Saturday, September 19th, at 6pm. We'll have our usual bountiful and always delicious potluck dinner and “open bench” on the grand and glorious, ever expanding, Bigler organ. Bring your organ shoes and some fun music, and join us for another fun party. No one is required to play, but I always enjoy hearing others play my organ.

RSVP to tell me what food you would like to bring. 898-5455. There are some of you out there that we've missed seeing for a while. Try to come! We're a wild and crazy bunch so you're sure to have a good time!

Jan

## NEW MEMBER: Rod Gisick

We welcome new member Rod Gisick who has joined our Southern Nevada Chapter. Rod did his undergraduate study at Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kansas where he majored in voice and minored in organ. He holds a Master of Music degree in voice from New England Conservatory in Boston. He has studied organ with Margaret Irwin-Brandon and James David Christie during the last ten years. Most of his professional life as a teacher, performer, clinician and church musician has been spent in Massachusetts. In his work as a church musician he has served as organist, choir director and handbell director. In addition to his musical activities, he has an interest in architecture and landscape design, at one time owning and operating a landscape design business. For the last two years he has lived in both the Philippines and Mexico.

Newly arrived in Las Vegas, Rod hopes to establish a voice teaching studio, and he is also available as a church organist and for substitute work. You can contact Rod by e-mail at [rodgis44@gmail.com](mailto:rodgis44@gmail.com) or by telephone at (702) 355-7980.



## PERFORMING ON OUR ANNUAL AGO ADVENT/CHRISTMAS RECITAL



Photo by Dorothy Young Riess

It seems pre-mature to be thinking about an Advent/Christmas recital when the outside temperatures are 105 degrees (late August), but the annual members' recital celebrating the holiday season will be here before we know it. The recital is to be presented Sunday, December 6 at 7:30 P.M. at Doc Rando Hall on the UNLV campus. By deciding to perform on the recital NOW, you will have ample time to prepare your most attractive seasonal piece. While "familiar" and "audience friendly" are good, this is also a time when we as a Guild Chapter put our best professional feet forward; any quality organ literature following the Advent / Christmas themes would be acceptable for inclusion in the program. In order to have time to arrange and prepare the program, please let Alice Hohenthanner (702-656-7170) know of your interest in performing and what you will plan to play no later than November 15. She will need the full title, full name of the composer, and date(s) of the composer. Arrangements for rehearsal times on the Doc Rando organ will be determined at a later time.

All Saints' Episcopal Church  
4021 West Washington Avenue  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89108  
702-878-2373

Music at All Saints'  
2009-2010  
Sundays at 5:30 pm

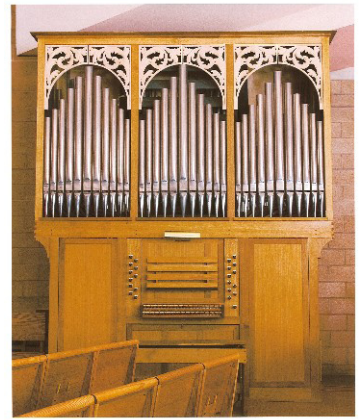
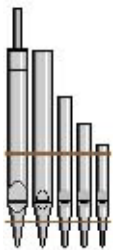


Photo by Dorothy Young Riess

All Saints' Sunday November 1	5:30 pm	Choral Evensong with Recital Bede Parry, Organist
Advent IV December 20	10:30 am	Ceremony of Lessons & Carols
Christmas Eve December 24	10:30 pm	Christmas Music by All Saints' Choir
Baptism of the Lord January 11	5:30 pm	Epiphany Choral Evensong with Recital Bede Parry, Organist
Ash Wednesday February 4	7:00 pm	Ash Wednesday Liturgy with Special Music by All Saints' Choir
Palm Sunday March 28	5:30 pm	Concert by All Saints' Choir

## Position Available



Green Valley Presbyterian Church  
1798 Wigwam Parkway  
Henderson, NV 89074

The church is seeking a dynamic part time Children's Choir Director for two choirs, beginning immediately or September 13. Both choirs meet on Sunday mornings. Please contact Director of Music Ministry, Marek Rachelski, 702.454.8484 for details.

## TREASURER'S UPDATE!

We have 46 paid members for our Chapter.

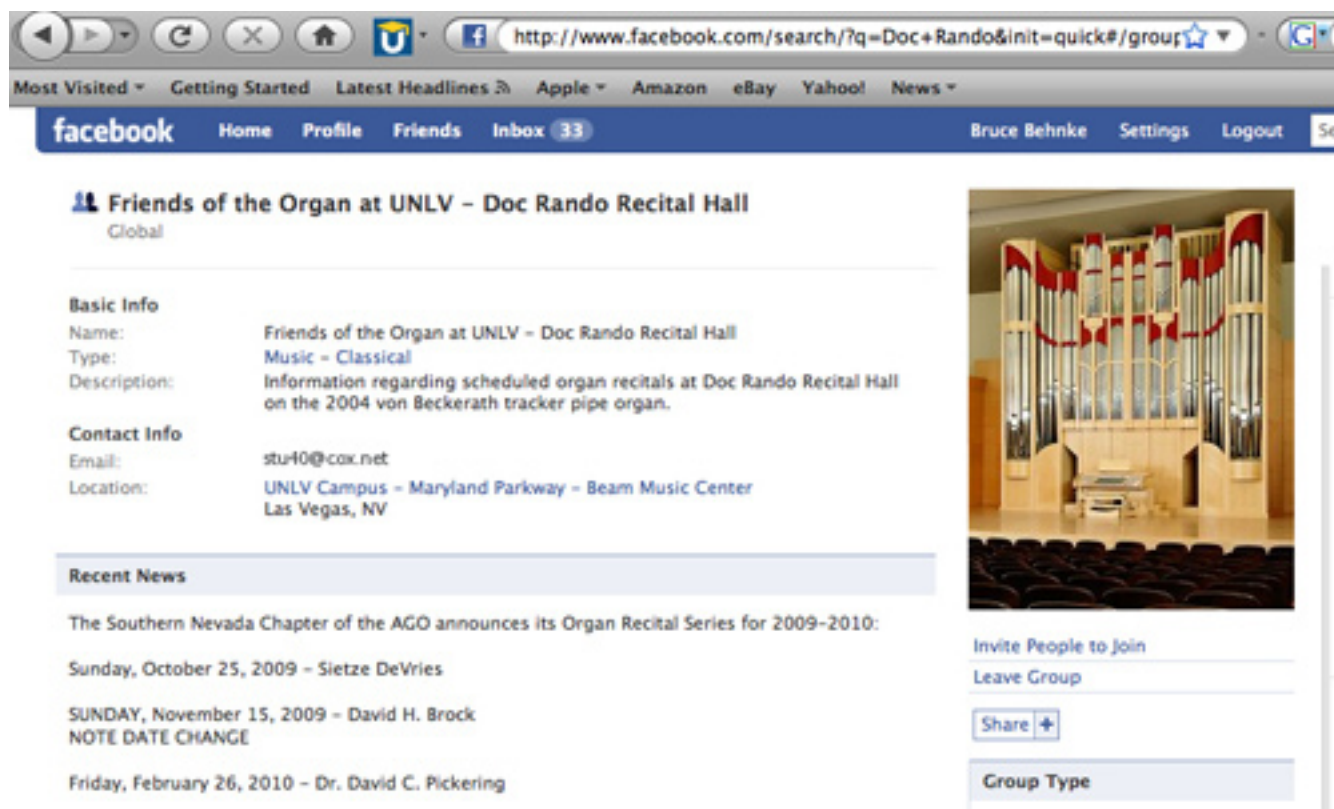
- 19 Regular members,
- 21 Special members,
- 2 Student members,
- 2 Dual members,
- 1 Honorary and
- 1 Friend.

31 Patrons have generously contributed to our Recital Series for 2009 - 2010. We would appreciate any additional funds to help underwrite the season.

David Dorway, treasurer

## NEW FACEBOOK SITE FOR ORGAN RECITALS

In an attempt to advertise another way for our AGO Recital Series, a new “Group” on Facebook was started. If you are already a Facebook subscriber, you can locate the site by going to the “Groups” page, and entering in the “Search” box Friends of the Organ at UNLV – Doc Rando Recital Hall. The site has the schedule of events for the AGO Recital Series, will have periodic updates, and will also publicize any other organ events scheduled in Doc Rando. With the help of member Dorothy Riess, we are also building a photo history of past performers and events on the site. Currently 23 photos have been posted and 71 people have joined the group. All are welcome to join.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the Facebook URL: <http://www.facebook.com/search/?q=Doc+Rando&init=quick#/group>. The Facebook navigation bar is visible at the top, showing the user is logged in as Bruce Behnke. The group page for "Friends of the Organ at UNLV – Doc Rando Recital Hall" is displayed. The group is categorized as "Global".

**Basic Info**

- Name: Friends of the Organ at UNLV – Doc Rando Recital Hall
- Type: Music – Classical
- Description: Information regarding scheduled organ recitals at Doc Rando Recital Hall on the 2004 von Beckerath tracker pipe organ.

**Contact Info**

- Email: stu40@cox.net
- Location: UNLV Campus – Maryland Parkway – Beam Music Center Las Vegas, NV

**Recent News**

- The Southern Nevada Chapter of the AGO announces its Organ Recital Series for 2009-2010:
- Sunday, October 25, 2009 – Sietze DeVries
- SUNDAY, November 15, 2009 – David H. Brock  
NOTE DATE CHANGE
- Friday, February 26, 2010 – Dr. David C. Pickering

On the right side of the page, there is a photo of a large, ornate organ with red and gold pipes. Below the photo are buttons for "Invite People to Join", "Leave Group", and "Share". At the bottom right, there is a section for "Group Type".



## Katherine W. Hills Obituary

A Friend of SNC-AGO, Katherine (Kay) W. Hills passed away peacefully on Wednesday, June 18, 2009 at her home in Overton, Nevada after a long battle with lymphatic cancer. She was born September 15, 1936, in Artesia, California to Robert A. and Inez Gibson Waymire. In July of 1961 she married William G. Hills in the Hawaii LDS Temple. They were later divorced.

Katherine lived most of her life in Moapa Valley. After graduating from BYU, she taught school in California for one year before moving to Hawaii for adventure and a teaching job. There she met and married William. They moved to Utah, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Pennsylvania for his schooling and work. In 1978, after the divorce, she moved her small family back to Overton. Here, she taught school for 23 years. Always active in the LDS church, she served as the ward organist for many years, served as a Relief Society teacher, as a gospel doctrine teacher and as a Las Vegas Temple Ordinance Worker. She enjoyed cross stitching, quilting

and tole painting. She loved to read, go to concerts and to travel. She enjoyed tremendously all of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Survivors include one daughter and two sons: Haunani Taylor of Las Vegas, NV; Baden (Julie) of Harrisville, UT; Gordon (Hang) of Hanoi, Vietnam; 13 grandchildren; four great grandchildren; two brothers and three sisters: Connie (Don) Whitney of Logandale, NV; Robert (Judi) Waymire of Etna, CA; Frances (Richard) Evans of Clearfield, UT; David (Kathy) Waymire of Albuquerque, NM and Jean Whipple of Bunkerville, NV.

Funeral services were held Wed., June 24, 2009, interment in the Pioneer Hill Memorial Cemetery under the direction of Moapa Valley Mortuary.

## CHAPTER MEMBERS' SUMMER ACTIVITIES

Several of the members of the chapter attended organ conventions this summer. Three of our members, Jan Bigler, Dr. Dorothy Riess and Dr. Paul Hesselink not only attended the AGO Region IX held "Festival" in Phoenix June 22-25 (with the Convention hotel being the elegant and up-scale Arizona Biltmore), but all three were also presenters of workshop sessions for the convention. Paul also attended the annual Convention of the Organ Historical Society July 5-10 held in Cleveland with side trips to Lakewood, Elyria, Toledo, Sandusky, Wellington and Oberlin. Many old and wonderful instruments were seen and heard, some of which are in jeopardy because of church closings and need of repair or restoration. Especially of concern is the large organ built by E.M. Skinner in the historic Cleveland Public Auditorium and Convention Center, a now abandoned facility with an uncertain future. Instruments heard included Flen-trop, Austin, Holtkamp, Votteler-Hettche, von Beckerath (the first von Beckerath imported to the U.S. in 1957), Farrand & Votey, Johnson & Son, E. M. Skinner, George Stevens, William Schuelke, Casavant, J. W. Steere & Son, Gober, Kimball and C. B. Fisk.