



Chiff Chat

November 2021

Dean:

Martha Sienkiewicz

Directors:

Klaus Becker

Lori Bourret

Joe Geehern

Dianne Rechel

Treasurer:

James Barnes

Secretary:

Karen Banta

Chaplain:

Rev. William H. Wallis

The Dean's Message: Welcome to our 75th Anniversary Year! The Springfield chapter has a robust and fine history of creating and supporting great musical experiences for our members and the Pioneer Valley community. Even within the pandemic this past year, we have partnered with the organists in England (NDOA), interviewed with Olivier Latty of France, presented our own master organ restorer Bill Czelusniak and held a successful in-person outdoor picnic hosted by St. Mary's Longmeadow. Hopefully, the ChiffChat and our website keeps everyone well informed of happenings. If any of you have special music for the holidays, please let us know and we'll post it. Our opening event on Nov. 7 at 5 pm will be a zoom get-together with National AGO which celebrates its own 125th anniversary. We hope to have many more festive events to celebrate this year and invite you all to party with us. Stay tuned....

MEMBERS' RECITAL AND BANQUET IN 2022?

by Karen Banta

The Springfield Chapter hoped to hold a members' recital, followed by a restaurant banquet, in June 2020. The pandemic cancelled that and everything else. We couldn't even try in June 2021. What about June 2022? With Covid numbers currently on the rise, we are not putting this on the calendar yet. However, let's hope that conditions will allow us to celebrate our chapter's 75th anniversary with this event. Stay tuned.

75TH ANNIVERSARY ZOOM



The Springfield MA Chapter of the AGO was founded on November 1, 1946, making this year our 75th anniversary. While we had been looking forward to this milestone for a couple of years and planning events, we were unable to present them. On Sunday November 7 we will have a Zoom meeting, starting at 5:00 PM. Our Chaplain Fr. William Wallace will install this year's officers:

Dean-Martha Sienkiewicz
Secretary-Karen Banta
Treasurer-Jim Barnes
Board Member-Klaus Becker
Board Member-Lori Bourret
Board Member-Joe Geehern
Board Member-Dianne Rechel

Elizabeth George, Director of Member Engagement and Chapter Development, will present a brief history of the AGO, which is celebrating its 125th anniversary this year. She will virtually present a certificate to our Chapter, recognizing our 75th anniversary.

Members will be able to present their memories of previous chapter members and events.

Martha will send link for this zoom program 24-48 hours in advance.

Note Bene: Remember to set your clocks back one hour on Saturday Nov 6!

ORGAN CELEBRATION AT THE ASHFIELD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH



On a lovely Sunday afternoon (Sept. 19, 3 pm) the town of Ashfield hosted a major organ event with the dedication of the newly restored 1903 George W. Reed tracker organ. Our own Grant Moss made the organ sparkle with a major recital which included among other varied works a delightful rendition of César Franck's "Prélude, Fugue et Variation Op. 18". The music filled the small crowded sanctuary and drifted out the door and windows to those seated outside under a tent on the lawn. This event represented years of hard work by the church trustees and committees, a major capital campaign to raise \$225,000, and the professional skill of *Czelusniak et Dugal, Inc* to restore the organ. The Organ Historical Society has recognized the significance of this important instrument with a National Heritage Pipe Organ Award. AGO Springfield supported this mission and plans to continue to do so in the future as this energetic congregation continues to provide fine music in the hills of western Massachusetts. Soli Deo Gloria.

Ashfield organ photographed by Gerard M. McGovern

THE WEDDING WE ALL WANTED TO ATTEND!

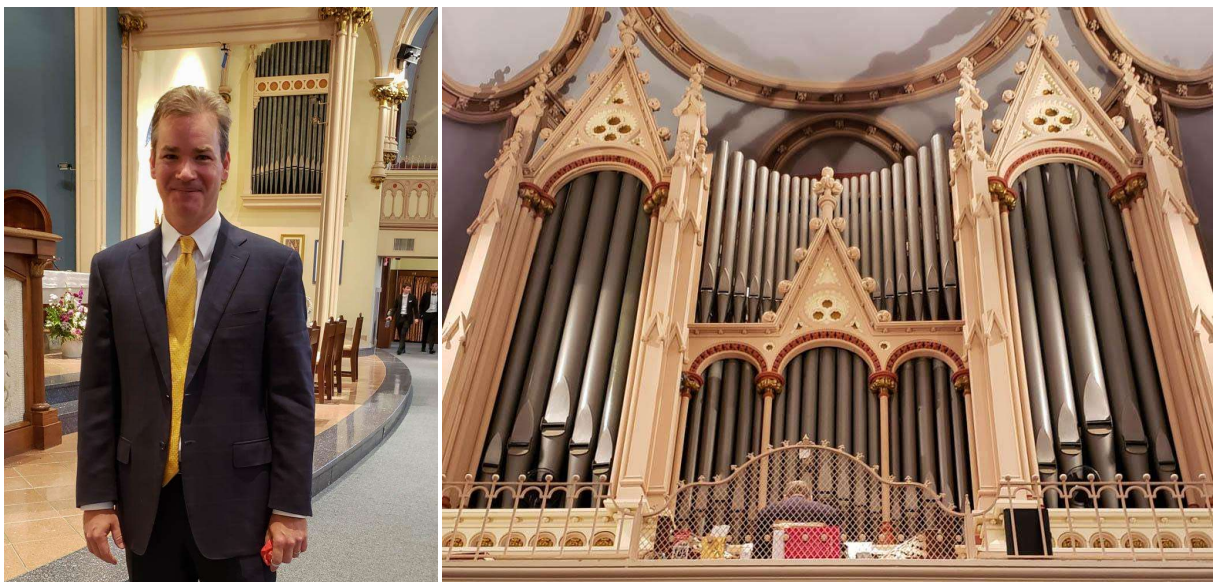
MONICA CZAUSZ WEDS RYAN BERNEY SEPT. 4, 2021

For those of you who do not know her, Monica joined our chapter while still in high school in Chicopee. She went on to study with Ken Cowan at Rice University in Texas. She has many distinguished degrees and awards, recently earning yet another degree at the Curtis Institute. Monica is currently living in Dallas, TX employed as minister of music at King of Glory Lutheran Church there. She is an internally known concert organist managed by Karen McFarlane. You can read all about her here: <https://www.moniaczausz.com/> One June, while she was still a student at Chicopee High School, Monica was invited to a prestigious music seminar in Philadelphia which coincided with her final exams. When she asked to have her exams early, Monica ran into a negative response and appealed to me (I was dean then) to write a letter. What a joy when an English teacher is asked to write! After creating official looking stationery with the AGO logo, I loaded the letter with good vocabulary, listing Monica's credentials, indicating that the entire Organ Guild was behind her and ending with the prophecy that she would surely put Chicopee on the map. It was my finest hour. She was consequently released and on her way to making us all proud. So when she walked down the aisle on that sunny morning at beautiful St. Michael's Cathedral, I counted 25 chapter members in the audience beaming proudly at this beautiful talented woman while Ken Cowan was up in the loft being the king of the King of Instruments. It was a moment in time not to be forgotten. The bride was lovely, the groom was handsome and the music was fantastic! Monica will be playing our 75th anniversary concert at St. Michael's on Friday evening, 22 April 2022. Mark your calendars and watch for the details because you won't want to miss it.

Pictures from the wedding of Monica Czausz & Ryan Berney taken by MJ Tash
Monica and Dad going down the isle joining Ryan in the sactuary



Ken Cowan, organist at the main cathedral organ.



1st photo: 1st pew: Roberta and Church Morikin 2nd pew: Martha Sienkiewicz, a visitor, and Jean Turner 3rd pew: Lori and Bob Bourret

2nd photo: Mrs. & Mr. Peter Beardsley



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Upcoming Events:

All of you will probably notice that there is virtually nothing posted in Upcoming Events. So many churches, choral and instrumental ensembles are still trying to find their place and means of existence in our Covid conscious world. There is usually a plethora of events, but under current circumstances so many ensembles are in the process of rebuilding and starting over. We are all hoping for a brighter future.

Reflections on being a carillonneur at Stanley Park by Joe Geehern

One Sunday a month from May to September, I climb four flights of rather winding stairs to the top of the carillon tower at Stanley Park in Westfield to play a one hour concert at 1:30 pm. At the top, surrounded by the bells is a small keyboard. I place my music on the bench, having made a list of ten or fifteen tunes for this concert. The musty smell and rather dusty light on the music rack are to be expected in a room used only once a month. First thing is to turn on the keyboard; then, turn on the bells which are electronically connected to the keyboard. A speaker system amplifies the bells. As i begin to play, the park ranger who let me in the back door confirms that the sound is coming out at the correct volume. *Bicycle Built for Two, Amazing Grace, a short Mozart Allegro...*the variety is my own choice. During the hour, many park visitors sit on benches simply to listen and enjoy the day. Built in 1950, the tower has now closed down and is undergoing a much needed major renovation. Tax deductible donations are welcome...<https://www.stanleypark.org/support.html>

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Position available :

Minister of Music

The First Congregational Church of Stockbridge, MA, seeks an organist-choirmaster to lead and coordinate the music programs of the congregation. This is an approximately one-third time position with commensurate compensation and benefits, to be negotiated depending on actual hours and qualifications. For further information and/or to apply for this position contact Will Garrison, Office Administrator, office@stockbridgeUCC.org or 413-298-3137. Qualifications will be reviewed beginning January 1, 2022, and will continue until the position is filled. There is a Johnson pipe organ/ two pianos ,anadult choir with 3 section leaders, and handbells.