



September 2021 “Pipings”

An Email Newsletter for members of the Low Country Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

from the Dean Jeff Harbin

Dear Colleagues and Members,

Greetings from the Parish Church of St. Helena in Beaufort! My name is Jeff Harbin, your new Dean. For the past two years, I have served as Director of Music and Organist at St. Helena’s Church in Beaufort SC. I am honored to have been appointed Dean of the Low Country AGO Chapter to fill the remainder of Dr. Jason Wright’s term. I look forward to seeing all of you in person soon, hopefully in October! We initially planned to have a chapter social event at Beth and Jeff Corry’s home in early September. I think that your board chose wisely when they postponed this gathering due to the Delta variant and the rise in the number of Covid cases here in Beaufort County. My family and I were also stricken with this virus in early August. Thankfully, we are doing much better now!

I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Wright and his partner Nick Ruden for their service to our chapter in the most challenging circumstances imaginable. Jason kept our Board going with monthly Zoom meetings and the planning of many fantastic events, most of which we were sadly not able to enjoy due to the coronavirus pandemic. Nick, in his volunteer role as Social Media and Technology

Coordinator, has done a fantastic job upgrading our website, Facebook page, and newsletters. They both will be missed, but we wish them the very best in their new endeavors!

I agreed to serve in this capacity knowing that I have the support of a fantastic team of dedicated individuals that do a tremendous amount of work behind the scenes to keep our chapter running. Dr. Pam Kane, our Sub-Dean, has been busy putting together a fantastic and varied slate of programs for 2021-2022. Greg Hollinger keeps our finances straight and has been the lead person for updating and revising our chapter by-laws, bringing them in line with those from National Headquarters. Beth Corry has been working on advertising and serving as a liaison with the Hilton Head Symphony. She has also generously agreed to serve as a member-at-large, taking my former role. Gil Campbell has also graciously returned to serve on the Board and also as newsletter editor. Geoff Borgelt, our third member-at-large, has been working with Beth and Gil to audit last season's financial records. I am so grateful for each of these folks and their hard work on our chapter's behalf!

This past summer, Mrs. Sarah Martin, my beloved organ professor at Georgia State University in Atlanta, passed away very quickly and unexpectedly. She went into the hospital around July 4 with difficulty breathing, only to be diagnosed with terminal cancer. She was a fantastic mentor who is missed tremendously! Sarah was exceptionally dedicated to the AGO, serving as Dean of the Atlanta Chapter and General Coordinator of the 1992 National Convention. In a presentation she gave in 2004, Sarah related that when she and her husband Gene returned to Georgia in 1955 and lived in Cleveland, Georgia, she joined the Atlanta Chapter and commuted all the way from Cleveland to the meetings. In that speech, she attested that "being a member of the AGO is really a professional obligation. But beyond that, AGO has so much more to offer: excellent programs, professional guidelines and advice, and probably the most important – genuine friendships."

Even in these challenging times, I think that membership in the AGO has a lot to offer. I am especially grateful for the genuine friendships that I have made over

the years through my affiliation with the Atlanta, Chattanooga, and now the Low Country chapters. I look forward to adding each of you to my “friends list” in the coming years! If I can ever be of service to you personally, please don’t hesitate to ask.

Sincerely yours,
Jeff Harbin, Dean