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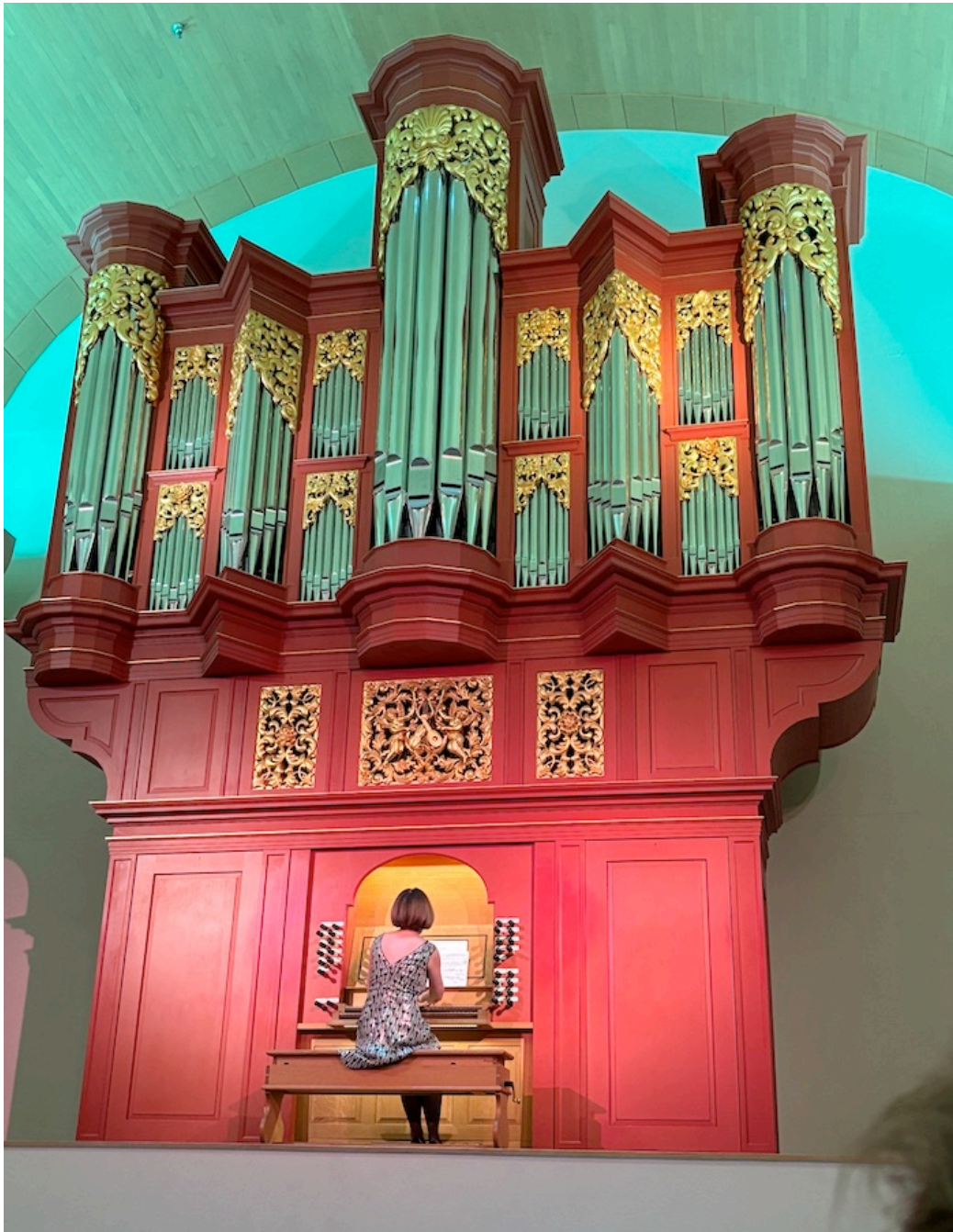
The NEWSLETTER for the AGO PALOMAR CHAPTER

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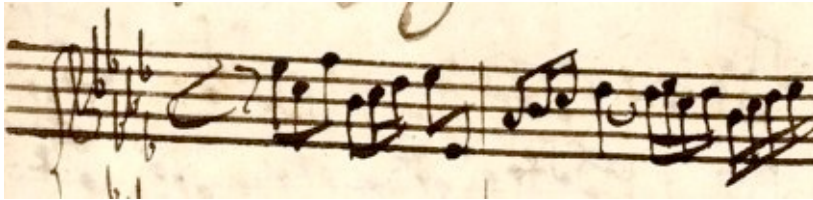
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Kimberly Marshall, Professor of Organ at Arizona State University, performs on the University's 1991 Paul Fritts & Co. II/29 organ, during the 2025 American Guild of Organists Regional Convention in Phoenix, Arizona.

A Note from the Dean



Dear Palomar AGO members,

Now that it is summertime, things slow down a bit. I am only at Palomar College Monday and Wednesday evenings. I actually have time to practice. I may actually give a recital at my church in a couple of months.

My wife and I traveled in June, in the break between spring semester and the summer session. It was very relaxing and a chance to spend time with my oldest son and his wife and young daughter. We enjoyed being around them for an entire week. It's hard to visit them frequently because they live in Salt Lake City.

I know you will enjoy the pictures from the AGO regional convention in Arizona. Thanks to Henry for providing us with a very descriptive and well-illustrated travelogue.

Congratulations to the students who participated in the Palomar AGO scholarship auditions: Alaina Postma, Santiago Hunt, Seleste Gonzalez, Riley Phillips, and Aleetheia Sun.



2025 American Guild of Organists Regional Convention, Phoenix Arizona



Your Newsletter Editor and his better half at the 2025 AGO Regional Convention.

June 16-19, 2025: Cindy and I attended the AGO Regional Convention in Phoenix, Arizona. Except for Emma Whitten, who performed as the guest soloist for the first event, I think I was the only member from our Palomar Chapter who traveled some 360 miles to attend the convention. I have never been disappointed in my various travels to attend AGO conventions, and this was no exception. Great music, great organs and great organists comes to mind as a motto for the four-day convention. Following are excerpts from my diary and photos:

On Sunday June 15th (the day before the convention begins), after a six hour drive mostly through California and Arizona desert, Cindy & I arrive in Scottsdale where the temperature is 112 degrees Fahrenheit! Luckily the Hilton Embassy Suites have a pool—two pools actually—and I discover one way to beat the heat.



The author takes a dip at the Embassy Suites by Hilton, Scottsdale, Arizona.

Day One (Monday June 16): Cindy & I visit the Vendors' Display at the convention hotel. We had a little fun playing the Orgelkids organ set up for display. It is a totally mechanical instrument, no electricity needed to power it, but someone has to pump the bellows, just like in the old days before electric motors. To see & hear a little video of our first collaborative public performance, go to YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/skMXH7WICJl>.



Cindy pumps and I play the two-octave Orgelkids organ at the Convention Center. Would you believe this little organ cost the Central Arizona Chapter almost \$9,000 including shipping from The Netherlands? It is an extremely high-quality instrument, built with no nails and no screws.

The American Guild of Organists 2025 Regional Convention in Phoenix got off to a stellar official start, with an evening recital by friend and colleague Dr. Emma Whitten on the 2010 Casavant Frères III/41 organ at St. Barnabas Episcopal Church! She played works by Jehan Alain, Pamela Decker, John Rotar, Florence Price, Marcel Dupré, Libby Larsen and Maurice Duruflé. I've never heard her play so well: convincing and stunning, every note! The pipe layout and back wall mural was especially colorful, as seen in the photos.



The Casavant Frères III/41 organ at St. Barnabas Episcopal Church.

Emma is getting some well-deserved recognition. At the gala reception at the hotel after the St. Barnabas event, I overheard a fellow ask her why she was so late for the reception. She replied, "A crowd of people at the church came up to talk to me and that delayed me, and when I arrived at the hotel, I was approached by quite a few people in the lobby, before I could get to the convention center."

I chimed in, "That's the price of celebrity!"

Her recital was followed by a church service in which high points for me were the works by Pavel Chesnokov, Josef Rheinberger, William Byrd, Alan Hovhaness, Brian Schmidt, Hans Leo Hassler, Charles Villiers Stanford, and Paul Smith, sung by the 24-voice CANTICUM NOVUM directed by Don Morse. A nice mix of old and new music.

The homily by The Rev. Dr. Sam Parkes, Senior Pastor at First United Methodist Church in Mesa, was in my opinion especially noteworthy. The hymns were also memorable. My eyes became wet near the conclusion of the final hymn, "Love Divine All Loves Excelling" (Hyfrydol). All in all, an inspiring evening. Bravo and Brava!

Day Two (Tuesday June 17): Another terrific day at the 2025 American Guild of Organists Regional Convention in Phoenix, Arizona! First, Richard Elliot (Principal Organist at the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah) performs works by Larry King, Louis Vierne, César Franck, Claude Debussy, William Bolcom and himself on the Berghaus IV/91 organ (2008) at La Casa de Cristo Lutheran Church.



Richard Elliot



The Berghaus IV/91 organ (2008) at La Casa de Cristo Lutheran Church.

Second, we heard the Morning Star Native American Ensemble (Gary Fields, founder/director) share singing, drumming, flute music, story telling and dancing from various Native American traditions



[Morning Star Native American Ensemble](#)



Hoop Dancer

Third, we heard Kimberly Marshall (Professor of Organ at Arizona State University) perform works by Dieterich Buxtehude, Arvo Pärt, Girolamo Frescobaldi, Bernardo Pasquini, Conner Chee and Johann Sebastian Bach on two organs at Arizona State University: (A) the Paul Fritts II/29 (1991) organ (tempered tuning) and (B) the Italian Baroque Traeri organ, built in 1742, on loan to Arizona State University (mean tone tuning).



The Paul Fritts II/29 (1991) organ at Arizona State University.



The Paul Fritts II/29 (1991) organ at Arizona State University.



The Italian Baroque Traeri organ, built in 1742, on loan to Arizona State University (mean tone tuning).



Kimberly Marshall

Day Three (Wednesday June 18): Another superb recital at the American Guild of Organists 2025 Regional Convention in Phoenix, Arizona. Isabelle Demers, Associate Professor of Organ at McGill University in Montreal, Quebec, performed works by Charles Tournemire, Siegfried Karg-Elert, George Baker and Rachel Laurin on the 1993 Dobson III/33 organ at First United Methodist Church of Mesa.



The Dobson III/33 organ at First United Methodist Church of Mesa



The Dobson III/33 organ at First United Methodist Church of Mesa



Isabelle Demers

Following Demers' recital, Cindy & I travel to Organ Stop Pizza in Mesa, where we eat pizza and listen to organist Brett Valliant play the Mighty Wurlitzer! We heard much popular music from the 1930s and 40s Big Band Era, plus more contemporary works such as music from the Phantom of the Opera and Star Wars. In fact, Valliant's rendition of the ominous Darth Vader theme followed by the ennobling Luke Skywalker theme would make a great prelude at House of Prayer Lutheran Church on the Sunday when pastor reads the Gospel of Matthew where Satan tempts Jesus during his 40-day fast, and Jesus rebukes the fallen angel, "Away from me, Satan!"



Brett Valliant at the Mighty Wurlitzer at Organ Stop Pizza.



Brett Valliant at the Mighty Wurlitzer at Organ Stop Pizza.

That evening, Cindy & I hear Raúl Prieto Ramírez, San Diego's Civic Organist, perform works by Dietrich Buxtehude, Franz Liszt, Freddy Mercury (Bohemian Rhapsody), and Modest Mussorgsky on the Peragallo Organ IV/41 (2023) at Saints Simon and Jude Roman Catholic Cathedral, Phoenix. Wow! This guy is fantastic. Entire program from memory. I've heard him play at the Spreckels Pavilion in Balboa Park. Amazing talent.



The Peragallo Organ IV/41 (2023) at Saints Simon and Jude Roman Catholic Cathedral



Raúl Prieto Ramírez

Day Four: (Thursday June 19): Cindy & I hear a recital by Scott Dettra, organist at Highland Park United Methodist Church in Dallas, Texas, performing works by Johannes Brahms, Johann Sebastian Bach and Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck on the C. B. Fisk II/27 organ (2024) at Camelback Bible Church in Phoenix, Arizona.



The C. B. Fisk organ at Camelback Bible Church.



Scott Dettra

Special thanks to House of Prayer Lutheran Church for generously providing Continuing Education Funds which helped me to defray costs for registration fees, hotel, gasoline, and other expenses. I can't wait to attend the AGO National Convention in St. Louis, Missouri next year!



We stopped at a gas station in Gila Bend, Arizona, on the way home, and met this friendly juvenile sauropod in the parking lot. At the other end of the lot was a theropod, but I didn't want to get too close to a theropod.

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