

2015



Classical Guitar Society of
Upstate New York

www.cgsuny.org

2015

BODs CANDIDATES' biographies/mission statement: there are nine (9) seats.

Bob Burnside has been on the BODs for six years and his experience as treasurer, especially when circumstances necessitated his “stepping up to the plate” required an un-asked for commitment of Bob. He has always gone out of his way to handle some of the less-than-popular tasks and done so with quiet fortitude: He has never let the Society down. Bob has consented to continue in his capacity as board member and treasurer. [fjh]

Matt Downey: I have spent the past 10 years trying to grasp what it means to be a guitarist. I have had the pleasure of being a part of CGSUNY and observing what it takes to be part of such a involved society. I went to school to see what educational purposes the guitar can serve and pursued the instrument as a performance instrument shortly after my education degree. I have interest in spreading passion and intrigue about the guitar. I would like to attempt to bring researchers, performers, and teachers to our society for future festivals. I know I could help with a members guitar ensemble (player and conductor), contact Collegiate Level students (Masters and DMA) to do lecture recitals, and even offer technique classes with exercises and rehearsal techniques for all level of players. I know that my passion for the guitar will be a useful asset to CGSUNY and I know the work it will take to be a member of the board. I know that a position on the board can better me not only as a guitarist but also as a member of our guitar society.

Gail Halmilton: Was a founder and first president of CGSUNY... Mission statement was and still is to promote the classical guitar, and its music to amateurs, professionals, students, and listeners... To help provide a place where guitarists of all levels could meet and share information, talent, opportunities for performances etc. To bring the classical guitar to the forefront in our communities and promote the arts in upstate N.Y.

I remain an amateur guitarist (aka: One who Loves) and although health, business, and personal situations have kept me away from the guitar activities for a while, I am healing up and am looking forward to being able to be much more active with the society in the near future....

Marc Hecker: I have served in administrative capacities as President for many years of the Ne'imah Jewish Community Chorus and also of the Eastern N.Y.State Optometric Society. I believe that a non-professional musician like myself can bring some special insight and ideas to the group's programs. In particular, I would like to see non-professional guitarists invited to play at special programs that only certain professional members have been selected to play at in the past. I also would like non-professionals to have an equal and fair shot at being selected for a master class.

Fred Hellwitz has served on the board of directors for six years acting in the capacity as president throughout that time. As president he has overseen the continued production of annual Fall Festival, successfully negotiating its transition to its current venue at SUCO. He has also forged relationships with The College of Saint Rose with whom he initiated the partnering with their international performer series to host the annual GFA winner, as well as with the Sand Lake Center for the Arts where over \$1000 has been raised for the Society through their joint efforts. Other community partnerships formed have included benefits of Compassion in Action(a medical clinic serving the underserved), and Steamer No. 10 Theater, which among other things provides summer programs for area youth. During his tenure Fred also instituted the Monthly Guitar Soirées where members and nonmembers, performers of all abilities could come together to perform and share music and camaraderie. Fred is stepping down as president but wishes to continue to contribute to the society by remaining on the board of directors.

George Lesh is currently serving as Secretary for CGSUNY and has also served on the CGSUNY Board for the past six years. I earned my degree in Music Education at West Chester State University and taught Choral and General Music at Unatego High School. I have served as a Zone Representative for the New York State School Music Association. I have frequently performed as an accompanist for numerous musical events and as a soloist on piano, organ and guitar. Over the years I have developed a strong interest in and appreciation of the classical guitar. Hopefully my involvement with CGSUNY has helped bring an enjoyment and cultural awareness of both the CGSUNY and the classical guitar to others.

Harry George Pellegrin teaches classical guitar privately and at Union College in Schenectady. He studied with Albert Valdes-Blain and Eliot Fisk and has performed in master classes with David Russell, Benjamin Verdery and John Duarte. Pellegrin has played a number of Capital area venues including the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall, The Linda Norris Auditorium, the Kitty Carlisle Theatre at The Egg, The Hall of Springs and The Saratoga City Center in Saratoga Springs as well as the Emerson Auditorium and Nott Memorial Chapel at Union College in Schenectady. Pellegrin has served on the board of the CGSUNY since late 2011 and is also a member of the board of directors of the Monday Musical Club of Albany.

Giancarlo Sidoli is a classical guitarist from Delhi, NY. He holds a M. M. in Classical Guitar Performance from S. U. N. Y. Fredonia where he studied with Evan Drummond, James Piorkowski, and Luis Zea. Concertizing since the age of 18, he has performed all over NYS, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts in both solo and chamber music concerts as well as performing in masterclasses of Nicholas Goluses, Jason Vieaux, Adam Holzman and many other noted guitar pedagogues and luminaries. As a member I have benefited greatly by performing in masterclasses of the many international performing artists that CGSUNY has brought to their area for concerts. Additionally the many CGSUNY festivals that I have attended have allowed for me to perform for rooms and halls filled with guitarists with a wide range of experience and repertoire expertise. Through these many guitarists I have been able to discover new and improved insights into technique, musical expression and performance and stage presence. As a personal anecdote, the first time I performed a complete Bach suite was at a board meeting to help me prepare for my Junior recital. It is my wish as a director to help the next generation of musicians become more aware of the classical guitar in its solo and chamber settings. Additionally I wish to continue the work of the society in benefiting the next generation of classical guitarists just as the society has done for me as a performer for the past ten years.

Paul Sweeny has served on the board for many years, most recently, and for many years as well, in capacity as vice president. In addition to Paul's managing the Festival's masterclass and the collegiate recital, having to juggle scheduling as well as input from numerous organizations/colleges at once, Paul has been extremely active in ensuring the Society's survival through his dedication and commitment to its stated purpose of promoting the classical guitar. Paul has often been the "voice of reason" during what can often become emotional topics and his continued involvement would be an asset to the BOD. [fjh]

Jon Tario has been on the board of directors since 2008 and in addition to contributing his musical talents to fundraising efforts, Jon has continuously occupied the nearly thankless job of web-master. While Jon's time commitments are limited his continued commitment to maintaining the Society's web page have been invaluable. [fjh]

Francis Wilkin: I am currently in my first year as a board member of the Classical Guitar Society of Upstate New York, and would be happy to serve again during 2014-15. In the last year I have organized several guitar soirees for the organization, including a benefit for the victims of the earthquake in Nepal. Having been a board member of the Dudley Observatory for over 7 years, I also bring non-profit experience which may benefit our activities. My day (and night!) job includes teaching physics and astronomy, and since 2012 I have studied classical guitar with Harry George Pellegrin.