

Recorder Reporter

Newsletter of two chapters of the American Recorder Society (ARS),
Chicago Recorder Society & the West Suburban Early Music Society

September 2026

Volume 68, Number 1

Chicago Chapter News

We closed an excellent 67th season on May 17 at our spring concert. Since 1958 recorder players have been gathering in Chicago, and now that grand tradition continues. In fact, we had two concerts on Sunday May 17, the chapter spring concert, and then a group of us dashed to Hyde Park to join in a concert with the Early Music Ensemble of the University of Chicago, directed by Liza Malamut of the Newberry Consort. Whitewater the last weekend of May. Then, a chance to relax.

Ha.

On Sunday June 19, 16 members of the Chicago chapter and WSEMS played at the Besse Coleman Public Library in Woodlawn for a group of 38 friends, family, library staff and patrons from the neighborhood. On Sunday July 19, 21 recorder players traveled to 111th Street to play at the Block House Gallery in Pullman. In each event Lisette Kielson directed a reprise of the CRS Spring Concert and Nancy Chabala directed the *Teddy Bear's Picnic*. In Woodlawn, James Watts and Seven Dinda played duets by Jean-Baptiste Loeillet as well as several modern pieces, and in Pullman Seven played *The Nightingale in Love* by François Couperin. We also gave members of each audience soprano recorders to experiment with us, and then take home with them. The final summer concert followed mass at Old St. Mary's, 1500 South Michigan, on August 16. After that, I was invited (with two weeks' notice) to gather some recorder players to provide background music for the Honeybee festival at Morton Arboretum on Saturday morning, August 29, finishing in time to join a group jamming and having dinner that afternoon at Stephanie Duesing's home in Naperville. It turned out that we had plenty of interest for musicians to join us for these monthly events with Lisette directing. As Michael Kuby keeps trying to tell me, recorder players want to play recorder.

So lots of energy in the summer of 2026. I ended up with about 30 photos for this newsletter and enough content for 8 pages of text. Lots of material for our October and November issues, but for now, our new season opens on Sunday, September 20 at 2 PM at St. John's Episcopal, 3857 North Kostner.

After leading us for these three outreach events this summer, Lisette returns to direct for the new season. Our

fall semester repertoire will focus on a festive, seasonal theme in preparation for two performances, December 13 at Bessie Coleman Library and our own Yuletide concert on December 20 at St. John's. Selections will include two 5-part sacred vocal pieces from the Spanish and Italian Renaissance; arrangements of *Simple Gifts* and *God Rest You Merry Gentlemen* for recorder orchestra; as well as a Jewish festival song, *Greensleeves*, and Bach's *Sheep May Safely Graze*.

We are also adjusting our schedule for next season. We have invited other chapter members to lead our third hour session. Peter Beck will open our new third-hour schedule on September 20, directing a set of new compositions from the ARS Library.



Lisette directs the chapter at our May 2026 concert



The Baron's Noyse

Finally, we will continue to provide recorder music for services at St. John's Episcopal. For this season, we need recorder players to join us on a Sunday in September or October to start. We are making plans to provide music for a Friday or Saturday night installation service for the new rector at St. John's, and for their Lessons and Carols Service on a Saturday night in December, and once more on Sunday April 4, 2027. Dates will be provided soon.



Recorders Reordered, Mona Mann, Rebecca McLane, Valerie DePriest, & Pam Wiese



Arrangements by Carl Foote and Peter Beck

It's time to renew your membership with the Chicago chapter, either using our [web site](#) or by bringing a check to the September meeting. With costs continuing to rise, we've made the difficult decision to raise dues this year to \$70, though you can use last year's rate of \$50 if you find the increase too much of a burden. We want you to make music with us. And then, as always, your donations balance our budget. We have a music-filled season ahead and are thankful for your participation and ongoing support.



I of course had to include a photo of my granddaughter at the spring concert. She will join us on soprano in a future concert.



University of Chicago Early Music Ensemble, May 17, 2026



James Watts and Michael Kubly, Early Music Ensemble in Hyde Park, May 17

Join us as we open our new season on September 20!

Frank Cole, 1934 – 2026

When once you have seriously studied and played an instrument you can't just stop—at least I couldn't. I have to play something. Recorder has satisfied my need to play music. I have thoroughly enjoyed the people, the music (the literature for recorder seems endless!), and performing, and I even get satisfaction from practicing. What a kick to play something that I couldn't play six months ago! Great challenges, and what fun!— Frank Cole, January 2007



Playing at a workshop, April 2007

Frank Cole's grandfather offered him a trombone in the attic when he was ten years old, and he started playing right away and kept going for 40 years or more. In ninth grade he was admitted into the Sherwood Music School Orchestra and Chicago Youth Orchestra, and won college scholarships, finishing a degree in music education at Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin in 1957. He played basketball too, tall enough to play center and tall enough for a contra bass years later. He played Paul Creston's "Fantasy for Trombone and Orchestra" for his commencement concert.

Frank was a regular on Tuesday nights at Pilgrim Congregational in Oak Park for many years, and regularly joined Ed Green as a roommate at Whitewater. Larry Johnson remembered nights playing in Frank Cole's home once a month with Nancy Chabala. "We'd play in his basement, where he had a large model train setup, and we always had a great time," Larry said.

Nancy and Larry both reflected on Frank's sense of humor. "He had a very dry wit and delighted in leading us down the garden path with his stories and deadpan deliveries which even after years could still give you a 'gotcha' moment," Nancy remembered.



Whitewater 2010

"One highlight was a Christmas program we presented at the senior living development near DeKalb where Frank's brother lived," Larry said. "We played pretty well, the program was well received and it's a great memory to have of Frank."

Frank served as an elementary school principal and school administrator for 36 years, finishing a master's degree in school administration at the University of Chicago with a Ford Foundation fellowship, and then going on to get a PhD. Over many years he played trombone in and around Chicago, including with the Civic Orchestra and with the Elgin Orchestra. Frank started to have trouble with lip control, focal dystonia, essentially a paralysis of the lip muscles. He tried for 15 years to treat the problem, and ultimately gave up and sold his instrument. But Frank's sad loss was a tremendous gift to us, as he started experimenting with a soprano recorder and a Trapp Family recorder book. In 1997 he started to practice regularly, joined the Chicago chapter, started attending Whitewater, and started taking lessons with Mary Ann Gardner. He also played at the Bristol Renaissance Faire a few times and carried on his life as a musician, just with a set of instruments that do not require an embouchure.

Frank moved to Minnesota a few years ago to live near his daughter, so we have not seen him for a long time. But we remember his heart and skill. Frank was noted for his passion for model railroading, a hobby he developed as a young man, and he sang in his church choir, served as an elder, and read the Scriptures regularly. Frank and his wife Janet raised five sons and daughters, and he had ten grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren.

West Suburban Early Music Society

The West Suburban Early Music Society meet at the Friends Meeting House in Downers Grove at 2 PM on the second Sunday of the month. The season opens on September 13 with Nancy Chabala directing. The December and May meetings will be on the first Sunday of the month. Future meetings will be held on October 11, November 8, December 6, January 10, February 14, March 14, April 11, and May 2.—*Nancy Culp*



Dinner and jamming at the Dawsons, May 2

Music and More

Marguerite Re has a viola de gamba that is partly assembled, but they are looking for someone who can finish the project. Reach her at marguerite.re@gmail.com.

The extraordinary British choral ensemble **Voces8** performs on October 2, 7:30 PM at Rockefeller Chapel, offered by [UChicago Presents](#). The concert features Bach, Benjamin Britten, and more.

Performer's Music on the 9th floor of the Fine Arts Building, 410 South Michigan Avenue, just celebrated their 45th anniversary. Founded by Lee Newcomer in 1981, Performer's Music remains the only independent music store in Chicago. They offer a broad selection of sheet music to teachers and musicians, classical, jazz, vocal standards, and showtunes, with a wide variety of method books and studies. They also offer a selection of recorder music as well as musical accessories such as stands, lights, reeds, lubricants, strings, and mutes.

Bach in the City offers [Fantasticus](#), *Bach & Before* on Sunday October 4, 3 PM, at Allen Hall at the DePaul University School of Music. The concert includes works by Bach, Biber, Buxtehude, and Pachelbel, and more. Find the DePaul University Holtschneider Performance Center near the corner of Fullerton and Halsted, an easy walk from the Fullerton L stop.

Chapter Information

Our chapters are open to anyone, regardless of musical training, who wants to cultivate appreciation of the art, history and use of the recorder and related instruments. Our meetings, programs and publications help members to come together with others with similar interests.

Chicago Recorder Society and West Suburban dues are paid in September for each new season. Dues include membership in your local chapter, this newsletter, and a welcome to attend the meetings of both chapters. We publish the *Recorder Reporter* September to May.

Chicago Recorder Society (ChicagoRecorders.org)

President	Mark Dawson
Vice President	Seven Dinda
Secretary	Jacob Schermer
Treasurer	Carl Foote
Facebook	Hyacinth Egner & Cheryl Kreiman
Web site	Larry Johnson & Carl Foote
Members at Large	James Watts, Michael Kuby, Hyacinth Egner, Irene Claude

Chapter Representative Larry Johnson

Music Director: Lisette Kielson lisettekielson@gmail.com

You can contact the chapter through our web site.

Like us on Facebook: 

<https://www.facebook.com/ChicagoARS>

Chicago Recorder Society meetings: Third Sunday of each month, September through May, 2 PM, at St. John's Episcopal Church, 3857 North Kostner. Enter through the side door on Byron and go to your right down a few steps to enter the parish hall, or enter in the front.

West Suburban Early Music Society (westsubems.org)

Convener/Chapter Representative:	Pat Mahoney
Vice Convener	Nancy Culp
Treasurer	Stephanie Duesing
Secretary/Membership:	Suzanne Scott
Hospitality:	Janet Fitchuk
Web page support:	Chris Culp
Music Director:	Nancy Chabala nchabala5555@gmail.com

WSEMS meetings: Second Sunday of each month, September through April, first Sunday of May, 2-5 PM at the Downers Grove Friends meeting house, 5710 Lomond Avenue in Downers Grove. The church is near Maple Avenue and 355. From 355, take the ramp and go east on Maple for less than a half mile and turn right (south) onto Lomond street. The church is on the right.

Visit us at chicagorecorders.org
Mark Dawson, newsletter editor
 2425 W. Leland, Chicago, IL 60625-2913
msiddawson@sbcglobal.net (773) 334-6376