

Fret Wire

Fall 2024

Fall Festival
Headliner



TARIQ HARB

CLASSICAL GUITARIST

***The CGSUNY
Newsletter***

Articles!

Info!

Guitar Stuff!

Fret Wire

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Our membership is encouraged to submit articles and compositions for possible inclusion to the *Fret Wire* editorial staff for consideration. Please contact Harry at recitalguitarist@verizon.net

On our cover:

Our Headliner, Tariq Harb

Our Mission

Our purpose is to promote the education, appreciation and cultural awareness of the classical guitar and other associated instruments as a non-profit presenting arts organization.

FALL 2024

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Contributors: (Past and Present)

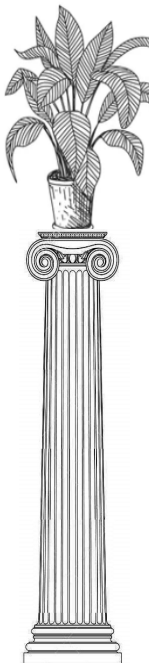
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The Classical Guitar Society of Upstate New York

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A Note from the CGSUNY President

—Paul Sweeny

As the various school years begin, we find ourselves with an abundance of guitar activities to look forward to. Marko Topchii, 2023 GFA winner, performs in Binghamton on September thirteenth (plans are underway to provide a live stream for those too far away). CGSUNY is sponsoring this great performer to help raise funds for desperately needed relief in Ukraine. One of our sister Societies will present Marko in Skaneateles later in the year, another chance

to hear this great artist.

We also of course look forward to our annual Fall Festival on Saturday and Sunday, October 19 and 20. The Festival is a wonderful opportunity to share the beauty of classical guitar music and camaraderie with fellow members. We are hosting two outstanding soloists for our Saturday performances: Tariq Harb and Chris Ladd, who will undoubtedly provide memorable concert experiences.

On a more personal level, I will be taking part in a chamber music concert in Binghamton on Sunday, September twenty-ninth. Our merry band is known as Early On (playing music from Now and Then). Guitar, three recorders, violin, double bass, and a soprano soloist will present music from the Baroque Period and 20th-21st centuries, a truly eclectic program.

I hope to see many of you in these and future events.



Fret Buzz from the Editor's Desk

—Harry G. Pellegrin

Are you excited? I KNOW I am excited!

The annual CGSUNY Fall Festival is rapidly approaching! Not only do we have two fine performers presenting recitals for us, we will also have the opportunity and privilege to 'hang and chat' with old friends. Some of them are indeed old, others are just of long acquaintance! Take your pick of how you'd like to be classified.

With the globe rapidly spinning into major military conflict and a societal crash here in the States becoming more likely, it will be a great relief to hear beautiful music and discuss more loftier—and more important—subjects than politics. Would that we could go back to the days where music was more important than

things outside our control. So hopefully we will forget the vitriol and angst of the outside world and concentrate on the language of heaven—music!

I have the distinct pleasure and advantage of having to choose which of three fine guitars to bring with me to the Fall Fest. No, I am not rich, but I have been fortunate. You all know about Emily (the guitar) but I also have my old and esteemed Hill Munich '37 and my Ramirez to vet for possible use. I am not planning on playing for the member's recital, but I need something to noodle on at the hotel. And I have used that convoluted introduction to ask a question; You have made your hotel reservations at the Hampton Inn using the CGSUNY discount? If not, please take

advantage of this as soon as possible. It is a significant savings.

As always, we are looking for donations of guitar and music-related items for the silent auction. These can include sheet music, footstools, strings, artwork, heck, a few years there we had liquor donations! I bought those. Even if you do not have anything to donate to the auction, please browse the items on hand. There have been some awesome items over the years. Marc Hecker scored a Cordoba C7 for almost nothing. I won a wonderful classical guitar flight case. Did I mention a bottle of Bourbon? No? Shhhh. It's a secret!

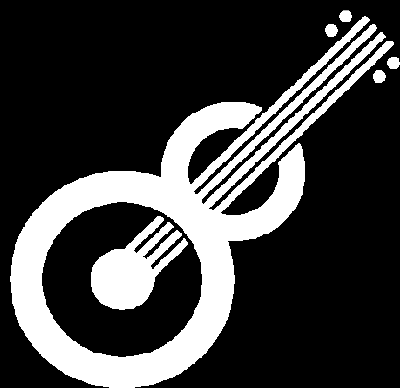
Further along in this issue will be the schedule for both



days of the Fest. We have lots of fine presentations, recitals, member's recitals, master classes and the usual camaraderie to please everyone in attendance.

Remember, there are lots of 'other' great places to eat in Oneonta. The other side of the river from downtown has way more and less crowded eateries. I discovered that last year. So explore and enjoy!

Fall Festival Headliner



TARIQ HARB
CLASSICAL GUITARIST

Dr. Tariq Harb's journey to distinction in the world of classical guitar has been marked by notable achievements and unwavering dedication. With a string of accolades including top prizes in renowned competitions like the Barrios WorldWideWeb Competition, the Montreal International Classical Guitar Competition and the Tokyo International Classical Guitar Competition, Harb quickly emerged as a leading figure in his generation.

Renowned for his unparalleled command of melody and emotion, Harb's virtuosity has been lauded by luminaries in the field. TED Global praised his "masterful" performances, while Patrick Roux, Artistic Director of Guitarre Alla Grande, extolled his "elegant and charismatic stage presence" and "impeccable playing." CBC Radio crowned him as their NEXT! guitarist in 2013, heralding him as "Canada's next classical guitar superstar," further solidifying his international acclaim.

Harb's concert engagements span the globe, gracing stages from North America to Asia and everywhere in between. His performances in iconic venues such as the ancient Roman Amphitheatre in Jordan, Tokyo's Bunka Kaikan concert hall, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and Carnegie Hall in New York have captivated audiences. He has also shared his expertise through master classes and appearances at prominent guitar festivals and as an adjudicator at music competitions worldwide.

A Jordanian-Canadian with Palestinian heritage, Harb's journey from a career in finance to the world stage of classical guitar is a testament to his unwavering passion and determination. With a master's degree from McGill University, a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Toronto and a faculty position at Concordia University, Harb continues to inspire aspiring musicians while enjoying support from industry-leading sponsors. In a world where talent and perseverance converge, Tariq Harb stands as a beacon of excellence, inviting listeners to embark on a journey of musical discovery and artistic expression.

March, 2024



Visit Dr. Harb's website: <https://tariqharb.com>

Enquiring Minds Want to Know...

Ongoing Questions as Posed by Deena Freed

Have you ever had to overcome a physical injury that left you either unable to play or playing with discomfort?

I feel as if I am the only person answering these questions every quarter. Wait... I am! Well, until you are sick of me and decide to write an answer to Deena's questions, I guess we're stuck with me!

You have heard *ad nauseum* about my shattered shoulder and damaged tendon, but you *may* not know I was involved in a significant crash in 1989 that resulted, among a myriad of other lesser though serious injuries, three compression fractures of my spine requiring vertebral fusions. When I complained about my left side being numb and that I was walking very oddly, the surgeon responded "You are lucky you are not shopping for a wheel chair!" I was. But the left arm being basically asleep — I didn't care about the leg — that meant that any guitar playing was out of the question. I threw myself into two other vocations that I also enjoyed, writing and photography, and wound up studying graphic arts. This was a merely adequate creative substitute for a few years, but it could not compare to the joy I found in my guitar.

"Can't you just play me *something*?" Elaine had asked. When we had first started dating she had questioned me about the apparently *musical décor* of my apartment: "Why do you have so many guitars? You never play them." And she was right. My left hand was still relatively numb six years after my injury.

I figured that as Elaine's birthday is on January first, I had a few months to dust off something from my old repertoire and play for her as a special birthday gift. I'd do this at our church's New Year's Eve talent show. The organizers of the show wanted me to audition for it, so I'd have to break a bit of a sweat. Going through my instruments, I soon found I couldn't play my classical guitars—the action was too high on them all and the necks too wide for my numb fingers to work with. So I grabbed my trusty old Les Paul electric and began playing some easier lute tunes on it. It would have to do. Elaine would love it and I could then put the guitar away for good, her having heard me play once. I worked on my guitar pieces during those times when Elaine was not home. My playing improved as I worked at it. By anticipating my movements, I could actually get through a few short pieces.

The audition approached. Could I pull this off in front of an audience when nervous? Well, I did. New Year's Eve came and at my appointed time, I played for my wife and it felt as if only she and I were present. It was magic to be playing again. I never thought I would be doing so ever again, and I must state that there was just a twinge of regret for me when I had finished and the applause had died away. Elaine was ecstatic.

The seed had been planted, or the 'bug' revived—take you pick of platitude. After another nine years of playing electric in the church worship team, I felt recovered enough to try the classical repertoire once again. It took another three years of truly dedicated practice to feel like I could do an almost credible job. Elaine says that what I have lost in technical ability, I made up for with the additional pain and suffering that I could now draw upon to make my playing more evocative. I think she may have been onto something — I had, as the old blues players say, *paid my dues*.

So although this all took place in my thirties and early to mid forties, I now find myself once again recovering from injury, I am drawing upon the fact that as I rapidly approach seventy, I will once again, with practice and patience, be able to return to decent levels of performance. Keep on pushing forward!!!

—**Harry G. Pellegrin**

P.S. You know, all members are welcome to answer these questions!

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The Rifenkark Memorial Concert Artist

Christopher Ladd



Award winning and internationally renowned classical guitarist **Christopher Ladd** is recognized throughout North America and abroad as one of the most promising and versatile classical musicians of his generation. *Fingerstyle Guitar* hails his performances as being "... rendered confidently and expressively." Praised as "... an exercise in extremes." by *Soundboard Magazine*, he is highly sought after as a soloist and chamber musician.

Most recently Mr. Ladd was a featured performer at the 2017 Sarajevo International Guitar Festival and the 2018 Summartónar Festival in the Faroe Islands. Noteworthy performances include appearances at the Vijećnica in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mengi and the Kaldalon Theater at Harpa in Reykjavik, Iceland, the DiMenna Center in New York City, the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., the Viennese Opera Ball hosted by the Austrian Embassy, the historic Byrdcliffe Theater in Woodstock, NY and for former vice-president Al Gore at his residence in Washington, D.C. Active also as a chamber musician, Mr. Ladd is a founding member of The Pandora Duo which features acclaimed flutist Janet Arms, and The Amaranth Duo with Icelandic violinist Asa Gudjonsdottir.

As a recording artist Mr. Ladd's multi-faceted career exemplifies his continual search for new ways to present the classical guitar. He has appeared on numerous projects for feature film, theater and the stage. His performance of Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez* can be heard on the documentary *The Real Royal Trip* directed by Sangh Kim and his performance of J.S. Bach's *Prelude, Fugue and Allegro, BWV 998* can be heard in *The Asylum's* cult-hit *Megashark vs. Giant Octopus*. He also contributed his skills to the 25th Anniversary of the epic metal band *While Heaven Wept's* newest release "Suspended at Aphelion" on Nuclear Blast Records which was released in late 2014. Most recently, his world-premiere recording of Robert Carl's *Concerto for Guitar and Chamber Orchestra* entitled *The Calm Bee* in the *Busy Hive* was released on *A Geography of Loss* from New World Records in August 2016.

Mr. Ladd has been a prize winner in numerous competitions including the Appalachian Guitar Festival Solo Competition, American String Teachers Association Solo Competition and he was twice a semi-finalist in the prestigious Guitar Foundation of America International Competition.

Mr. Ladd currently serves on the faculty of The Longy School of Music in Cambridge, MA and at The Hartt School in West Hartford, Connecticut as the Chair of the Guitar and Harp Program.

Fall Festival Schedule!

Saturday

9 AM Registration

10:00 President welcome followed by warm up/technique with Harry Pellegrin, Ensemble playing.

11-12:30 Members Recital First Session

12:30-2:00 Lunch

2-3:00 Members Recital Second Session

3:00 Annual Meeting

4-5:00 Chris Ladd Rifembark Concert

5-7:30 Dinner

**7:30 Tariq Harb
Reception to follow**

Sunday

9:30-10:30 Ensemble playing

10:30-12:30 Master Class with Tariq Harb

If we get many applicants for the Master Class, we might have Chris Ladd teach one, either simultaneous or after Tariq's!

Hampton Inn

CGSUNY has an arrangement with the Hampton Inn in Oneonta for a block of rooms for Friday and Saturday:

Rate \$175

Code DT

Mention CGSUNY

Address is 225 River Street, Oneonta
13820

607-433-9000

Sales person was Alexandra Sales

Like us on Facebook!

THE CLASSICAL GUITAR SOCIETY OF UPSTATE NEW YORK COMES TO EARLVILLE

On a humid Sunday afternoon in July, my husband and I decided to journey down to the quaint village of Earlville to attend a concert given by the Classical Guitar Society of Upstate New York (CGSUNY). Upon entering the theatre in the historic Earlville Opera House (EOH), we noticed something unusual. Absent were the amplifiers, microphones, cables, speakers, and all of the sound paraphernalia that one comes to expect at a live concert. In fact, the unlit stage was perfectly bare, with the exception of five folding chairs. After a brief, welcoming introduction by EOH's Executive Director, Michelle Connelly, five players (Giancarlo Sidoli, Mark Pawkett, Paul Sweeny, Ken Meyer, and Dennis Turechek) unceremoniously took those seats with their instruments, and launched into, "Study for Five Guitars," an inventive but melodically-intriguing piece (composed by Dennis Turechek) with themes that still ring in my ears as I write this.

Up next was guitarist Tom Rasely, a veteran of at least three White House performances. Rasely's delicate folk collection of familiar tunes, which included Simon & Garfunkel's, "Scarborough Fair," and the Beatle's, "Michele," were mellow and pleasing to the appreciative crowd. A nice transition was provided by capable guitarist Paul Sweeny, who was joined by his talented wife, Barbara Kaufman on recorder. Together, the duo showcased inventive arrangements and demonstrated their virtuosity in a variety of styles, which neatly wrapped up the first half of the program.

Following the Intermission, when the audience members had a chance to chat with the performers (while eating yummy, home-baked goods), unique Ric Chrislip opened the program's 2nd half with a collection of mesmerizing early music for lute and voice - proving himself adept as both a lutenist and vocalist.

Music from Arcas (1832-1888), and Torroba (1891-1982) was then skillfully presented by accomplished guitarist Giancarlo Sidoli. A very memorable highlight of the concert was the premiere of an original piece, "Once Upon a Time on West 13th Street," written by Harry Pellegrin as a tribute to CGSUNY's co-founder, Dennis Turechek. This was beautifully played by Paul Sweeny, who helped create colors reminiscent of Greenwich Village, sprinkled with touches of French Impressionism. Though sitting in my seat at the Earlville Opera House, I felt magically transported in a most nostalgic way to old NYC, and to the Left Bank of the Seine in Paris - which I've never even visited!

A wonderfully self-deprecating Dennis Turechek entertained the audience next, not only with his humor, but with great musicality in his medley of Great American Songbook tunes, "Like Someone In Love," and the delightful waltz, "Emily." As funny as he was that day, the depth of Turechek's harmonic mastery and expressive jazz stylings were apparent to all.

Closing out the afternoon was the inimitable Syracuse guitarist, Ken Meyer. As the sunlight began to fade, Meyer's piece was ironically titled, "Sunburst" - a musical tour-de-force which took us along the sun's path from dawn to dusk, creating every conceivable effect with speed, impressive fluidity, and sensitive phrasing. Ken Meyer's performance will not soon be forgotten.

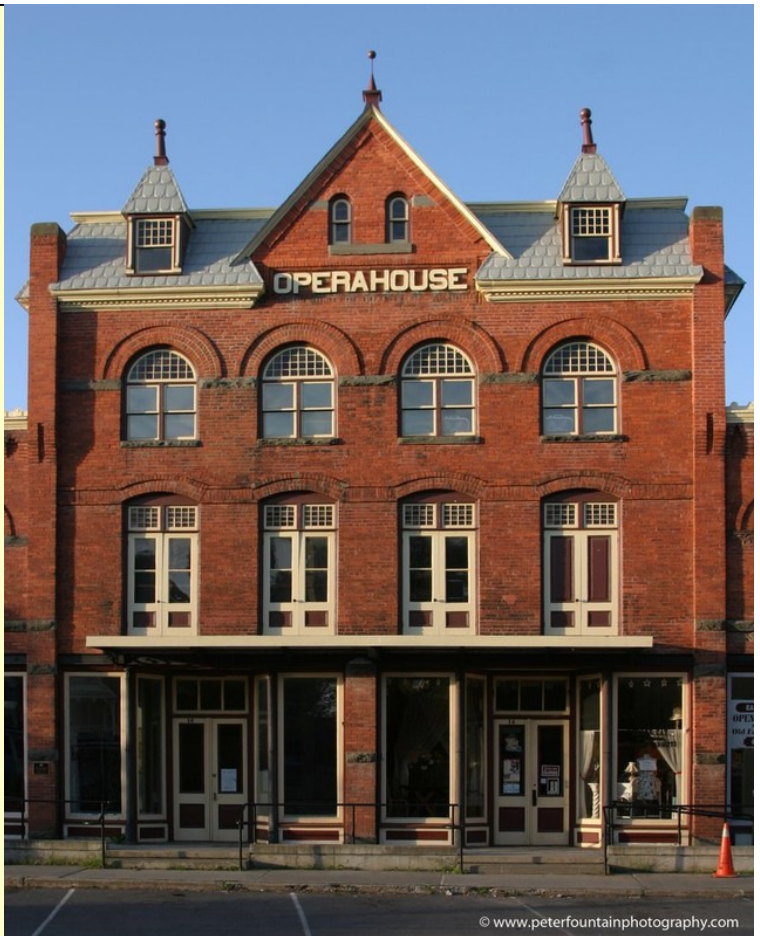
I would be remiss if I did not mention that each and every player presented their selections with a skill and musicality which clearly took decades to nurture and develop. Any of these eight musicians could have been gigging most anywhere on that Sunday afternoon. But they chose to celebrate an organization created to pay homage to the often-unsung instrument of their life's devotion - the classical guitar. So if the Classical Guitar Society of Upstate New York should gift us with another concert any time soon, I highly suggest putting it on your calendar. Then, simply take a seat, and be prepared for an aesthetic journey like no other.

—Dianne Adams McDowell

Dianne Adams McDowell is the Vocal Arranger for Broadway's Tony- Award winning *A Gentleman's Guide to Love & Murder*, Universal Theatrical Division's *Alfred Hitchcock Presents: The Musical!*, and Arranger/ Consultant for Disney Productions. She co-wrote the score for The New Victory Theatre's *The Wind in the Willows* with husband James McDowell, and composed for Radio City Music Hall. Current projects include Tazewell Thompson's *JUBILEE*, a world premiere with full orchestra at Seattle Opera in the fall of 2024.

“Earlville Opera House Multi Arts Center enriches the Central New York community through the visual and performing arts while preserving its historic building for future generations.”

Earlville Opera House
18 East Main St.
Earlville, NY 13332



Directions:

The Earlville Opera House is located in a three-story brick building (pictured above) on East Main Street - just east of Route 12B at the stop light in the center of the village.

Review of CGSUNY Soirée held August 25, 2024, 5:00PM via Zoom

CGSUNY's August Soiree was on August 25, 2024 at 5PM. Our Board President, **Paul Sweeny** facilitated, and he also conducted the sound check that started at 4:30. This marks the last Soirée of Summer and the return to academic year, and the anticipation of the beauty of fall foliage.

Round 1

Dave Richman opened today's Soirée with a piece by Pat Metheny. Pat is an iconic jazz guitarist who is a great favorite of Jason Vieaux. The piece that Dave played certainly had lots of jazzy chords and used the full range of the guitar. It was a charming piece with a jolly, light air to it. Dave is busy playing gigs including some classical guitar and some pop/jazz ones in various restaurants in the Ithaca area.

Marc Hecker played one of Sor's studies. It had a march-like mood and a very typical 'classical' form and structure.

Bill Simcoe played Astor Piazzolla's *Milonga* for Three. This is a charming piece that features minor chords and a minor mood. It's a slow, beautiful dance with some lighter moments, but maintains its slithery tone. I just discovered Gary Ryan's book called *Play Piazzolla*. It features easy guitar arrangements that sound really good. Both of the pieces Bill played today can be found in Gary Ryan's book.

Eric Roth played one of his own compositions called Waltz-like from a group of his compositions called *Bagatelles*. Eric explained that a bagatelle is a short, light piece. This one had a simple melody with some pleasant chromatic and modal sounding surprises. To me, it sounded like a great folk melody that had been arranged for classical guitar. It was wonderful to hear one of Eric's original compositions.

Paul Sweeny played Heitor Villa-Lobos *Prelude Number 1*. When I was first learning guitar, this piece was at the top of the classical guitar hit parade. But those preludes aren't as popular now, and it's a pleas-

ure to hear them again— especially to get a fresh take on how stunning it is. Chock full of Villa-Lobos 'tricks', it is a kit of movable left and right hand patterns that are stacked together to great effect. As a result, once you learn this piece, it lives permanently in your fingers. It is the ultimate 'written for the instrument' composition and a gift to lovers of the guitar.

Round 2

Marc Hecker played an arrangement of the iconic theme to the 1981 movie, *Chariots of Fire*. It was fun to be reminded of that classic movie and to remember hearing that heroic theme for the first time.

Bill Simcoe played *Vuelvo al Sur* (I Return to the South) by Astor Piazzolla. This was a faster Argentinean dance that sounded more familiar to me. It sets up a repeated dance rhythm, then the high voice takes the melody. In English, the words of the song are, "I return to the South, how you always return to love, I return to you." **Eric Roth** played *Reverie*, a nocturne by Napoleon Coste. It started with a slow, dignified introduction and moved into several variations in major and minor keys. It ended with a spectacular fireworks of harmonics. **Paul Sweeny** played a short 'riff' from a Jobim song he will be performing as an accompanist soon.

I had a special insight this week that snapped some guitar history into perspective for me. The Internet cites 1779 as the beginning of the 6 string guitar, of course that may be a questionable date. But earlier instruments had attributes like different numbers of strings, and double courses. The early 6 string guitars would have been the small guitars that we call parlor guitars and are like the reproduction instrument that Eric Roth plays. 1779!! The dates of the early group of guitarists that gathered in Paris were: Fernando Sor, (1788-1839), Mauro Giuliani (1781-1829), Mateo Carcassi (1796- 1853), Napoleon Coste (1805-1883). Just notice how early that was in the history of the modern instrument. They were born almost exactly at the beginning of the 6 string guitar. When Sor wrote his *Method for Guitar*, he was doing something quite new. The music they wrote may sound a bit old fashioned to us

now, but they were pioneers of the guitar. It was around 1840 that Torres invented the larger, contemporary guitar. So that Paris guitar 'club' was around for a while, composing, writing methods books, teaching, arguing about nails/no nails, and preparing the way for us.

— *Deena Freed*



UPCOMING EVENTS

Monthly Virtual Zoom Soirées

CGSUNY is now offering Monthly Virtual Soirees open to our membership. We will host a Zoom meeting on the Third Sunday of Every Month at 5pm and send information out to our membership. Members may come to perform or watch the Virtual Soiree.

Any questions can be directed to current Secretary, William Simcoe, via email:

wsimcoe@cgsuny.org

The Question for next quarter's issue:

What are some special memorable moments from guitar festivals you have attended? Recount a really good story for us!

All members feel free to respond!

Hampton Inn

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Rate \$175

Code DT

Mention CGSUNY

Address is 225 River Street, Oneonta 13820

607-433-9000

Sales person was Alexandra Sales

October 19th & 20th 2024!!! Fall Fest '24

SUNY Oneonta Fine Arts Center.

1. Take I-88 to Exit 15. Make a right at the end of ramp onto Foster/Lettis Highway.
 2. As the Foster/Lettis Highway crosses Main Street at its first major intersection, it becomes Maple Street in residential Oneonta.
 3. At the first light on Maple Street, make a left onto Center Street.
 4. At the end of Center Street, make a right onto West Street.
- Turn right at the SUNY Oneonta sign onto Ravine Parkway and into the campus.



Campus Directory

Links to Google Maps:

1. [Alumni Field House](#)
2. [Alumni Hall](#)
3. [Bacon Hall](#)
4. [Baseball Field](#)
5. [Blodgett Hall](#)
6. [Bugbee Hall](#)
7. [Chase Physical Education](#)
8. [Counseling, Health and Wellness Center](#)
9. [Curtis Hall](#)
10. [Denison Hall](#)
11. [Emergency Services/Police](#)
12. [Facilities and Safety](#)
13. [Fine Arts Center](#)
14. [Fitzelle Hall](#)
15. [Ford Hall](#)
16. [Golding Hall](#)
17. [Grant Hall](#)

Map Key

- Visitor Parking
- Admissions/Visitor Parking
- Accessible Parking

See you next quarter in
the Winter Issue of

Fret Wire

Have some news?

Have an idea for an article?

*Have you written a piece that
you wish to present to the
membership?*

Consider submitting it for
possible inclusion in

Fret Wire

your Society's
quarterly newsletter!

I know, I
look like
Kenny!

