



AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

Chapter Leadership News

November 2021

Tenacity

Dear Chapter Leaders,

In early October, I had the pleasure of joining Caron Farmer, Great Lakes regional councillor, on a Zoom call with six chapter deans in Michigan. The conversation was robust and full of great idea sharing. What impressed me most was the tenacity that these wonderful chapter leaders displayed. While Zoom fatigue was discussed, everyone agreed that new technologies had helped them and their members to stay connected. Rather than dwelling on the live events planned for this fall that had to be canceled, they talked about being resourceful and inventive, sharing information about how they were using their YouTube channels for recorded and livestreamed recitals. And, they were excited about collaborating on future hybrid programs. Being flexible, nimble, and tenacious will be essential as chapter leaders plan future programs and events.



A couple of weeks ago, I attended the Palm Beach chapter's happy hour. I can't begin to express how great it felt to be able meet in person, chatting with members and board officers. (In the photo is David Macfarlane, a past regional councillor, who is currently serving on the board of the chapter.) I am beginning to schedule some chapter visits and am excited at the prospect of embarking on road trips throughout the AGO's seven regions.

This issue of **Chapter Leadership News** will cover the following:

- ✓ Claire DeCusati, Boston AGO Chapter
- ✓ Upcoming Webinars
- ✓ The Year of the Young Organist Recruitment Contest Tip #5
- ✓ The Year of the Young Organist Scholarship Application
- ✓ Northern Virginia Chapter's Support of AGO's Certification Programs
- ✓ Celebrating the New Hampshire and Springfield (MA) Chapters' 75th Anniversaries
- ✓ Collaborative Events within and beyond the Walls of the AGO
- ✓ AGO Twin Cities Chapter: The Organ List



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**Profile of the Month: Claire DeCusati, Boston Chapter
Former Registrar, Newsletter Editor, Webmaster, Chapter Historian, and
2022 Elections Coordinator**



What's sitting on my desk right now: Papers! I'm doing research now for the Boston chapter, gathering all the "Dear Uncle Max" columns from TAO that were written by one of our deans, Max Miller. These popular columns were published monthly from 1996 to 2000.

If I weren't doing this, I'd: I've just completed training as a Master Gardener, and I must meet certain requirements to become certified. Once MMGA knew I had web and IT skills, I was rapidly recruited to maintain their public website as well.

When I'm not at work I'm traveling, gardening, and doing needlework. My needle artwork integrates my love of travel. Right now, I'm replicating Fabergé eggs in needlework, as I can't afford the real ones!

What keeps me motivated serving in leadership: For over ten years, I have been performing "back office" work for the chapter: running the website, editing the newsletter, serving on the executive committee, sending welcome letters to new members, etc. These activities play to my strengths, and through them I have become acquainted with many members I would not normally know. The Boston chapter is very diverse, and meeting its many members motivates me to serve the chapter.

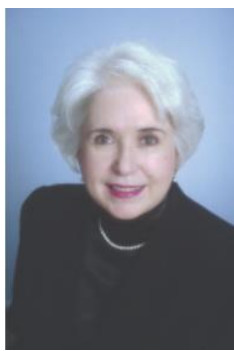
The best advice I ever got: A person can choose their response to a situation.

Upcoming AGO Webinars



Monday, November 1, 2021, 7 p.m. EDT How to Be a Board without Being Bored

Congratulations! You've just been elected to your chapter's board. Do you feel prepared? Has anyone shared what will be expected of you?



Join Sue Mitchell-Wallace, Southeast regional councillor, Wayne Wold, Mid-Atlantic regional councillor, and Joyce Gerstenlauer, district convener, as they highlight key points from *The Board Team Handbook* about what it takes to work together to become a successful team. This webinar is for *anyone* serving in any leadership capacity on a chapter board. Please register [here](#).



Monday, November 8, 2021, 5 p.m. EST Chapter Nominating Committee: Have You Formed This Yet?

Presented by the Committee for Chapter Development and Chapter Support and AGO administrative assistant Eric Birk.

This webinar will cover why *now* is the time to establish your nominations committee. It will address the timeline and responsibilities leading up to your chapter's elections, and who should be involved. Please register [here](#).



YEAR OF THE YOUNG ORGANIST

“Investing in the Future”
July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022



The Year of the Young Organist Chapter Recruitment Contest Win \$1000 for Your Chapter!

Beginning July 1, 2021, and ending June 30, 2022, how many young organists can you recruit? Each month, we will be sending you a new recruitment tip to help your chapter recruit as many young organists as possible. We’ve created a page on our website that will include each tip and additional resources: <https://www.agohq.org/year-of-the-young-organist-recruitment-contest-2/>.

Tip #5: As the holiday season approaches, encourage teachers to give the gift of free membership to their students. We’ve created a festive flyer for you to distribute or email as an attachment. <https://www.agohq.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Give-Your-Student-the-Gift-of-Free-Membership-with-the-American-Guild-of-Organists.pdf>

Introducing the
AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS
ORGAN SCHOLAR PROGRAM



Students will acquire practical experience through participating in an immersive full-time church music program.

Program highlights:

- Salary, health care, and housing provided
- Hands-on practical experience
- Experience working in an active and vibrant music program
- Mentored by a proven and capable church music leader

Student applications open January 15, 2022, and are due on February 15, 2022

For more information, email info@agohq.org

Happy Anniversary, New Hampshire Chapter!



On behalf of everyone at National Headquarters, we wish to congratulate the New Hampshire chapter for their 75 years of great leadership and support of the AGO.

Here's to another wonderful 75 years!

Happy Anniversary, Springfield (MA) Chapter!

National Headquarters also wishes to congratulate the Springfield (MA) chapter for 75 years of great leadership and support of the AGO.

Here's to another wonderful 75 years!



Saluting Successful Chapter Collaborations

Friends of Casavant 3062 and Emmanuel Episcopal Church present

Sounds in the Sanctuary
Season 2021/22

ORGANIST
CLIVE DRISKILL-SMITH

09 | 25 | 21 |
7:30 P.M. | Saturday

203 S Kensington LaGrange, IL 60525
Admission: Free Will Offering
[emmanuel-lagrange.org/\(708\)352-1275](http://emmanuel-lagrange.org/(708)352-1275)

Friends of Casavant 3062 proudly kicks off its 2021/22 season by celebrating the newly renovated Casavant 3062 pipe organ with an IN-PERSON recital by Clive Driskill-Smith. Critics praise Driskill-Smith's "blazing technique and described his performances as "intensely moving and truly breathtaking" (Organo Pleno, Australia).

FOC 3062 acknowledges support from Arts Midwest and the Fox Valley and SW Suburban Chapters of the American Guild of Organists. A live stream of the recital and AGO masterclass with Clive (3PM on 9/26) will be available at emmanuel-lagrange.org/livestream

Congratulations to the Fox Valley and Southwest Suburban chapters for their collaboration in presenting Clive Driskill-Smith that attracted 120 people to attend this program.

Congratulations to the Greater Bridgeport (CT) chapter for reaching beyond the walls of the AGO to collaborate with the Connecticut Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association on Building Back Better: Returning to Singing. Over 100 people attended this special event.

John Polo, Bridgeport's webmaster and administrator, shared the following: *We do everything possible to promote quality programs. Everyone feels better when they have a large, receptive audience. It creates sustainability to do more. The AGO members are accompanists or choral directors for the choral ensembles, which links them to singers from multiple church choirs and elsewhere.*

Join us for a Zoom Workshop Tuesday
September 21, 7:00 PM

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

Sponsored by
The American Guild of Organists
Greater Bridgeport Chapter
and the
The Connecticut Chapter
American Choral Directors
Association
www.greaterbridgeportago.org

Workshop:
*Building Back Better :
Returning to Singing*

A free, interactive Zoom workshop for choral directors, to learn about getting you and your choir back to singing in a healthy way. Led by noted area Artistic Choral Directors [Constance Chase](#) (U.S. Military West Point Glee Club; Western CT State University), [Dr. Carolina Florin](#) (Manchester Community College; Manchester Chorale), [Dr. Frank Marnignetti](#) (First Church Congregational Fairfield; Sacred Heart University), [Frank Zilvary](#) (South Church, New Britain; Mystic River Chorale).

Topics include reestablishing your choral program (when and how), vocal pedagogy for the returning singer, singing in a mask without strain, warming up, and repertoire selection.

You Are Invited to the

AGO Achievement Awards

Would you like to

Learn more about the pipe organ and how to play it?

Focus on one area of organ playing at a time?

Have a more comprehensive knowledge of a specific skill?

Prepare for the **Service Playing Certificate**?

Cheers to the Suffolk and Nassau (NY) chapters for collaborating on the Achievement Awards.

Working toward these awards will be an educational experience that will support your organ skills and increase your job qualifications. The interaction with other Guild members can be supportive and reaffirming.

Deanna Muro, Awards and
Certifications Chair

Miami, Fort Lauderdale, and Palm Beach Tri-Chapter Event Featuring Greg Zelek Sunday, October 10, 2021



Pictured from left to right are Kyler Brown, Fort Lauderdale dean, Philip Lehenbauer, Palm Beach sub-dean, Jan Fulford, Palm Beach dean, Greg Zelek, Elizabeth George, Luis Cuza, Miami dean, and William Harden, Miami sub-dean. Greg's stellar performance received several standing ovations. Fifty-six people attended the event, with an additional 26 watching the livestream. What an exciting way to kick off the year of programming in south Florida!

Northern Virginia Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

The AGO wishes to acknowledge the Northern Virginia chapter for supporting the Guild's certification programs. We encourage all chapters to support these efforts by incorporating a workshop into their year of programming.

AGO Certification Class — Workshop

Dr. David Kelley, AAGO, ChM, Certification Officer

Tuesday, November 16, 2021, 7:30 p.m.

Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, 9350 Braddock Road, Burke, VA 22015

Click on the links below for information about each certification.

[Service Playing Certification](#) (SPC)

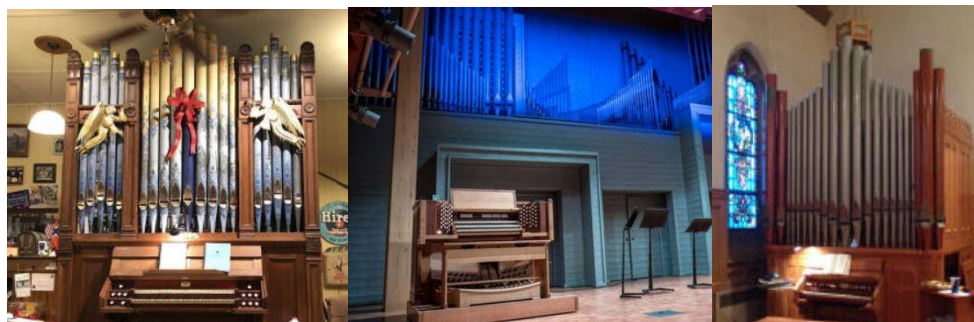
[Colleague Certification](#) (CAGO)

[Choir Master Certification](#) (ChM)

[Associateship Certification](#) (AAGO)

[Fellowship Certification](#) (FAGO)

Twin Cities (MN): The Organ List



Compiling lists of churches in Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, South Dakota, and North Dakota was started many years ago by TCAGO member Dick Greene. In 2015 Dick decided to retire, and chapter member David Engen inherited this project. With the help of Jayson Engquist and Lise Schmidt, it took seven

years to complete. Twin Cities used many resources, including the OHS, the Minnesota Historical Society, the old Organ List, Facebook, and, most importantly, personal knowledge from members, to identify and verify each instrument.

As much information as possible is collected for each entry about the original organ (builder, date, opus, size, key action), along with any pertinent notes or links to original documents. They include the stoplist, with as much information as possible, along with photos of the organ, console, and church exterior.

Learn more about all the organs listed here: <https://www.pipeorganlist.com/OrganList/index.html>.



What is your chapter doing to recognize and engage your new young organist members? Please email elizabeth.george@agohq.org and let me know!