



AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

## Chapter Leadership News

August 2020

### ***Lights! Camera! Action! Online Programming!***

Dear Chapter Leaders,

I am pleased to announce that the AGO website now has an impressive list of past and future online programs that include chapter recitals (thank you!) and workshops. This library can be accessed in the drop-down menu under the **Membership** tab. Scroll down to **Chapter Leadership Toolkits** and you will find two subpages: <https://www.agohq.org/online-programming-for-chapters/> and <https://www.agohq.org/leadership-webinars/>. Please continue to send me the dates, program titles, speaker information, etc., so that this library can continue to grow. In addition to chapter focused resources, in the drop-down menu under the **Education** tab you can also register for future webinars, including, recitals and workshops that will be presented by the Committee on Continuing Professional Education (CCPE), <https://www.agohq.org/upcoming-ago-webinars/> and also have access to past webinars <https://www.agohq.org/ago-webinars-and-supporting-documents/>. The AGOYO board has also planned some great virtual programming that will be accessible to everyone. This information will also be included in the Online Programming for Chapters web page. For those who want to relive the wonderful performances, and **Pipe Talks** that took place during **OrganFest 2020**, they can be accessed on our website <https://agoorganfest2020.org/>.

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

- ✓ August Online Workshops and Webinars
- ✓ AGOYO “Fridays at Noon” Online Programs
- ✓ Sacramento Valley Chapter’s Centennial Organ
- ✓ AGO’s Newest Chapter: Gateway Confluence
- ✓ September 17<sup>th</sup> Leadership Town Hall Meeting
- ✓ The Birth of the Virtual Choir
- ✓ Membership Renewal Assistance
- ✓ Leadership Spotlight: Rodney Girvin, AGO San Diego Chapter Life Coordinator



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## August Online Workshops



Thursday, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 pm EDT

Thursday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 pm EDT,

Virtual Choir for the Rest of Us, Workshop (2 parts).

Virtual Choir for the Rest of Us

Workshop: Part 1

### Carol Spradling, Presenter

Carol Spradling, director of music at First Congregational Church of Essex Junction, decided that the COVID “stay at home” order was going to mean that her small but mighty choir was going to adapt, rather than disband. Using Zoom rehearsals, smartphones, electronically distributed music, and the online digital audio workstation BandLab, she and her choir started scaling the learning curve between live choral singing and digital recording. **Please download the BandLab app, prior to participating in the workshop, as it will be used in both workshops: <https://www.bandlab.com/download>**. This is a hands-on, nuts-and-bolts course in how to produce socially distanced audio recordings of your choir or ensemble (from home), using smartphones, laptops, and free software. To attend Part 1 of this workshop, please register [here](#).

Part 2 of this workshop will include participant follow-up discussions of hands-on software utilization, sharing of success stories and challenges. To attend Part 2 of this workshop, please register [here](#).



**Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 pm EDT: Banking Issues for Chapters webinar, Eric Birk, AGO Executive Assistant, Presenter.** This webinar, designed with plenty of Q&A and led by a current AGO chapter treasurer who facilitates tax-exempt documentation needed by AGO chapters, will address the procedures and roadblocks that chapters often experience when opening bank accounts. I encourage all chapter treasurers and deans to attend! Please register [here](#).

## AGOYO VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

Something for everyone!  
AGOYO virtual program year 20-21

# FRIDAYS AT NOON EST

videos will be premiered at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/GuildofOrganists>

**August 14-** Organ crawl: West Point Chapel

**September 11-** Workshop:

Church musicians and technology

**September 25-** Panel: Organists of colors

**October 9-** Panel: The Global Organist

**November 13-** Organ crawl: Longwood Gardens

**December 11-** Organ factory tour: Austin Organ Co.

**January 8-** Webinar:

Young conductors/organists guide to church music

**February 12-** Organ crawl: Wanamaker

**March 12-** Panel:

Board positions in the guild/serving in leadership roles

**April 9-** Organ factory tour: Taylor & Boody

**May 7, 14, 21, 28-** Young organist recitals

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Follow us on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AGOYoungOrganists>

Follow us on Instagram at:

[ago\\_young\\_organists](https://www.instagram.com/ago_young_organists)

Email us at:

[conveneragoyo@gmail.com](mailto:conveneragoyo@gmail.com)



<https://www.agohq.org/ago-young-organists/>

## Sacramento Valley's Centennial Organ Acquisition



I was intrigued reading Ron Sidhu's **Dean's Message** in the chapter's July newsletter that shared how the Sacramento Valley Chapter rescued this historic organ and wanted to share excerpts with you.

*I am writing to you on Independence Day to say that we have "liberated" the Centennial organ from the hands of the Philistines! Never let it be said of our chapter nor any of the organ lovers in our pleasant valley, that there is no support for the organ because that is not true! We not only support each other as colleagues but also promote and protect the organ for posterity!*

*About a month ago chapter member Marian Metson sent me a link that had a curious message, so much so I thought it was fake. Neither unadorned*

*nor addressed it simply said: "To think it has come to this." Grimacing I was going to delete it when I read the word Centennial organ in the link. Clicking on it, my heart sank and I was physically ill for the rest of the day (and a few subsequent ones). The State University at Chico had put the finest Central German Organ (outside of central Germany) up for public auction! An organ that is estimated at \$1.7 M could be had at that point for just over a hundred dollars. (If there was an exclamation point that denoted fainting, I would use it here.) But regardless of the money, it is the finest example of that style of building during the life and times of Johann Sebastian Bach, a great composer to be sure, but whose pulpit, his personal medium of expression, was the organ. After a month of handwringing, chapter colleague Dr. David Rothe and I decided to join forces to save the organ with our own money. Within three days, the love for the organ was manifested by a variety of people, supporters, fans, and AGO members, who threw their lot in with us and by Monday the auction was hot and heavy. It would turn out that we were competing with a gentleman from the Czech Republic. Things were touch and go the entire bidding time. Then, a colleague called my cell phone and threw in more money and by providence; we saved the organ from leaving the country and our golden valley. The auction abruptly ended, the servers went down, and after 3 minutes of sheer terror - we won. (WE WON!) The organ cost us \$75,157.25. In addition to that, we have the expenses of moving it to storage and insuring it there. As we raised about \$96K (in three days mind you) we have it covered. We will soon be raising money to resurrect it once we have a location to put it.*

To be continued.....

## We Welcome the Gateway Confluence Chapter

I am pleased to announce the formation of the Gateway Confluence Chapter. Located east of the Mississippi River, across from the St. Louis Chapter, this chapter was formed to better serve the Greater Belleville area of the Central Illinois constituency and grow the young organist member segment by connecting with area colleges, churches and universities. The chapter looks forward to planning many virtual programs, as well as collaborating with the St. Louis chapter on future events. <https://www.facebook.com/GatewayAGO/>.



## Save the Date! September 17<sup>th</sup> Chapter Leaders Town Hall Meeting

Please mark your calendars for Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 pm EDT, for our next Town Hall meeting. September's meeting will include a virtual tour of the AGO website, provide lots of time for Q&A and feature a discussion led by District Convener Shannon Fore, on recruitment strategies during this time of social distancing. I encourage all chapter officers to attend. A Zoom invitation will follow closer to the date.

## A Little Something for Those Who Are Frazzled from Producing Virtual Choral Recordings

I always look forward to reading the North Shore Chapter's monthly newsletter. Judy Kohl's **Dean's Message** always inspires me, and this newsletter continues to present content that is constructive and reveals just how much this chapter cares about its members. <http://www.northshoreago.org/news-and-views/overtone>. The July issue also contained links to some wonderful recordings. One in particular, **The Birth of the Virtual Choir**, was extremely amusing and I thought you might enjoy viewing it, too.



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=6&v=fUdoCgnj9qA&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=6&v=fUdoCgnj9qA&feature=emb_logo)

## The AGO Membership Assistance Program

Throughout the week of **OrganFest 2020** the Guild shared a Donate button, providing everyone with the opportunity to contribute to a fund that would help membership renewals for members who had experienced job loss due to COVID-19. The response was heartwarming and to date, we have received \$6000+ in donations. If you know of a member who has lost income due to the effects of the pandemic and cannot afford to renew his or her membership, please send me their information. [elizabeth.george@agohq.org](mailto:elizabeth.george@agohq.org).

**Rodney Girvin**

**Chapter Life/Social Media Coordinator**

**San Diego Chapter**



**Chapter Dean, Chris Cook** shared: *One of our chapter's newest members is relatively new to both the organ and the AGO. Rodney Girvin added organ to his skill set only four years ago. Already a fine pianist and piano teacher, he felt the call not only to learn the instrument, but to serve in leadership on the Executive Board. He was serving as our secretary, as the board was evaluating the effectiveness of its traditional organizational structure. It had become obvious that the role of*

*member-at-large had grown tired and ineffective. This position having no clear role on the board discouraged participation, and attendance was poor. At the same time, our analysis revealed that the new vision we were developing for our chapter would require a number of heretofore unidentified, inter-related roles that would create better synergy and efficiency. Our new emphasis on developing a strong, vital community meant that we needed leaders who would create engaging experiences, where our members would have a chance to make new friends and renew old relationships through networking opportunities. We rewrote our bylaws to eliminate the member-at-large positions and replaced them with these positions: Hospitality Coordinator, Chapter Life/Social Media Coordinator, Education Coordinator, Membership Coordinator, Newsletter Editor/Webmaster, and Placement Coordinator. Each of these new positions has a meaningful contribution to make to our chapter development strategy. Rodney is a forward-thinking social media enthusiast, who understands not only the hows of social*

*media, but the whys. He is infinitely patient in supporting our less-than-convinced leaders as we add these important public relations tools to our efforts. He has made sure that every event is covered, that items of interest are regularly posted, and that livestreams and videos of our events are available for those who cannot come in person. Under his guidance we had already made plans to present our entire program season online, before the COVID-19 crisis occurred. Currently, Rodney is making the transition to Chapter Life/Social Media Coordinator. He is excited about exploring new ways he can fulfill our vision for this position: to make our members visible, so that we know something about each other in ways we could never accomplish solely at our meetings. We feature news tidbits (weddings, babies, retirements, deaths, changes of jobs) regularly, using as many photos as we can, and include a member cameo that features a more in-depth interview delving into their backstory. Rodney's role as **Chapter Life/Social Media Coordinator** is best described as "making members real to each other." We are grateful for Rodney's passion to make our chapter the friendliest chapter in the nation. Thanks to him, we are getting closer every day!*

**Do you have a chapter leader you wish to recognize? If so, please send a photo and brief description of how she/he has enriched and positively impacted your chapter to [elizabeth.george@agohq.org](mailto:elizabeth.george@agohq.org).**