



AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

## Chapter Leadership News

December 2021

### The Board Team Handbook

Dear Chapter Leaders,

The AGO recently launched a publication called *The Board Team Handbook*. I first began using this handbook in 2002, when I was working with another chapter-structured organization. I still consider it to be one of the greatest resources for chapter leaders, as it addresses all the challenges and difficult situations a volunteer may encounter when serving on a board. On November 1, regional councillors Sue Mitchell-Wallace and Wayne Wold, along with district convener Joyce Gerstenlauer, presented a brief overview of key points in the handbook in a webinar cleverly titled “How to Be a Board without Being Bored.” You can access the video [here](#) and find *The Board Team Handbook* in the Chapter Leadership Toolkits web page: <https://www.agohq.org/chapter-leadership-toolkits/>. AGO’s **Chapter Management Handbook** details chapter operating procedures; however, this document should not be confused with *The Board Team Handbook*, as the first tells us what to do and the latter tells us *why*. I cannot begin to tell you how valuable I believe you will find this new leadership resource, and I encourage you to select one chapter from the book to be discussed at each of your board meetings. Important topics from the book will be covered at Leadership 2022 and in future webinars—but don’t wait until then. I urge you to read it *now*.

As the year comes to an end, I want to thank each of you for your hard work and remarkable leadership during a very difficult time. My wish for you, your loved ones, and all of your chapter members is for good health, and that very soon we will also be able to experience the incredible joy of meeting in person.

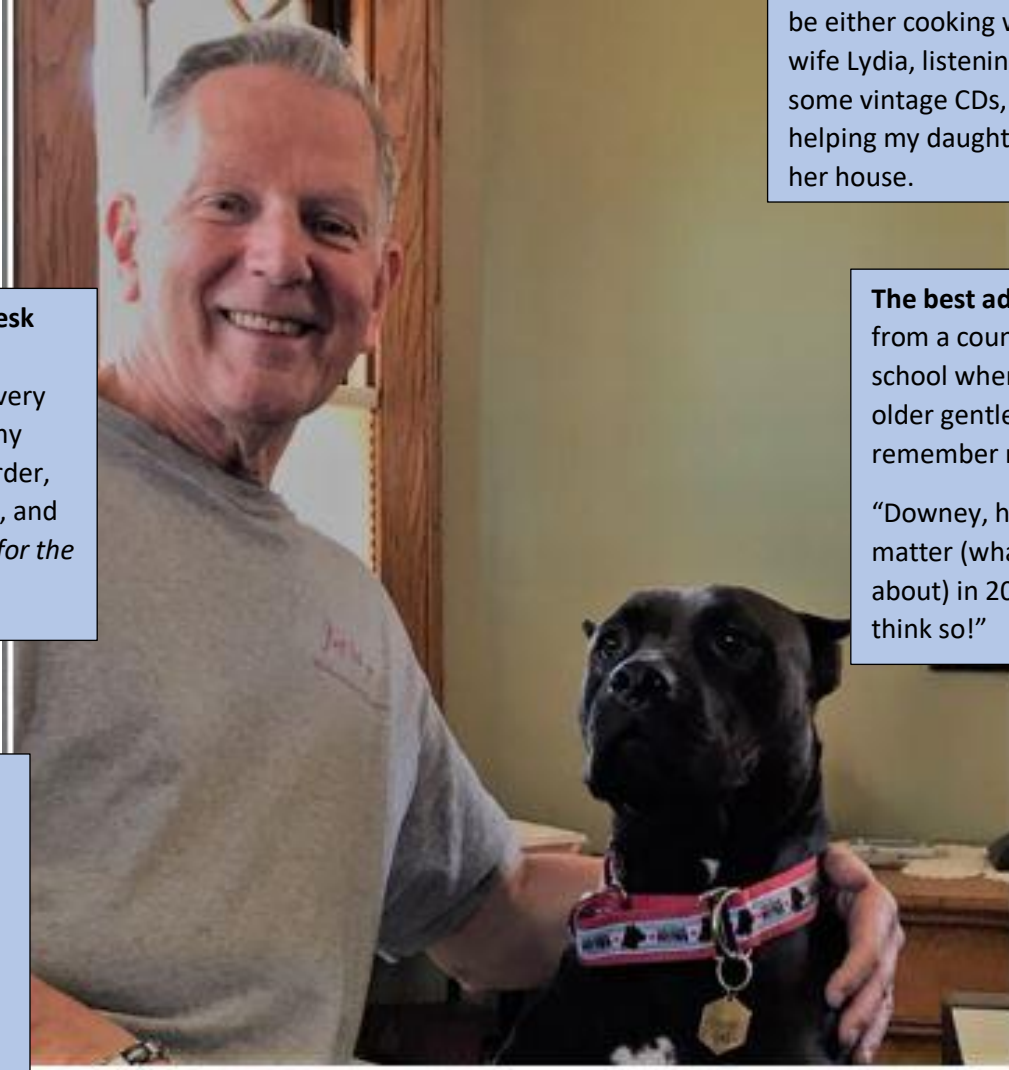
This issue of **Chapter Leadership News** will cover the following:

- ✓ Leadership Profile: Mark Downey, Dean, Fox Valley Chapter
- ✓ The Year of the Young Organist Organ Scholar Program
- ✓ Upcoming Webinars
- ✓ The Grand Strand Chapter Explores Saints and Cemeteries
- ✓ Celebrating the Chambersburg Chapter’s 50th Anniversary
- ✓ The Winchester Chapter’s “Case of the Purloined Pipes”
- ✓ David Enlow’s “Ways with Hymns” Workshop
- ✓ Donate to AGO’s 2022 National Convention
- ✓ Chapter Visits



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## Profile of the Month: Mark Downey, Dean, Fox Valley (IL)



**If I weren't doing this, I'd** be either cooking with my wife Lydia, listening to some vintage CDs, or helping my daughter rehab her house.

**What's sitting on my desk right now:** I really hate clutter, so I don't have very much. But, I do I have my laptop, Zoom H4n recorder, Advent planning guides, and *One-Minute Devotions for the Church Musician*.

**The best advice I ever got** was from a counselor at the high school where I taught. He was an older gentleman and could never remember my first name.

"Downey, honestly, is this going to matter (whatever I was upset about) in 20 years? No, I didn't think so!"

**When I'm not at work I'm** either walking my pittie, Champ, riding my bicycle, or looking up new sushi restaurants in our area.

**What keeps me motivated serving in leadership:** My colleagues are an amazing group of dedicated musicians who are kind, passionate, and excited, sharing all the resources the AGO has to offer. They challenge me with thoughtful questions, and our chapter is now stronger and more resilient, even in these challenging times.



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 #6:** Start promoting AGO’s Organ Scholar Program. Send this flyer to your students and colleagues, urging them to join the AGO so that they can take advantage of this wonderful opportunity.

ANNOUNCING THE  
AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS  
ORGAN SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
HOSTED BY DUKE CHAPEL  
2022–2023



Paid internship at a renowned institution	Applications open January 15, 2022
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For more information visit:  
<https://www.agohq.org/scholarships/>

## Upcoming Webinars



### EMPLOYING MUSICIANS IN RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

A Handbook for Committees and Candidates

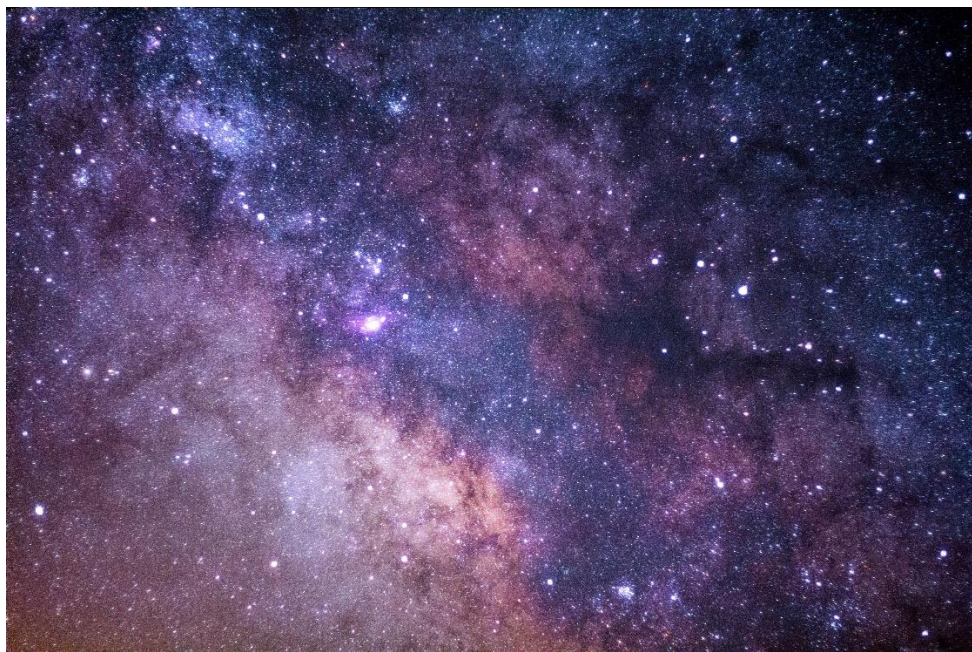
Prepared by  
American Guild of Organists  
Committee on Career Development and Support  
October 2020

**Monday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 7 pm EST**

### **Using the New “Employing Musicians” handbook: Your Compensation Package.**

Moderated by Councillor for Membership Vicki Schaeffer, members of the Committee on Career Development and Support will address all of the elements to help you evaluate, propose, and research the data for your compensation. Participating from the committee will be Nicole Cochran, Doris Dabrowski, Andrew Johnson, Anthony Rispo, and AGO Executive Assistant Eric Birk. Please register [here](#).

## Save the Date!



**February 6–7, 2022, 7:00–8:30 p.m. EST**

***Leadership 2022***

***Experiencing the New Age of Volunteer Leadership***

Online registration will open shortly.

## The Grand Strand (SC) Chapter's Saints and Cemeteries



The Grand Strand chapter sponsored a history-themed event for Halloween on Saturday, October 16, at Kingston Presbyterian Church in Conway, S.C. Both the sanctuary and the graveyard are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The chapter invited local churches and members of the community to join the event, which focused on both music and local history. Sixty people gathered in the oldest church in Conway and were welcomed by the church's director of music, Bradley Hardee. A prelude to the event, "Ein' feste Burg," arranged by Wilbur Held, was played on the three-manual Allen organ by chapter member Laura Candler-White. Bradley Hardee accompanied Reformation and All Saints hymns and psalm singing for the congregation. The church's pastor, Rev. Robert Bannan, presented background on both All Saints Day and Reformation Sunday. Guest speaker Ben Burroughs, the church's historian, shown dressed in a period costume, gave the interesting history of local churches and their formation; all started by worshipping in

Kingston's original meetinghouse. Roberta Rowland-Raybold, chapter dean, closed the program with J.S. Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor. Attendees then proceeded to the old Kingston cemetery, where Ben Burroughs led the tour, giving the history of families who had settled there and were instrumental in the formation of the oldest church in the area.

## Happy 50th Anniversary, Chambersburg (PA)!

On October 23 at the First Lutheran Church, district convener Joyce Gerstenlauer presented Phil Schuman, dean of the Chambersburg chapter, with a certificate in honor of the chapter's 50th anniversary. On behalf of everyone at national headquarters, we wish to congratulate the chapter for 50 years of wonderful leadership and support of the AGO!



## The Case of the Purloined Pipes

Kudos to the Winchester (VA) chapter for presenting a program that featured chapter members (with a special appearance by Wayne Wold, Mid-Atlantic regional councillor) serving as actors in a murder mystery written by Linda Beville and Marilyn Shenenberger.



Dean Linda Beville shared:

*The plot was a meandering maze about missing notes on the organ while our chapter was preparing to rehearse for our **Christmas Lessons and Carols**. We had to sing several carols, omitting the stolen keys (all the C's), which was much harder to do than one would think. Thirteen of our members played themselves. Each was a suspect and each firmly denied any wrongdoing. Appropriate "music mafia" names were created to match each personality. Our treasurer was "Ricky, the Doctor who Doctored the Books." Our webmaster was "Emily, the Undercover Cyber IT Hacker," and one of our board members who loves to bake and usually heads our refreshment tables was "Carol Sweeny Todd, Purveyor of Sweets with a Mystery Ingredient." I played the lead character, who was the organist and choir director of the local "Mountain Top" United Methodist Church (our*

*chapter straddles the Blue Ridge Mountains and the valley of Virginia). Because times were tough for earning a living as a full-time church organist, I moonlighted as the town detective. My name (a compilation of three of our members' names) was **Alana Gloria Oesterling**, and my detective badge had a catchy slogan to match: "**AGO on the GO.**" We sang appropriately altered carols at points throughout the play. The plot included our most-esteemed past dean, Dr. Steven Cooksey, who had been working on the pipes and accidentally slipped, grabbing and breaking the action cord to the C notes. He liked to practice late, and at 1:00 a.m., he fell asleep in the pipe chamber to awake to the sounds of our chapter laughter. We called in one of our favorite organ repair specialists, and the mystery was solved. However, one of our members shared a real mystery that he had experienced. A week prior to our event, he discovered that the director's copy of each piece in the music library was missing from his office. Over 400 scores had vanished! We wrote him into the play, and the mystery continues. So . . . we are anticipating a sequel.*

What a clever and entertaining idea for a chapter program. Who says that every program needs to be a recital? I want to congratulate the Winchester chapter for thinking outside of the (music) box and creating a truly fun and memorable event! Hint, hint—I just might have to schedule a chapter visit the next time you plan on presenting this special program. I'd love to be part of the whodunit.

## Nassau Chapter Features David Enlow's "Ways with Hymns" Workshop



Dean Elizabeth Bailey shared:

*On Sunday, September 19, several of us gathered in the gothic splendor that is Trinity Lutheran Church in Hicksville, Long Island, to hear David Enlow speak on the topic of **Ways with Hymns**, a subject that is so important to any church musician, especially those of us who are organists. On a perfect very late summer afternoon, he led about 20 of us in the church (and more on livestream) through some most interesting topics. He discussed our "mise en place," our preparation, our aims and strategy, making it very clear that we do not accompany hymns, we lead them. He showed us how we can do this by using interesting harmonies in addition to the ones in front of us, and how we can introduce hymns in a variety of ways. He elicited many answers from the attendees, which made his workshop most interesting, involving all in his presentation. Interludes are a big thing with him; he asked us to consider their purpose, texture, configuration, and duration, and to end them in a manner that clearly indicates to all when to begin singing that next verse! He shared that any preludes, interludes, or postludes should be based upon when the hymn was written, so the congregation can see the relationship between when it was written and how we would "compose" our own embellishments around it. He gave examples from plainsong, the Renaissance, the Baroque era, and the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, using examples of his own, with additional suggestions from us. He also suggested some models from composed literature based upon hymnology from such composers as Buxtehude, Bach, Brahms, Dupré, etc., giving us such a wide range of possibilities to draw from. David is a most engaging speaker and presented this most interesting information with grace, humor, and a genuine feeling of appreciation for us, his listeners. It was a most successful and fitting way to begin our NAGO season!*

You can view the recording of David's workshop here: <https://fb.watch/9kFU200CLm/>.

## Support AGO's National Convention in Seattle

Has your chapter considered donating to our 2022 National Convention? I recently received a list of chapters that donated to the 2018 National Convention in Kansas City. We were blessed to receive donations from the following 18 chapters:

**\$10,000** and above: Houston

**\$5,000–\$9,999:** Seattle

**\$2,100–\$4,999:** Greater Hartford, Greater Kansas City

**\$1,000–\$2,099:** Indianapolis

**\$500–\$999:** Austin, Cincinnati, Memphis, New Haven, Rhode Island, San Diego

**\$100–\$499:** Canton (OH), Fox Valley (IL), Holland (MI) Area, Manhattan KSU (KS), Richmond (VA), San Joaquin Valley (CA), Wichita (KS)

Many chapters allocate funds in their annual budgets to help support our regional and national conventions. We hope that those who donated in the past, as well as chapters that have not previously considered donating, will support our 2022 convention!





## November Pennsylvania Chapter Visits

On November 13, I had the pleasure of visiting the Lancaster (PA) chapter, attending a special recital, **Keyboard Connections**, which was part of the area's **Starlight Tea Concert Series**. The recital, led by chapter member Margaret Marsch, included works by Saint-Saëns, J.S. Bach, Haydn, R. Wagner,



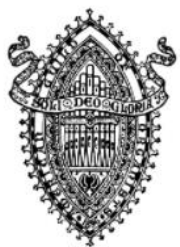
Poulenc, Ravel, and Gounod, and featured organ arrangements that included three harpsichords and dual pianos. They played to an SRO house and received many standing ovations. Here is the link to the recital:

<https://lancob.org/events/starlight-tea-concert-series-american-guild-of-organists-keyboard-connections/>.

On November 14, I visited the Williamsport chapter and attended a member recital that marked the culmination of the yearlong celebration of their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Through collaboration with the United Churches of Lycoming County, the recital featured works by Josquin, Sweelinck, Bruhns, Corrette, Albinoni, Kirnberger, Saint-Saëns, and Dupré. When I told chapter dean Donna Elkin that I was not an organist (some of our members often gasp upon hearing this) but had studied opera and sung professionally, she asked, "Then what will you sing?"



I was honored to perform Mozart's *Laudate Dominum*, with the talented organist members also singing in the choir. The Williamsport chapter has 12 members. They may be a small chapter, but their leadership is robust, and their members are truly passionate about the AGO!



## Pennsylvania Northeast Chapter

American Guild of Organists

On November 15, before heading back to the Harrisburg airport, I met with several officers from the Pennsylvania Northeast chapter: John Vaida, dean, Carl Ruck, sub-dean, and Raphael Micca, former dean and current chapter administrator. We discussed the future events that they are planning and their focus on recruiting and

engaging young organists throughout this year. They described a past event that I wanted to share with you. They collected adult and children's choir robes from churches that had closed their doors and hosted a member event where anyone who needed additional choir robes for their churches could take as many as they wanted. I know that many chapters have conducted music swaps; however, this unique strategy, focused on the repurposing of choir robes, not only helped other members' churches but also demonstrated the chapter's focus on outreach and generosity in helping others. Carl Ruck has promised to send me more details to include in a future newsletter.

This trip was the first one that I had taken since March of 2020. Despite delayed plane departures and having to run through the Atlanta airport at breakneck speed to make flight connections, it was so wonderful to personally meet with dedicated chapter leaders and attend some truly impressive recitals! I look forward to scheduling more chapter visits in 2022.



**Happy New Year!**