



April 2023

Chapter Officer Training

Dear Chapter Leaders,

Happy Spring!

Many of the responses from our post-conference survey indicated that you would like to receive more hands-on training. We plan to focus on this in June, to support the changeover of officers; however, did you know that we have recordings of webinars that provide excellent officer training? For those who have assumed treasurer positions, please view the recording of this excellent webinar, presented by Jeff Verkuilen: [The Top Four Things Your Chapter Must Do to Be Financially Responsible](#); ([handout](#)). On the off chance that you have not yet started your chapter nominations process, please view [Now Is the Time to Start Your Chapter Nominations Process](#), which is accompanied by two very detailed handouts: [Chapter Elections—What to Do When](#) and [Nominations Announcement through Installation](#). (If you are experiencing challenges in identifying candidates who wish to serve, please don't hesitate to contact me.) We anticipate launching iMIS, our new association management system, in September, but as there has been a lot of officer turnover recently, I strongly recommend that, whether you are a registrar, membership coordinator, or treasurer, you review this handout that describes, step-by-step, [How to Access Membership Reports in ONCARD](#). If you are interested in some hands-on ONCARD training, Molly Davey will be happy to teach a group of you, through screen sharing, so that you can feel more comfortable with the process. Please email her at molly.davey@agohq.org. I've also recently discovered that some of our chapter officers who are not using ONCARD on a monthly basis do not understand how to read an Excel spreadsheet. Phylcia Ross, manager of member engagement and chapter support, is happy to present a hands-on session on how to use Excel. Please email her at pross@agohq.org.

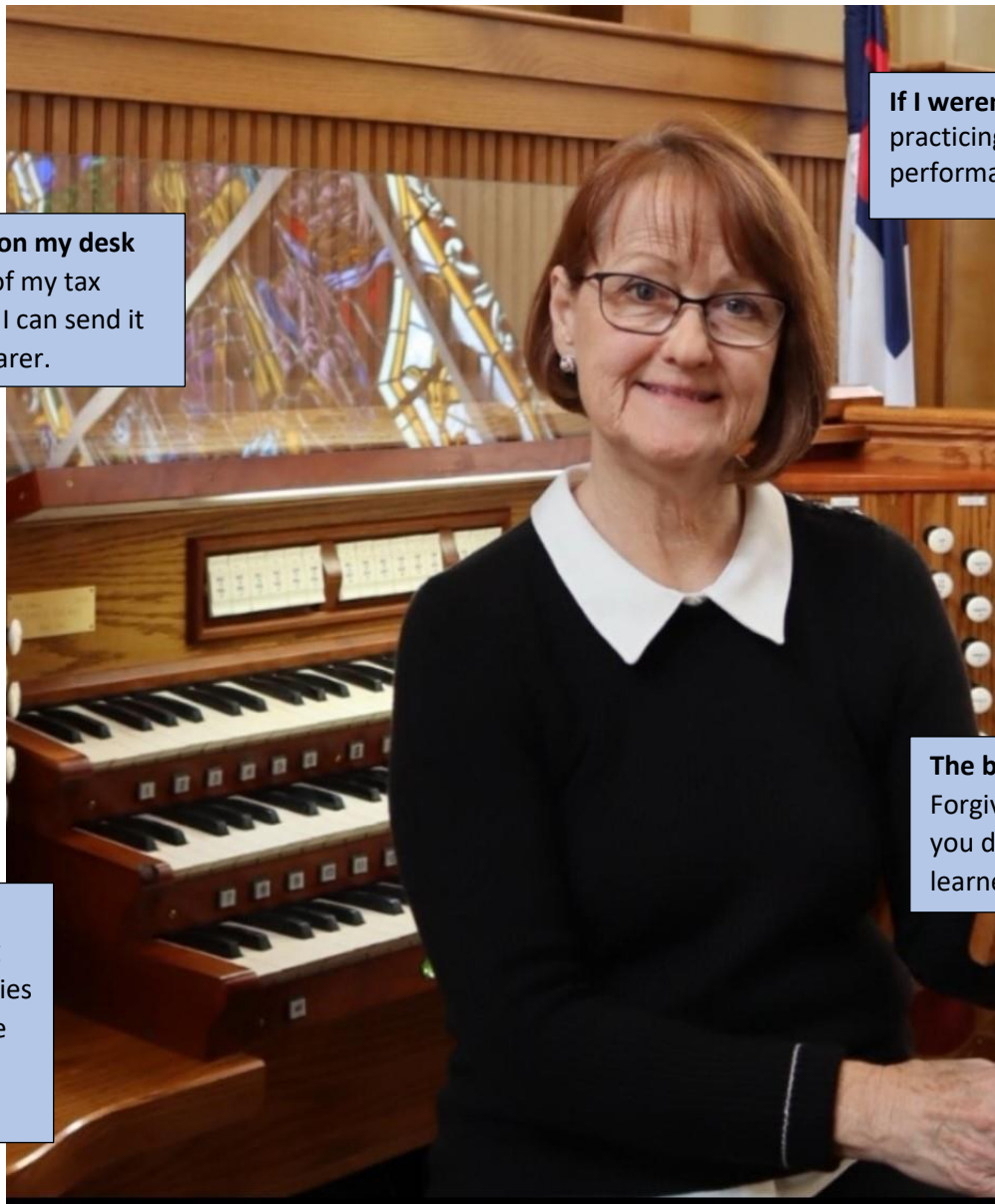
This issue of **Chapter Leadership News** will cover the following:

- ✓ Leadership Profile: Jan Fulford, Dean, Palm Beach County Chapter
- ✓ Phoenix Rising: Central Iowa Chapter's Operation WIDOR
- ✓ Chapter Specialist Support Teams
- ✓ Pipe Organ Encounters' Scholarship Deadline
- ✓ Oxford—University of Mississippi's First Pedals, Pipes & Pizza
- ✓ Upcoming Webinars
- ✓ The Church Music Institute and AGOYO's Mini-Conference
- ✓ Twin Cities Pipe Organ Discovery Day
- ✓ Leadership Reminders
- ✓ Volunteer Appreciation Week



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Profile of the Month: Jan Fulford, Dean, Palm Beach County Chapter



What's sitting on my desk right now: All of my tax information so I can send it to my tax preparer.

If I weren't doing this, I'd be practicing for my upcoming performances.

When I'm not at work, I'm relaxing with my three kitties and spending time with my granddaughter.

The best advice I ever got: Forgive yourself for what you didn't know before you learned it.

What keeps me motivated serving as chapter dean: I love everything about the pipe organ, so I enjoy doing all that I can to promote organ concerts, recitals, and services. My chapter is very active, and that keeps me motivated to offer them more opportunities to perform and events to attend.

Phoenix Rising: Central Iowa Chapter's Operation WIDOR

Sub-dean Stephen Smith and member Ryan Frederick shared the following:

CIAGO membership has always had an effective presence in our community of organists, choir directors, music teachers, and clergy; however, we have witnessed declining member engagement and attendance at many of our events. One of our best-attended social events, our Twelfth Night potluck supper, attracted 30–40 people a decade ago. Attendance had declined to about half that number prior to COVID, and since the pandemic there has been a precipitous drop to a single-digit number of attendees. During several executive committee meetings earlier this year, we sought to identify the symptoms. Clearly COVID has had a dramatic impact on many organizations; however, we noticed that these trends predated COVID. Several members had canceled their membership, and others had retired or moved to other areas of the country. We determined that we must do more to serve area organists and the wider community of people who enjoy organ music in religious and/or secular settings.

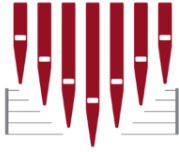
We have initiated several outreach programs to grow knowledge of the AGO, and to increase membership and participation in CIAGO. Through our purchase of an Orgelkids (OrgelkidsUSA.org) portative organ, which we fondly named Piper, we have been able to demonstrate to many young people how pipe organs are constructed and operate. We intend for Piper to go on tour to visit libraries in central Iowa over the next several months. We recently reinitiated personal communications with local organists who had previously offered their venues for CIAGO sponsored events pre-COVID, which resulted in providing existing members with informal opportunities to share music, play different organs, attend recitals, and attend purely social events. Our next action plan is more comprehensive and will be rolled out over the next several months. We have titled this **Operation WIDOR (Welcoming Individuals Drawn to the Organ Responsively)**, to raise awareness of the AGO and CIAGO. We have compiled a mailing list of over 800 churches located in 12 counties of central Iowa. We will be mailing a membership brochure, accompanied by a letter that will give a brief overview of WIDOR; it will also include an invitation to an upcoming special event. A members' recital will be presented, along with a demonstration of Piper, and the event will conclude with a reception where we can personally share the benefits of joining the AGO. Another invitation will follow to attend an organ recital by a well-known soloist. We hope to reach musicians and individuals who may never have heard of the AGO, those who have never engaged with our organization, as well as lapsed members. We strongly believe that the AGO is an organization for all levels of talent, and we hope to demonstrate that inclusivity to players and enthusiasts of all levels. We're very much looking forward to seeing how our efforts pan out. Our special event is scheduled for May 19 at St. John's Lutheran Church in downtown Des Moines. We'll surely have more news after that, so stay tuned!

Express Your Interest in Serving as a Chapter Specialist Support Team Member

Are you interested in sharing your expertise by serving on a chapter specialist support team? Detailed information, a recent webinar that featured a Q&A session, and a submission form can be found [here](#).



Pipe Organ Encounters' Scholarship Deadline: April 15



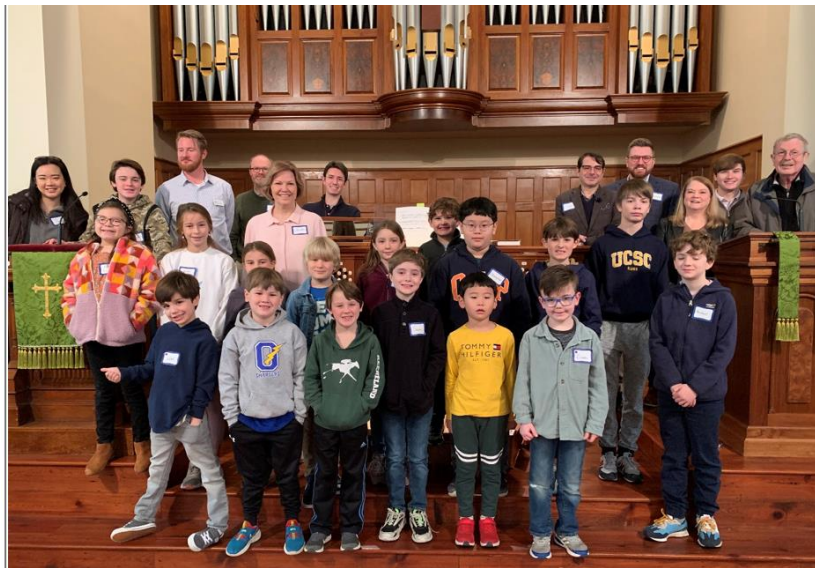
American Guild of Organists
PIPE ORGAN ENCOUNTERS

2023

The committee on Pipe Organ Encounters is excited about the two programs that will be presented for beginning and intermediate organists this summer. The Fox Valley chapter's POE, June 18–23, will take place at Wheaton College, followed by the Wichita chapter's POE, June 25–30, at Wichita State University. Need-based financial aid is available to cover full or partial registration fees for attending a POE. Funds are limited, and scholarships are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. The POE scholarship deadline is **April 15**. The application is an online form and asks questions of both the participant and her/his parent(s); additionally, it requires the submission of a recommendation from the participant's organ or piano teacher, also through an online form. To apply for a scholarship, complete the application submission process to attend a POE event, then contact the director of that POE to request access to the scholarship application. The scholarship application can only be completed after participants are accepted to attend a local POE. To apply to attend the Fox Valley POE, please email poe@foxvalleyago.org. To attend the Wichita POE, please email alindal@gloriadeiwichita.com.

Oxford–University of Mississippi Chapter's First Pedals, Pipes & Pizza

On February 4, the Oxford–University of Mississippi Chapter held its first Pedals, Pipes & Pizza, with visits to two local churches. First Presbyterian Church houses a Casavant (1980) renovated by Cornel Zimmer (2013), and Oxford–University United Methodist Church is home to an Austin (2000). Students toured the pipe chambers, participated in demonstrations at the console, and even had the opportunity to learn from a small Gedackt kit organ donated to First Presbyterian Church by Ronald Vernon and the Viola da Gamba Society. A copy of *A Young Person's Guide to the Pipe Organ* was provided for over 20 student participants (elementary to college age), and nine chapter members assisted in this successful event. Participating chapter musicians included Debra Atkinson, Jason Derrick (treasurer/secretary), Jonathan Gandara, Tanner Gough, Creighton Holder (sub-dean), John Leslie, Anita Ludlow (dean), Warren Steel, and Adam Stringer.



Upcoming Webinars

Certification Webinars

Monday, April 17, 7:00 p.m. EST
Renaissance Counterpoint (FAGO)

Please register [here](#).

Monday, April 24, 7:00 p.m. EST
Transposition (CAGO, AAGO, and FAGO)

Please register [here](#).

Support the Church Music Institute and the AGOYO Mini-Conference August 4–9, Dallas, TX.

For many years, each August, the Church Music Institute has presented an annual Summer Intensive in Dallas, Tex. This year, CMI and the AGO Committee on Young Organists are studying the possibility of presenting a two-part mini-conference: “Equipping Leaders to Serve the Saints” and “Music & Worship: Imagine & Explore.” It will include workshops to inspire and prepare young musicians and organists to lead meaningful worship, whether they are serving in small or large congregations. The workshops will cover a variety of topics, including “Conducting from the Podium or Keyboard,” “Organ Improvisation to Encourage Congregational Singing,” “Repertoire for the Small Church Choir,” “Psalmody—Style & Liturgical Practice,” and “Best Practices for Building a Church Music Career.”

CMI and AGOYO hope that area chapters will want to participate by identifying one or more young organists in their chapter (18 years or older) that they wish to sponsor to attend this special event. Your chapter can help lift the financial burden many young organists face by investing in their future—and their involvement in your chapter. We hope that, upon returning from the conference, your young organist member will want to present what she or he learned in support of their professional development. Stay tuned—more details will follow.

Twin Cities Chapter’s Annual Pipe Organ Discovery Day



Under the leadership of member Phil Asgian, on February 4, the Twin Cities chapter celebrated another very successful Pipe Organ Discovery Day. Students in grades three through twelve from across the Twin Cities participated, as well as older students from the undergraduate and graduate programs at the University of Minnesota. Students had an opportunity to play four organs at the School of Music building, as well as the large Aeolian-Skinner at Northrop. TCAGO Education Committee members presented a class on the history, science, and technical evolution of the organ. Michael Barone, host of *Pipedreams*, presented updates on what’s happening with

organs around the United States. At Northrop, we had a behind-the-scenes tour of the organ’s pipe chambers and blower room. Guest artist Isabelle Demers provided instructional support on the Aeolian-Skinner.

Chapter leaders, please remember:

- ✓ There should always be two signatures on your bank card. I cannot begin to tell you how many emails and phone calls I have received regarding issues with chapter deans being unable to access a bank account because the treasurer has moved away, taking the information with them—or is deceased. When there is board turnover, one of the first steps to be taken is for the new dean and new treasurer to go the bank to sign new bank cards. Additionally, it is highly recommended that no treasurer remain in this position indefinitely. Having the same person in charge of chapter funds for more than two years is not recommended because, over time, it can lead to the mishandling of funds.
- ✓ Once you have updated your operating procedures, please send them to AGO Headquarters so that we can store them for you. You most certainly can use National’s operating procedures (<https://www.agohq.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/AGO-Operating-Procedures-11-07-17-Revision.pdf>); however, I would suggest that you add specific policies that pertain to your chapter for the following reasons, as noted in *The Board Team Handbook* (<https://www.agohq.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/The-Board-Team-Handbook.pdf>):

A good set of written board policies (i.e., operating procedures)

- informs everyone of board intent, goals, and aspirations
- prevents confusion among board members, staff, and the public
- promotes consistency of board action
- eliminates the need for instant (crisis) policy-making
- reduces criticism of the board and management
- improves public relations
- gives a clear direction from the board

A policy is a written statement of the process and procedures for handling a specifically defined issue. Just entering a motion into the meeting minutes that says the board will follow a particular direction is *not* policy. Relying on board tradition to be board policy is not enough. Determination of how the board handled an issue the last three times is not policy. Please refer to pages 22 and 23, under “Board Policy,” in *The Board Team Handbook*.



Chapter leaders, we can’t thank you enough for your leadership and all of the hard work you do on behalf of your chapters! Once again, we will be raffling off three pairs of organ shoes. A notification will appear on our website very shortly with a form to submit your name.