



# The Worcester Organist

Official Newsletter of the  
WORCESTER CHAPTER  
AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

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## WORCESTER - The Pipe Organ Capital of New England

Warning: This Newsletter Contains a HUGE Amount of Information.  
Please be seated and fasten your seatbelts to read and absorb (and cheer us all on!)

### DEAN'S MESSAGE

"... We're All Volunteers On This Bus ..."

**P**assion! ... for great organ music and inspiring instruments. That's the reason WorcAGO exists and the reason we're all a part of it. Our love of music-making brings us together to learn, hone our skills, further the "cause" of organ music in our community, and offer support to each other (plus commiserate a little from time to time!). WorcAGO provides us with an opportunity to stick our heads out of our music and find out what others are doing, and to "**renew our licenses**"—to become rejuvenated for the continued energies and fresh ideas needed to keep our own music programs vibrant. As chapter members, we're **all volunteers on our AGO bus** in our journey to work together to achieve these goals and have a little fun & fellowship along the way. As we enter this new season of music-making, I urge us all not only to reach out for new ideas and refreshment, but also to **reach out to each other**—greet someone you don't know at a concert or reception, invite a new member to an upcoming event, offer a ride to a shut-in, offer a word of encouragement, thank an elder colleague for their contributions over the years. A great opportunity is just around the corner for our 9/26 opening festival service. There's a social reception after the service to greet new people, and we have the offer of a **15% (food) discount** from a local downtown restaurant for meals just prior to the service—a great opportunity to get friends, new acquaintances, and neighbor-church colleagues together to "show off" our hospitality and wonderful our music at the service—park, dine, and make an early evening of it to enjoy the music! (Coupon on web site)



In our 2010-2011 WorcAGO Program Year, we are rich on ideas but poor on people to lead and implement them! We have a huge line-up of concerts, events, workshops ready for your enjoyment. But it takes people to "run" the events - hand out programs, sit at the CD sales table, serve punch, make a few phone calls. We've heard the complaint that the "same people run all the concerts in the same venues." So now's your opportunity to help be a part of the AGO 2.0 solution! See our volunteering wishlist—most of the tasks/requests are very easy to accomplish—many hands (feet too!) make for easy (and successful!) programs. We are grateful for the handful of people who helped call about 100 people to renew or re-join WorcAGO for the 2010-11 year. We hope you'll fill in your volunteering skills and willingness in your online Membership Profile (see details in the next newsletter and intervening emails), or when you renewed on the Membership form.

We're wanting to offer the following initiatives to the chapter, but *we desperately need volunteers*: (click here to volunteer)

\* **Carpooling** and offering a ride to those needing assistance for local concerts. (We need a coordinator: 1-2 hours/month)

\* **TAO Magazine "recycling"** to place unwanted/unused stacks of magazines in the hands of eager students and organ enthusiasts. (We need a coordinator: 1 hour/month)

\* Service playing (preludes, hymns) and improvisation/composer (beginner to advanced) "**buddy**" partners to meet 1-2 times per month and offer each other advice on organ repertoire performed. (Coordinator: 1 hr/month)

\* Elder buddy initiative where a member “**adopts**” a **retired musician** to phone or visit them occasionally (30-60 mins/month?). (Personal note from the dean: I have found it immensely rewarding and enlightening to spend time with those who’ve been in our shoes in years past, to hear stories and learn about ideas that are really quite relevant for today’s music programs! ... not to mention the warm and grateful human connection) (Coordinator: 1 hr/month)

\* **Reception helpers** for 9/26 (Help with Member Directory Pictures(collect names), staff the CD/book CD sales table, serve punch, everyone: mingle and greet new people - we’ve had feedback that visitors leave without ever having someone say hello to them!) (we have a custodian to clean up, so not to worry!). Other events need help too!

Sincerely,  
Will Sherwood, ChM, AAGO, Dean WorcAGO 2010-2012

*Note: For this newsletter Will Sherwood is the editor and sole contributor, thus first person throughout correlates with Will.*

## CHAPTER PROGRAMS FOR THE YEAR

I cannot recall when I’ve been as excited about so many “meaty” (and I’m vegetarian!) events as have been assembled for 2010-2011 for WorcAGO. Wow! You may have already seen hints of this on our web site throughout August, but these highlights bear repeating here. (See Chapter Programs on our web site, containing the latest details and dates, some still being planned - the bottom portion of that page is the accumulated detailed calendar)

**Sunday Sept 26 Opening Convocation Festival Service** (pre-concert talk: 6:30pm) Service 7-8pm, punch reception following.

*(It’s rare as church musicians that we actually get to sit in the “audience” of a service or performance - here’s the perfect opportunity!)*

First Unitarian, 90 Main St, Worcester (Aeolian-Skinner, IV/67)

**Extended Prelude (6:45)** played by WorcAGO past deans – easy preludes you can use too!

Festival hymns (written by WorcAGO members) with descants and timpani

Gospel Introit (the rafters will rattle!)

Kodaly: Laudes Organi, with Brett Maguire, organ

Homily: Rev Richard Jones, WorcAGO Chaplain

Postlude Farewell: Peter Stoltzfus-Berton – Vienne: Final from *Symphony I*

Reception – Catch up with your colleagues, Meet New Members! CDs, Books on sale

**SPECIAL FEATURE: We’ll be taking informal headshot pictures for our online Member Directory** (free service for use in our directory). (our upcoming online Directory will feature an option to have your picture displayed so we can remember each other’s names!)

\*A **Fall Crawl** to the Northampton area (details forthcoming) (click here to indicate interest)

\*A workshop for **Beginning Organists** and Pianists just adjusting to play an organ (click here to indicate interest)

**Bach’s Birthday** Organ Concert

**Organ+Plus+** Instruments Concert

\*A workshop on how to easily **incorporate “technology”** (web, CDs, PDFs, midi, MP3s, Email, Social Networking, etc.) into your church music program and also how you can take best advantage of all the resources the internet has to offer for the music world (check out now our Free Organ Music Score Resources on the WorcAGO web site! Wow!) (click here to indicate interest)

An end-of-year Young Artist **Scholarship Recital**

\* Our First-Mondays **Open Loft** (Open Console) series will introduce attendees to the history and details of each instrument visited, hear a demo, and then open console to try out the instrument for yourself – all in an informal, non-confrontive atmosphere. You’ll be up close and personal with some of the area’s fine instruments (large and small). We begin the first Monday in October at **Holy Cross** – I think that’s pretty impressive to be able to see/hear/touch that magnificent Taylor and Boody instrument; then on to **Our Lady of the Angels** (near Webster Square) on 11/1 (double check time on our web site for latest information, due to special guest artist for demonstrations). (click here to indicate interest)

\* We’re also planning a PPP (**Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza**) for students (as well as organ-enthusiast adults – it’s fun to see organ demonstrations and hear about the workings of the instruments). We’re hoping to plant some seeds for budding young organists! (click here to indicate interest)

*\* Note: These events require a non-binding reservation with us so we can plan accordingly.*

Do visit Chapter Programs on our web site to check for the latest updates - we’re still polishing our calendar events list!

## CHAPTER UPDATES

What a busy summer it has been in the WorcAGO leadership world. We've reached **two major milestones** in our annual membership drive - we've achieved: (1) 90% of the number of members from 2009-10 (even with so many people moving away), and (2) our faithful team of phone volunteers have contacted an additional 60 former members (prior to 2009 who've dropped out) to try to entice them to re-join. These two feats have allowed us to be entered into two national AGO contests — with cash prizes of (1) **\$500**, (2) **\$1500**. Good Luck to WorcAGO for the chance to win this lottery! And thanks again to the phone volunteers who helped!

Because the renewal process logistics were so painful and time-consuming (it would seem that members were distracted from renewing, and uninterested in our local contests), we will be instituting changes for next year's renewal process—we just cannot expend 70+ hours again of prime volunteer time to phone and email members. Please let us know your suggestions for (1) what improvements in our WorcAGO chapter would make us more attractive such that you all are chomping at the bit to renew to remain a member of our thriving community, and (2) what enticements can we offer to get members to renew on time? Already we have the suggestions (with considerations of our very limited budgets) of: starting earlier for both designing the program calendar as well as renewal reminders, offering a 1 to 5 dollar discount for earlybirds, getting people to read their emails (good luck with that one!), helping people understand the impact of their not renewing in a timely manner (we tried a little in that "guilt" department in our reminder emails hoping that members would not want their colleagues to take their valuable time to be on the phone instead of teaching organ lessons or planning WorcAGO workshops!).

## CONTESTS

In addition to the National Chapter contests (membership renewals, and contacting former members to re-join), WorcAGO exec board decided to hold our own local chapter contests to provide incentives to our members to (1) renew, and to (2) refer colleagues/acquaintances (even dual members) to join WorcAGO. Unfortunately this was not effective as enticement—it still took 40+ hours of phone calls and close to a thousand emails to reach our (national contest) goals. We're not sure why this contest idea didn't work—at the time, it seemed like a sure-fire incentive! Perhaps people weren't reading their emails, perhaps the prizes (the top prize was a \$50 gift certificate (having a \$62 value due to the discounts offered)) weren't attractive enough, maybe people just aren't in the contest spirit, or maybe renewing is not a priority task. In any case, of the 107 memberships to-date, 99 were in by the Aug 25 deadline and qualify for the main prize, and 0 (zero) successful referrals were made—but we included our tireless phone volunteers for the 8 successes they had!

The winners will be posted soon on our [www.WorcesterAGO.org](http://www.WorcesterAGO.org) web site.

## CHAPTER BUSINESS

The following nuts-and-bolts decisions were made by the exec board:

- \* Institute a new classification of membership: **Student Friend** for \$15. This is the same as Friend but a student under the age of 18.
- \* Donate \$25 from the chapter general funds to the National AGO **Annual Fund**
- \* Offer our *Great Organs of Worcester* CD and William Self's book for a **reduced rate at the reception of the 9/26 Festival Service** - stock up on Christmas Presents!
- \* In order to improve our connection with other concert/workshop attendees, **encourage members to be sociable at AGO** and other concert events:  
*We promise not to leave you standing in a corner all alone, and we want to meet you! All of us can benefit from being active in the chapter, from discussing the challenges of church music and comparing notes on how to meet them, to enjoying beautiful music together.*
- \* Add two additional domain names for our WorcAGO website (currently WorcesterAGO.org): **WorcAGO.org, WorcAGO.com** - we're wanting to make it easier to type and to offer a catchy "branding" term as an easy type of marketing.
- \* **Co-sponsor three events** for the 2010 season: 11/12 Fundraiser (50% WorcAGO) at All Saints - Silent Film with Peter Krasinski donating his talents as Theater Organist; 12/15 (Free) Annual Mechanics Hall Christmas Concert (noontime); Fundraiser (50% WorcAGO) with Robin Dinda and Renea Waligora for a organ duet concert
- \* We are in the process of sending a membership information and invitation letter to **180(!) area churches** whose musicians are not connected with WorcAGO. (Thanks to Jean Briedenbach for researching and compiling this HUGE list!). **We can use volunteers for a half hour to stuff letters!**
- \* Starting next year (2011-12) we will enforce the national bylaws that a member cannot join at the level of **Friend if they have employment** as a church organist or director. We've been lax in prior years for this rule.
- \* We will be "publishing" **chapter financial information** in our "protected" membership online web directory. (User login required in order to view financial reports, etc.) This will be implemented sometime in the fall.
- \* Institute web-based "**Want-Ads**" for \$10/qtr (we have one already, for an Estey reed organ - check it out, former owner was the late Robert Dickenson, a former WorcAGO chapter dean!)
- \* Add a **Business Directory and a Musicians Directory** to our web site. These are paid ads, in the case of musicians, to provide a referral service for instrumentalists/vocalists who are available for hire (for weddings, funerals, special services).

\* Although we do not usually send anything out hardcopy any more (due to costs, and environmental concerns), we will be sending a **postcard** to the membership and former members regarding the **Fall 2010 line-up of Chapter Programs**.

\* Because so much emphasis is being placed on communication via email and the web (and no more hardcopy mailings except to those without email), we are offering a **mini-workshop in January on tech-related information** with multiple entry-points (arrival/start times) for more moderate topics involving: (1) web & email for beginners (e.g., text on a web page that is underlined is intended as a link to be clicked with your mouse!), (2) utilization of the web & email for church musician leaders (i.e., how the web can help your choir and music program), and (3) *advanced*: MIDI applications in a church music program (even if you are computer-resistant, you can sit back and be amazed by the live demonstrations!). Don't worry, you won't be turned into a geek!

## **DON'T MISS THESE ON WorcesterAGO.org!**

\* Our HOME PAGE shows the **latest news and upcoming calendar highlights**. Your ticket to the best information in the area!

\* *"The Console"* Our WorcAGO official blog - This is where to get the scoop of **everything going on in Worcester** - we don't like to use the term "gossip", it's just plain juicy news about concert reviews and WorcAGO members. Updated several times a week - thus you don't have to wait until your next newsletter in order to know what's going on!

\* **Online Calendar** - has been a great success over the summer. Concert artists and promoters can upload concert information instantly. The public can view concert information, which can include links to bios, organ specs, pictures, etc. An advanced search mechanism allows you to narrow-down specific concert categories of interest. A subscription option allows you to sign up for period emails to remind you of upcoming concerts in the categories/geographies that you select.

\* NEWS> TAO Highlights - check out what not to miss in your recent issues of *The American Organist*!

\* EDUCATION> Certification - summary of various levels of certification from Service Playing Certificate (highly recommended for all!), to Fellow - announced over the summer

\* (We'll highlight other web pages and new pages in future issues)

## **WorcAGO BLOG HIGHLIGHTS**

Our online blog (newsy update web page) has been a big hit with folks who have been visiting it every week or so - they are able to read the latest happenings with members and concert reviews, etc. We update the information several times per week as information comes in. Be the first on your street to find out what's happening outside the bounds of your choir loft!

You can access it any time via: [www.WorcesterAGO.org](http://www.WorcesterAGO.org) NEWS> The Console

*A snippet of items recently posted:*

\* Jim Christie's Paris sabbatical update.

\* New jobs for Peter Stoltzfus Berton and Lucia Clemente Falco (congratulations!)

\* Free choral music in Shrewsbury - Read about the free offer from First Congregational - email contact address listed

\* August Mechanics Hall organ concert reviews - including the innovative concert concept of "AGO POE Alumni" (young artist concert)

\* AGO National Convention in DC in July (in case you haven't seen the reviews - far more than is available anywhere else, including TAO!)

## **NEWSLETTER STANDARD "DEPARTMENTS"**

Because all of our information is now online, we'll summarize our normal newsletter sections with links below - when you see an underscored/outlined phrase, it means that's a web link that you can click on to view the details. It's sorta like a piston! Push to get the results. For our 10 non-internet members, we are printing the newsletter and most of the linked pages.

Unfortunately, they will not be able to benefit from the up-to-the-minute updates that are posted almost daily.

\* PLACEMENTS(Job Postings)

\* SUBSTITUTES(List of Members available for subbing)

\* Concert Calendar

\* Chapter Programs for 2010-2011

## WorcAGO COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

I regret to say that I have failed to complete the committee member and other roster appointment for the some 30 positions available. I found our membership drive to be all-consuming to reach our membership goals, revamp our web site, attend the DC convention, and then assist with Program Planning. Too, many potential volunteers were on vacation in August and were not available to discuss proposed appointments. We'll update our web site with new appointees as the information becomes available. To fully staff all the committees would require about one-third of our membership to be committee members and chairs. Most of our members are part-time musicians with one *or more* full-time day jobs and a family to manage and they have minimal personal time, and thus finding willing and available volunteers has been very difficult. We are brainstorming hybrid solutions to fulfilling the entire committee spectrum of appointments, including considerations for incorporating reduced responsibilities, having co-chairs, or combining roles.

## FROM THE WorcAGO ARCHIVES VAULT

# American Guild of Organists

United States and Canada

(Name and seal registered in U. S. Patent Office)

Organized April 13, 1896

Incorporated December 17, 1896

Amended Charter granted June 17, 1909

Charter Granted December 17, 1896

Amended Charter granted June 22, 1934

Authorized by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York

**This is to Certify**

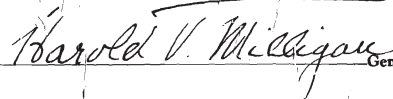
*that the Council has ratified a petition and grants the formation of the*

**Worcester**

*Chapter*

*this* fourteenth *day of* March 1949.

  
Warden

  
General Secretary

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Placement listing fee is \$20.00 for 4 mos., payable in advance to:  
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**Worcester AGO Website links:**

**Membership** – [www.WorcesterAGO.org/membership](http://www.WorcesterAGO.org/membership)  
**Online Store** – [www.WorcesterAGO.org/store](http://www.WorcesterAGO.org/store)  
**Blog** – [www.WorcesterAGO.org/blog](http://www.WorcesterAGO.org/blog)

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