



# VOX OCEANA

MAR 2022

NEWSLETTER OF THE RHODE ISLAND CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS | VOLUME LV NO. I

## RI CHAPTER OFFICERS AND APPOINTMENTS 2020-2021

Dean, Gigi Mitchell-Velasco  
pipeorganlady22@gmail.com

Sub-Dean (Acting)  
Stephen T. Martorella

Secretary, David Cranmer  
401-447-9848  
dcranmer45@cox.net

Treasurer, Doris Alberg  
401-365-7273  
dalberg1@cox.net

Publicity, Stephen T. Martorella  
401-885-0623  
steve.fbc@verizon.net

Newsletter, Althea Allard  
401-728-4431  
altheaallard@gmail.com

Historian, N. Peter LaMoria  
401-723-6974  
npeterlam@aol.com

Placement: Julie Tagen 401-885-7438

Membership: Christopher Souza  
401-368-2758

Auditors:  
Denise Petrucci, Jackie Gourd

Reg. Councillor: Leslie Smith  
northeastago@gmail.com

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

2020

Adam Schneider  
adamsschneider39@gmail.com

2021

Fred Jodry  
Lawrence E. Wilson 860-857-5493  
lewilson3rd@gmail.com

2022

Philip Martorella  
Gina Vecchio 401-354-2366

[www.riago.org](http://www.riago.org)

## FROM THE DEAN

Hello and Happy Spring Everyone!

By now, hopefully most of you are out and about, going out to eat, going to church and possibly even taking in a few live concerts! We hope so, because we are back and ready to start offering some fun things to do that relate to your favorite subject, the ORGAN!

**SILENT FILM NIGHT!** Our first large scale event in a long time is happening this May 21, 2022, at 8 pm, hosted by Patrick Aiken at Central Congregational Church in Providence: a screening of the epic 1927 silent film *Wings* with accompaniment on Central's mighty Aeolian Skinner pipe organ. International sonic artist, Peter Krasinski (our very own superstar of the silver screen) will be at the console to deliver a live improvised soundtrack. And for those of you who have seen Mr. Krasinski in action, you'll know that no one delivers with quite the impact of sound and emotion for silent film as he does! Don't miss this one of a kind experience in this RIAGO event sponsored by the Vitullo Fund, making this free and open to the public! Here is a link about the organ for that evening:

Pipe Organ Database | Aeolian-Skinner Organ Co. (Opus 1440, 1964) Central Congregational Church

And here is a link to Mr. Krasinski's website: Peter Krasinski - Specializing in Silent Movie Accompaniment

**JAMES BUSBY IS RETIRING.** Also, please note that our dear friend, James Busby will be retiring this year from S. Stephen's Episcopal Church. If you wish to catch his brilliant playing do not miss his last service at the console on the Feast of Corpus Christi, June 16th at S. Stephens. Please go and wish him well. Also enjoy the review of his October recital in this month's edition of our newsletter.

Finally, I must say a few words about a special friend of our chapter. Dear Stephen Kirby, our past Dean and RIAGO advocate and a mentor to me when I became Dean, has, as many of you know, passed away last year. We all miss him very much and I wanted to include this beautiful loving tribute that his son did for him on The Rhode Show. In case you missed it, here it is: (7) The Rhode Show - Remembering Brendan's Dad, Stephen P. Kirby - 11/9/21 - YouTube

I

wish you well and long to see you! We want to hear from you so keep sending Althea your ideas for the newsletter and stay healthy and happy!

*Gigi*

Gigi Mitchell-Velasco, MMus, CAGO, Dean

*Editor's note: Please see accompanying email for active links offered in this Dean's Message.*

## Upcoming Events!

### It's a Belated Birthday and you're invited.

Our plans to celebrate Bach's birthday near the March date got lost in the Covid closing of the host church. With places opening up, we are looking forward to settling on a date in June, and if weather permits, combining it with a picnic/annual meeting. We will meet at the First Congregational Church, 300 High Street, Bristol. Stay tuned for specifics. Meanwhile, if you are interested in performing, please contact Adam Schneider at [Adamschneider39@gmail.com](mailto:Adamschneider39@gmail.com) Or call at 401-442-1875. We need performers, of course, and your availability will help us set the date!

### Silent Movie Night

Plan to come to Central Congregational Church at 8pm on May 20 to watch a wonderful old-time movie and enjoy the organ accompaniment provided by Peter Krasinski, acclaimed improviser and concert artist. The plans have been in the works and long anticipated, and finally, mandates and schedules are coming together so that we can present this thrilling event. See Dean's message for details.

### Recital by Competition winner, Nathan Schneider

Our Lois Conboy Scholarship winner, announced in June, 2020, Nathan Schneider, will be back in the USA from studies abroad and available to perform a recital for us in July. We eagerly anticipate hearing him in person, and will keep you informed of time and place once they have been finalized.

(By the way, see the final page of this newsletter for details on applying for a Conboy Award this year.)

Finally, after so many months (years?) of isolation, we can look forward to meeting together and enjoying the work of fellow organists. Please, come out of hibernation and join us for as many events as you can!

## A PLEA

In this day of rolling AGO registration, when membership renewal is due in the anniversary month of your last dues payment, rather than universally in July, our Membership master, Chris Souza, is having a difficult task in assembling a Directory. To include all members in the Directory anticipated for Spring 2022, please note your renewal date and send dues to National several weeks in advance of expiration. Dues can be renewed online (perhaps the most efficient, since office staff are working from home). If you need to renew via US mail for reimbursement by your employer or for other reasons, it is especially important to initiate the process in advance to allow for the delay at headquarters. Your Chapter appreciates your support in this effort.

***Up for dues renewal? Do it today--please.  
Your membership matters!***

## CATCHING UP WITH...

*Editor's Note:* In an effort to connect our members through the newsletter during these days of limited in-person gatherings, we are inviting you to share a brief item about your work, on-the-side or primary; a special interest or accomplishment; a tip you have discovered in your work with colleagues or students. Please send me an email for inclusion in this column, and perhaps recommend another member I might invite to participate in this exchange. Then, when we are able to meet in person, we will not be strangers, but friends in the making.

Thanks,

*Althea* ([altheaallard@gmail.com](mailto:altheaallard@gmail.com))

**Peter Lamoria** is our first contributor:

### Busby and Sesma at S. Stephen's

On Sunday October 10th, 2021, a truly rare and memorable musical offering was heard at S. Stephen Church Providence. James Busby, organ, and Megan Sesma, harp, bonded in mutual talent to perform sonic thrills seldom heard anywhere. Sesma, currently the 1st enlisted principal harpist with the United States Coast Guard, who also holds positions at Connecticut College, New London, University of Connecticut, Storrs, and Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, has performed extensively, world wide.

*Continued on next page*

## PLACEMENT LISTINGS

Contact Julie Tagen (401-225-9594) to list

Emanuel Lutheran Church 10/10/20  
9 New London Ave, West Warwick, RI 02893  
Pastor Todd Stange 401-450-2836  
Ahlborn-Galanti \$13-18,000 Minister of Music

Lutheran Church 08/14/21  
54 Cedar Swamp Rd., Smithfield, RI 02917  
Office Administrator 401-232-7575  
Allen G220 \$10-16,000 organist

St. Michael's Episcopal Church 09/05/21  
399 Hope ST, Bristol, RI 02809  
Loretta Frances 401-253-7717  
\$18-20,000 organist/ director Our Redeemer Evangelical

St. Martin of Tours 09/29/21  
50 Orchard Ave., Providence, RI 02906  
Gabe Alfieri 508-226-0956  
Reuter \$11-13,000 organist

Christ Congregational Church 01/10/22  
1350 Pleasant St., Brockton, Ma 02301  
Murray Kidd boardofmusic@brocktonmusic.org  
Austin \$15-18,000 organist

Haven United Methodist Church 01/10/22  
200 Taunton Ave., East Providence, RI 02914  
Joan Klein 401-438-4911 organist/pianist

St. Andrew's Episcopal 01/21/22  
182 Willow Ave., PO box 6, Little Compton, RI 02837  
Norman MacLeod 401-314-5671  
Allen \$200/wk interim organist

## FREE MEMBERSHIP FOR YOUNG ORGANISTS

The AGO National Council is committed to membership recruitment, retention, and growth. Through June 30, 2022, anyone under the age of 30 can join or renew membership free.

*Continued in next column, bottom:*

---

### SUBMISSIONS

DEADLINE: 20th of each month. SUBMISSIONS: Send Word or Text files to [altheaallard@gmail.com](mailto:altheaallard@gmail.com) or to Althea Allard, 166 Suffolk Ave., Pawtucket, RI 02861. ADVERTISING: Word doc, PDF (print ready), JPG (high resolution), or TIFF. All files should be grayscale at 300 dpi resolution. Email to [altheaallard@gmail.com](mailto:altheaallard@gmail.com)

## SUBSTITUTE LISTINGS

Contact Julie Tagen (401-225-9594) with changes.

### AVAILABLE SUNDAYS & WEEKDAYS

Babbitt, Jonathan 401-864-9009  
Casteel, Eden: 401-932-5589  
Clarke, Margaret: 401-726-4128 (all)  
Higgins, Stephen: 401-441-2270 (comfortable with any keyboard situation)  
Jones, William: 401-848-4327 (all)  
Kohl, Karen: 401-787-2695 Please Inquire  
MacCubbin, Jay: 401-521-0698  
Nicholson, Nancy: 401-521-9097 (all)  
Norton-Jackson, Diana 401-714-2700 interim, sub, no weddings  
Tagen, Julia L.: 401-225-9594 (all, weddings/funerals/interim)  
Taylor, Terry: 401-253-9030 ([tutti@fullchannel.net](mailto:tutti@fullchannel.net))  
Vecchio, Gina: 401-954-2163  
Wilson, Lawrence: 860-857-5493 Organ; Sacred Jazz Composer/Arranger

### AVAILABLE WEEKDAYS ONLY

Black, John: 401-737-1230 (all, available Saturdays & weekdays)  
Castellani, Roger: 917-621-6530  
Cranmer, David: 401-447-9848  
Martorella, Philip: 401-615-0769 (no Sun. a.m.)  
Seaholm, Edward 401-309-2167  
Sobaje, Martha: 401-626-0099 (weddings, funerals)  
Westhaver, Verna: 401-683-2636

## LAMORIA, CONTINUED

She showed "technique to burn" and masterful musicality in the three pieces by French composers Marcel Grandjany, Rene Raby and Maurice Ravel. The latter piece was transcribed for harp and organ by James Busby from Introduction et Allegro (1907) for Harp, Flute, Clarinet and string quartet. James truly "tamed a beast" with his skillful accompaniment of the harp, and showed the resources of the organ to great aplomb in epic organ solo works by Aaron Copland and Leo Sowerby. The concert was an annual offering showcasing the Robert Hale Ives Goddard Memorial Organ, an Austin organ dating from 1955 containing 76 ranks.

*Information from the program notes by James Busby, submitted by Peter Lamoria.*

## YOUNG ORGANISTS, CONTINUED

Opportunities for both personal and professional development will include master classes and webinars on a wide-variety of topics including: Organ Maintenance, Insurance, Retirement, Healthcare, Conducting, Video Recording, and Vocal Pedagogy. *See next page for Award opportunities.*

---

### ADVERTISING RATES

1/4-page ad (3.5"W x 5"H): \$18 -or- 1/8-page ad (3.5"W x 2.5"H): \$10  
Flyers provided electronically for inclusion with newsletter (for RIAGO members): \$10.  
Make checks out to RIAGO and mail to Althea Allard by the 20th. \$25 non-members.

# THE THIRD ANNUAL LOIS CONBOY MEMORIAL AWARDS 2022

The Rhode Island Chapter of the American Guild of Organists (RIAGO) is pleased to announce its Third Annual Lois Conboy Memorial Awards 2022. The Reverend Thomas Conboy, Jr. wanted to memorialize his wife, Lois, by having RIAGO grant awards in her name. It is the Chapter's desire to support young artists who wish to pursue the organ as a career.

There are three Scholarship Awards: a Young Artist Award (\$1,200), an Encouragement Award (\$500) and a Discovery Award (\$300).

The Young Artist Award is open to anyone who is a New England native or resident, 30 years old or younger, and is or has been or will be enrolled in a program of organ study at a University, Conservatory, or College, or is a graduate of any music program.

The Encouragement Award is open to any undergraduate or graduate student 30 years old or younger, and is or has been or will be enrolled in a program of organ study at a University, Conservatory, or College, or is a graduate of any music program.

The Discovery Award is for anyone in Rhode Island who wants to learn more about the organ, regardless of age. The award money may be used to pay for organ lessons, Pipe Organ Encounters (POE), workshops, or any other program involving organ discovery and learning.

Application Deadlines:

Deadline for submissions for the Young Artist and Encouragement Awards is May 15, 2022. Winners to be announced on or before June 15, 2022.

The Discovery Award accepts submissions on a rolling basis and is awarded on a "first come, first served" basis. Applications are open until November, 2022.

Only one award per candidate in any given year, and any previous Young Artist winners are ineligible to apply again.

To apply, email [riago.events@gmail.com](mailto:riago.events@gmail.com) and we will send you an application form.

---

Lois Conboy began organ lessons in junior high school. She attended Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey, focusing on Organ and Choral Conducting. After marrying the Reverend Thomas Conboy, Jr., she completed a degree in Education from California State University (PA), and later, a Master of Education. Moving to Rhode Island in 1972, when Rev. Conboy became pastor of Calvin Presbyterian Church in Cumberland, Lois oversaw the selection and installation of the new organ in their newly constructed church. She served as volunteer Organist/Choir Director at Calvin for over fifteen years, and during those years, spent every "vacation Sunday" playing at other churches. After retiring from Calvin, Lois served as interim and in her last years in Rhode Island, served as Organist/Choir Director at the Community Church of Providence. Lois loved RIAGO and was active in workshops and conventions, but most of all, she enjoyed and cherished the friendship and fellowship of the Guild members.