



VOX OCEANA

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NEWSLETTER OF THE RHODE ISLAND CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS | VOLUME LIII NO. 3

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

During this unprecedented experience, Dean Kirby asked the Board to communicate our concern and encouragement to members through this special newsletter. All of us wish all of you and your families an abundance of good health.

FROM THE DEAN

Dear Colleagues,

The RIAGO Board realizes that this is a very difficult time for our members. Many have been laid off indefinitely or had income reduced. Know that help may be available for you. Please check the RI Dept. of Unemployment, which has opened windows for private contractors and other independent employees. Go to www.dlt.ri.gov for the instructions and application.

I know that Holy Week and Easter will be very difficult for many of you who will not be providing music for your churches. Neither will I, as my Pastor will allow only his assistant and the cameraman into church. Services are brief and at a minimum.

We all hope that this situation will end soon and we can return to worshipping in our respective churches. Please remember, services may be canceled or minimized but Easter, like spring, is not.

Stephen P. Kirby, Dean



From Larry Wilson, Exec. Committee

As we await return to our beloved churches to celebrate God through ministry and music, I recall that only weeks ago, February 23rd, over 300 people gathered at First Baptist Church in America to hear a powerful concert under the direction of First Baptist's Minister of Music **Steve Martorella**. "Let Justice Roll!" capped three weeks of insights into diversity, inclusion, and leadership, which I shared at several Forums.

The cantata, by Julliard graduate and Yale Institute of Sacred Music lecturer Mark Miller, celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as the personification of these values. Dr. King's "A Letter from a Birmingham Jail" is the focus of this work, performed by choirs from First Baptist and Newman Congregational Church, UCC.

We will return one day to our church buildings with even greater impact, bringing lessons learned and new ways of doing things. I urge you to prepare: keep your faith, stay sheltered, and help others. Meanwhile, be well, my fellow church musicians!

Larry

From Gigi Mitchell-Velasco, Sub Dean

My dear Friends,

As I write in the safety of my home, I hope you are happy, well, and coping with our strange new reality. Lately, every morning, a profound sense of gratitude comes over me. "Thank God for this beautiful day; we are healthy." Shouldn't we begin every day this way? Yet, pre-COVID, many of us, myself included, would wake and launch into the cares of our day, sometimes even dreading certain tasks. (Full disclosure, I was a dreader more often than not.)

I have gone through fear and frustration, but last fall, I miraculously emerged from a tough transition period. Determined to get my physical, mental and spiritual house in order, I decided to take a Sabbatical. I looked forward to new opportunities: organ recitals, challenging repertoire, and even orchestral conducting. I had secured a place in a festival for international conductors in Kiev Ukraine, which I was to attend in June. This year was to reset. As it turns out, the whole world has had to push this reset button.

Our experiences today—our fears and uncertainty—may remind us that after 9-11 and the recession of 2008, we experienced similar emotions. But those events showed us that things get better, though probably different. But you will get to the other side. Gratitude is most difficult during hard times, but it is precisely during those times when we need it most. Take time to write down what you're grateful for. It keeps you grounded and allows the Universe (God) to prepare you for your next great adventure. There were many times when I felt that my life had been upended, and everything I had worked for was gone. Then one day I realized how grateful I was for everything I had. Utilizing that energy allowed me to see new opportunities and new talents. New things will come for everyone, no matter how dark these days seem. It's okay to feel discouraged, to have bad days and good days. Forgive yourself for the bad days and rejoice in the good ones.

In my "gap year" I worked on restructuring, spiritual and physical work using Dragontree Apothecary. It offers workbooks, journaling, herbs and meditation practices. I received this article from them, and I found it helpful and hopeful, so I want to share it with you!

<https://thedragontree.com/2020/03/27/good-news-9-things-to-celebrate-this-week/>

Feel blessed - You ARE. Feel loved - You ARE

Dwell in gratitude and possibility!

Oh, and watch lots of Netflix and share those great funny animal videos!

Write me if you want to. I am here!

From Doris Alberg, Treasurer

And now for something completely different, as Monty Python used to say. It's hard to try something new and different when we are pretty much in lock down. I've been watching more than my usual number of videos as I suspect you may be doing as well. So, I've been exploring various folk music sites. No, not Peter, Paul and Mary or Flat and Scruggs, although they are fun too. I am looking at world folk music.

For a short burst of amazement, go to YouTube (regular old, not the subscription format) and search for the Igor Moiseyev Ballet. They are a Russian troupe who know how to DO folk dances. Sort of a cross between ballet, gymnastics, some ice skating moves, with perhaps a touch of the Rockettes. I'll leave the rest for you to discover.

The other group to search for is La Tuna de Madrid, a mandolin orchestra. (warning spell check may insist on tune and not tuna) They were actually in Providence a number of years ago when the Providence Mandolin Orchestra held an international festival. The videos are short, lively and most of all something Happy to watch with no one yammering at you. At least not in English. You won't even need to wash your hands!

PS Of course you can always watch Monty Python too.

PPS Or Tom Lehrer - Anyone remember his delightful "Poisoning Pigeons in the Park?"

From Althea Allard, Vox Oceana Editor

Dear Friends,

I hope you and your families are staying well, that other life circumstances are not bothersome, especially now.

I'm using this enforced non-working time to do Lent in a more mindful way. I'm also getting a lot busier in the kitchen and enjoying the opportunity.

Last Sunday, my husband and I were invited to ring St. Mary's Church bell at 9AM per Bishop Tobin's request that churches ring bells for 5 minutes to signal hope and prayers for all our neighbors. I'm also getting to church several days a week, at the recommendation of Peter Lamoria, to keep the organ in working condition. Nice excuse to keep practicing.

On the lighter side, do a YouTube search for Dapper Dans at Disney. Normally, they are in very colorful barbershop costume, but there is also a Socially Distanced Zoom-style performance, very easy to find on your phone.

Until we can get together again, hoping you are all well and managing to make the most of this time.

From Adam Schneider, Exec. Committee

My Dear Friends in Christ,

It saddens me deeply that we cannot return our God-given gifts on Sunday mornings at this very special time. Please know that all of you and your congregations are in our prayers and thoughts. We miss you all deeply and pray that we can be together soon.

Please pray for all the souls of the departed. May they rest in peace, and find comfort in God's love!

PLACEMENT LISTINGS

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

Emmanuel Episcopal Church 2/19
120 Nate Whipple Highway, Cumberland, RI 019864
The Rev. Joan Testin, 401-658-1506
Allen \$200/wk O/D

St. Mark's Episcopal Church 11/18
111 East Shore Rd., Warwick, RI 02889
The Rev. Susan Wrathall day 401-737-3127 eve 401-617-0380
Steere & Turner \$16,000 O/D

St. Patrick Catholic Church 3/19
2068 Cranston St., Cranston, RI 02920
Fr. Roger Durand, 401-944-0001(day) 401-499-1076(eve)
Rodgers \$12,000 3 weekend Masses O/D

Greenville Baptist Church 7/19
582 Putnam Pike, Greenville, RI 02828
Elizabeth Gates 401-949-1134 (church),
401-632-6748 (text only)
Moller \$15-16,000 O/D

Woodridge Congregational Church 7/19
546 Budlong Rd., Cranston, RI 02920
Rev. Scott Spencer 401-942-0662, 508-838-0035 (c)
Wicks \$13,500 O/D

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)
Vecchio, Gina: 401-954-2163
Vinson, Duncan: 781-888-3848
Westhaver, Verna: 401-683-2636 (substitute/interim)
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.)
Sobaje, Martha: 401-626-0099 (weddings, funerals)

STUDY ABROAD

Mark Steinbach, University Organist and Senior Lecturer, Brown University and **Lee Ridgway**, Boston organist and harpsichordist, will lead *Bach's Organ World* tour to Germany, June 2-11, 2020. Participants will experience and play historic organs in Germany spanning 280 years, with a focus on instruments which Bach himself played, or could have played in Saxony Dresden, Leipzig, Naumburg, Altenburg, Störmthal, and Tangermünde and the Cathedral in Berlin. A new feature of the 2020 tour is masterclasses on key instruments. For more info: <http://concept-tours.com/>
Login: BACH ORGANS 2020, Password: bachorgans2020
or contact Mark_Steinbach@brown.edu

Contact Mark for updates in light of Covid-19 changes.

SUBMISSIONS

DEADLINE: 20th of each month. SUBMISSIONS: Send Word or Text files to 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

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.