



# VOX OCEANA

APR 2021

NEWSLETTER OF THE RHODE ISLAND CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS | VOLUME LIV NO. 2

## 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  
adamschneider39@gmail.com

2021  
Fred Jodry  
Lawrence E. Wilson 860-857-5493  
lewilson3rd@gmail.com

Stephen P. Kirby

2022  
Philip Martorella  
Gina Vecchio 401-354-2366

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

## FROM THE DEAN

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Today I saw a hyacinth trying to pop up in my yard - just the little green leaves barely peeking out! It is indeed the season of hope, and we have much to be thankful for. I bring you Spring greetings from all of us here at RIAGO as we make our way into the season of hope which so far has brought us mass vaccinations, more openings of churches, restaurants and other businesses, and hopefully soon, live performances both instrumental and choral. We have set our first (hopefully in-person) meeting for September 12th. As a matter of course, you may all mark your calendars for the first Sunday after Labor Day from now on as our Season Opener! But we aren't quite finished with this year's season. We are hoping to have a Closing Event the first Sunday in June, June 5th. This is our annual meeting and closing of the season event. We are waiting to see what might be possible, but do keep that in mind.

We are grateful to Brian Mattias from Potter Rathbun for giving us a personal update on the exciting new organ which was on the cover of the TAO in August. Althea Allard our editor gives us a report on the mini convention last February sponsored by the Merrimack Valley Chapter.

Please see and share the documents attached about the RIAGO Annual Awards and Lois Conboy Young Artist Competition. Get the word out to worthy students and young talented players. The deadline for submission on May 1st.

Lastly, I was contacted by Brother Roger Chingas at Blessed Sacrament. He writes: "*A Blanche Davis was very involved with RIAGO back in her day...she was preparing to write a book on the historical organs of Rhode Island, and after her passing, her sister, Mrs. William Chambers of Edgewood, gave the notes for this book to our chapter.*" As Dean, I would love to hear from any of you who may know where these notes might be found. Our chapter membership looks quite different today than it did, and we are hoping to find more information about previous members, their research and contributions. I am hoping that while we move forward, we can also learn more about our past and our members that have contributed so much to the foundation of who and where we are today.

Lastly, if you are looking for some good local organ concerts with local and guest artists, check out the Thursdays at Noon at Grace Church in Providence which is live streaming and on YouTube. The schedule may be found here: <https://www.gracechurchprovidence.org/music-at-grace/thursdays-at-noon/> And also check out [www.BrocktonUCC.org](http://www.BrocktonUCC.org) for their pipe organ series or look them up on YouTube for past events. Here is a link to our own Peter Krasinski last November: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Js2fYR0CDI>

As always, I wish you all the best and wish you a Happy Spring.

*Gigi*

Gigi Mitchell-Velasco, MMus, CAGO

Dean

## KEGG ORGAN COMES TO COVENTRY

Greetings from Coventry!

I'm sure many of you have seen the TAO article from August or have heard the news about our new Kegg pipe organ at Our Lady of Czestochowa Church in Coventry. We all know that 2020 was miserable for a multitude of reasons. It was very frustrating to postpone all of the plans I had to invite people to see, hear and play this beautiful organ. We've still not had our dedication recital!

While we may not yet be able to host an "official" Open Bench, I invite anyone who is interested in visiting the first Kegg organ in New England to reach out to me at [brian@potterrathbun.com](mailto:brian@potterrathbun.com). I'll be happy to host visits for individuals or small groups! It is truly an amazing instrument that is comfortable playing any style of music.

In the meantime, here's another item to enjoy. Laura Kilgus spent a couple of hours with us during the installation and subsequently wrote an outstanding article for *The RI Catholic*. Charlie Kegg remarked that it was "the best article ever written about our work." She truly "got it" and was able to convey the emotional aspect of this pipe organ installation. The link is here: <https://www.thericatholic.com/stories/keys-to-the-heart-of-a-parish,11104>.

We are looking forward to better times and a return to normalcy when we can celebrate this fine instrument in every manner that it deserves! Until then, be safe.

*Cheers!*  
*Brian*

*Brian A. Mattias, CAIO*  
*Potter-Rathbun Organ Co., Inc.*  
*401-942-5410 office*  
*401-477-4144 mobile*

## MERRIMACK VALLEY AGO VIRTUAL MINI CONVENTION

On Saturday, February 27th, the Merrimack Valley Chapter of the AGO presented its annual Mini-Convention online. The MVAGO was honored to welcome two eminent speakers: **Ian Watson**, who described his experience as conductor of the Handel and Haydn Society's "A Messiah For Our Time," and **Katelyn Emerson**, who spoke on "Healthy, Efficient Practice: How Do We Learn?"

Ian described the challenges of "legally" presenting *Messiah* when playing wind instruments and singing were banned in Boston. Negotiations ironed out the rules--elaborate masks for singers, worn all the time. And the chorus did record, two sets of eight singers at a time, in the studio, masked, six feet apart, and listening to the orchestra on their headphones. The two trumpeters had to record individually. The director had to conduct a bit before the beat so the singers would be on time. And as we heard in our own presentation featuring Theresa Koffman on Zooming a choral piece, technicians were invaluable in adjusting and coordinating sight and sound.

**Katelyn Emerson** gave a lively powerpoint presentation, very helpful for following the information. She points out among other things, that it is not scientifically possible to "unlearn" a mistake. As her mother used to admonish from the kitchen while young Katelyn practiced, "Don't practice your *mistakes!*" She demonstrates at the organ and covers avoiding injury and transforming negative self talk into cheerleading. She encourages us to "practice smarter rather than harder."

Even the lunch break provided some gems. One of the attendees, living in Paris at the moment, reported that one seldom hears repertoire during church services and concerts; "everyone" simply improvises!

If you would like to view these presentations, please contact the Editor for links and password: [altheaallard@gmail.com](mailto:altheaallard@gmail.com)

## 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

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR COVID SETBACKS

RIAGO has set up an Emergency Relief Fund in response to the current and ongoing crisis and its economic impact on our members. The relief will be a \$100 gift card to a supermarket where the recipient buys groceries. To be eligible, applicants must be current members of our chapter and have lost income from their church postings as a result of being laid off due to the Covid lockdown any time after 15 March 2020. This gift card may be issued only once in a 12-month period. Individuals with liability and/or insurance claims pending are not eligible. To apply, send a statement with your name, home address, telephone, email, a brief paragraph detailing the circumstances of your dismissal, the date of dismissal, (date of reinstatement if applicable) and the name of the institution from which you were dismissed. Please send this material to Steve Martorella at [steve.fbc@verizon.net](mailto:steve.fbc@verizon.net)

The matter will be subject to review by the committee for the ERF (Lawrence Wilson and Stephen Martorella) and subject to final approval by the Dean (Gigi Mitchell-Velasco).

AGO National offers a link to various articles indicating helpful sources of information for musicians, religious institutions, students regarding many of the Covid-related challenges facing members. <https://www.agohq.org/responding-to-Covid-19/>

## 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  
Vinson, Duncan: 781-888-3848  
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)  
Westhaver, Verna: 401-683-2636

---

### 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)

---

### 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.