



# THE WINDLINE

August 2012

The newsletter of the

Clearwater Chapter, American Guild of Organists

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

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## Dean's Message

Hello everyone,

I hope you've all had a good summer. One of the highlights of mine was attending our National AGO Convention in Nashville. Even though the thermometer was topping out at over 100 degrees, all the program venues were comfortably air-conditioned. The recitalists were outstanding! Included in this year's list of performers were: Thomas Trotter, Tom Trenny, Todd Wilson, Cherry Rhodes, Raul Ramirez, Clive Driscoll-Smith, the Choir from Trinity College, Cambridge and others. Many of the programs played totally from memory and in the case of the Trinity College Choir sung from memory! These national conventions are inspiring events. Plan now to attend the next one which will be in Boston in 2015.



I attended the national guild meeting where we were told about some proposed changes that we will be asked to vote on this fall. These changes will streamline operations helping the guild to function more efficiently. They are:

1. Reducing the number of Regions from 9 to 7 (No states will be split and our region will lose Louisiana to the region to the west of us.)
2. Reducing the number on the National Board from 17 to 7 members who will meet mainly by electronic means and in person twice a year.
3. Dropping the current grievance process in favor of more positive solutions

The guild is also planning to construct a new national website and work toward the national payment of dues. The three chapters that won in the contest to increase membership were: 1<sup>st</sup> place — Orange County, CA; 2<sup>nd</sup> place — West Texas; 3<sup>rd</sup> place — New London, CT

Kevin V. Johnson, Dean

## CLEARWATER AGO 2012-2013

### OFFICERS

**Dean:** Kevin Johnson

**Sub-Dean:** Tom Huffman

**Secretary:** Denny Smith

**Treasurer:** Bill Rockenfeller

### BOARD MEMBERS

**2013:** Carol Alexander  
Robert Shone

**2014:** Robert Kirchner  
Harryette Williams

**2015:** James Biggers  
Priscilla Ortoski

*Board Meetings are held at  
St. Alfred's Episcopal Church,  
1601 Curlew Road Palm Harbor.*

### Next Board Meeting

**Wednesday, September 5, 2012 9:30 a.m.**

### GROM EDUCATION FUND

Tom Huffman, Chair

email: [hufftom@aol.com](mailto:hufftom@aol.com)

### PLACEMENT COORDINATOR

Harryette Williams

email: [hwilliams79@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:hwilliams79@tampabay.rr.com)

## In Memoriam

Steven Clark passed away early Sunday morning, July 22 in Nashville, Tennessee from pancreatic cancer. Many of you will remember Steve who was Organist and Choirmaster at Church of the Ascension and then at St. Alfred's Episcopal Church. Steve was a member of our chapter and assisted with many chapter events. He was a member of the Nashville chapter and produced some of the publicity for the national convention that appeared in The American Organist. He was serving as Organist at Bellevue United Methodist Church in Nashville when he became ill. Please remember his wife Donna and their children in your prayers. Cards may be sent to: Donna Clark, 5837 Woodlands Ave., Nashville, TN 35211.

### Choral Workshop with Dr. James Bass, Conductor of the Master Chorale

**St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
407 Saturn Avenue, Clearwater  
Sunday, September 23, 2012 – 6 p.m.**

6 p.m. Social Hour – Appetizers  
6:30 p.m. Dinner  
7:30 p.m. Workshop

Plan to join us on Sunday evening, September 23 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Clearwater for our first meeting. St. Paul's Organist and Choir Director George Algozzina will be our host and Denny Smith is the chairperson for this event. There will be a social hour at 6 p.m. followed by a delicious dinner at 6:30 p.m. Our evening's program is being led by Dr. James Bass, director of The Master Chorale. Denny, who is a member of the Master Chorale has arranged for Dr. Bass to be with us and share some of his ideas about choral warm-ups and rehearsal techniques this distinguished bay area choral group. Choir members are invited to join us as we learn from the director of this distinguished bay area choral group. Dr. Bass will provide copies of the music to be read.

Choir members who do not wish to join us for dinner may arrive for the Workshop and Anthem Reading Session at 7:30 pm.

***More details about the dinner and making your reservation will be sent by separate notice***

### Kudos to Tom Huffman

Check out the August issue of The American Organist. On page 16 you will find a picture of Victoria Meredith, Betty Dethmers, and me with our Chapter banner and an article about our Vocal Workshop last February. Tom submitted the photo and article. Look for more news of our chapter in upcoming issues.

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL COMPLETE

Thanks to all of you and to Bill Rockenfeller our Chapter Treasurer, we have completed our membership renewals earlier than ever this year. Please note however that there was a dues increase this year that was not reflected in the first dues form that went out. Thank You!

William Rockenfeller, 25 S. McMullen-Booth Road, Clearwater, FL 33759

#### Dues are Past Due...

If you have not already done so please send in your dues as soon as possible to our Treasurer Bill Rockenfeller. Thank you Bill, for the tremendous job you do! Regular voting member went from \$92 to \$97, Special voting member from \$67 to \$77 so **if you fall into one of these categories and you paid the lower amount it would be greatly appreciated if you would send Bill the amount of the increase.**



### Congratulations

To Dr. Sandra Rogers on her appointment as Organist at St. Mathias Lutheran Church in Clearwater

## Scholarship Funds

The Clearwater Chapter has a long history of supporting young organ students through our two scholarship funds. Both the Grom Education Fund and the Peterson Scholarship Fund exist primarily to offer financial assistance to middle/high school students studying organ with chapter member teachers. A typical grant would cover half the cost of the teacher's normal lesson fee for a semester. Other requests are considered by the board and might include full fee coverage, printed music, organ shoes, costs for a student or chapter member/officer to attend a workshop, convention, Pipe Organ Encounter, or other educational event.

Grant requests are reviewed and teachers are notified of the board's decisions in advance of the semester of study. The application form, and the lesson log form are available on the website [www.clearwaterago.org](http://www.clearwaterago.org). The application must be submitted to the dean prior to the semester and the lesson log at the completion of study. At that time the grant is paid directly to the teacher.

The application deadline for the fall semester (September-December) is August 15.

Send it to: Kevin Johnson, Dean  
St. Alfred's Episcopal Church  
1601 Curlew Road  
Palm Harbor, FL 34683

For more information, contact the Scholarship Funds Chairman Thomas Huffman at (727) 409-8726 or [hufftom@aol.com](mailto:hufftom@aol.com)

## Concerts

### Classics and Cheesecake

*Sunday, October 7 at 4 p.m.*  
St. Alfred's Episcopal Church,  
1601 Curlew Road, Palm Harbor

This is a concert with a wide variety of classical instrumental and vocal selections performed by St. Alfred's Episcopal Church musicians. At the intermission all go to the parish hall to sample a variety of cheesecakes and other sweets. Following our cheesecake break we return for the second half of the program.



## POSITIONS AVAILABLE

**St. Anne's Episcopal (Anglican) Church in Crystal River** is looking for an Organist/Choir Director. A small choir meets only in the winter, rehearsing every Sunday at 9:00 a.m. prior to the 10:15 service. The organ is a two-manual Rodgers in good condition, and the piano is tuned to the organ for possible duets. Extensive music library. Compensation is negotiable.

Please contact Christina Scarbrough: [muettisquirt@hotmail.com](mailto:muettisquirt@hotmail.com).

**Venice Presbyterian Church** is looking for an Associate Organist/Accompanist with appropriate education and experience in several areas: organ/piano skills, hymn-playing, improvisation, presentation of solo organ literature and choral accompaniment. Applicants must be comfortable with a variety of musical worship styles. This is a salaried part-time position, requiring 15 hours/week and a yearly salary range of \$15,000. to \$17,000., negotiable.

Contact Andrew R. Galuska. Phone: (941) 488 - 2258, ext. 122. Cell: (941) 468 - 7864.

Email: [agaluska@venicepresbyterian.org](mailto:agaluska@venicepresbyterian.org) Website: [www.venicepresbyterian.org](http://www.venicepresbyterian.org)

**First Church of Christ, Scientist** : Note—the listing that was in the original version of the Windline for August advertised a position at this Church in error. We have been informed that there is no position available. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

## SUBSTITUTE LIST

### ORGANISTS / DIRECTORS / ACCOMPANISTS / VOCALISTS

Please send updates or corrections for this list to Placement Coordinator **Harryette Williams** by calling **727-596-5968** or emailing her at **hwilliams79@tampabay.rr.com**.

Note: *Inclusion in the two lists below does not constitute the Chapter's endorsement of skills, and thus it encourages interviews with all prospective substitutes.*

Janice Beach	727-391-3145	Organist ( <i>temporary only</i> )
James Biggers	727-784-8450	Organist
Edi Evans	727-446-3739	Organist
Grayce Hillman	727-642-7322	Organist or Organist/Director
Roberta Hoopes	727-442-8333	Choir Director
Dorothy Olsen	727-784-8620	Organist ( <i>Winter Resident</i> )
Rhoda Young	727-535-2125	Choir Director/Vocalist

### SUBSTITUTE ORGANISTS FOR WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS (Other than Sunday mornings)

Stephen Allen	813-968-7095	Tom Huffman	727-409-8726
James Biggers	727-784-8450	Robert Kirchner	727-674-5118
Cheryl Brouette	727-785-8081	Faye Monroe	727-260-3990
Edi Evans	727-446-3739	Dr. Linda Pointer	727-441-1099
David Owens	727-595-8196	Dr. Sandra Rogers	727-937-9780
Grayce Hillman	727-642-7322		

### The Peace Project Live CD Recording

The Master Chorale is pleased to announce that pre-orders for a live CD recording of the "The Peace Project" are now available online ([www.masterchorale.com](http://www.masterchorale.com)) for only \$15 plus shipping/handling. The CD is set to be released on August 4th. A Track listing is also available on the Master Chorale website.

#### Guest Performers:

Sharon Scott, vocalist  
Valerie Gillespie, saxophone  
Kevin Beckner, narrator  
Robert Winslow, accompanist  
Mark Neuenschwander, bass  
Ian Goodman, drums

#### Concert Description:

"The Peace Project" explored the many ways people communicate empathy, kindness, and love through various genres of music. The concert featured The Master Chorale with music that is driven by beauty and moving text. Moments of exceptional a cappella singing were woven through a concert with the unbridled passion of gospel, jazz, anthem, and motet. Included on the program was a premiere of a new work by famed conductor/composer André Thomas plus classical music by Rachmaninoff, Paulus, and Bernstein.



## 2012-2013 Proposed Programs

September 23 **Dinner & Choral Workshop/Anthem Reading**  
 (Sunday) Dr. James Bass, Artistic Director of the Master Chorale  
 6 p.m. *St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Clearwater*

October 26 **Pipe Screams**  
 (Friday) *1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church, Dunedin*  
 7 p.m. *Please let Stephen Allen know if you would like to play on*  
*loween concert This is your chance to play something really scary.*

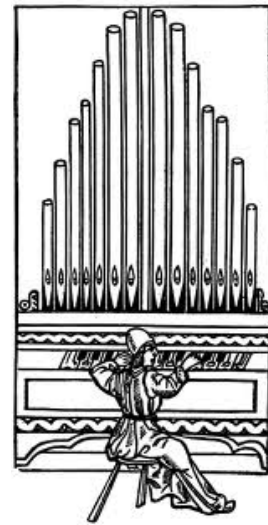
*the Pipe Screams Hal-*

November 17 **Handbell Workshop**  
 (Saturday) *Northwood Presbyterian Church, Clearwater*  
 9 - Noon

December 26 Student Gathering  
 (Wednesday) *Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Largo*  
 10 a.m.

December 29 **Christmas Party**  
 (Saturday) or  
 December 30

January 13 **Andrew Kotylo, Organ Recital**  
 (Sunday) *Peace Memorial Presbyterian Church*  
 3 p.m.



March 1 **Early Music Festival – Guest Artist TBA**  
 (Friday) *1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church, Dunedin*  
 7:30 p.m.

March 2 **Early Music Festival—Student Recital**  
 (Saturday) *1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church, Dunedin*

March 10 **Early Music Festival Choral Concert**  
 (Sunday) *Peace Memorial Presbyterian Church*  
 3 p.m.

April 21 **Massimo Nosetti, Organ Recital**  
 (Sunday) *Prince of Peace Lutheran, Largo*  
 3 p.m.

May 19 - **Spring Banquet**

### Newsletter Items

Please submit any Newsletter Items by the 15th of the month before you want your item to be posted to the e-mail address below. Also use this address to inform me of any e-mail updates including if you are receiving multiple copies of the Newsletter. ([NewsletterClwAGO@msn.com](mailto:NewsletterClwAGO@msn.com)) Thanks, Scott Garrett, Newsletter Editor

## Bring back the organ!

December 27th, 2011

*This essay was written by John Allen Bankson, Adjunct Professor of Music at Louisiana Tech University and pastor at John Knox Presbyterian Church in Ruston, Louisiana. Mr. Bankson published the essay on his Knowtea blog, <http://knowtea.com>.*

Throughout the 1990s, churches experimented with the “seeker-friendly” or “Willow Creek” philosophy of church marketing. One of the underlying premises of this philosophy was, if you want to attract “unchurched” people to your church, then the last thing your church should resemble is—a church. Pulpits had to go, replaced by flimsy music stands that could be removed at a minute’s notice. Baptismal fonts and Communion tables had to be kept sight unseen (only to be brought out for the midweek “believers’ service”: Sunday was reserved for the “unchurched”). Many churches got rid of the choir (as we saw last time) in favor of more showbiz-oriented “worship teams” or “praise teams”. In some cases, the choirs stayed around, although they were usually relegated to the role of background singers for the “stars” on the worship team. But even if the choir escaped the axe, the organ (and the organist) almost never did.

So far, the American church in the 21st century is exploring emergent and missional philosophies. (I realize that these terms are not synonymous, but there is considerable overlap between the two.) One of the encouraging aspects of these current trends is that churches have finally realized that most worshipers are longing for a sense of connectedness to historic Christianity. People want to know that they are part of a larger story: a story that began long before we arrived on the scene and that will continue long after we are gone. Seeker-friendly churches could not deliver the goods in this area. Seeker-friendly worship was extremely tied to its own temporal and geographic context, whereas emergent or missional worship tries to reflect a more global view as well as what Robert Weber called the “ancient-future” outlook. One important element, however, is still largely missing:

*Bring back the organ.*

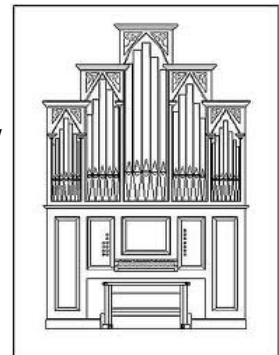
If you ask the average person on the street what a church is “supposed” to look like, they will most likely mention pews, stained glass windows, pulpits, altars, etc.: all those “churchy” furnishings the Willow Creek movement tried to eradicate. Similarly, in surveys, people routinely associate church music with hymns, choirs, and organs. In Western culture, the sound of a pipe organ is probably the most “churchy” sound people can imagine. For some reason, church leaders have got it in their heads that “people don’t want that,” but this is mistaken. Marva Dawn, in *Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down*, cites a survey of American Christian teenagers which reveals that the type of music they deem appropriate for worship is music that is characterized by all these “churchy” elements: choirs, hymns, and the organ. Adults suppose that teens will consider rock and roll the most appropriate for worship, since that is what they prefer to listen to in their daily lives, but this is not the case. So by removing “churchy” music and instruments in

the name of “what the young folks like” actually results in an environment that young people actually find fake and, frankly, embarrassing. If the survey Dawn cites is any indication, when young people go to church, they want it to “sound like church.” They want it to “feel like church.” Most churches can take one simple step that will go a long way in recapturing that feeling:

*Bring back the organ!*

Besides the fact that most people connect the sound of a pipe organ with church more than any other sound, there are many sound reasons (pun intended) for retaining (or recovering) the use of the organ as the primary instrument in worship.

**1. The organ is the best man-made instrument for supporting congregational singing.** I say the best man-made instrument, because the best instrument for encouraging singing is the human voice itself. One sings more freely and with greatest confidence when one is surrounded by good singers. But if one is going to have accompanied singing in church (discussions of accompanied vs. unaccompanied singing will have to wait for another time), instruments that most closely resemble the human voice in terms of sound production will encourage better singing than instruments which differ from the human voice. The human voice is a wind instrument: supported air is sent through the larynx, causing the vocal folds to vibrate, thus creating sound. The organ is a wind instrument too: actually a collection of wind instruments all in one place (reeds, flutes, trumpets, etc.), and one person can play them all simultaneously. The piano is a percussion instrument, not a wind instrument. As soon as a note is struck on the piano, the sound immediately begins to decay. That does not encourage sustained singing “on the breath.” This is not to say that the piano is not a great instrument, or that great music has not been written for the piano: I am a pianist myself and love the instrument a great deal. But it is not well-suited for accompanying congregational praise. Neither is the guitar. The guitar is, technically, a stringed instrument, but it is played as a percussion instrument (by plucking or strumming the strings), not in a sustained manner (bowing) as other stringed instruments can be played. Guitar-led congregational singing is inevitably throaty singing, and is usually pretty anemic as well, except for those who are singing into microphones, and then, of course, their voices are being artificially amplified or “lifted up,” and there should be no artifice in our worship. Forced, throaty singing does damage to the musical instrument that God gave each of us (our voices): God’s people need to learn to sing “on the breath” (note: this is not the same thing as breathy singing!), and accompanying singing with wind instruments, such as the organ and/or a brass choir, is one of the best ways to encourage healthy singing.



**2. The organ is made up of choirs.** In my previous article (about choral music in the church), we saw that biblical worship is all about choirs. If Christian worship is fundamentally choral worship, then it follows that instrumental choirs would accompany the singing of human choirs (remember that the congregation itself is one of those human choirs). One should assemble brass choirs, woodwind choirs, handbell choirs, etc. to use in worship, but it is impractical to use these on a weekly basis. (I do not recommend the weekly use of a church wind ensemble or orchestra, as they are almost always out of tune and do not play together, due to their limited rehearsal time. It seems more desirable to have these groups make contributions to worship frequently enough that their gifts are being employed, but not so often that their performances sound thrown together. Worship should not be artificial, but it should not be shoddy either.) Employing the organ is a way to have wind-ensemble-led congregational singing every week. Furthermore, the various choirs (ranks) or families of pipes that make up the organ mean that there can be an almost limitless variety of tone colors in the worship service. A talented, thoughtful organist will change registrations as necessary to complement the changing moods of the various stanzas of the hymns that are sung.

**3. The organ is a powerful instrument.** It is no wonder that the organ is called “the king of instruments.” Such power is useful in painting a picture in worship of the majesty and grandeur of our God. Now many instruments can produce loud sounds, but in the case of the organ, it is the instrument itself, not the performer, that is the source of this strength. A pianist must exert his strength to play loudly, drawing attention to his own might. Playing the organ indeed requires great skill, but the player himself is dwarfed by the sheer magnitude of the instrument, so the “Look at me!” factor is much less in the case of an organist than with a pianist, guitarist, or other instrumentalist. It helps to have such an instrument in worship that points beyond ourselves, particularly one whose power comes not from the one playing it, but from the wind, as God reminds us that life is to be lived “not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit (Heb. ruach, “breath” or “wind”), declares the Lord of hosts (Zechariah 4:6).”

**4. The organ is a very expensive instrument.** Yes, I see this as a plus, not a drawback. Too often churches assume that “good stewardship” means being cheap, but some things are worth the money. Christ’s honor is worth the money. We live in a nation littered with disposable-looking metal buildings erected as houses of worship because it was the cheap thing to do. Contrast this with the great Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals of Europe, which took centuries to complete. Those who began building those churches never lived to see their completion. In many cases, their children never lived to see the completion of these churches. That is dedication to something bigger than one’s self. That is looking past one’s own nose. Evangelicals gather in their disposable buildings and play disposable music on disposable instruments. An organ installation, by contrast, is a permanent thing. It says, “We are committed to excellence in church music, and we want to en-

courage that excellence for many, many generations to come.” Isn’t Christ’s honor worth that? Spend the money on something that will last. Let the world keep its disposable music.

**5. The organ can help create a “church culture.** The church should not follow the world; rather, in all areas, including the arts, the church should lead the way, setting the example of excellence, and let the world follow suit. For the past century or more, the world has led the way and the church has followed suit, usually with results that are far from excellent. Evangelical Christians in particular have been known for creating inferior copies for themselves of things that already exist in the world. This is what Francis Schaeffer referred to as “the Evangelical ghetto.” Or, as Ken Meyers has put it, Evangelical Christians have learned to be of the world but not in it. Instead of aping the culture around us, the church should be creating a “church culture” that is superior to anything in the world. In church music, the organ is the cornerstone of the “church sound” and thus of a church musical culture. With the exception of some concert halls and old-time movie palaces, churches are pretty much the only buildings where pipe organs can be found, and since the organ is not a portable instrument, that also means churches are pretty much the only places that pipe organ music will be heard. This means that the sound of church music will be unique. A renaissance of interest in pipe organ music will also mean that those churches with fine pipe organ installations will be in demand as locations for recitals, which can only help further the church’s visibility in the community.

Colleges in this country have seen a dramatic decrease in the number of organ majors. It is no wonder: young people have grown up in churches in which, if there was a pipe organ, it sat in a corner gathering dust. Since so few churches are looking for organists, the job prospects for young people who might desire to become organists are slim, so they major in something else. But it is not too late. Forward-thinking churches can, and should, endow organ scholarships for the purpose of raising up a new generation of skilled, theologically-minded church organists who can help create a new, more excellent culture of church music. If your church’s organ is in disrepair, have it fixed. If it has fallen into disuse or is used rarely, have that problem fixed too. Search for a gifted, dedicated organist (i.e., one who takes his/her job seriously and will practice accordingly), and reward him or her handsomely for undertaking this important part of leading in worship (you pay peanuts, you get monkeys). We need to restore the “king of instruments” to a place of prominence, as it can help us exalt the King of kings like no other instrument can.

*Bring back the organ!*