

The American Guild of Organists

Windline—September 2021

Clearwater (FL) Chapter

www.clearwaterago.org

**Dr. Shawn Thomas, Dean
Thomas D. Huffman, *Windline* Editor**

From the Dean:

Friends,

Like many of you who are involved in a variety of organizations figuring out how to plan for 2021-2022, we have again come to terms with a virus that has reared its unwelcome head. Your Executive Board met in mid-August and crafted a bold calendar of events. We left the meeting energized by what would be a very fruitful season. Our highlight of the fall season was to be a *Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza* event held at Church of the Ascension in October. As some of the most vulnerable to the virus are children under 12, your chapter leaders, in conversation with Church of the Ascension decided to postpone until Spring 2022.



Our most successful and rewarding events from 2020 will take place again in 2021: our annual *PipeScreams* concert, and *A Musical Twelve Days of Christmas*. As of now *PipeScreams* is still scheduled to take place in person at First Presbyterian Church, Dunedin. In the event we must “pivot” (aren’t we all tired of that word?), we will easily shift to YouTube. *A Musical Twelve Days* was such a success, we will once again record in area churches and release one video each day from Christmas through Epiphany. I hope you will consider playing on one of these programs.

We are still hoping to have in-person events this year, but of course it depends on public health guidelines. Events will be publicized when we know for sure it is safe to gather in large numbers. Stay tuned!

Shawn Thomas, Dean

“Growing Your Membership”

by Peggy BeVille

(Peggy is Secretary of the Clearwater Chapter and Organist/Director of Traditional Music at St. Luke’s United Methodist Church, St. Petersburg)



As a new board member (really as an old, inactive member), I thought I could contribute something by watching the *Growing Your Membership* sponsored by the National AGO in August. What I liked about GYM webinar is that it is so applicable to our churches as well as the AGO. GYM is a process represented by the acronym ACCRR:

Acquire,
Cultivate,
Convert,
Retain,
Refer,

but it appears to me to take a village as I’ve heard before.

Reading the multitude of really good ideas could be mind-boggling. Maybe that’s why so many organizations don’t have an intentional plan for growth. It appears to me that it takes a professional (the presenter is a professional organizational growth person working in Orlando) or a team. From watching the webinar, I am convinced that whether it is called a team or committee, a group of members volunteering to work from their knowledge, experience and strength can make growth happen. I dislike surveys, but perhaps one could be created on SurveyMonkey to find our members who would like to participate in growing our membership. The 10-page handout can be found at: [Suggestions for Growing & Strengthening Your Chapter](#) .

Because there was so much information to present and participation from the viewers, not everything got covered so a Part II webinar has been scheduled for September 13, 2021, at 6:00 PM on Zoom. Registration is required.

Chapter Officers—A Closer Look

Each issue of The Windline will include a brief biographical sketch of one of our Clearwater Chapter Officers. This month’s focus is on our Dean, Dr. Shawn Thomas.

SHAWN THOMAS serves as Parish Musician at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, an ELCA congregation in Largo, FL. A graduate of the University of West Florida and the University of Florida, Shawn recently received the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Church Music from the University of Kansas. His past teachers include Michael Bauer, Laura Ellis, James Higdon, Lynne Lauderdale, and Kevin Vogt. While in Gainesville, Shawn served as the Associate Organist and Music Intern at First Presbyterian Church under Dr. Mark Coffey, where he had the honor of premiering Aaron David Miller’s Chorale Fantasy on “Ein Feste Burg,” commissioned in honor of the tenth anniversary of their C.B. Fisk pipe organ. Shawn has performed in master classes with virtuoso organists Michel Bouvard, Vincent Dubois, and Olivier Latry, among others.



Shawn is married to Michelle, the Cathedral Administrator at the Episcopal Cathedral of St. Peter, St. Petersburg, FL. Shawn and Michelle are the fur-parents of two cats (Mac and Cheese) and two dogs (Nelson and Buddy). They are self-proclaimed craft beer aficionados and have visited over 40 breweries in the Tampa Bay area, and over 200 across the country.

Keith Martin Rasmussen

1953 - 2021

Keith Rasmussen, a Clearwater Chapter member and newly elected member of our Executive Board, died unexpectedly on July 23, 2021 in Ruskin FL.

Keith was born in Janesville, Wisconsin, on October 15, 1953, one of three sons born to Sherrill and Alice Herwick Rasmussen. He grew up in a setting where music was an important activity in both the immediate and extended family. His father was a lyric tenor and trombonist, an aunt was a professional organist, and an uncle was also a tenor.

Although he started piano lessons at an early age, his real interest was in the trombone. Jay Main, his trombone teacher, helped him become keenly aware of the importance of accurate pitch and intonation. All of his academy teachers - Louise Larmon, Lloyd Fischer, and Gwendolyn Husted - were inspirational and by his junior year at Wisconsin Academy, he was enjoying the time spent in practice, particularly on the organ, and considering the possibility of majoring in music.

During that year, inspired by his visits to Andrews University, where he heard C. Warren Becker playing the organ, Rasmussen made a decision to major in music and after graduating from WA in 1972, enrolled at AU as a music major in keyboard performance. He completed a B.Mus. in 1977 with an organ major, piano minor, and a secondary emphasis in choral techniques.



A year later, he received an M.Mus. in organ performance. Becker was his teacher in both degrees, even though he was on sabbatical much of the time during Rasmussen's year of graduate study. Because of Becker's frequent absences during that year, Keith helped teach organ lessons at the university and organize the music schedule at the church.

He was hired by Kingsway College in Ontario, Canada, in 1978 and would teach there until 1996. In those eighteen years, he taught keyboard lessons, accompanied the choir, became music chair, and taught computer classes for five years. His work in the latter area of teaching led to a quadrupling of student computer usage at the school.

During these years he also took organ lessons from David Craighead for ten summers as he continued graduate music study at the Eastman School of Music.

It was during his time at KC that Rasmussen demonstrated an innate flair for organizing major musical events. He served on the board of the Oshawa Symphony as chair of the program committee, organizing the concert season and arranging for performances in various venues. When he left the area, he was made an honorary member of the Oshawa Symphony Association in appreciation for his work. He also organized major choral events for the Royal Canadian College of Musicians and received an award for attracting the greatest number of new members to the Oshawa Centre.

From the beginning of his career, Rasmussen was involved in church music, serving as organist and pianist for the College Park Church at Oshawa from 1978 to 1997 and the Bridge Street United Church in Belleville from 1996 to 2001, where he also directed the choir. He served as organist and choirmaster at the Simcoe United Church in Oshawa for twelve years, from 1984 to 1996.

Subsequent positions included teaching at Albert College in Belleville, Ontario, for a year and serving as full-time organist and choir director at First Presbyterian Churches in Statesville, North Carolina, from 2001 to 2005, and Winter Haven, Florida, from 2005 to 2009. Most recently he served as Director of Liturgy and Music at St. Anthony Parish in Lakeland, Florida, and was Professor of Piano at Polk State College in nearby Winter Haven, a position he held beginning in 2007.

We received this note from Dr. Duncan McMillan (music faculty University of Tampa):

I am writing on behalf of my son, **Cameron MacMillan**, former member of GPMTA. He requested that I reach out to my professional friends and colleagues who may be able to benefit from his services.

He has just finished his MM degree at the University of Oklahoma and would like you all to know that he is available on commission to provide arrangements of music – from vocal/instrumental solo to chamber ensembles/ full orchestra – for your music programs. He is a very proficient transcriber and arranger, with experience in all genres.

This summer is an especially opportune time for him to create arrangements for your fall programs as he is staying in Norman, OK, pursuing Suzuki teaching certifications online and has lots of free time for composing and arranging projects.

Below is a link to an orchestral reduction he wrote and performed at the 2019 Brevard Music Festival (Mussorgsky's 'Night on Bare Mountain' transcribed for cello quartet).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ui_dyH4o7Kk

His email for direct contact is cameronmacmillan@verizon.net, and his cell phone is 727 735 2984.

Brief Notes

- Congratulations to our dean, Shawn Thomas on completing work last month on the DMA degree from the University of Kansas.
- Tom Huffman has accepted the position of Organist/Choirmaster at the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Dunedin beginning September 27.
- Dr. Linda Pointer has been appointed to the vacancy on the Executive Board created by the death of member Keith Rasmussen.
- The next meeting of the Executive Board will be Wednesday, September 8 at 10:00 a.m. at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church.





Free Membership

The AGO National Council is committed to membership recruitment, retention, and growth within our organization. During the Year of the Young Organist, July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022, any individual under the age of 30 can become a member or renew her/his membership for **FREE** as part of this program.

The Year of the Young Organist will provide opportunities for both personal and professional development. Programs will include master classes and webinars on a wide variety of topics including: Organ Maintenance, Insurance, Retirement and healthcare, Conducting, Video recording, and Vocal pedagogy.

[Click here](#) for a flyer to share with a young organist to promote this free membership.

Welcome to four students of Dr. Steven Ball at Jesuit High School that have joined the AGO with this opportunity:

Aidan Agustines

Christian Micko

John Rozance

Jason Thrower

Welcome New Members

*Ms. Colleen Rabe
Safety Harbor, FL
adagio1inc@gmail.com*

*Wendy Roth, BA, MA
Dunedin FL
rothclw@aol.com*

For full addresses and phone numbers, check the website member directory



TAO September 2021

Calendar

- Monday, September 27 Opening Chapter Event
(details to come, governed by covid rate)
- Sunday, October 24 Timothy Belk, Organ
Peace Memorial Presbyterian, Clearwater—3:00 p.m.
- Friday, October 29 Pipescreams
First Presbyterian, Dunedin—7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, November 20 Organ Crawl to Gainesville
Organs to visit: First Presbyterian: C.B. Fisk, 2002 (III/52)
Holy Trinity Episcopal: Visser-Rowland, 1995 (III/65)
University of Florida: E.M./Aeolian Skinner-Moller-Reuter(V/97)
- December 25-January 6 A Musical 12 Days of Christmas. Recordings due Dec. 13
- Friday, January 7 Twelfth Night Dinner at Alfano's Restaurant—6:00 p.m.
- Sunday, February 6 Member recital
St. Ignatius RC Church, Tarpon Springs—3:00 p.m.
- Sunday, March 13, 2022 Erik Wm. Suter, Organ
Peace Memorial Presbyterian, Clearwater—3:00 p.m.
- Saturday, April 2 Workshop with the Seipp/Sheets Trumpet and Organ Duo—11:00
Sunday, April 3 Concert—3:00 p.m.
Prince of Peace Lutheran, Largo
- Spring 2022 Pedals, Pipes and Pizza
Episcopal Church of the Ascension, Clearwater
An all day event for children and youth to get acquainted with the organ and carillon. Dr.
Laura Ellis and Dr. Linda Pointer are the faculty for the day.

Positions Available

Anona United Methodist Church, Largo, Florida, is an inclusive church with both a pioneering and innovative spirit in our 150-year history. Anona is seeking an Organist/Associate Director to provide inspirational organ and piano music, along with worship leadership support for our Traditional Worship services.

This is a full-time position with benefits. Email a resume, and links to videos playing organ and piano to jeremy@anona.com

Duties/Tasks

- Support and uplift Traditional worship services through inspirational and well-prepared organ and piano music.
- Prepare music for weddings, funerals, and other special events as needed.
- Work with the Executive Pastor and Pastoral Team on Traditional worship planning.
- Provide accompaniment support for the Wednesday choir and directing and accompaniment support for additional Traditional worship groups and ensembles.
- Organize, schedule, and rehearse soloists, ensembles, and other musical groups as needed to support the Traditional worships services.

Participate in regular coaching sessions with the Executive Pastor, and regular meetings with the worship teams and church Program Directors.

Skills & Abilities

- Strong organ and piano skills, and experience in leading musical groups in worship.
- Experience in leading inspirational Traditional worship services with excellence.
- Organizational and planning skills in communicating and scheduling of worship groups and services (knowledge of Planning Center Online and ProPresenter software helpful).

A teachable spirit and willingness to learn Anona's culture and values.

Professional Background

- A degree in Music is preferred.

Demonstrated musical abilities in organ performance, piano accompaniment, and leading musical groups

Trinity Presbyterian Church, Clearwater, FL is seeking a tenor voice as part of the quartet for their live streaming service on Sundays. College age and up. Please Contact Gabe Irizarry, Interim Director of Music, at (321) 698-9873 for more information.

Check with our Chapter PLACEMENT COORDINATOR, Priscilla Ortoski
for possible additional listings or information

tap.tortoski1@verizon.net
(727) 845-4745

SUBSTITUTES AVAILABLE

(O=Organist only; O/D=Organist/Director; D=Director only; V=Vocalist)

Please send updates or corrections for this list to Placement Coordinator Priscilla Ortoski by calling (727) 845-4745 or emailing tap.tortoski1@verizon.net. Inclusion in the lists below does not constitute the Chapter's endorsement of skills, and thus it encourages interviews with prospective substitutes. Those listed must be a member of The American Guild of Organists.

Brent Douglas	(727) 459-7025 O, O/D
Herman G. (George) Fisher	(727) 339-3077 O (239) 398-4966 (cell)
Grayce Hillman	(727) 642-7322 O, O/D, V
Roberta Hoopes	(727) 560-3962 D
Dr. Linda Pointer	(727) 441-1099 O, O/D
Dr. Sandra Rogers	(727) 560-2376 O, O/D, V
Donald Rolander	(727) 804-6314 (cell) O, O/D

AVAILABLE FOR EVENTS—NOT SUNDAY MORNING

Stephen Allen	(813) 968-7095 O, O/D
Peggy BeVille	(727) 726-8457 O (727) 403-8166 (cell)
Cheryl Brouette	(727) 453-0317 O
Tom Huffman	(727) 409-8726 O, O/D

Clearwater AGO 2021-2022 Officers

DEAN:

Shawn Thomas
shawn@poplargo.org

BOARD MEMBERS

Carol Alexander (2022)
Mark Prater, AAGO, ChM (2022)
Bobbie Hoopes (2023)
Tom Hoehn (2023)
Linda Pointer (2024)
Brandon Vennink (2024)

GROM EDUCATION FUND

PETERSON SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Tom Huffman, Chair
bufftom@aol.com

PLACEMENT

COORDINATOR

Priscilla Ortoski
tap.tortoski1@verizon.net
(727) 845-4745

SUB-DEAN:

Timothy Belk

SECRETARY:

Peggy BeVille

TREASURER:

Bob Booth

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:

Edward Peterson
(727) 787-0922