

The Trompette

The Newsletter of the Westchester Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

OCTOBER, 2011

VOLUME 10, #2

From the Dean's Bench

Hello Everyone!

This past September 11th at a beautiful little church in Croton-on-Hudson called St. Augustine's Episcopal, several Westchester AGO members were lucky to find seats! *Zinkali*, a beautiful ensemble composed of board-member **Laura Ravotti** on piano, flautist L. Elise Carter and French hornist Susan LaFever, performed mostly works of living composers. This unusual ensemble has found absolutely gorgeous music written or arranged for them, and their unique sound, with that sanctuary's lovely acoustics, made what should have been a difficult day's night, an evening of consolation. *Bravo* to Laura and her musical colleague's for creating something new out of three instruments rarely heard in this way. Personally, I am also so grateful to hear wonderful new music.

Our first meeting is September 26th at 4:00 p.m. at Hitchcock Presbyterian Church, with **John King**, host. *The Alexander Technique for Organists* will not only be of eye-opening interest to organists and other keyboard players, but to anyone who has ever wondered if there might be a better way to manage their everyday activities. I hope you all are able to make it to this meeting, and frankly, I'll go out on a limb -- if you make it to no other meeting this year, come to this one. Come hear speaker **Karla Diamond**; afterward, we'll enjoy lively discussions about organ-playing and share summer vacation stories during 'cookies and juice'! (Important: Karla recommends we wear comfortable clothing.)

Now, a look ahead to Fall! Please see the calendar of programs, mark yours and stick it on the *fridge*. (You know what I mean.) You will not want to miss anything! At our first meeting, September 26th at Hitchcock Presbyterian in Scarsdale, guest speaker Karla Diamond will teach us all about *The Alexander Technique for Organists*.

Our second meeting follows in two weeks, on Sunday, October 10th. We will have a sign-up sheet for car-pooling at the Sept. 26th meeting. Everyone must have a photo ID, such as a driver's license, or they will be refused admittance to West Point. **Craig Williams**, our host, will meet us at the Old Cadet Chapel at 3:00, where we will park in the circle in front of this small building in the old graveyard. I have maps available and driving directions, but it will be simpler to plan ahead and car-pool with several other members. After the Old Cadet Chapel we'll drive up to the Cadet Chapel where Craig will talk about the magnificent Möller organ, which will be accessible to us to play! Please don't be shy, and bring some music to try out. If you can *google* 'West Point Organs' you will be able to find pictures of this impressive instrument.

(Continued next page)

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Job seekers – there's help from the AGO. Please see the accompanying article in this issue of the *Trompette*, visit our website, agowestchester.org, click on American Guild of Organists, and you'll find lots of information. Thanks to our Webmaster, **Virginia Bender**, for always keeping our website filled with information helpful to the Chapter.

Bye for now,

Alice Avouris

The 2010 – 2011 Season

Sunday, October 10, 2010, 3:00 p.m.

West Point Organ Crawl (Host: Craig Williams)

To carpool, call Alice Avouris, 962-2015

Saturday, November 6, 2010, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Pedals, Pipes and Pizza: a Young People's Introduction to the Organ

(Presenters: Joyce Gardner & Joe Nigro)

Valhalla Methodist Church (Host: Joyce Gardner)

Sunday, January 9, 2010 (snow date: Jan. 16) 4:00 p.m.

Twelfth Night Party (at the home of Phaedon and Alice Avouris, Yorktown Heights)

Sunday, February 6th, 2011

Members' Recital

First Congregational Church, Chappaqua (Host: Keith Robellard)

Sunday, March 20, 2011, 4:00 p.m.

Creating and Maintaining a Successful Children's Choir (Presenter: Eileen Laurence)

Katonah Presbyterian Church (Host: Eileen Laurence)

Sunday, May 22, 2011

Presentation by Dr. Gavin Black

of the *Princeton Early Keyboard Center*

The Old Dutch Church, Sleepy Hollow (Host: Jeremy Goldsmith)

Saturday, June 4, 2011 (date tentative)

Wanamaker Organ Day, Macy's Department Store, Philadelphia (Host: Kevin Walsh)

Bus from Westchester to Philadelphia and back

Westchester AGO presents:
Sunday, October 10, 2010, 3:00pm

West Point Organ Crawl

Host: Craig Williams

To carpool, call Alice Avouris, 914/962.2015

Interview with a board member . . .

Meet Karen Longwell

Karen Longwell is Music Director/Organist for St. Columbanus Church in Cortlandt Manor, NY, where she directs a senior and junior choir. She has her Bachelors from Ithaca College in Theatre and spent twenty-six years in Manhattan working as a professional performer on Broadway, regional theatre and in movies. Among her credits are the revival of *Camelot* starring Robert Goulet (Guinevere u/s), Radio City holiday shows, and a national tour of *Cats* understudying Grizabella. She toured in *The Marriage of Figaro* from California to Nova Scotia. She performs with *Sing We Enchanted*, an a cappella group specializing in renaissance music. She was organist for 3 ½ years at Stevens Methodist Church in South Salem, N.Y. She teaches voice and has written/directed musical productions with Harvey Summer Camp and Panas High School. She studied piano with Wayne Leupold in her teen years.

Alice Avouris: Karen, you are a really multi-talented musical artist. When did you seriously consider becoming an organist?

Karen Longwell: That’s a hard question, because I don’t think I ever had dreams of becoming an organist. I went to college to be a professional singer and went to New York City. After I moved to Westchester I looked around and realized that all the professional musicians up here were church musicians who did other things on the side. So, with piano skills it was a natural that I would eventually land an organist job. I’m still learning how to play this magnificent instrument.

Alice: In your bio, you mention studying piano with organ pedagogue and organ music publisher, Wayne Leupold. What other teachers inspired you?

Karen: My choral director in high school was influential. He taught us passion for music, along with sight reading (both piano and singing). He played all the wind instruments, the bass violin, and the piano. Just by his example he taught us that nothing was impossible. Believe it or not we did the Brahms *Requiem* 3 times. We sang Beethoven’s *Choral Fantasia* twice; Hindemith, Vivaldi, Mozart. Could a public school do that today?

Alice: Where did you grow up? What is the name of your high school?

Karen: It’s West Genesee High School in Camillus, NY, outside of Syracuse.

Alice: Karen, what advice do you have for beginning organists, or organists just starting out in a church job?

Karen: Go with your instincts. A lot of what we do is feeling out the congregation and going with the “flow” of the people you’re playing for. Are they traditional? Do they want classical or contemporary music? Or both? What are the musical strengths; i.e. does anyone play an instrument? How can you best utilize what you’re given? Taking chances can pay off: at first my congregation grumbled at the Gregorian chant but are now coming around. They realize it can be very meditative.

Alice: That’s great advice: creativity and flexibility are real gifts in a church music director. And introducing the congregation to new music, such as Gregorian chant, to enhance the spiritual, -- we should spend some time exploring that at a future AGO meeting.

Sometimes balancing a music career and family life is a challenge. What’s your experience?

Karen: An organist job fits very well with parenthood – one of the few that do. It’s not 9 to 5. The only downside is that your weekends are tied up. My son (13) realizes that we don’t go on weekend trips or fun excursions and he’s learned to make adjustments. He hangs with his friends. My oldest, a daughter, went with me to church and sang solos. She’s now working on singing professionally. I don’t have experience with *little* children

-- mine were nearly teenagers when I started working in churches. Sleeping all morning is their specialty!

Alice: My daughter sang for me, too, in the children's choir. I was so proud! Of all of your musical activities, which are the most rewarding to you?

Karen: They say raising children is the hardest job you'll ever love. Well, I say directing a children's choir is the hardest job you'll ever love. They're exhausting to rehearse because their attention span is...short. In some ways I feel sorry for them: they have to sit still and listen to teachers for six hours; then they come to me and I'm telling them to be quiet and listen. But they absorb everything like sponges and can surprise you with how well they were listening. They've taken to singing Latin like ducks to water. (Better than their parents.) I do feel a sense of pride when they sing. They'll take these memories with them into adulthood.

Alice: Children's Choirs – we will have a program on this topic next spring, at Katonah Presbyterian Church, led by Eileen Lawrence on March 20th. We're planning an interactive panel discussion on how to create and maintain a successful children's choir. Please share your ideas with us.

Karen: In my situation I have a school attached to the church, and the choir was well-established when I joined. But if you want to start one from scratch my instinct would be to find any children's organization attached to the church, i.e. a Christian youth fellowship, girl scouts, boy scouts, a sponsored sports team, and go to one of their meetings to do a presentation/talk to recruit interested kids. The smaller elementary school kids take to choir easily. That's maybe where you could start. But, I spoke to a middle school music teacher who said enrollment is up in band and orchestra. Apparently nowadays it's "cool" to be in the school music groups. I know for a while kids thought music organizations were for "nerds" but that's changing. We should take advantage of that as music directors.

Alice: Did you ever have a last-minute emergency or pending disaster, and how did you deal with it?

Karen: I was coming home from the gym on a weekday as usual, when my cell phone rang. It was Monsignor wondering where I was. There was a funeral that was about to start and why wasn't I there and where was the singer? I drove home, picked up my music, and arrived at the church as the casket was being brought in. I sang and played the funeral mass stinky and sweaty in my gym clothes. It went fine. But the poor secretary in the office must've been embarrassed. She had forgotten to call me to let me know a few days ahead of time.

Alice: It's so good to hear stories of embarrassing professional moments – we need to know that life goes on afterwards and people generally forgive and forget! Thank you so much, Karen, for sharing your human and inspiring stories and advice 'from the bench' with us.

Reads & Mixtures

WE WELCOME OUR CHAPTER'S NEWEST MEMBERS!

Eugene Lavery
Assistant Director of Music/Organist: Bronxville Reformed Church

Rick Tripodi

HERE IS A LETTER WITH REGARD TO LAST MONTH'S REQUEST FOR RECITALISTS AT THE OSBORN CHAPEL:

Dear ones!

It seems the Osborn Chapel recitals in Rye are a "go!" We've had at least 6 people say they'd play. So, could you repeat the "appeal" that was included in the last newsletter? I will help coordinate the calendar along with the Osborn's Activities Director.

As you may recall, these are 1/2 hour organ recitals (2 p.m.) on Sunday afternoons at the Osborn Chapel in Rye, NY (right off I-95). We are set through October 31st, at the moment. So, we'd be scheduling for November and December 2010.

Thanks!

Jayson R. Engquist

E-MAIL: orgjre@verizon.net

TEL: (914) 777-1660

THE APPEAL (reprinted from the September 2010 issue):

NEEDED: Organ Recitalists for Sunday Afternoon Concerts at the Osborn, Rye NY. Weekly organ recitals on the two-manual Austin organ in the Osborn's Chapel. Sunday afternoons from 2:00--2:30pm. As there is no budget, concerts would be a "gift" from the visiting organists to the residents of the Osborn. The organ is tuned on a regular basis and kept in excellent condition. The residents are lovely people and they enjoy music immensely. If you are interested in participating, please contact: Jayson R. Engquist at orgjre@verizon.net or 914/ 777.1660. The concerts will begin in October, 2010

CLOSING NATIONAL 2010 AGO EVENT

(Reported by Jayson R. Engquist)

The 2010 national convention (<http://www.ago2010.org/events>) of the **American Guild of Organists** concluded on Thursday, July 8, 2010 with a bus trip to the beautiful Roman Catholic Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. which sits atop one of Washington's highest points. Most convention goers took advantage of the beautiful weather and sat or stood outside to hear a half-hour carillon recital preceding the organ and choral concert. The standing-room-only audience inside the Shrine heard a concert featuring several organ and choral works, including James MacMillan's *Tota pulchra es* (commissioned by the Basilica and performed by the Basilica choir conducted by Peter Latona with organist Daniel Sañez), David Hurd's *Three Psalms* (for choir and two organs performed by The Washington Chorus with conductor Julian Wachner and organists David Briggs and Renée Anne Louprette), Olivier Latry's *Salve Regina* (with Renée Anne Louprette, organist) and an improvised organ symphony (in four movements) by David Briggs, organist. These works utilized both the Basilica's front and rear gallery pipe organs. **The Washington Chorus** (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/31/AR2008033102466.html>) was one of the week's most impressive ensembles. The only 'downside' of this event was not being able to find adequate seating, once we got inside the Basilica. By the time most AGO members reached the inside (following the outdoor carillon concert), the general public (which had been allowed to enter) had taken most of the seats! Ushers quickly moved chairs from some of the side chapels to assist AGO members (making a lot of noise in the process, much to the chagrin of the audience members seated nearby) to accommodate the large crowd. Many people ended up standing for the entire concert (which lasted almost 2 full hours). Apparently shrines cannot be "reserved" for special events -- all are welcome to enter at any time.

Following the event, buses returned us to the Marriott Wardman Park hotel where a reception was held for all convention goers. The David Rees-Williams Jazz Trio performed and the cash bars were fully utilized by our members. The bars seemed to have constant lines, waiting for service! The reception afforded everyone a chance to review the week and to say good-bye to each other. We look for information for next year's Regional gatherings (our is a joint Region 1 and 2 event in Morristown, NJ) and the 2012 National AGO convention scheduled to be held in Nashville.

[Revised 9-10-2010]

AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS LAUNCHES NEW ONLINE CAREER CENTER

More than 150 Job Listings Posted for Organists and Conductors
as Well as Two Openings at THE AMERICAN ORGANIST Magazine

NEW YORK CITY — The AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS (AGO), the world's largest organization of organists and choral conductors and the leading advocate for equitable employment practices for church musicians, has partnered with JobTarget to provide a new career center for AGO members. The service is accessed through the AGO home page www.agohq.org.

Job seekers can search for positions available online using a wide array of search and sorting tools. Individuals can also upload résumés to be viewed by job recruiters and potential employers and sign up for job alerts when a new position is posted. Employers pay a modest fee to advertise positions available with JobTarget and to review résumés.

Powering more than 1,200 job sites, JobTarget is a leading operator of online job postings. "The AGO is delighted to announce that it has partnered with JobTarget to create a powerful and multi-functional new career center for all AGO members," declared AGO Executive Director James Thomashower. "Endorsed by the AGO Committee on Career Development and Support, JobTarget is a premier provider of online career services for professional membership organizations. By harnessing the power of the Internet, we are now able to offer five times as many listings as before, along with an array of new career services including the ability to search for jobs by key word, state, and zip code; receive job alerts when new jobs are posted in accordance with parameters set by the job seeker; create and save résumés that potential employers can review; and access a wide variety of new tools, search aids, and resources designed especially for job seekers."

In addition to more than 150 job listings for organists and conductors, the new AGO career center also includes two listings for openings on the AGO National Headquarters staff: an Editor and an Advertising/Marketing Manager for THE AMERICAN ORGANIST Magazine, the most widely read journal devoted to organ and choral music in the world, and the official journal of the AGO and the Associated Pipe Organ Builders of America. Complete job information can be found online at www.agohq.org.

Empty Benches

Director of Music Ministry (Second Announcement) -- A 250-member congregation seeks a permanent part-time Director of Music Ministry (approximately twenty hours/week) with proficiency in playing pipe organ, piano, and in choral conducting. Wide knowledge of sacred music including classical, Christian contemporary, gospel, and blended styles is required. There is one Sunday service and special services, plus one weekly evening rehearsal. Proficiency in recruiting, training and directing choirs of all ages is important. Also required is the ability to interact with the pastor, church staff and commissions in planning and presenting music for worship, as well as other

congregational needs. Salary & vacation negotiated by Personnel Commission; additional income from weddings, funerals, etc. White Plains Presbyterian Church, White Plains, NY 10601. Phone: 914/761.8585. Send cover letter, resume, and three references to:

wppcmdsearch@googlegroups.com

Music Director/Organist (Second Announcement) – Music Director is sought to lead a volunteer choir in a variety of music styles (gospel, contemporary Christian, hymns, etc). The successful candidate will be a skilled teacher who can introduce the choir and congregation to new and unfamiliar music. The Music Director/Organist will rehearse with the choir at least twice a month; offer the prelude, offertory, postlude and musical interludes during worship service; be able to accompany the congregation and pastor during the worship service. The Music Director/Organist will also have the responsibility for coordinating guest vocalists and musicians. Send resume and salary requirements to: Music Search Committee; Trinity UMC 130 S. Lexington Avenue, White Plains, NY 10606 or via fax: 914/761.2226 or via email: trinityumc130@verizon.net.

CONCERT CALENDAR

Sunday, October 3 at 7:00 pm

Pumpkins & Pipes – another *Three Organist Spectacular* (Kathryn Jones, Joseph Nigro & Thomas Zachacz) featuring works by Guilmant, Arnatt, Clérambault, Parry, Franck & Bach. Reception to follow in the Parish Hall. Saint Augustin Church, 140 Maple Avenue, New City, NY. 845/634.2407 \$10 donation suggested.

Friday, October 22 at 7:30 pm

Organ Recital – featuring Terence J. Flanagan. The Presbyterian Church of Mount Kisco, 605 Millwood Road, Mount Kisco, NY. 914/666.7001 Free-will offering

Sunday, October 24 at 5:00 pm

Organ Recital – Christopher Creghan performing works by Prokofiev, Bach & Fauré. Church of Saint Barnabas, 15 North Broadway, Irvington, NY. 914/591.8194 \$10 donation suggested.

FROM YOUR NEWSPAPER EDITORS...

Thank you all for your cooperation in getting your material **TO US** by the **20th of each preceding month**. We want to be able to deliver the Newsletter to you on or about the 1st of each month, and it takes a week or more to finalize the copy and layout, get it to and from the printer, and address, stamp and mail all of the copies. *The Trompette* is sent out by email, and by regular mail to those Members without an email address. The electronic versions are sent out immediately after finalization, but processing the printed copies can take a week or more, plus the delivery of the regular postal mail can additionally take a week or more. If you have an email address, but are presently receiving your copy by postal mail, consider receiving it electronically instead, saving the Chapter postage expense. Send your email address to: [Lois](#) Simmonds

Kindly do not send in items more than once. For the Concert Calendar, include event, date, time, location, cost (if any) and an information phone number. (Incomplete or unclear submissions cannot be printed.) Due to space constraints, articles and notices are edited.

If you have provided a notice for the “Empty Benches” section, please be advised that postings will be carried for 3 calendar months unless we are advised that the position has either been filled or is still active. Newest listings appear first. Listings carried more than one month will be arranged alphabetically by organization and will indicate the month they were first run. We appreciate your cooperation in keeping *The Trompette* accurate and up.to.date.

Send your concert notices, articles, and other materials to:

E.mail: (preferable): Thomas Zachacz (Compose in MS Word, if possible)

Postal Mail: T. Zachacz, *The Trompette*,

The Dean and the Executive Board encourage our Members to send informative articles and any other items of interest for publication in the Newsletter.

Thank you!

Lois Simmonds & Thomas Zachacz

Editors,

The Trompette

***Here is the LATEST issue of the
Westchester Chapter AGO Newsletter.....***

Inside:

***Review of the National Convention by Jason Engquist; the
AGO's New Online Career Center; Alice Avouris interviews
Karen Longwell; Empty Benches; Concert Calendar***

Westchester Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

The Trompette

Lois Simmonds &

Thomas Zachacz, Editors