

2015 AGO / QUIMBY REGIONAL COMPETITIONS FOR YOUNG ORGANISTS

CHECKLIST FOR CONVENTION COMPETITION COORDINATORS

NOTE: All publicity, correspondence, and documentation concerning the competition should use its correct name: **AGO/Quimby Regional Competitions for Young Organists.**

The Convention Competition Coordinator **must** have regular access to email and be proficient in its use.

The Regional Competition Coordinator will:

1. Become familiar with the competition rules, published in the October, 2014 issue of *The American Organist* and downloadable online at www.agohq.org.
2. Receive the information (including names, contact information, photographs and biographies) on all winners of chapter-level competitions in the region from the Regional Competition Coordinator no later than April 30, 2015. Include that information in the convention program book.
3. Notify all chapter competition winners of the date and place of the regional competition by **May 15, 2015**. Provide detailed information on the instrument: specification, compass, manual layout, number and location of pistons for each division, availability of memory levels, and other console accessories.
4. Schedule practice time and notify competitors of the schedules. Each competitor must receive a minimum of three hours practice on the competition instrument. In addition, each competitor must be given thirty minutes on the competition instrument on the day of the competition. Inform the competitors that late arrival will result in forfeiting their full practice time. See section 6 of the rules for Regional Level Competitions for more information.
5. Identify other local venues (churches, college/university facilities) where competitors may practice when they are not using the competition instrument. Schedule access to those instruments from the date when the competitors arrive and the use of the competition instrument through the entire day of the actual competition.
6. Notify competitors of the details of lodging (convention hotel is strongly recommended), transportation, meals and any other hospitality items during the competition period. State clearly the date on which the competition period ends and competitors assume responsibility for their own expenses. Also emphasize that chaperones will not receive any remuneration from the Guild. See sections 10 and 13.a. of the rules for details.
7. Appoint three judges and two alternates no later than **May 15, 2015** in consultation with the Councillor for the Region, the Regional Convention Coordinator, and the Regional Competition Coordinator. If any of these parties has a student that is a competitor, he or she cannot be a judge. These judges should be highly knowledgeable with regard to organ literature and performance practice. Ensure that no past or present teacher of a competitor, or any other teacher associated with a school attended by a competitor, serves as a judge for the competition.
8. The Competition Coordinator must ensure that, for each piece performed during the competition, each judge has a perusal score available during the competitors' performances. Judges might be encouraged to bring personal scores for this purpose; alternatively,

- coordinators might work with the competitors themselves to ensure availability of these materials (using school libraries, etc). Any identifying marks on scores should be erased or concealed. Any photocopies used must be produced solely for this perusal purpose and destroyed by the Coordinator immediately upon the competition's conclusion.
9. Submit the names and photos of the competitors for inclusion in the convention program book.
 10. **At least 20 days** prior to the competition:
 - Beginning in 2015, Regional Competitions for Young Organists (RCYO) competitors are expected to “accompany” (instead of “perform”) a hymn in each round. To ensure realistic conditions for these hymn accompaniments, it is important for competition coordinators to encourage adequate audience attendance at the competition rounds, thereby providing a singing “congregation.”
 - Inform the judges of the works (including editions of Bach works) to be performed. Judges may use their own scores.
 - Download from www.agohq.org three copies of each of the hymns chosen by the competitors.
 - Secure page-turners/assistants for competitors as requested, using neutral parties from the local chapter hosting the regional convention rather than persons known to the competitors. Assistants are prohibited from pulling stops or advising competitors in any way.
 - Assign a monitor to be present during the practice sessions. The monitor is **not** the same person as the page-turner/assistant or the competitor’s chaperone. The monitor should be stationed in a location that permits observation of the competitors without distracting them.
 - Arrange for an instrument to be available for each competitor for warming up prior to their performance. This may be either a second organ or a piano.
 - Allow competitors to sign up for practice time on other local organs (see #5 above). Arrange transportation for those who request it.
 - Confirm with the convention treasurer that sufficient funds for the first- and second-place prizes have been received from National Headquarters.
 10. Immediately prior to the competition:
 - Assign performance time of competition for each competitor and notify them. Build extra time into the schedule in case emergencies arise.
 - Give each competitor a phone number, preferably cell, at which you can easily be reached.
 - Check the condition of the instrument to be used for the competition and ensure that it has been properly tuned. Report any mechanical problems to the resident organist.
 - Learn how the performance venue functions: lights, sound system, keys, signage, locations of restrooms and water fountains, etc.
 - Identify and prepare a “green room” space for the competitors.
 - Prepare a printed program of the competition performances, omitting the performers’ names.
 - Prepare any necessary checks for the judges. See section 13.c. of the rules for details.
 11. During the practice period:

- Supervise the required start and end of each practice time, or assign someone else to do so.
 - No one is permitted in the room during practice except the competitor, a page-turner/assistant, and the monitor. Neither the competitor's teacher nor his/her chaperone may be present during practice.
 - If at all possible, have someone familiar with the competition instrument on site during practice times.
 - Assigned memory levels should be random and confidential. Do not post a list of the assigned levels. Make sure the level is reset after each competitor practices to avoid the possibility of copying/tampering.
 - Encourage competitors to report any mechanical malfunctions. Furnish a notepad for this purpose.
 - Competitors may not listen to each other practice.
12. During the competition:
- Ensure that the judges are positioned where they can best hear the competition instrument, yet are not seated immediately adjacent one another. The judges must be screened so they cannot visually identify the competitor; make sure that the screening is tall enough to conceal all of the competitors from view. The competitors may be visible to the audience.
 - Make certain that the judges arrive at the competition site at least 30 minutes early to examine the console, play the organ, and acquaint themselves with its sound.
 - Provide the judges with a list of any uncorrected mechanical problems.
 - Provide judges with the official form to score and rate the competitors (available from www.agohq.org). A copy of the Official Rules should also be available for their use.
 - Instruct the judges to provide signed, written comments to the competitors concerning their performances.
 - Make certain that each judge has copies of the works to be performed and a copy of each competitor's choice of hymn.
 - Remind judges of differences in editions.
 - Remind judges that the purpose of the competition is to **encourage** young organists. Judging should be based primarily on the differences in the quality of the performance rather than the differences in the difficulty of the work chosen. Even though judges can decide to withhold a prize, they should keep in mind the age of these players and their stage of development.
 - Remind judges that this stage of the competition is the conclusion of the AGO/Quimby Regional Competition for Young Organists. The winner will be invited to perform as a "Rising Star" at the 2016 National Convention in Houston, TX.
 - Be responsible for conducting the competition on an efficient schedule.
 - If they wish, competitors may sit in the audience to hear the rest of the competition.
 - Serve as "Master of Ceremonies" unless the Councillor for the Region is invited to do so. Use the script (available at www.agohq.org).
13. Immediately after the competition:
- Meet with judges to facilitate their decision-making concerning first- and second-place winners.

- In the event of a tie for first place, places will be determined by the sum of the scores on the 100-point scale. If this still results in a tie, then the judges will determine the first- and second-place winners by consensus.
- Encourage the judges to speak with the competitors about their performances after the results are announced.
- Conclude the competition as “Master of Ceremonies” unless the Regional Councillor is invited to do so. Use the script cited above.
- Remind the competitors to send thank-you notes to Michael Quimby.
- Confirm arrangements for a 45-minute recital by the first-place winner at the convention.
- Give the judges any necessary honorarium checks.
- Obtain the social security numbers of the 1st and 2nd place winners’ and give these to the Regional Convention treasurer so that the prizes may be awarded.
- Prepare a 1099 form for the first-place winner.
- Distribute the judges’ comment sheets to the competitors.
- Electronically submit the photographs, biographies, and updated contact information for the first- and second-place winners to AGO National Headquarters **no later than August 1, 2015**.

Thank you for volunteering for this important role.

If you have any questions, please contact Harold Calhoun at AGO Headquarters (212.870.2311, ext. 4318); competitions@agohq.org.

RCYO Competitions Committee

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2015 AGO/QUIMBY REGIONAL COMPETITIONS FOR YOUNG ORGANISTS

THE PURPOSE OF THIS COMPETITION IS TO ENCOURAGE YOUNGER ORGANISTS TO PURSUE EXCELLENCE, TO GAIN PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE, AND TO RECEIVE RECOGNITION FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS. THESE COMPETITIONS BEGIN AT THE CHAPTER LEVEL AND CONCLUDE AT THE SEVEN REGIONAL CONVENTIONS. THE WINNER OF EACH REGIONAL COMPETITION WILL BE INVITED TO PERFORM AT THE 2016 NATIONAL CONVENTION IN HOUSTON, TX. THE AGO/QUIMBY REGIONAL COMPETITIONS FOR YOUNG ORGANISTS ARE MADE POSSIBLE BY A GENEROUS GRANT FROM MICHAEL QUIMBY, PRESIDENT, QUIMBY PIPE ORGANS, INC.

Judges' Instructions: Each judge is expected to provide signed comments to competitors concerning their performances. These comments should be of a positive and constructive nature rather than destructive, and should in no way ridicule the performer. It is our goal to make these performances both motivating and encouraging – please remember to point out what is done well in addition to what needs work. Judges should allow for a tasteful difference of opinion in matters of style, interpretation, registration, etc. The coordinator will tell you the order in which each competitor's pieces will be played before he or she begins. Please write comments for each piece performed. Discussion with the competitors is also encouraged at the conclusion of the competition.

As you judge, consider:

- Accuracy
- Rhythmic security and freedom
- Tempo
- Phrasing and articulation
- Registration
- Awareness of stylistic period
- Musicianship and imagination

Assign points for EACH PIECE according to the following guide:

90 – 100	Outstanding performance, with few or no accuracy problems. Excellent sense of tempo, articulation, style, etc. All factors working together!
80 – 89	Very good in most respects, but still needs work in one or more areas.
70 – 79	More problems with accuracy, rhythm, etc.; needs even more work.
60 – 69	Many difficulties.

Please remember that outstanding performances can occur at any playing level – points should be given based on the quality of the performance, not the difficulty level of the music. The focus should be on achieving excellence in performance at the level the competitor plays and not ambition that results in a compromised performance.

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Competition Coordinator – Instructions for tallying points

Each judge will award points for each piece performed, on a 100-point scale as indicated in the judging instructions. Following the competition, **each judge will total the points for each performer and, based on those totals, rank the competitors 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.**

The Competition Coordinator will tally the **rankings** for each competitor and announce the ranking point totals to the judges. First and second prizes will be awarded according to the order of ranking point totals (lowest to highest) unless the judges decide by consensus to withhold either prize due to lack of merit.

Example:

	Ranking from judge 1	Ranking from judge 2	Ranking from judge 3	Total Ranking points	Prizes
Competitor A	1 st	2 nd	4 th	7	Second prize
Competitor B	3 rd	3 rd	3 rd	9	
Competitor C	2 nd	1 st	1 st	4	First prize
Competitor D	4 th	4 th	2 nd	10	

Order of ranking points, from low to high:

Competitor C: 4 First prize
Competitor A: 7 Second prize
Competitor B: 9
Competitor D: 10

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“SCRIPT” FOR COMPETITION COORDINATORS

Remarks prior to competition performance:

- Welcome to the competition.
- Note the locations of restrooms and water fountains.
- Announce the performance schedule of the competitors.
- Audience members may enter or leave only between pieces, not during playing.
- Generous sponsorship of the AGO/Quimby Regional Competitions for Young Organists comes from Michael Quimby, President of Quimby Pipe Organs, Warrensburg, Missouri.
- RCYO is a two-part process:
 - Each contestant participates in a chapter-level competition held in the Region between mid-February and mid-April this year.
 - Name the states (and countries, if applicable) included in the Region.
 - First-place winner at the Regional level is invited to perform as a “Rising Star” at the 2016 National Convention in Houston, TX.RCYO ends at the regional level, and competitors do not advance to a national competition.
- No recording, photography, or applause is allowed.
- Turn off cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices.
- Judges may not speak to audience members until after the competition results have been announced.
- Each competitor’s program should be announced; for example, “Competitor X will play the following pieces in this order...”. Be careful to **not** refer to competitors as he or she.

Remarks after competition has concluded and judges are ready to announce results:

- Introduce and thank the judges and competitors.
- Encourage the competitors to speak with judges about their performances.
- Comment sheets will be distributed later by the Competition Coordinator.
- Announce the winners: second-place, then first-place.
- Reiterate that the first-place winner at the Regional level is invited to perform as a “Rising Star” at the 2016 National Convention in Houston, TX.
- Encourage chapters to sponsor the winner of the Regional Competition in recitals throughout the region following the competition. These future recitalists should be remunerated appropriately if they do not have a set fee.

OFFICIAL JUDGING FORM

2015 AGO/QUIMBY REGIONAL COMPETITIONS FOR YOUNG ORGANISTS

While there is no mandatory method of judging, each judge must be consistent, using the same method of evaluation for all competitors.

Each judge is to assign points for each piece, based on the scale in the judges' instructions. Following the competition, the judges will total their points for each competitor and rank them 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. based on the point totals. The competition coordinator will then total the rankings (not the total points). In the event of a tie for the lowest ranking point total, the judges will decide the winner by consensus. First and second prizes will be awarded according to the order of ranking point totals (lowest to highest) unless the judges decide by consensus to withhold either prize due to lack of merit.

Comments: Each judge is expected to provide written comments to competitors concerning their performance. These comments should be of a positive and constructive nature rather than destructive, and should in no way ridicule the performer. Judges should allow for a tasteful difference of opinion in matters of style, interpretation, registration, etc. Comments should be signed by the judges. Verbal discussion is also strongly encouraged.

Competitor (# in order of appearance): _____

Bach work _____

Points _____

Variations on an Old American Tune

Points _____

Work composed after 1750: _____

Points _____

Hymn (circle one of the following): Leoni (The God of Abraham Praise), Mit Freuden zart (Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above), Aberystwyth (Jesus, Lover of My Soul).

The competitor is expected to introduce the hymn and lead the audience in the singing of all verses; at least the first stanza of the hymn must be played from the version downloaded from Agohq.org. Published or improvised arrangements may be used for the introduction and any subsequent verse, if the competitor desires.

Competitors are to prepare the hymn (in matters of registration, tempo, etc.) as though accompanying a normal Sunday congregation for the competition's given building and space. A competitor's performance is evaluated on execution (consistency of tempo, accuracy of notes, etc.) and appropriateness of artistic choices in relation to tune and text. The competitor is not penalized if planned registration choices do not comfortably coalesce with the size of the singing assembly gathered for the competition itself.

Points _____

Additional work of competitor's choice: _____

Points _____

Signature of Judge: _____