



AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

Chapter Leadership News

September 2020

Zoom Fatigue

Dear Chapter Leaders,

Who would have thought that a few months ago any of us would have known what the term *Zoom fatigue* meant. Whether we like it or not, Zoom has become an integral part of our work and volunteer lives. I cannot begin to fathom how difficult it must be for those of you who are teaching organ or piano online, as well as how challenging it must be to keep students focused and motivated. For those who have been tasked with recording a weekly worship service, it now often takes several days to put it all together. After having produced four AGO workshops addressing online recording technology, software names such as Adobe Premier, BandLab, Sibelius, Camtasia and Audacity, have now become a part of my vocabulary. It has been amazing to learn about the capabilities of these new technologies and made me so appreciative of all the hard work and collaboration that goes in to producing a weekly service.

Over the past few months I have learned that ring lights, eliminating background noise, and coordinating the right camera and audio settings are now critical factors that help our AGO workshops and webinars look as professional as possible. My personal *Zoom fatigue* became quite apparent a couple of weeks ago. The webinar speaker was poised and ready, the recording button had been pressed, participants had entered the meeting and housekeeping notes had been smoothly delivered. As I began to read the speaker's bio I suddenly realized that the second page of it was sitting on my desk in another room. Thank goodness the speaker graciously shared her own background, and I had another opportunity to redeem myself, reading her full biography the following week in the second part of the workshop. I am anxiously looking forward to taking a few days off, during which I can assure you, I will not be Zooming with anyone. Please don't take this personally.

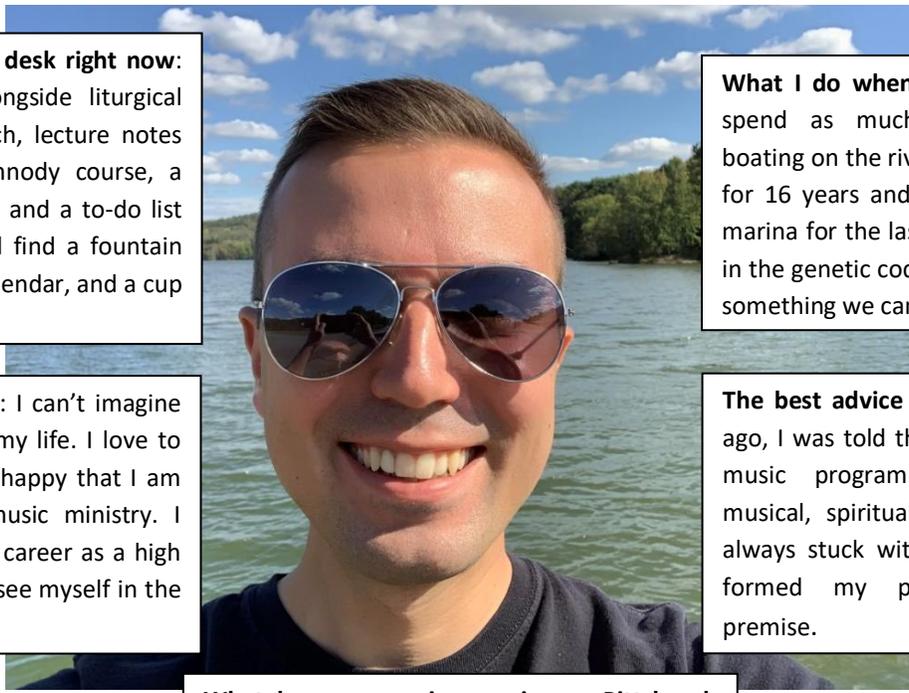
This issue of **Chapter Leadership News** will cover:

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Profile of the Month: Chaz Bowers, Dean, Pittsburgh Chapter



What's sitting on my desk right now: Too much stuff! Alongside liturgical music plans for church, lecture notes for next week's Hymnody course, a stack of organ scores, and a to-do list for the AGO, one will find a fountain pen, an actual desk calendar, and a cup of coffee.

What I do when I'm not at work: I spend as much time as possible boating on the river! I've owned a boat for 16 years and docked at the same marina for the last 15 years. Boating is in the genetic code of my family, so it's something we can all share.

If I weren't doing this I'd: I can't imagine doing anything else with my life. I love to serve the church and am happy that I am able to do it through music ministry. I would possibly consider a career as a high school teacher, or I could see myself in the Navy.

The best advice I ever got: Some time ago, I was told that people join a church music program for three reasons: musical, spiritual, and social. That has always stuck with me and I have since formed my program around that premise.

What keeps me going serving as Pittsburgh Dean: It is a joy to see people of all ages, young and old; as well as people of all interest levels and abilities, from amateur to DMA, put all of their differences and divisions aside and enjoy time together spent in study and fellowship around the organ.

Chapter Leaders Facebook Page

Did you know that we have a Chapter Leader Facebook page? This private Facebook page is the perfect place for you to connect with fellow leaders, start some conversations and collaborations <https://www.facebook.com/groups/242135870018431>. We look forward to seeing you there!

Chapter Support Offered by the AGO Committee on Information Technology

This committee provides independent, objective support to the leadership of the Guild on issues related to technology. One of its roles is to serve as a technology resource for chapters. Whether you need help with using the Internet, using mailing list software, or other communication platforms, this committee is here to help you. I know that there are still many who are struggling with new technology and some who basically have chosen to ignore it. It is critical that *everyone* should be knowledgeable and comfortable using it. I strongly encourage you to take advantage of this committee's expertise. Please contact Harold Stuart, committee director, hhstuart@mac.com, so that he may be of service.

RCYO Updates

It is time to start planning for RCYO chapter competitions to be held next February-April. Due to COVID-19, there will be no live chapter events in 2021. The RCYO Committee has revised the competition rules to allow chapters to host a chapter competition safely, by recording. The RCYO Committee has formulated the guidelines below, but they are also open to creative alternatives (subject to committee approval). The committee has sought to simulate a live event wherever possible.

1. As usual, the competitors will submit an initial online application; the deadline for submission is January 15, 2021.
2. With the aid of a proctor, each competitor will create a recording of their RCYO performance.
3. The proctor will upload the recorded performance into the competitor's online application. Proctors can also submit CD recordings, if that is easier to do.
4. On the day of the competition, the chapter competition coordinator will share the recordings with the judges and chapter members during a video meeting (e.g. Zoom) or by email.
5. After the judges have determined a winner, the competitors will be asked to join the video meeting to hear the results.

The committee is excited to be able to hold the 2021 RCYO competitions as virtual events. Your chapter can submit an online application to host a 2021 chapter competition from the RCYO page of the website, <https://www.agohq.org/performance-competitions/rcyo/>. The chapter competition dates will be posted on line as the chapter applications are received. For more information, contact the RCYO Committee Director, Vivienne McKay, at vivmckay@att.net.

The AGO Task Force on Gender Equity

The AGO is excited to announce that a task force has been formed under the leadership of Nancy Cooper, DMA, CAGO, to address gender equity in our profession.

Mission

- To advocate for women organists
- To bring more women into the Guild
- To attract a new generation of young women organists
- To build equal representation of women in the American Guild of Organists at all levels

The task force will be planning meetings and webinars to support greater awareness of its mission. For more information please email elizabeth.george@agohq.org.

Mark Your Calendars for These Upcoming AGO Events

Tuesday, September 8th, 7:30 pm EDT:

African American Organ Music: A Roundtable Discussion Followed by a Live Q&A.

Join the discussion with panelists Adolphus Hailstork, Evelyn Simpson-Curenton, David Hurd, Mickey Thomas Terry, Mark Lawson.

View the discussion on YouTube at 7:30 pm EDT by clicking [here](#). We invite you to also participate in a post-discussion of the program on Zoom at 8:30 pm EDT by clicking [here](#).

Thursday, September 17th, 1:00 pm EDT: Chapter Leader Town Hall Meeting

This town hall meeting will introduce the new members of the AGO's **National Council**, will include a virtual tour of the AGO website, and feature a discussion led by District Convener Shannon Fore, on chapter recruitment strategies during a time of social distancing. I encourage all chapter officers to attend. Please register [here](#). If you cannot attend, a recording of the meeting will be accessible on the AGO website's **Chapter Leadership Webinars** page.

Wednesday, September 23, 2020 at 2:00 pm EDT:

Webinar: Live Streaming Music Legally in Churches and Recitals

Panelists: Brenna Cronin, General Manager, One License;
David Schaapp, Founder, Selah Publishing

Moderator: Eileen Hunt

This webinar will address all aspects of U.S. copyright laws and will cover all aspects of compliance. Please register [here](#). Please submit any questions you may have to elizabeth.george@agohq.org.

Winchester Chapter Honors Its Retired Members

After reading the August Issue of **En Chamade**, I was so impressed by their wonderful initiative to recognize members who are retiring. What a great example of *member care*.

*Our **En Chamade** issue for September 2020 features five extraordinary musicians who will be retiring, most likely to expand interesting pursuits and adventures. We will celebrate the achievements and tenures of Richard McPherson, Karen Keating, Tom Mitts, Marcia Merry Baker and Terry Sisk. There will be appreciations and testimonials, perhaps a bit of music and well wishes for these friends. The retirement program will be Sunday, September 20, Zooming at 3:00 PM.*

Accessing the New AGO Logos

Please note that non-members have recently used our new letterhead and solicited several chapter leaders. The AGO logo files have now been password-protected and are available to all AGO leaders. Please call AGO Headquarters at 212-870-2310 to gain access to these files.



Saluting Tony Cruz
Outstanding Chapter Leader
Jacksonville Chapter



Chapter Dean, Jan Pitts Smith shared: *Tony Cruz is an amazing part of AGO Jacksonville! He joined our board in 2006. Since then he has held many officer positions, serving as dean, secretary, webmaster, newsletter editor and communications director. In 2017 he served on the steering committee for the regional convention held in Jacksonville, FL. His real job is as cantor for St. Marks Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA) where in addition to serving as organist, he is also the choral and handbell director. Besides AGO and his “paying job,” he is a founding member and baritone soloist in RareSong, a Florida First Coast early music ensemble. He also produces and conducts an annual Bach Vespers that attracts participants and audiences from many surrounding counties.*

In a newspaper article from 2014, he summed it up as his “dream job.” “I get to work with people, preach the gospel (not in the same manner as a pastor, but in the manner of a Bach Chorale), provide music for the festivals of the church, and play music that gathers people into the divine presence and sends them as servants into the world. There is nothing I would rather do.”

He is always willing to help anyone that asks and has been a stable force in our chapter for many years. We are so lucky to have him in our chapter!

Do you have a chapter leader you wish to recognize? If so, please send a photo and brief description of how she/he has enriched and positively impacted your chapter to elizabeth.george@agohq.org