



AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS
WEST REGION

September 2022

Dear West Region Chapter Leaders

Greetings from your new Regional Councillor. I'm steadily getting up to speed on the duties and parameters of this role, which will include periodic regional news and updates from me. I had intended to get an initial communication distributed much sooner, however I finally discovered that I can download from Oncard a list of all the chapter leaders in the region instead of having to build a list manually! (Note: those of you who perform multiple roles may get multiple copies of this e-mail....sorry—that's a side effect of the antiquated technology available at the moment. More about that later.)

You may remember reading in my "campaign" write up in TAO that a particular focus for me is the vitality and health of the 42 chapters in the region. My first step to getting better acquainted with each chapter will be a detailed exploration of your website. Fair warning—if your website is out of date you might want to work on that sooner than later. (See more details about websites below).

I'm all for using technology to make our "jobs" as chapter leaders easier and handling tasks efficiently. The new system that will replace Oncard should be a big step in the right direction—current projection is that it will come online mid-2023. In the meantime, we're mostly on our own to manage chapter operations and communications. If your chapter has some "tips and tricks" to share, please send them to me and I'll include them in future newsletters.

Likewise, please send me any news, special events, anniversaries, etc. that you'd like to share with other chapters in the region for inclusion in upcoming newsletters.

We are the most far-flung region in the AGO. We have the largest geographic footprint in the continental US (plus Alaska where there is no chapter), and the region includes six chapters in Asia/Pacific countries/cities and Hawaii. I'm hoping we can create more awareness and interaction amongst these 42 chapters for the benefit of all.

Nelson Dodge, *West Region Councillor*

Chapter Highlights

Year of the Young Organist, sponsored by AGO national, included a competition for the chapters that gained the most new young (under 30) members, with a \$1,000 prize for the winning chapters in the small, medium, and large chapter categories. Two chapters in the West region won this contest: Hong Kong (small chapter) and Los Angeles (large chapter).

Long Beach (CA)—hosted a Pipe Organ Encounter in June 2022

<https://www.lbago.org/poe2022>

Los Angeles (CA)—has been producing a podcast for over two years

<https://www.laago.org/podcasts>

Orange County (CA)—the restoration of the Hazel Wright organ at Christ Cathedral is being celebrated in series of concerts from September 2022 to June 2023, including a new CD recording produced by Roger Sherman (Gothic Records) featuring OC members David Ball and Dr. Emma Whitten.

<https://www.christcathedralmusic.org/yearofhazel>

Sacramento Valley (CA)—Olivier Latry performs for the chapter, November 6, 2022

<https://www.sacvalleyago.org/news/latry>

San Diego (CA)—100th Anniversary Banquet, September 18, 2022

<https://agosd.org/news-and-events/ago-chapter-events/sosopening.html>

Seattle (WA)—thank you for a wonderful national convention!

Singapore—Daniel Moulton presented a masterclass via Zoom from his hotel room in February 2022 when he unexpectedly tested positive for COVID after arriving in Singapore.

<https://singaporeago.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/PipeEchoes27v2.pdf>

Sydney (Australia)—the Organ Music Society of Sydney, affiliated with the Sydney AGO, sponsors an annual competition for young organists. Finalists for 2022 will compete in October.

<https://sydneyorgan.com/index.html>

Taiwan—hosted a Children’s Organ Experience Camp in August at Shuanglian Presbyterian Church

<https://www.agotw.org/events>

Chapter Websites

Your website is your public face—it is the natural place for people outside your chapter to learn more about what you’re doing. It’s worth the effort to keep it vital and current.

Compiling the list of all the websites I see that 29 chapters—or 69%—have a website. Eight chapters have a page hosted on the national AGO (agohq.org) website. Five chapters are MIA. Many of you have beautiful, content-rich sites that I look forward to studying. I’ll spotlight the **Portland (OR) chapter’s** website as an example simply because they’re hosting the Regional Convention next year....and you’ll see that announced on their home page. <https://www.portlandago.org/>

Up-to-date content is another matter. Of the eight chapters that have a page on the national site only one has current season information—kudos to the **Central Coast (CA) chapter**. The other seven show years-old information or are indeterminate due to program/event dates that don’t include the year(!). I want to encourage these chapters, and the five with no website, to consider switching to a more easily

maintained website platform such as google sites, which is free. Please contact me if you'd like some assistance getting that going. I can provide a basic template you can use to have a new website up and running in an afternoon. Creating and updating content is as easy as editing a Word document.

To see an example of what you can do with a free google site take a look at www.laorganfestival.com. This site is dedicated to the Presidents' Day Organ Festival presented by the Los Angeles chapter each year. With so much detailed information involved with this event, this standalone website (separate from the main LA chapter website) makes it easy for frequent updating and specifically promoting this event to the public.

A note about dates on your websites.....include the year! It's essential to understanding that any event on your event your website is past or future.

West Region Officers

Councillor

Nelson Dodge westrc@agohq.org

Coordinator for Education

Ronnie Bishop ronniepipes@gmail.com

Coordinator for Professional Development

Gregory Norton greg@fumcpasadena.org

Coordinator for Competitions

Carl Kishline kishlinec@icloud.com

District Conveners

- Alaska/Idaho/Montana/Wyoming—**Timothy Bell**
- Oregon—vacant
- Washington—vacant
- Northern California—vacant
- Southern California—**Philip Smith**
- California Central Valley—**Michael Varlas**
- Arizona/Southern Nevada—vacant
- Utah—**Teresa Clawson**
- Asia/Pacific--vacant

West Region Convention
Portland, Oregon – July 10-13, 2023