

# The Worcester Organist

Volume 6 Number 1  
January 1988

## DEAN'S MESSAGE

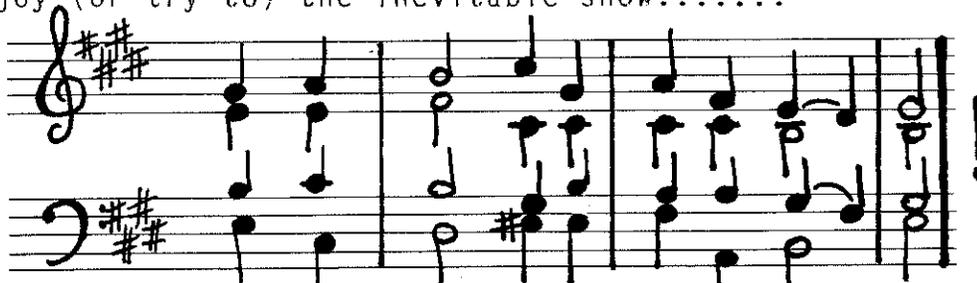
Greetings for 1988! (Only twelve years till the turn of the century?!) I hope you've all survived the holiday season with your health, sanity, and even some spiritual nourishment. In spite of the pressure to produce quality music for these major celebrations, I think that a very good test of our effectiveness as ministers of music is whether we ourselves can come out of it all with a good portion of personal religious fulfillment.

We have some optimal tidings and some dismal tidings. First, the dismal tidings. Some of you may have heard through the grapevine, or read about it in the newspaper. Due to unforeseen circumstances in Worcester's hotel situation, the Executive Committee has officially reversed its decision to host the 1990 National Convention. Quite a major decision, and quite a disappointment, given the mental energy many have invested thus far. Be assured that the decision was made after extensive deliberation over numerous details, facts and figures. Various alternative arrangements were researched, involving transportation, scheduling, and alternative housing. These possibilities were eliminated after careful consideration. Richard Jones has a detailed report elsewhere in the newsletter.

And now the optimal tidings. After receiving our recommendation that Worcester withdraw its bid, the National Council accepted the decision willingly but regretfully. However, both Executive Director Dan Colburn and Region I Coordinator Eileen Hunt have made it clear to us that our withdrawal was completely understandable, and will in no way color National's feelings towards Worcester as a future Convention site. All concerned are still truly impressed and enthusiastic about the cultural richness of our city, and remain in anxious anticipation of a National Convention in Worcester, when our situation will permit a more convenient and practical housing set-up. The consequences of our withdrawal haven't yet come to light. If certain paths are followed (we're not at liberty to say which paths), it may be that Worcester will have a share in something (we're not at liberty to say what). All this will hopefully be explained in our next newsletter. In the meantime, we should keep our hopes and our spirits kindled.

I'm happy to say that the Chapter will once again offer class instruction for the preparation of both the Service Playing and Colleague Exams. As always, I strongly encourage anyone even remotely considering an exam in the future to register for the classes. For details, refer to Exam Coordinator Michelle Graveline's announcement in this issue. I can't stress enough the personal and professional benefits of AGO accreditation at all levels of ability.

Hope you enjoy (or try to) the inevitable snow.....



*Lucie*

**American Guild of Organists  
1987-88 ANNUAL FUND  
A NEW TRADITION**

Daily Guild concerns have changed over the past 90 years--we now have national volunteer committees on subjects such as Denominational Relations and Chapter Development, and a Task Force on the New Organist, to address the shortage of new students that threatens the future of our profession. In addition, many of the Guild's original services continue--the Professional Certification program, which preserves high standards of musicianship and guides members to improve their skills, for example, has never been in greater demand.

In order to support these and other important programs and services and still maintain affordable dues, we must ask those members who are able to express their conviction in the work and purposes of the Guild by participating in the Annual Fund. Together, we can make the Annual Fund a NEW TRADITION, one that will enable us to continue to serve and promote our original tradition of quality church and synagogue music in this country.

To participate, you may either respond to the mailing to all members in November, or send your contribution directly to:

1987-88 AGO ANNUAL FUND  
815 Second Avenue, Suite 318  
New York, New York 10017

All contributions to the Fund are tax-deductible.

REPORT OF THE 1990 AGO CONVENTION CHAIRPERSON

Richard F. Jones

As most of you are no doubt aware, this will be my last report to you as Chairperson of the 1990 National AGO Convention. It is with a feeling of disappointment, regret, and loss that this report is being written in January of 1988 rather than in July of 1990.

On Monday, December 7, the Executive Board of the Worcester Chapter unanimously recommended that the 1990 National AGO Convention be withdrawn from Worcester. That recommendation was accepted by the Executive Committee of the National Council meeting in New York the same day. The recommendation was made and accepted reluctantly but with the realization that there was no other decision that could be made.

To summarize, the strength of our proposal to host the 1990 lay in the unique advantages Worcester offers --- the quality and diversity of its pipe organs, the flourishing cultural life of the city, and the city's relative smallness which affords a degree of manageability for the convention-goer that is unusual and attractive. The one very large weakness of the proposal was housing. This weakness was of great concern to all involved in the submission of our original proposal and has been an ongoing concern to Worcester Convention personnel since our proposal was accepted.

The comments I made in my published interviews with the media are accurate and I stand by them. It is a fact that in 1985 and 1986 when our initial and final proposals to host the 1990 were submitted to the National Council, the proposals were only submitted after we had received firm, verbal assurance from the Worcester County Convention and Visitors Bureau that a convention center and hotel would be in place and operating in June of 1990. Bill Short, the Executive Director of the Worcester Chamber of Commerce which oversees the Bureau, told the press that we couldn't have received such assurances because it would be impossible to give them. Well, we did receive those assurances as all of our personnel who were involved and my written reports at the time will confirm. From what I can gather, it had been the practice of the person at the Bureau we dealt with to make what would seem to be impossible promises in that person's efforts to market Worcester as a site for conventions. Those at the Bureau and the Chamber whom this person reported to have only recently become aware that such an unfortunate practice had been adopted and was used frequently by this individual, no longer in their employ.

Other assurances we received from the Bureau were that the Marriott was definitely going to expand and that one or two other hotels were on the drawing boards. On the strength of all of these assurances, we submitted our final proposal, it was accepted, and we began to plan the Convention.

It has been the experience of the national organization that splitting convention-goers up between different hotels is unpopular because of the very collegial nature of AGO conventions and that it places too large a burden on a convention's overall logistics. However, since our proposal, while splitting up the convention-goers, projected that nearly all would be accommodated between four major downtown hotels all within walking distance of each other and many convention performance sites, housing even though it wasn't ideal, seemed relatively cohesive and manageable.

That was in 1986. By the end of 1987, it was obvious to me that the situation had changed drastically. Not only did the convention center and hotel seem a remoter-than-remote possibility, but the Marriott decided not to expand, other hotels never made it to the drawing boards, and one of the major downtown hotels was sold for conversion to condos. Our proposal had projected 800 rooms downtown. At the end of 1987, we were left with 245.

We had been able to book 800 rooms using all available hotels and motels in Worcester and the immediate vicinity. This would have involved splitting the convention between ten different hotels.

Continued...

1990 Convention Report continued...

Considering the number of single rooms we would have needed to make available and the number of rooms necessary to accommodate guest artists and lecturers, the Convention would have therefore had a registration limit of 1300 or under at the most.

And the transportation bill for the busing required would have approached \$100,000.

Given all of this, I could see no other acceptable decision than the withdrawal of the Convention from Worcester.

It would have been possible, perhaps, to go against all the odds and continue with our plans to host the 1990, but the Convention would have been greatly reduced in scale and the logistics involved would have made those in charge of it and those attending it less than satisfied. When people come to Worcester we do want them to enjoy all aspects of their time here, after all.

In light of the complicated process of designing and planning a national AGO convention, we had to make this decision when we did so that the National Organization has time to regroup.

I feel that we acted responsibly and realistically, a feeling shared by National as well. We have been assured by National that in no way is the Worcester Chapter thought to be at fault in any of this and that their very positive opinion of us is unchanged. Indeed, I have been told to consider this Convention not cancelled but rather postponed until the city is at last able to handle it. There is no question that we were ready to handle it, but no one that I know of in the Chapter has the resources to construct a major hotel, so we'll have to wait for Worcester to catch-up with itself.

Much controversy has centered around my published comments concerning our perception that the Convention and Visitors Bureau treated us less than satisfactorily. This perception is accurate. Promises were made to us that could not be kept concerning the convention center and hotel. A rather diffident attitude characterized our meetings and attempted meetings with the Bureau. And (the inevitable straw that broke teh camel's back) a crucial meeting that had been arranged with representatives of the National Organization, the Worcester Chapter, and the Bureau was shunted aside by the Bureau with no warning to us. Not quite the way to treat any group that had the potential of bringing \$750,000 in income to the city, I think.

And so does Bill Short of the Chamber, who is a very forthright and sensitive individual. We have had extensive discussions following our announcement that the Convention was withdrawn and it ~~was~~ obvious to both of us that he had been very badly served by several people at the Bureau who had not supplied him with accurate information, who had not in fact even kept him informed. It was unfortunate for all concerned that his own people had not brought him in on the process long ago. But at least there is no public disagreement between us now.

I am surprised by how much attention our withdrawal of the Convention received. Up until we withdrew it, we were just a minor cultural organization planning another meeting here. Now even city councillors are talking about us. The reason? We publically made known how much income this Convention had the potential of bringing into Worcester. Interesting, isn't it? To some people, culture --- the thing that really makes Worcester special --- is only important when it can put money into their wallets --- or take it out. This needs to change if Worcester is to fully realize its potential.

In sum, I thank all those hard-working chapter members who worked so hard in the planning of this Convention and all of you for allowing me to have such a major part in it. I hope I bore that responsibility well for you. I remain entranced by what Worcester does have to offer, chiefly, dedicated and enthusiastic people like you!



## A CALL FOR DONATIONS

We all knew that one day the crisis brought on by the increase of the disease AIDS would hit home. Now it has.

Our former Dean, Gil Lay, who to my mind was the person most responsible for the Worcester Chapter becoming the very active and vital organization it is, has AIDS.

Gil remains as he always was positive about his ability to overcome the special challenges this illness presents.

Recently, he has been in contact with many of his friends in Worcester, and many of us including the Chapter's Executive Committee feel it important to offer more than just moral support to Gil, especially in light of the substantial contributions of time, talent, and energy he made to us a leader and friend.

As you know, the financial strain on people with AIDS is tremendous because of the costs of necessary medications and the difficulty presented when a person with AIDS is physically unable at times to work and thus support his or her self.

Thus, it was decided to make a significant contribution to Gil from the Chapter's reserved funds. This contribution was sent to Gil in time for Christmas.

We hope that members of the Worcester Chapter will donate as generously as possible so that the amount borrowed can be replaced, as all our funds are important for a Chapter this active.

We ask you to make whatever donation you are able to make for a cause that is very important --- the support of a person we care about who is faced with the greatest challenge of his life.

You should send your contributions to our Dean, Lucia Clemente Falco, 36 Bridgeport Street, Worcester, 01604.

Checks should be made payable to the Worcester Chapter AGO.

Thank you for your support.

Richard F. Jones, for the Executive Committee

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## ECUMENICAL CHOIR FESTIVAL AT WESLEY CHURCH

On Sunday, January 31 at 5 p.m. (before the SuperBowl), a unique ecumenical service featuring the choirs of seven downtown churches will be presented at Wesley Methodist Church, Court Hill. The choirs featured are those of Wesley, St. Paul's Cathedral, First Baptist Church, Trinity Lutheran Church, All Saints Episcopal Church, the United Church, and First Unitarian Church. Several organists will also perform.

This is becoming a happy tradition among the downtown churches and any of you who attended last year's service at St. Paul's know what an exciting service it is. The music that is made is splendid, as the quality of the choirs involved would indicate, and the congregational participation is thrilling. How often do we get a chance to hear 1200 people singing hymns in four parts in full voice? (every Sunday, right?)

# Pakachoag Community Music School

191 Pakachoag Street • Auburn, Massachusetts 01501 • (617) 791-8159

*Peggy Kelley Reinburg, M.Mus., Director*

## FORTHCOMING CLASSES IN SACRED MUSIC

ORGAN HISTORY AND DESIGN                      8-Week Course                      January 18 - March 14  
Peggy Kelley Reinburg, Instructor                      Monday, 7:30 - 9:30PM  
Registration: \$5.00  
Tuition:                      \$75.00

A study of the basic concepts of organ construction with emphasis on the historical development of the pipe organ and the impact of that development on present day organ building and design. Audio and visual aids will enhance the presentation of a comprehensive body of material. The course is open to professional musicians, to clergy, and to all who wish to have a better understanding of this most versatile of instruments. It is highly recommended for members of committees considering new organ projects or organ restorations.

PLEASE PHONE THE MUSIC SCHOOL BY JANUARY 12 TO REGISTER.

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## EXAM PREPARATION FOR THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS SERVICE PLAYING AND COLLEAGUE CERTIFICATES

4-Week Course

Peggy Kelley Reinburg, Instructor                      February 3 - February 24  
Wednesday, 7:30 - 9:30PM  
Registration: \$5.00  
Tuition:                      \$35.00

PLEASE PHONE THE MUSIC SCHOOL BY JANUARY 25 TO REGISTER.

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## SUMMER ORGAN INSTITUTES

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS                      JULY 10 - 16, 1988  
ADULTS                      JULY 17 - 23, 1988

STAFF: JAMES DAVID CHRISTIE, MICHELLE GRAVELINE, STEPHEN LONG, PEGGY KELLEY REINBURG AND BARCLAY WOOD. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE PHONE 791-8159.

## DETAILS FOR CLASSES FOR SERVICE PLAYING AND CAGO EXAMS

This year there will be a series of classes which will focus on skills needed for the service playing exam as well as the Colleague exam. Last year's class was very successful, producing three students who passed the service playing exam with flying colors. Others who audited found a number of tips to help them with their own skills.

The classes will be held on WEDNESDAY evenings in February, beginning Feb 3. Once again, they will be taught by Peggy Kelley Reinburg at Pakachoag Church. The classes are offered through the Pakachoag Community Music School, and are \$35 tuition for all four classes, plus a \$5 registration fee. Persons interested in taking the classes should register by calling the school at 791-8159. Please call as soon as possible -- there must be a certain minimum number for the classes to be held. Make a resolution to do something for yourself this year-- take a class!

PLACEMENT.....

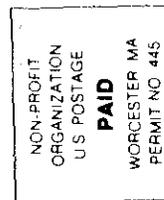
FRAMINGHAM, First Church of Christ, Scientist. Organist for Wednesday evening and Sunday morning service. Yamaha organ. \$50.00 per service. Contact Judy Honens (443-8062) for details.

MARLBOROUGH, First United Methodist Church. Organist/Director. Small choir, one rehearsal, one service. Electronic organ. \$35-\$40 per week. Call Phillip Williams at 481-5268 for details.

ROCHDALE, Christ Episcopal Church. Organist/Choirmaster. Contact Rev. Dr. Michael L. Vono, Rector at 892-8460 for job description.

STURBRIDGE, Christian Science Society. Organist for Wednesday evening and Sunday morning service. Small electronic organ. \$30-\$40 per service. Call Betsy Lane at 413/245-3461 for details.

WORCESTER, Our Lady of Loreto. Music Director, with ability to play the organ. Small choir with one rehearsal per week. Allen Organ. Call Fr. Aquino at 753-5001 or Rick Vacca at 842-3716 for details.



Lucia Clemente-Falco  
36 Bridgeport Street  
Worcester, MA 01604

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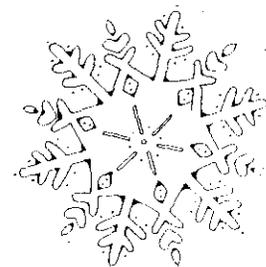


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