

INTRODUCTION

Members of the American Guild of Organists are very much aware of the challenges facing chapters today, and we want to help you meet those challenges. This Media Relations Handbook is designed to help you better promote and publicize your chapter's events and activities, as well as to help you generate increased awareness of the International Year of the Organ (IYO) and Organ Spectacular (OS).

Statistics suggest that only 20 percent of the U.S. population actively participates in music. We know fewer than that regularly attend organ recitals. Certainly more people would get involved in music in general, and organ music, in particular, if they were aware of the joys and wonder of being involved with it. So, it's up to all of us to spread the word.

The International Year of the Organ is an ideal time to heighten public awareness of organs and organ music, and our national public relations campaign will focus on that. We hope that you and your members will help increase awareness at your local level.

The message is that organs and organ music are wonderful to see and to hear. The greatest challenge facing us today is getting our message about the organ and its music out to the general public in a simple but powerful way.

Countless books have been written about the wonder of the organ and the magic of its music, but the most powerful testimony for the organ comes from those who love the instrument and its music; therefore we encourage you and your members to be spokespersons for the AGO, the IYO, the OS, and your chapter activities.

- Organ music can nourish your soul.
- Attending an organ concert can introduce you to a new world of sound produced by an instrument which you may have never seen or heard.
- You can marvel at the physical coordination required of the performer.
- You can appreciate how much a pipe organ is a work of art visually as well as sonically.

This kit will:

- Stimulate your thinking about ways to enlighten your community about the joys and benefits of promoting the organ.
- Provide you with a multitude of ideas for events, community relations and exposure.
- Give you suggestions on how to launch and promote recitals.
- Help you to build a constituency for organ music and heighten awareness of the benefits of the organ's repertoire and versatility.
- Help you and your members lay the foundation for generating an interest in organ that will benefit you for years to come.

- Through these efforts, it will help you and your members encourage new people to hear the instruments, resulting in more organ music appreciation.

These materials are available in hard copy from AGO headquarters for a small charge to cover production and shipping. The online materials will be updated as new information becomes available.

We wish you great success and applaud your efforts in promoting the benefits of music in your community.

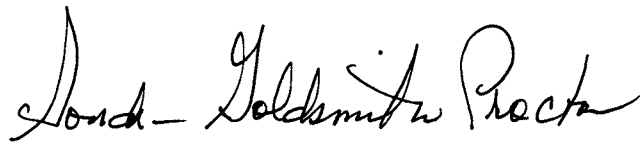
The American Guild of Organists

Committee on Professional Networking and Public Relations

Margaret Evans, director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margaret Evans". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Sondra Proctor

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sondra Goldsmith Proctor". The signature is written in a cursive style with some capital letters.

Larry Schou

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry Schou". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'L'.

Lois Toepfner

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lois Z. Toepfner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'L'.

23 June 2008