

Washington Recorder Society



Notes

September 2026

www.washingtonrecordersociety.org

Dear WRS members,

Hello to all! I hope you had a wonderful summer with moments of playing music!

We are excited to announce our new WRS playing season, which will begin on Saturday, September 12th, with our first in-person *meeting*. Be sure to renew your membership (**below**) so you can attend all the in-person and online meetings that will be offered.

We are happy to announce the 2026-2027 Board of Directors. See the end of the newsletter for their names, roles, and email addresses. Feel free to contact them at any time with questions or suggestions. See you all soon!

Monica Boruch, President

Time to Renew Your Membership for 2026-2027

The fiscal year for the Washington Recorder Society ends on August 31, so it is time to renew your membership for another year of great benefits. The cost is still \$55. Go [here](#) and then click on "Pay Now," which will take you to PayPal. You do not need to have a PayPal account – you can pay with a credit card. If you are a new member or your contact information has changed, please complete the membership form on the same page. While you are there, click on "Donate" to give an additional amount to support WRS if you are able. We are so fortunate to have excellent teachers from near and far to teach our Zoom and in-person meetings! Dues alone do not cover WRS expenses for these terrific teachers.

Remembering WRS Members

WRS recently lost two longtime members, Jane Udelson and Virginia Phillips.

Jane Udelson's Memorial Service was held on August 19, 2026. WRS members Rachel Isaacson, Jayme Sokolow, Marge Weissberg, Edie Tatel, Brie Salzman, and Gabriel Johnson participated in the service. See more about Jane's life at <https://www.rememberingjanetudelson.com>.

Virginia Phillips was 103 years old when she died. A memorial service will be held for her in Ohio. See <https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/49378033/virginia-s-phillips>

WRS 2026-2027 Schedule

Meetings in person are held at St. Columba's Episcopal Church, 4201 Albemarle St. NW, Washington DC 20016. The closest Metro stop is Tenleytown on the Red Line. Online sessions are held on Zoom. You will receive an invitation and music after registration.

Date	Type	Schedule	Description
2026			
Sat, 9/12	In person	10:00-10:30am 10:30am-12:30pm	Meet and greet Play music with Adéla Balima and Gary White
Mon, 10/05	Online	7:00-7:30pm 7:30-9:00pm	Virtual Happy Hour Session led by Nina Stern
Sat, 10/17	In person	10:00-10:30am 10:30am-12:30pm	Meet and greet Play music with Gary White & Adéla Balima
Sat, 11/14	In person	10:00-10:30am 10:30am-12:30pm	Meet and greet Play music with Adéla Balima & Gary White
Mon, 11/16	Online	7:00-7:30pm 7:30-9:00pm	Virtual Happy Hour Session led by Héloïse Degrugillier
Sat, 12/12	In person	10:00am-1:00pm	Holiday party and music led by Gary White & Adéla Balima
2027			
Sat, 01/16	In person	10:00-10:30am 10:30am-12:30pm	Meet and greet Play music with Adéla Balima & Gary White
Mon, 01/25	Online	1:30-2:00pm 2:00-3:30pm	Virtual Happy Hour Session led by Annette Bauer
Sat, 02/06	In person	10:00-10:30am 10:30am-12:30pm	Meet and greet Play music with Gary White & Adéla Balima
Sat, 03/06	In person	10:00-10:30am 10:30am-12:30pm	Meet and greet Play music with Adéla Balima & Gary White
Mon, 03/22	Online	7:00-7:30pm 7:30-9:00pm	Virtual Happy Hour Session led by Emily O'Brien
Sat and Sun, 04/10-11	Amherst Spring Break Workshop		St George's Episcopal
Sat, 04/17	In person	10:00-10:30am 10:30am-12:30pm	Meet and Greet Play music with Gary White & Adéla Balima
Sat, 05/22	In person	3:00-5:00pm	Recital in the Music Room
Mon, 06/07	Online	7:00-7:30 7:30-9:00	Virtual Happy Hour and Annual Business Meeting Session led by Gwyn Roberts

New Co-Music Director—Gary White

Last month WRS selected Gary White as its new co-music director after a playing session with the Board and other WRS members. He joins Music Director Adéla Balima to lead the in-person meetings.

Gary has conducted several orchestras in the Philadelphia area, including the award-winning college prep program, Philadelphia Sinfonia Association (a youth orchestra of high-level student musicians, which he conducted for 26 years until 2025); and Orchestra Concordia, an adult community orchestra he helped to create.

He guest-conducts extensively for professional, university, and high school orchestras and music festivals. Gary was also a professional freelance French horn player. He trained at the prestigious Pierre Monteux School for Conductors and Orchestral Musicians in Hancock, ME, graduated from The New School of Music, and earned a master's degree from Temple University's Esther Boyer College of Music.

In 2016, Gary decided that in addition to conducting, he wanted to return to playing and began studying recorder with Gwyn Roberts. In addition to studies with Ms. Roberts, he studied with Elissa Berardi, Alison Melville, and Letitia Berlin and participated in masterclasses with such renowned performers/teachers as Saskia Coolen and the Flanders Recorder Quartet.

He is an original member of the WindWay Recorder Quartet and guest musician for the Sophia Consort. He performs extensively in the Richmond, Virginia area with RVA Baroque, both as a featured soloist and an ensemble member. He has participated in many Amherst Early Music workshops and seminars. Gary also plays traverso and Renaissance flute.

As a conductor, Gary has had the great pleasure of several collaborations with Philadelphia's top Baroque Orchestra, *Tempesta di Mare*, founded by his teacher and colleague, Gwyn Roberts and her husband, Richard Stone. He has also put the recorder front and center in the modern orchestral world by conducting the US premiere of Graham Fitkin's Recorder Concerto, with Tom Beets of the Flanders Recorder Quartet as a soloist, and Jamie Allen's Concerto for Recorder, Percussion and Strings, featuring Heloise Degrugillier. Gary lives in Richmond, Virginia and is enthusiastic about working with WRS musicians.

New Board Member—Enrique Lara

Welcome to new Board member Enrique Lara. He has an interesting and varied background.

I come from a home that was always filled with music – on the radio, on LP, on tape, or on CDs. I have been told that, as a baby, I used to tap out the beat to music on any surface that was handy. To this day, my fingers still feel the urge to move when music comes on.

I took piano lessons while I was in elementary school. While my family was living in Nairobi, Kenya, I was fortunate to have a piano teacher who was an expert in the Suzuki method; after we moved to Mount Vernon, New York, I continued with piano lessons for a year or so. By the time I reached high school, I had become very interested in drumming and formed a garage band with a group of my classmates. I also sang in the school choir.

My recorder journey started at the turn of the century, while I was in Toronto for work. I stopped by a music store and explained that I wanted an instrument that was portable. The salesclerk suggested a plastic soprano, which I happily picked up. I spent the next two decades sporadically fiddling with the recorder until finally resolving to prioritize practice in early 2022. After a couple of years of "going it alone" via online videos and method books, I set out to find a recorder instructor. That led me to WRS, where I've been enjoying the in-person rehearsals and online courses. I was also fortunate enough to find a recorder teacher at WRS and continue taking lessons, striving to improve my playing.

What Did You Do This Summer?

Virginia Baroque Academy—*Monica Boruch*

VBA takes place in early June every year in Harrisonburg, VA and is part of the annual Shenandoah Valley Bach Festival. The workshop has a small number of participants, including recorders, strings, harpsichordists, and sometimes singers.

There were 7 recorder participants who met for half a day every morning with Anne Timberlake. The Masterclass is a combination of studying one composer (this year, it was Francesco Veracini Sonatas). Each of us performed twice during the week and discussed musical approach, articulation, phrasing, and techniques to handle nervousness.

In the afternoons, we met in small mixed ensembles with different faculty coaches and rehearsed repertoire for a final concert at the end of the week, for the community as part of the Shenandoah Bach Festival. We also were delighted to hear daily midday concerts performed by professional musicians as part of the festival.

Mideast Early Music Workshop 2025—*Eric Schwartz*

If you have never attended a recorder workshop, you should consider going to Mideast. It's a small and friendly workshop, held at LaRoche University near Pittsburgh. The faculty-to-student ratio is small, so you don't have to worry about being lost in the crowd. I've been attending since 1999 and have found something interesting every year.

There are courses for recorder players, flutists, and gambists. Everyone takes two technique classes a day and can select from a variety of other courses. This year those choices ranged from an Introduction to Early Notation to Truly Contemporary, which featured 21st-century compositions. You could learn some English country dances, and even try out the harp, krummhorns, or the gamba. In the evening, we had the pleasure of playing in an All Workshop ensemble. If you want new music or a new instrument, Von Heune Workshop always has a well-stocked shop.

Amherst Early Music Festival—*Zulema Garraffo*

I participated in the second week of the Amherst Early Music Festival (Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pennsylvania, July 19-26). Arriving on Saturday, I listened to the student and faculty concerts of the first week. I was sorry to have missed the Friday performance of the Rameau lyric comedy, *Platée*, which I heard was a hit (AEM description

here: <https://www.amherstearlymusic.org/festival/program/baroque-academy-opera-project>)

I took four classes: an early notation class that was put together at the last minute with Pat Petersen; Larry Lipnik's class for all instrumentalists and singers; and a baroque class with Heloise Degrugillie. We took a class and performed in Rotem Gilbert's group, with most players on Renaissance recorders, a great experience. Larry Lipnik's class was tailored to performance, and this year benefited from the addition of more singers and beautifully played Renaissance flutes.

A lecture by Rotem Gilbert on "Susanna un jour" was excellent. With a 1–2-day notice, Amherst assembled a large group of faculty members to play during the lecture. Only in Amherst! I participated in a couple of very interesting after-concert drop-in sessions (9 pm!). As a recorder player, having the chance to listen in person to many top professional performers would by itself make the Amherst festival worth it. Sarah Jeffery was on the faculty, and her concert was a very inspiring experience. Other outstanding concerts were presented by the Choral Workshop, the Medieval Project with Benjamin Bagby, and the faculty. It was announced that the festival will be in Muhlenberg College again next year, a very convenient location for people in the Washington, DC area.

Two Weeks at Amherst—Arya Safa

I had so much fun at last year's Amherst Early Music Festival that I returned this year for the full two weeks. What joy playing music from England and France! What better escape from the real world than being immersed in playing and hearing beautiful music, day and night, in the beautiful setting of Muhlenberg College, and seeing some familiar faces from WRS—including Betty, Maria, Anthony, Judy, and Steve Ono!

My first week included an in-depth journey through Purcell, guided by Rainer Beckman, and the big mixed ensemble classes with Larry Lipkis and Larry Lipnick, which included voices, viols, and some horns.

The highlights of the second week were the classes taught by Sarah Jefferey: Recorder Gym (mostly skills, very little actual playing of pieces), Baroque Opera, and Intro to Contemporary Techniques, which was WILD and apparently strange to a lot of people, since there were surprisingly only 6 in our class. Sarah demonstrated and taught us some cool techniques for making sounds out of the recorder, such as "burbling," blowing into the fingering holes, playing two recorders at once while singing, and going through the whole alphabet, from A to Z, to compare various tonguing and breath sounds made from each consonant. Contemporary music is Sarah's favorite genre, and her incredible concert performance included her singing and incorporated these techniques. She segued from "Prelude in C" by Hotteterre (1674-1736) to a modern piece, "Lullaby," by Fumiharu Yoshimini (b. 1962). There is a video of this performance on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=frhgW-nMmUE&list=RDfrhgW-nMmUE&start_radio=1

And somehow Larry Lipnik always manages to pull together 40+ players in a mixed ensemble, this time to play "Royal Musical Treasures Fit for Kings," music from the Field of the Cloth of Gold--a summit meeting between King Henry VIII of England and Francis I of France...a kind of 1520 battle of the bands and opulent display of wealth..



Finally, here is a wonderful performance by the recorder teachers Sarah Jefferey, Rotem Gilbert, Saskia Coolen, and Héloïse Degrugillier.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1R0kijOfdtEsF0hnma1plEqKAz7d5GovC/view?usp=sharing>

My T-shirt--a bass playing bass recorder-- was designed by Sara Jefferey's mother-in-law, and Sarah says she made sure the bass, and the bass recorder, were correct in every detail (available on her website)

Next Level Week with Tish Berlin & Frances Blaker-- Edie Tatel and Zulema Garraffo

WRS members Dawn Fairbanks and Gary White joined Zulema, Edie and 9 other players from all over in the lovely mountain setting of Shrine Mont, in Orkney Springs, Virginia. A short(ish) drive for most WRS members, this nearly 6-day workshop offered a packed week of music. Tish and Frances are extraordinary teachers whose program differs meaningfully from most others. The week combined small group and tutti performance and coaching with instruction in technique, using beautiful music appropriate for a range of skills. Enhancing whatever we played, techniques such as Breathing & Tone, Articulation, and Finger Facility were a daily focus, while each day also included 2 Topics: Medieval and Renaissance Italian Songs and Counterpoint/Harmony in Henry Purcell. There were daily opportunities for individual practice and to work in consort groups of 4 with Tish and Frances.

We were assigned to classes, but the feeling was always one of respectful, cheerful collaboration. On our last evening, we performed for each other in "Open Mic," featuring music we'd worked on or that we'd brought with us, including ukulele and singing! The relaxed and encouraging atmosphere made it easy to play seriously with new friends. We hope to see even more WRS members at Next Level next year.

Become a Better Player

Local Instructors

ADÉLA BALIMA Kensington, MD Phone : 240-688-2809 Email: adelabalima@gmail.com Website: http://adelabalima.com	RACHEL ISAACSON Arlington, VA Phone : 571-338-4606 Email : isaacson.rachel@gmail.com	CAROLE ROGENTINE Bethesda, MD Phones: 301-530-6386 (home); 301-523-5515 (cell) Email: crogentine@gmail.com
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Where to Hear Early Music

Look for Announcements Online for 2026-2027 Season

Washington Bach Consort <https://bachconsort.org/calendar/>

Folger Consort <https://www.folger.edu/performances-events>

Tempesta di Mare <https://tempestadimare.my.salesforce-sites.com/ticket/#/>

Capitol Early Music <https://capitolearlymusic.org/>

Piffaro—The Renaissance Band <https://www.piffaro.org>

WRS Website

The WRS website, <https://www.washingtonrecordersociety.org/>, has lots of useful information. The main page introduces the organization and provides the latest news. The footer has links to the meeting schedule and newsletters. The menu and the buttons both take you to more detailed information such as links to handy websites. Check out the Members Only section for a directory of members and the Roger Morris Collection of recorder music.

The American Recorder Society

WRS is a chapter of the American Recorder Society. ARS provides many resources for all recorder players, including its own YouTube channel, which has many free videos and information. The ARS site also has free music and play-alongs. The website address is <https://americanrecorder.org/>. The initial membership fee is \$30, with an annual charge of \$60 thereafter, for access to many resources. Consider joining. The ARS offers scholarships for workshops and classes. For more information and to register, go to https://americanrecorder.org/learning_resources_for_recorder.php.

Classified

Anna Granger of St. Augustine's Catholic School in Ward 1 DC is looking for volunteers to assist with her after-school music school for grades kindergarten through 5. Gabe Johnson and Betty Landesman of WRS previously volunteered but are unable to continue. Anna can be reached by text or phone at 202-257-8728 or email wmgranger@aol.com.

Board of Directors and Music Leaders

Monica Boruch	President, fmboruch@comcast.net
Enrique Lara	Vice President and Webmaster, larae77@gmail.com
Gabe Johnson	Secretary, gabriel.p.johnson@gmail.com
Carolyn Lincoln	Treasurer, carolyn.lincoln@verizon.net
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Edie Tatel	Program Coordinator, edietatel@gmail.com
Adéla Balima	Music Director, adelabalima@gmail.com
Gary White	Music Director, parchester@aol.com