Delegates representing orchestras from all corners of the nation convened in Phoenix, AZ during the first week of August for the 33rd Annual Regional Orchestra Players’ Association (ROPA) Conference, hosted by Local 586 and the Arizona Opera Orchestra, with activities centered at the Westin Downtown Phoenix Hotel. ROPA’s annual conference is one of the most important benefits of ROPA membership, and much information is gleaned there to assist with negotiating, organizing and understanding the current state of the orchestral world.

A central theme highlighted throughout this year’s conference dealt with the topic of diversity and inclusiveness in the symphonic world, and several excellent guest speakers offered their perspectives throughout the week. Lovie Smith-Wright (President, Houston Local 699) gave the AFM Diversity Committee report, and Alex Laing (Principal Clarinet, Phoenix Symphony) offered a detailed description of “Plans for Recognizing the Diversity in Our Locals/Diversity in Orchestras.” As part of his report, Alfonso Pollard (AFM Legislative-Political Director/Director of Diversity) shared information about musicians from minority groups who hold positions in symphony orchestras. On the final day, Weston Sprott (Trombonist, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra) presented “Actionable Strategies to Make Your Orchestra More Diverse and Inclusive.”

The opening session featured addresses by AFM Phoenix Local 586 President Jerry Donato, Joe Specter, General Director of the Arizona Opera and Steve Wilcox, Communications Director of the Arizona Commission for the Arts. Donato reported that union membership in the area is up, despite the fact Arizona is a right-to-work state, and he shared recruiting techniques Local 586 implements. Specter highlighted several of the opera company’s successful projects, and Wilcox reinforced the common knowledge that arts and culture radiate throughout the economy. The final session of this first morning was a well-received presentation on hearing protection, with audiologist Heather Malyuk of Sensaphonics.

Delegates spent much of the first day in valuable small group discussions with their Members-at-Large, sharing information with orchestras of similar budget size. Wrapping up official business for the first day, new delegates received training from ROPA officers and members of Symphonic Services Division.

On the second day, ROPA warmly welcomed representatives from our fellow AFM Conferences: OCSM, TMA, RMA and ICSOM, with Robert Fraser, Tony D’Amico, Marc Sazer and Meredith Snow, respectively, highlighting their years’ activities. AFM President Ray Hair led a panel discussion which offered important clarity on the status of the AFM Pension Fund. A large number of resolutions were approved,
ROPA President’s Remarks, 2017 ROPA Conference  
by John Michael Smith, ROPA President

Thanks to everyone who attended the 2017 ROPA Annual Conference in Phoenix! I greatly enjoyed meeting many new delegates and attendees, and visiting with those who I’ve known for many years. I hope everyone who attended the conference went home feeling that they gained valuable information, learned new things and were inspired by presentations and conversations that occurred during the week.

So, what do you do with all of this when you return home? The purpose of these conferences is to take the information presented and the energy that you gather there and share it with your orchestra’s musicians and with your local officers, boards and members. Setting up a time at your local’s Board of Directors meeting to present a report is a great way to share with them what you learned at the conference. It gives the local buy-in and a return on their investment for providing support for your orchestra’s membership in ROPA. A written report might well do for the Board, but I would suggest that the delegate or whoever attended from your orchestra offer to give a report in person. It extends the conference’s personal face-to-face message and provides opportunity to discuss how the messages from the conference can be utilized in your local. Following this oral report by writing a report on the conference for the local’s newsletter gets the message out to your entire local.

For your orchestra, you should consider a report to both the orchestra committee and to the musicians at an orchestra meeting. Again, I would encourage you to make a live presentation. The annual ROPA conference is all about having live face-to-face presentations, discussions and conversation. Carrying that aspect back to your orchestra is like taking them there. And of course, writing a report and distributing it to the orchestra is a good follow-up, and there you can be more detailed with information. By telling your orchestra members what you heard and saw, and by being able to answer questions and give your own personal descriptions in an oral report, you will continue to share from the conference in the same live, personal manner that makes the conference so special and connecting.

So, I encourage our delegates and conference attendees to not only be a reporter for ROPA by writing, but to also be our face and voice, and carry our message out to your local and to your orchestras!

Editor’s Message
by Sharon Jones, ROPA delegate, Elgin Symphony Orchestra

Hello, delegates! I wanted to introduce myself as your new editor of The Leading Tone. I am the ROPA delegate for the Elgin (IL) Symphony Orchestra and I may have met some of you at the 2017 ROPA conference in Phoenix this past August. I look forward to working with you on these newsletters and seeing you at future conferences.

If you have any articles you would like to submit or have topics to recommend for articles, please email me at bellsauf@earthlink.net and your work will be considered for the next issue of The Leading Tone. Thank you so much. Stronger together!
The City of Houston is in full recovery mode after sustaining damage from the trillions of gallons of water rained down by Hurricane Harvey. No organization better exemplifies the level of support and creativity post-crisis than Houston Grand Opera (HGO) and Houston Ballet.

Both organizations share the Wortham Theater Center in Houston’s arts district where they stage productions in the large Alice and George R. Brown Theater and smaller productions in the Lillie and Roy Cullen Theater. Every precaution was taken before the storm to minimize damage, including erecting floodgates, moving props and costumes to higher ground and storing instruments in parts of the basement that were expected to stay dry. The building, however, took on over 12 feet of water, flooding the basement entirely and bringing silt and mud over the stage and into the auditorium. The earliest date of return to the theater is May 15, 2018. Despite the grim news that both companies will be homeless for an entire season, everyone has rallied to face the challenge of how to put on the large scale productions that Houston has come to expect, while still putting the employees and artists first.

Houston Ballet had the earliest problem to tackle with a season that was supposed to begin on September 8th with Poetry in Motion, a mixed repertory, followed by “Mayerling,” a North American premiere with music by Franz Liszt. With quick thinking, Houston Ballet opened the season on September 22nd with a four-show run of “Mayerling” at Houston’s Hobby Center — to critical acclaim. The New York Times hailed the production as a “romantic masterpiece.” “Poetry in Motion” was rescheduled for October 26 and 27. Even though the company was unable to make up all of the lost services, all of the Houston Ballet Orchestra musicians were paid for the missed work, even though the company was under no contractual obligation to do so.

HGO recently announced that the three productions in 2017 will take place in a large exhibit hall at the George R. Brown Convention Center, naming our new home the “HGO Resilience Theater.” It will seat approximately 1,700 people with no seat being further than 100 feet from the stage. The calendar for the first part of the season has been maintained with no loss in rehearsal time or number of shows. HGO will open the season with “La Traviata” on October 20th.

Both companies have indeed shown tremendous resilience in the wake of Harvey, as have the musicians who play in both orchestras. Musicians volunteered across the Houston community — cleaning out flooded houses, donating supplies to shelters, giv-
ing gift cards to friends who lost many of their belongings and homes and bringing the gift of music to displaced people at shelters to lift their spirits.

On September 27, seven of Houston’s Theater District’s resident companies put on a benefit concert to honor and raise money for local heroes. It was a beautiful collaboration with memorable performances by all organizations. There was a full pit orchestra of volunteer musicians from Houston Ballet, HGO and the Houston Symphony. The evening of service was a great way to give back to our city and to show our patrons and audiences that we can and must continue making great art as our community recovers. As the ROPA delegate for both the HGO and Houston Ballet orchestras, I would like to extend a big thank-you to all of the delegates who have reached out and offered to help in any way they can. I would also like to thank the ROPA Board who donated $500 to the AFM Hurricane Relief Fund. The outpouring of generosity has been touching. We had several members whose homes flooded, who lost personal belongings and who lost instruments, mallets, mouthpieces and supplies that were housed in the basement of our beloved Wortham Theater Center.

If you are still looking for a tax-deductible way to help the HGO and Houston Ballet musicians directly, we ask that donation checks be made out to the Tim Harris Fund (our local’s general relief fund) and mailed to Local 65-699 with a memo that the funds are to be directed to the orchestra musicians of HGO and Houston Ballet.
In Memoriam: Maurice Grants
by Lynn Grants

Born in New York City, Maurice remained a quintessential New Yorker, even after his family relocated to Los Angeles when Maurice was in his early teens. On discovering that his new school didn’t have an orchestra, he organized one, recruiting like-minded friends and setting up a rehearsal schedule. This expanded to his forming a community orchestra, the Symphony of the Chaparral, in the Sunland - Tujunga foothill communities. He took on conducting duties with the orchestra, as well as setting programming, securing rehearsal and performance space and acting as personnel manager.

Although he worked primarily as a cellist, Maurice was also a bassoonist. I vividly remember him playing the contrabassoon solo in Beauty and the Beast from Ravel’s Mother Goose Suite. We met in college at California Institute of the Arts, and started a string quartet to play Bartok #4. In the course of our 33-year marriage, we played Bartok, and a great many other things, with school friends who have also become lifelong friends and colleagues.

Maurice also had a passion for history and genealogy. It led him to extensive research on his and my family trees, and to his forming several cousins groups and organizing family reunions all over the country. He had a real gift for bringing people together, both in person, and in cyberspace, and thoroughly enjoyed the detective work involved in tracing family trees. His interest in history eventually led him to participate in Civil War historical reenactment, and he was as careful in his attention to historical detail as he was to musical details.

As contractor of Music Angelica, he was instrumental in drawing up the ensemble’s first-ever CBA, and, starting as contractor for the Paulist Choristers, he stayed with as it grew into the National Children’s Choir, which saw him contracting musicians both in Los Angeles and on the East Coast.

Maurice was a firm believer in everyone getting a fair deal, and that led him to serve on the Pasadena Symphony’s Orchestra Players’ Committee as chair and to act as the Pasadena Symphony’s ROPA representative. In addition to being the ROPA representative, he was elected to serve as a ROPA Parliamentarian, fulfilling a term as ROPA Delegate to the AFM.

Maurice loved to travel, and combined that love with his love of music, touring twice with Yanni, with Eric Clapton and with the Los Angeles Mozart Orchestra (Voices of Light). He always made the most of those tours squeezing in sightseeing adventures and, of course, searching out the best food. His life was lived richly and fully, and his memory will live on in the many, many lives he touched.

Reprinted by permission of Gary Lasley, Secretary/Treasurer of Local 47.
Resolution Nº. 1

Subject: Resolution proposing to amend Article IV, Section I and Article V, Section 2 of the ROPA Bylaws to increase the number of Members-at-Large serving on the Executive Board

Whereas, Pit orchestra membership of The Regional Orchestra Players’ Association (“ROPA”) has grown significantly in recent years; and

Whereas, The threshold budget for Associate Membership in ROPA under the following conditions:

(a) Its total budget is [800,000] $1,000,000 or less. If the total budget of an orchestra with Associate Membership should exceed $800,000 $1,000,000, that orchestra must either apply for full ROPA membership or resign its associate membership.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board

R O P A 2 0 1 7 R e s o l u t i o n s
Adopted at the Annual Conference

Resolution Nº. 3

Subject: Resolution proposing to amend Article VII of the ROPA Bylaws to separate the positions of The Leading Tone Editor and Social Media Coordinator

Whereas, The Regional Orchestra Players’ Association (“ROPA”) values the ability to regularly publish its newsletter, The Leading Tone; and

Whereas, ROPA strives to increase its social media presence by giving more focused attention to its social media sites; and

Whereas, The Leading Tone Editor and the Social Media Coordinator require very different skill sets; and

Whereas, Dividing the position of The Leading Tone Editor/Social Media Coordinator into two positions will better serve the goals of regularly publishing The Leading Tone and increasing ROPA’s social media presence; therefore, be it

Resolved, That Article VII of the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association Bylaws be amended and the Sections enumerated as necessary and appropriate, as follows:

Section 1:

Enumeration: The Adjunct Positions shall include an Editor of The Leading Tone, a Social Media Coordinator, a Historian, a Webmaster, a Conductor Evaluation Administrator and a Conference Coordinator. Adjunct Positions may be held by persons who are not members of a ROPA orchestra. The services of any Adjunct Position may also be filled by 3rd party vendors. Adjunct Positions shall be filled by appointment by the President with the approval of the Executive Board, and be under the direction and supervision of the Executive Board or by a ROPA officer as provided for in these bylaws.

Section 2:

The Leading Tone Editor /Social Media Coordinator: The Leading Tone Editor /Social Media Coordinator shall:

(a) Prepare and promulgate at least four issues annually of ROPA’s official Newsletter, which shall be named The Leading Tone;

(b) Send out reminders to Delegates and Executive Board (via email) to submit articles for The Leading Tone approximately 2-3 weeks before the deadline;

(c) Compile submitted articles into newsletter format (using preferred design software such as Publisher);

(d) Edit articles for grammar and spelling;

(e) Submit completed newsletters to the ROPA President for review and approval;

(f) After the ROPA President’s approval, submit The Leading Tone to legal counsel and any proofreaders, and may also submit articles to the original authors for additional proofreading;

(g) Send an electronic file (in final draft form) to the Secretary for posting on the ROPA website;

(h) Send emails to the Delegates to notify them when the newsletter is available on the ROPA website;

(i) Be responsible for email postings of relevant industry articles;

(j) Moderate emails posted to the ROPA general discussion list;

(k) Be responsible for monitoring and posting on the ROPA Facebook page;

(l) Be responsible for any future social media formats as approved by the Executive Board.

NEW SECTION.

Social Media Coordinator: The Social Media Coordinator shall:

(a) Be responsible for email postings of relevant industry articles;

(b) Moderate emails posted to the ROPA general discussion list;

(c) Be responsible for monitoring and posting on the ROPA Facebook page;

(d) Be responsible for any other social media formats as approved by the Executive Board.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board

Resolution Nº. 4

Subject: Resolution in support of the UAW’s efforts to organize the Nissan plant in Canton, Mississippi

Whereas, The United Auto Workers (the “UAW”) have dedicated significant resources to organizing foreign auto maker plants in the United States; and

(continued on page 7)
Whereas, Employees at the Nissan plant in Canton, Mississippi are voting to join the UAW on August 3 and 4, 2017; and

Whereas, Canton, Mississippi is in the jurisdiction of American Federation of Musicians Local 579 (“Local 579”), and Local 579 is the bargaining agent for the Mississippi Symphony, a Regional Orchestra Players’ Association (“ROPA”) orchestra; and

Whereas, The members of Local 579 have supported the UAW in the Canton organizing campaign; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association lends its support to the employees of the Canton, Mississippi Nissan plant in their organizing campaign; and be it

Resolved, That ROPA commends Local 579 for its active support of unionism in its region; and be it further

Resolved, That ROPA encourages all AFM locals to continue supporting the organizing efforts of other unions in solidarity and in the pursuit of strengthening unionism in the United States.

Submitted by: Lisa Davis, Delegate, Mississippi Symphony, and the ROPA Executive Board

Resolution No. 5.

Subject: Resolution granting the status of ROPA President Emerita to Carla Lehmeier-Tatum

In Recognition of Carla Lehmeier-Tatum

Whereas, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum served as President of The Regional Orchestra Players’ Association (“ROPA”) for nine years, and is the longest serving President in the history of ROPA; and

Whereas, Under her leadership, ROPA has expanded to an organization which serves 86 orchestras and over 5,000 musicians nationwide; and

Whereas, Carla’s stewardship, grace, poise and diplomacy has strengthened ROPA’s significance and the reputation of its orchestras throughout the United States; and

Whereas, Carla is a tireless union advocate who continues to fight for musicians’ livelihoods; and

Whereas, ROPA wishes to honor Carla for her distinguished service; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association hopes Carla will continue to be a part of ROPA, in any capacity, for many years to come; and be it further

Resolved, That ROPA hereby confers upon Carla Lehmeier-Tatum the status of ROPA President Emerita.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board

Resolution No. 6

Subject: Resolution from the musicians of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, thanking ROPA and its members for their support during a difficult time

Whereas, The change would have resulted in extreme hardship and oppression for many of the musicians of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra; and

Whereas, The musicians of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra attempted to unilaterally change the terms and conditions of the musicians’ employment; and

Whereas, Wherever, ROPA and its members came to the aid of the musicians of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra by spreading the word, offering support, and providing education and training; and

Whereas, The delegates to the 2016 ROPA Conference adopted a resolution urging the management of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra to bargain fairly with the musicians; and

Whereas, The publicity, support and education helped the musicians get through a difficult time; and

Whereas, The musicians of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra have been able to maintain their working conditions, thanks in part to the support of ROPA and its member musicians; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the musicians of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra express their deepest gratitude to their colleagues in Regional Orchestra Players’ Association orchestras across the country, and thank ROPA and its member musicians for their solidarity and support in time of need; and further,

Resolved, That ROPA acknowledges and appreciates the sentiments of the musicians of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra.

Submitted by: Nora Frisk, Delegate, Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra

Resolution No. 7

Subject: Resolution for consideration by the delegates of the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association

Whereas, Many musicians who are members of Regional Orchestra Players’ Association (“ROPA”) orchestras also work as substitute and/or extra musicians in other orchestras; and

Whereas, Working as a substitute and/or extra musician is an important part of many ROPA musicians’ livelihoods, and is sometimes a ROPA musician’s primary or significant source of income; and

Whereas, Standards and procedures for engagement of sub/or extra musicians may vary amongst orchestras, and are often not fully addressed; and

Whereas, Arbitrary or discriminatory hiring and employment practices for substitute and extra musicians, when they exist, adversely affect the entire community of musicians; therefore, be it,

Resolved, That the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association promotes fair and equitable hiring and employment practices for any musician, including substitutes and extras; and, be it further

Resolved, That ROPA encourages all orchestras to adopt ethical policies, procedures, and criteria in regard to hiring and employment practices for substitute and extra musicians.

Submitted by: A. C. Lewis, Santa Rosa Symphony ROPA Delegate, and Debbie Spangler, Oakland Symphony and Symphony Silicon Valley ROPA Delegate

Resolution No. 8

Subject: Resolution congratulating the musicians of the Los Angeles Opera Orchestra for their 2016 Grammy award

Los Angeles Opera Resolution

Whereas, Members of the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association (“ROPA”) produce high quality media projects under the Integrated Media Agreement (the “IMA”) of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada, which serve to elevate the reputation of ROPA and classical music nationwide; and

Whereas, The Los Angeles Opera produced a recording under the IMA of John Corigliano’s The Ghost of Versailles; and

Whereas, In February 2017, the recording received Grammy Awards for Best Opera Recording and Best Engineered Classical Album for 2016; and

Whereas, The Los Angeles Opera Orchestra is a member of ROPA; and

Whereas, ROPA encourages its members to continue creating projects under the IMA; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association congratulates the Los Angeles Opera and the musicians of the Los Angeles Opera Orchestra for the great honor of receiving two Grammy Awards.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board

(continued on page 8)
Resolution No. 9

Subject: Resolution commending the American Federation of Musicians for implementing the Local Officer Training Program

AFM Local Officer Training Resolution

Whereas, During the 2016 International Convention of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada (the “AFM”), a Resolution was considered to develop more training for local officers; and

Whereas, This program was successfully developed through the cooperative efforts of the AFM Symphonies Services Division and the AFM International Executive Board; and

Whereas, AFM local officers are now receiving this training; and

Whereas, This training will be available to more local officers in the future without additional financial burden to the locals; and

Whereas, The importance of having knowledgeable and well-trained union officers is critical to protecting the rights of AFM members and to growing the AFM membership; and

Whereas, Local officer training leads to improved communications and relationships between Regional Orchestra Players’ Association ("ROPA") member orchestras and their locals; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the ROPA Executive Board hereby expresses its appreciation for AFM’s efforts in training local officers; and

Resolved, That the ROPA supports the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada (the “AFM”) in its efforts to lobby against H.R. 785.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board

Resolution No. 10

Subject: Resolution in opposition to H.R. 785, the proposed National Right-to-Work Act

National Right-to-Work Resolution

Whereas, On February 1, 2017, Representative Steve King (R-IA) introduced H.R. 785, the “National Right-to-Work Act,” in the United States House of Representatives; and

Whereas, The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, which allows states to adopt anti-labor “right-to-work” laws, has undermined unions for 70 years by allowing individuals who work under collectively bargained agreements to “free ride”; and

Whereas, “Right-to-work” legislation, in states where it has been enacted, compromises our locals’ abilities to support our member orchestras; and

Whereas, A federal “right-to-work” law would irrevocably harm unions in the United States; and

Whereas, The Regional Orchestra Players’ Association (“ROPA”) values union membership and supports free bargaining laws across the country; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the ROPA supports the American Federation of Musicians in opposition to H.R. 785; and

Resolved, That ROPA supports the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada (the “AFM”) in its efforts to lobby against H.R. 785.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board

Resolution No. 11

Subject: Resolution commending the work of the American Federation of Musicians in lobbying to support continued funding of the National Endowment for the Arts

NEA Resolution

Whereas, President Trump’s proposed budget for 2018 eliminates all funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (the “NEA”); and

Whereas, Many member orchestras of the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association (“ROPA”) rely on funding, either directly or indirectly, from the NEA; and

Whereas, The survival of the NEA is a crucial element in helping our communities to thrive; and

Whereas, Elimination of funding for the NEA would be extremely harmful to ROPA orchestras and to the public at large; and

Whereas, The American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada (the “AFM”), alongside several other arts organizations, has worked tirelessly and successfully to fight the proposed elimination of funding; and

Whereas, House appropriators have seen fit to restore FY 2018 NEA funding at a level of $145 million in opposition to the President’s proposal; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the ROPA Executive Board hereby thanks, applauds, commends and recognizes Paul Austin for his many years of outstanding service and unwavering devotion and friendship to ROPA and its members, and to unionism itself, and wishes him well on his future endeavors.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board; co-sponsored by Sarah Chandler, delegate, Binghamton Philharmonic

Resolution No. 12

Subject: Resolution acknowledging the Pittsburgh Symphony Musicians for donating $10,000 to the orchestra endowment fund of the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Orchestra.

NEA Resolution

Whereas, The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Players’ Association ("ROPA") with a goal of $4 million for the orchestra endowment, as part of its $21.2 million capital campaign; and

Whereas, Paul Austin was elected as delegate for the Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra to The Regional Orchestra Players’ Association ("ROPA") in 2007; and

Whereas, Paul Austin served on the Executive Board of ROPA from 2008 through 2011 as Member-At-Large and also as Vice President, which included the duty of serving as Conductor Evaluation Administrator; and

Whereas, After stepping down as Vice President in 2011, Paul Austin continued in his role as Conductor Evaluation Administrator; and

Whereas, Even after his orchestra became a member of the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians ("ICSOM"), Paul remained in the role of Conductor Evaluation Administrator of the ROPA Conductor Evaluation Bank until the spring of 2017; and

Whereas, Paul remains a valuable contributor to the lives of symphonic musicians in the United States by serving on the ICSOM Governing Board; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association hereby thanks, applauds, commends and recognizes Paul Austin for his many years of outstanding service and unwavering devotion and friendship to ROPA and its members, and to unionism itself, and wishes him well on his future endeavors.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board; co-sponsored by Sarah Chandler, delegate, Binghamton Philharmonic

Resolution No. 13

Subject: Resolution acknowledging the Pittsburgh Symphony Musicians for donating $10,000 to the orchestra endowment fund of the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Orchestra.

In Honor of the Musicians of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

Whereas, The Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre created an endowment fund for the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Orchestra, a member of the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association ("ROPA") with a goal of $4 million for the orchestra endowment, as part of its $21.2 million capital campaign; and

Whereas, The goal of the fund is to protect the company’s current level of orchestra accompaniment, and to build on its goal of sustainable, long-term funding for annual performances with live music; and

Whereas, In 2006 the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre scaled back live music to where the ballet has committed to performing with the full Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Orchestra for only two out of five mainstage productions; and

Whereas, The Musicians of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, a member of the International Conference (continued on page 9)
of Symphony and Opera Musicians (“ICSOM”), has made a donation to the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre of $10,000, specifically for the orchestra endowment, in the belief “...that live music is essential to the success of all ballet performances, and we hope that our donation will encourage other generous individuals in our city to give in order to bring the orchestra back to all Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre performances...” (1); therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association appreciates and acknowledges the generous work of orchestras supporting other orchestras in their local arts community; and be it further

Resolved, That ROPA and the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Orchestra acknowledge and thank the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Musicians for their generous donation to maintain and grow the number of live performances of the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Orchestra.

Submitted by: The Musicians of the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Orchestra and The ROPA Executive Board

(1) Shirley McMarlin, *Pittsburgh Symphony Musicians Donate $10,000 for PBT Orchestra*, TRIB LIVE, June 14, 2017 (quote from Micah Howard, PSO Bassist and Orchestra Committee chair)

**Resolution No. 14**

**Subject:** Resolution in gratitude to Nancy Nelson for 6 years of faithful service as Vice President of ROPA.

Nancy Nelson Resolution

Whereas, Nancy Nelson has served for three terms as Vice President of the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association (“ROPA”); and

Whereas, Under her guidance, ROPA’s membership has grown and thrived; and

Whereas, Nancy’s dedication to ROPA’s guiding principles has been an inspiration to the ROPA Executive Board and all of ROPA’s member musicians; and

Whereas, Nancy has selflessly stepped up in times of need by also performing the duties of a Member-At-Large; and

Whereas, Nancy has offered comfort, leadership, and support to all delegates, from the newest orchestras to the founding member orchestras; and

Whereas, In her role as Vice President, Nancy has trained many new ROPA delegates to be union leaders; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association hereby thanks Nancy Nelson for her service to ROPA and its members; and be it further

Resolved, That ROPA expresses its most sincere hope and desire that Nancy will continue to be a part of ROPA, in any capacity, for many years to come.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board

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**SAVE THE DATE: 2018 ROPA Conference**

**Tuesday, July 31st — Thursday, Aug. 2nd**

**Negotiating Orchestras Workshop:** Monday, July 30th

**Portland, Oregon**
including the addition of an eighth Member-at-Large to serve our delegates, which acknowledges that ROPA is a growing organization. Rochelle Skolnick and Todd Jelen led the delegates through a lively role playing activity, “Internal Orchestral Organizing.” The day’s final presentation was by ROPA’s good friend, Nathan Kahn, who shared his wealth of knowledge on negotiations. That evening, conference attendees traveled to the home of the Arizona Opera for a dinner hosted by Local 586.

Along with the diversity sessions mentioned earlier, the final day of the conference included remarks by SSD staff. Throughout the conference, Director Rochelle Skolnick, Debbie Newmark, Chris Durham, Jane Owen, Todd Jelen and Laurence Hofmann provided valuable knowledge and support to our delegates, and we thank them very much for their service to the orchestral world. We also welcomed ICSOM General Counsel Kevin Case, who discussed the topic of bullying in the orchestral workplace.

Following the election of officers, the 2017-18 ROPA Executive Board will include President Mike Smith (Minnesota Opera Orchestra), Vice President Dave Shelton (Lexington Philharmonic), Secretary Karen Sandene (Omaha and Lincoln Symphony Orchestras), Treasurer Donna Loomis (El Paso Symphony), Delegate-at-Large to the AFM Convention Naomi Bensdorf Frisch (Illinois Philharmonic and Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra) and Members-at-Large Taylor Brown (Chattanooga Symphony and Opera Orchestra), Lisa Davis (Mississippi Symphony), Sean Diller (Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra), Marika Fischer Hoyt (Madison Symphony), Katie Shields (Arizona Opera Orchestra), Maya Stone (Huntsville Symphony), Amanda Swain (Houston Ballet Orchestra and Houston Grand Opera) and Steve Wade (Hartford Symphony).

And finally, we offer our sincere appreciation to conference hosts, the musicians of the Arizona Opera Orchestra, Local 586 (Phoenix, AZ), Phoenix Local President Jerry Donato and numerous hard-working local volunteers. We also would like to thank Conference Coordinator Linda Boivin and ROPA Delegate Katie Shields for their outstanding work assisting the ROPA Board in presenting a well-run conference. We look forward to our 34th Annual Conference in 2018 in Portland, OR!
What is the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association (ROPA)?

- Professional orchestra musicians of large and medium-sized budgets with AFM contracts;
- Service organizations networking with over 5,000 musicians and 87 orchestras;
- Representatives of Regional Symphony Musicians at International/National forums.

Who does ROPA serve?

- ROPA rank and file musicians;
- Future musicians by protecting today’s jobs;
- All orchestras. What affects one affects all;
- The American Federation of Musicians;
- The communities our orchestras serve;
- Elected representatives—Delegates and Orchestra Committees.

Why does ROPA exist?

- To give knowledge and tools to union orchestras’ musicians and to assist in establishing fair working conditions;
- To educate the membership about industry standards, labor law, procedures and practices;
- To empower and enable our colleagues to better their lives in their workplace;
- To communicate during a time when labor is being dismantled in our country.

Other important principles identified:

- ROPA is a place for our member orchestras to turn to for support;
- ROPA establishes a forum for our member orchestras to discuss concerns and to educate orchestras on current trends and solutions;
- ROPA provides assistance for orchestras in crisis with advice and contact information;
- ROPA works to create fair collective bargaining agreements, fair working conditions and fair compensation.

What are the crucial components ROPA utilizes to accomplish its goals?

- Information sharing with orchestra to orchestra, musician to musician and person to person;
- The information is shared through website, emails, Facebook, telephone calls, conferences and newsletters;
- Work to create an atmosphere within each ROPA Orchestra of concern and commitment;
- Create awareness of issues through Delegate communicating to the ROPA Executive Board.

What are the results of the work of ROPA?

- Inclusion in a labor community;
- Better professional lives and contracts than we otherwise had;
- Solidary and support;
- Greater awareness of management tactics;
- Knowledge of what works and what doesn’t work;
- Education of membership;
- Orchestra profiles: wage and scale charts, orchestra reports.

What are the Values of ROPA?

- Unity
- Fairness
- Democracy in work place
- Education
- Shared Sacrifice
- We are one with all labor
- What impacts one, impacts all
- Collective action to find solutions
- Identify problems—Identify Successes

Working for Musicians since 1984
A conference of the American Federation of Musicians, AFL-CIO

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ROPA Member Orchestras

Full Members
Akron Symphony Orchestra
Albany Symphony
Allentown Symphony
Annapolis Symphony
Ann Arbor Symphony
Arizona Opera Orchestra
Atlanta Ballet Orchestra
Atlanta Opera Orchestra
Austin Symphony Orchestra
Binghamton Philharmonic
Boston Ballet Orchestra
Boulder Philharmonic
California Symphony Orchestra
Canton Symphony Orchestra
Chattanooga Symphony & Opera Orchestra
Colorado Springs Philharmonic Orchestra
Dallas Opera Orchestra
Dayton Philharmonic
Delaware Symphony Orchestra
Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra
East Texas Symphony Orchestra
El Paso Symphony

Elgin Symphony Orchestra
Erie Philharmonic Orchestra
Eugene Symphony
Fort Wayne Philharmonic
Fresno Philharmonic Orchestra
Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra
Hartford Symphony Orchestra
Houston Ballet Orchestra
Houston Grand Opera Orchestra
Huntsville Symphony Orchestra
Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra
Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra
Knoxville Symphony Orchestra
Las Vegas Philharmonic
Lexington Philharmonic
Long Beach Symphony Orchestra
Los Angeles Opera Orchestra
Madison Symphony Orchestra
Memphis Symphony Orchestra
Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra
Minnesota Opera Orchestra
Mississippi Symphony Orchestra

Monterey Symphony
New Haven Symphony Orchestra
New Mexico Philharmonic
New West Symphony Orchestra
Oakland Symphony
Omaha Symphony Orchestra
Orchestra Iowa
Pacific Symphony
Palm Beach Opera Orchestra
Pasadena Symphony Orchestra
Pittsburgh Opera Orchestra
Portland Opera Orchestra
Portland Symphony Orchestra
Reading Symphony Orchestra
Rhode Island Philharmonic
Richmond Symphony
Santa Barbara Symphony
Santa Rosa Symphony
Sarasota Orchestra
South Bend Symphony
Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra
Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra
Spokane Symphony Orchestra

Symphony Silicon Valley
Tacoma Symphony Orchestra
Toledo Symphony Orchestra
Tucson Symphony Orchestra
Flint Symphony Orchestra
Glimmerglass Opera Orchestra
Hudson Valley Philharmonic
Lincoln Symphony Orchestra
Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra
Pittsburgh Ballet Orchestra
Tri-Cities Opera Orchestra
Tulsa Opera Orchestra

Associate Members
California Philharmonic
Central City Opera Orchestra
Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra

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