

Fall  
2016

## The Leading Tone

A conference of the American Federation of Musicians, AFL-CIO

**2016 ROPA Conference Edition**  
**Lowell Conference Center, Madison WI**  
**July 26th—28th, 2016**

**2016 ROPA Conference Report**  
*by Karen Sandene, ROPA Secretary*

This past July, delegates from ROPA's eighty-seven orchestras, SSD Staff and special guests arrived in Madison, Wisconsin for ROPA's 32<sup>nd</sup> annual conference. The conference, held at the Pyle Center on the University of Wisconsin campus, provided a terrific learning and networking opportunity, allowing all to reconnect with friends and fellow orchestral musicians from across the nation. It was also a chance to offer our best wishes to three of our colleagues as they move on to new chapters in their lives.

Throughout the conference, representatives of the Symphonic Services Division (SSD) provided a wealth of knowledge. As well as being available for valuable 1-on-1 contact with delegates and speaking on several topics, SSD staff provided several hours of training for delegates from negotiating orchestras prior to the full conference. We thank Director Jay Blumenthal and Nathan Kahn, Debbie Newmark, Chris Durham, Todd Jelen, Rochelle Skolnick and Laurence Hofmann for sharing their knowledge with the delegates.

In addition, ROPA utilized resources from the University of Wisconsin School for Workers, with Don Taylor leading the department and presenters Armando Ibera, Michael Childers and David Nack. Sessions included "Building Community Support" and "How to Jumpstart Your Union".

The opening session began with a welcome by AFM Madison Local 166 President Brian Witty. Norman Gilliland, Wisconsin Public Radio, spoke about how culture can bring together people with diverse political viewpoints, and Mark Cantrell, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra spoke of the importance of board education. In a presentation titled "Lessons Learned: Hartford Symphony/



ROPA Secretary  
Karen Sandene



Attendees of the 2016 ROPA Conference participating in the Solidarity Sing-Along at the Wisconsin State Capitol Building..

Grand Rapids Symphony", Nathan Kahn, Randy Whatley, Paul Austin and Steve Wade discussed the outcomes of those negotiations as a result of social media, networking and public relations activities. Following the morning sessions, the delegation headed to the Wisconsin state capitol building to participate in the daily Solidarity Sing-Along, which has been a fixture at the capitol since March 2011.

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## The Leading Tone

### Volume 32, Issue 1

#### Editor

Karen Sandene  
karensandene@gmail.com

#### Proofreaders

John Michael Smith  
David Sheldon

*Letters to the editor can be sent to the  
e-mail address above,*

## ROPA

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c/o Donna Loomis  
Treasurer, ROPA  
204 Magic Shadow Drive  
Santa Teresa, NM  
88008

#### INFORMATION CENTER

- This newsletter will be posted online at:  
<http://www.ropaweb.org>
- To subscribe to the ROPA Internet Mailing List, visit  
<http://groups.google.com/group/ropa-discussion>.
- The list is open to musicians in ROPA member orchestras, and AFM Local officers for those orchestras.

## ROPA President's Remarks, 2016 ICSOM Conference

*by John Michael Smith, ROPA President*

I'd like to thank ICSOM for the opportunity to address the 2016 annual conference in our nation's capitol. This is my first official duty as President of ROPA since I was elected at our annual conference in Madison, Wisconsin a month ago.



ROPA President  
John Michael Smith

For the past 36 years I have performed as a bassist with the Minnesota Opera Orchestra, first as a section player, and since 2000 as Principal Double Bass.

Outgoing ICSOM Chair Bruce Ridge and I have shared a common origin: we both attended the

same high school, Kempsville High School in Virginia Beach, Virginia. In fact, in recent years our mothers even lived in nearly identical adjacent condo buildings near the Kempsville Greens Golf Course, and even had the same unit number and location in their respective buildings!

My first professional orchestra experience was with the Norfolk Symphony, which is now the Virginia Symphony. This was also true for Bruce. My first professional audition was for the North Carolina Symphony, Bruce's current orchestra.

I became a member of the Columbus Symphony Orchestra in 1976, when I had moved to Columbus, Ohio to enter graduate school at Ohio State. One of my colleagues in Columbus was a violinist named Chris Durham, who is now an SSD negotiator. Chris, Nathan Kahn, and others were founders of ROPA in 1984 in Columbus.

I moved to St. Paul when my wife accepted the position as 2<sup>nd</sup> bassoonist with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra in 1980. In addition to the Minnesota Opera Orchestra, I have performed, recorded, and toured with both the SPCO and Minnesota Orchestra as a substitute and extra musician, and have been an active free-lancer in a variety of ensembles and types of music.

While in Columbus I began my training in string instrument repair at The Loft Violin Shop, and furthered my knowledge through the Violin Society of America's Oberlin Violin Restoration Workshops. For the past 35 years I have operated my own shop, John Michael Smith, Luthier – which is my day job!

I have been elected to serve on my orchestra's players committees and negotiating committees since 1990, when we signed the first CBA negotiated with a musician member committee and the Local. I have served on every negotiating committee since that time, and will be working again on our next negotiations in 2017.

Speaking of negotiations, I have had the experience of when things don't go right. The Minnesota Opera Orchestra went on strike in 1993 as a result of an alliance with the SPCO, Minnesota Opera, and Ordway Theatre to save the SPCO, which was in financial crisis. The end game was the elimination of the Opera Orchestra, and the SPCO becoming the "house orchestra" of the Ordway Theatre, and consolidating the administration of the three organizations. It was a perfect storm of expiring CBAs and the managements coming to the conclusion that our orchestra was expendable. With Local 30-73 standing with ALL musicians, the SPCO musicians supporting and standing with the musicians of the Opera, valuable strike organization help from Rosemary Estes of SSD, Local 30-73 President Brad Eggen, Liza DeBrul, counsel for the SPCO musicians, and the negotiating committees of both orchestras, we were able to turn the tide, dissolve the alliance, and return to the bargaining table. An agreement was finally reached where the Minnesota Opera Orchestra became a standing orchestra of named employee musicians.

This was the first time I became aware of ROPA. I was contacted by Andrew Brandt, the editor of *The Leading Tone*, for an article about the combined forces of two orchestras negotiating with three managements. It was at this time that I became aware that there was special help and support available from an organization of orchestras similar to ours, and addressing our special needs.

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(President's Remarks, continued from page 2)

### ***We are stronger together!***

More recently, I also happened to be at and near ground zero through the two lockouts in the Twin Cities: the 7-month lockout of the SPCO and the 15-month lockout of the Minnesota Orchestra. My wife was the chair of the negotiating committee for the SPCO; that battle was painfully fought every day in our home, the media, and on the streets of St. Paul, as it was across the river in Minneapolis. My colleagues of the SPCO, Minnesota Orchestra, Minnesota Opera, and many others stood together through leafleting, being a presence in front of concert halls and orchestra offices throughout these hard times, sometimes in the bitter cold and snow of the Minnesota winter. We stood with Musician support groups for both the SPCO and Minnesota Orchestra, attended and performed in self-produced orchestra concerts by both ensembles, and stood beside each other in many rallies that were held throughout these troubled times.

### ***We are stronger together!***

I attended my first ROPA Conference in San Francisco in 2007 as an alternate delegate. I became the Delegate for Minnesota Opera Orchestra in 2008, and continued to serve in that role into 2013. I was elected to the ROPA Executive Board as a MAL in 2011, and began serving as the MAL for the Pit Orchestras, which today numbers 18 orchestras. I also began serving on the ROPA Electronic Media Committee in 2011 and became Chair in 2013, succeeding Paul Austin. I have also served as the Conference Host for the 2012 ROPA Conference in Minneapolis.

As ROPA Electronic Media Chair, I served as a member of the negotiating team along with the ICSOM Electronic Media Committee members during the negotiations of the 2<sup>nd</sup> IMA beginning in the fall of 2013 through January of 2015. I found this to be a very collaborative and unified team of AFM, ROPA, and ICSOM.

### ***We are stronger together!***

ROPA is now 32 years old and is a growing organization, currently with 87 member orchestras with budgets between \$546,000 (Hudson Valley Philharmonic) to over \$40 million (LA Opera). We recently welcomed two new orchestras: the Boston Ballet Orchestra and the Annapolis Symphony, and have a couple more waiting in the wings.

Our annual conference is typically an information-packed event, with social events included on most evenings. The Madison Conference included a Union Solidarity Sing-Along at the Wis-

consin State Capitol, a weekly event in support of Unionism in a less-than-supportive-of-unions state government. It also included attending the weekly outdoor Concert on the Square by the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, which weekly draws over 30,000 in attendance.

There was a special reception in honor of Nathan Kahn's retirement from Symphonic Services Division of the AFM. Nathan was the first President of ROPA, and his service, devotion, and presence was acknowledged and highlighted throughout the Madison Conference.

Overall, we are observing a relative calm in a majority of our orchestras, with negotiations generally going a little more smoothly and fewer orchestras having to accept cuts. Most recent negotiations with our orchestras are experiencing modest increases. And it's not to say that everything is perfect in all of our orchestras (there are still challenges), but ROPA and its members are there to offer assistance, and support, as stated in ROPA's Guiding Principles:

- ROPA is a place for our member orchestras to turn 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.



Virginia Beach natives and fellow bassists: outgoing ICSOM Chair Bruce Ridge and incoming ROPA President John Michael Smith.

I am succeeding Carla Lehmeier-Tatum as President of ROPA. She has served 9 years as the head of our player's conference, the longest serving President of ROPA. Her leadership and impact in ROPA and the Players Conferences has been huge. I have big shoes to fill; but the message still goes on:

### ***We are stronger together!***

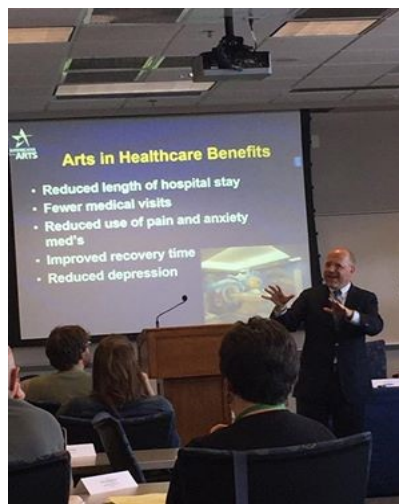
Mike



(Conference Report, continued from page 1)

Delegates spent time the first day in small groups discussion with their Members-at-Large. Afternoon presentations included Conductor Survey procedures and breakout sessions dealing with grievances, public relations and committee basics, as well as new delegate orientation.

The second day was a busy one. AFM



Above: Randy Cohen, Americans for the Arts  
Below: Allison Beck, Director of the FMCS



President Ray Hair addressed the conference, discussing highlights of the AFM Convention, the Democratic National Convention, and Local Officer Training. Allison Beck, Director of Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service spoke in detail on the "gig economy" and the effect it has on the labor industry. Randy Cohen from Americans for the Arts presented the results of several surveys on the impact of arts on individuals and communities. Representatives from OCSM, TMA and ICSOM gave updates from their conferences. Following the day's sessions, attendees had the opportunity to attend a concert by the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra on the lawn of the

state capitol.

The final day of the conference began with presentations by Symphonic Services. Laurence Hofmann gave an intro-



AFM President Ray Hair

duction to features of the new electronic wage chart. Nathan Kahn spoke of the early days of his orchestral experiences and how it led to the creation of ROPA. SSD attorney Rochelle Skolnick led a role playing activity on peer review.



Members of the SSD Staff addressing the conference.

Our final speaker was Rabbi Renee Bauer, Executive Director, Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice. She spoke of how to build alliances between community organizations and labor.

The Conference extended its warm wishes to our friends AFM Negotiator Nathan



Delegates participating in a mock peer review activity, created by SSD Attorney Rochelle Skolnick



Carla Lehmeier-Tatum, presiding over her final ROPA Conference as ROPA President

Kahn, ICSOM Chair Bruce Ridge and ROPA President Carla Lehmeier-Tatum



Just a few of the many bassoonists attending the ROPA conference.

as they step down from their positions. Their service to our orchestras and the AFM has been invaluable. Assuming the role of ROPA President is John Michael Smith, of the Minnesota Opera Orchestra, and previously the MAL for the pit orchestras. Along with Smith, The 2016-17 ROPA Executive Board elected on the final day of conference includes Vice President Nancy Nelson, Secretary Karen Sandene, Treasurer Donna Loomis, Delegate-at-Large to the AFM Convention Naomi Bensdorf Frisch, and Members-at-Large Taylor Brown, Lisa Davis, Sean Diller, Mary Anne Lemoine, Dave Shelton, Maya Stone and Steve Wade.

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(Conference Report, continued from page 4)



Delegates and Hosts enjoying the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra performance

We offer our sincere appreciation to conference hosts, the musicians of the Madison Symphony and Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, Local 166 (Madison, WI, Madison Local President Brian Witty, and numerous hard-working volunteers.

And finally, we would also like to thank Conference Coordinator Linda Boivin and ROPA Board Member-at-Large Naomi Bendsdorf Frisch for their outstanding work assisting the ROPA Board in presenting a well-run conference. We look forward to our 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference in 2017 in Phoenix AZ.

## A Thank-you to Carla Lehmeier-Tatum

By Karen Sandene, on behalf of the ROPA Board



Above: : Carla Lehmeier-Tatum addressing the delegation at the 2015 Toledo Conference

A quick look at Resolution #7 from the 2016 Madison Conference can tell you about the professional accomplishments that Carla Lehmeier-Tatum achieved during her tenure as ROPA President; she has been such a valuable voice for musicians and has led ROPA to increased visibility and influence in the industry. However, what the resolution doesn't quite cover is her boundless energy and unwavering passion for ROPA, and perhaps more important, the upstanding humor and grace she exhibited when handling challenges, both great and small.

Carla was always busily thinking of ways to make ROPA better, and she was regularly in touch with board members, delegates, Local officers, AFM staff, guest speakers, hotel management, caterers, etc., with e-mails, texts, phone calls, conference calls, and in-person visits—sometimes when she was just passing through town, and occasionally while waiting to board a flight at the airport. She was able to keep all of the moving parts clicking, and we all felt that we were an integral part of ROPA's success. Still, we found time to bond away from business, sharing a good laugh (with a twist of Minnesotan).

We would like to wish Carla continued success in her new endeavors, knowing that fine arts students in New Mexico are going to reap the benefits of her passion and humor. We hope to see and hear from her as a Friend of ROPA (and friend) at future conferences or just wherever.



Below: Vice President Nancy Nelson presenting a plaque to Carla at the 2016 ROPA Conference.

Right: Unwinding after a successful ROPA Conference, Minneapolis, MN.



Above: Two past ROPA Presidents: Barbara Zmich (front) and Carla Lehmeier-Tatum (back), 2016 Madison Conference



# Code of Ethical Audition Practices

(Editor's note: ROPA Delegates approved Resolution No. 3 at the 2016 Madison Conference, encouraging ROPA member orchestras to follow the guidelines in the Code of Ethical Audition Practices, and encouraging its member orchestras to consider incorporating the Code of Ethical Audition Practices into their Collective Bargaining agreements. The Code of Ethical Audition Practices is provided below, for reference.)

## Code of Ethical Audition Practices Approved by the Orchestra and Management Conferences

*The following code of ethical audition practices, approved in 1984 by the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians (ICSOM), the Major Orchestra Managers Conference (MOMC) and the AFM, is a document of suggested procedure for management and orchestra musicians alike. As with all codes of ethics, it is not a contract; no one is involuntarily bound to it and it contains no provisions for punitive action. Those who endorsed it have maintained that they will conduct their auditions in accordance with the principles articulated therein, with the tacit assertion that they think others should do likewise. The Code of Ethics was conceived and formulated by the Major Managers-ICSOM liaison Committee, constituting the first time that both ICSOM and MOMC have acted in concert rather than autonomously in addressing such a major issue. In the belief that the Code may be improved over time, it includes a provision for regular review by a joint committee of representatives from the three endorsing organizations. The Code has also been approved by the Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA) and the Regional Orchestra Managers' Conference (ROMC). A similar code exists in Canada between OCSM and the Association of Canadian Orchestras.*

### Purpose and Scope of Code

It is of utmost importance to musicians, managers and conductors that auditions be conducted in accordance with guidelines ensuring competition that is fair to all who audition while providing the best results for orchestras seeking musicians. Therefore, the AFM, ICSOM and MOMC propound the following ethical and fair audition practices to which all parties should adhere, subject to local contractual consideration.

### Preparation for Auditions

1. Notices of auditions should be given only for genuine vacancies, including newly created positions, which the management intends to fill as a result of those auditions, with no predeterminations having been made as to who will be hired. Musicians taking such auditions should only do so with the intention of accepting the position if it is offered.
2. Auditions should be advertised in appropriate places, including the International Musician. Notices should be clear and complete, specifying the position intended to be filled by the auditions, the person to contact in response to the notice and the dates that applications are due and that auditions should be held. Notices should appear far enough in advance of auditions for interested musicians to apply and adequately prepare.
3. All applicants should be sent written responses to their applications. Invited applicants should be sent clear instructions setting forth the date, time and place of the audition, the complete audition repertoire (excluding sight-reading repertoire) and parts for announced excerpts not generally available. All parts supplied by the orchestra should be legible and identical for all candidates.
4. Applicants should be given notice that if they choose not to attend the audition they should promptly notify the personnel manager or other designated person.

### Conduct of Auditions

1. In preparing for and conducting auditions, all participants should be aware of policies and procedure governing those auditions, including this code.
2. Although the existence and composition of an audition committee and the nature and extent of its participation in auditioning and hiring is determined locally, musicians' involvement should at least include the initial screening of applicants.
3. Applicants should not be disqualified from an audition on the basis of information about them obtained from current or previous employers or from other institutions to which they have applied.
4. Auditionees should be given sufficient time and, to the extent possible, adequate private facilities in which to warm up and practice.
5. Parts supplied by the orchestra for auditions should be in good condition, legible and clearly marked as intended to be played at the audition.
6. There should be no discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age, creed, national origin, religion or sexual preference; steps ensuring this should exist in all phases of the audition process.
7. There should be reasonable accommodation for the handicapped.
8. Auditionees should be given opportunity and encouragement to comment, anonymously if desired, to the audition committee and management about the audition process.
9. Auditionees should be notified of their status in the audition process immediately upon such determination. Candidates under active consideration after auditions are completed should be so notified and given an estimated time of final decision.
10. Auditionees should be informed prior to auditions of the orchestra's policy regarding reimbursement of auditionees' expenses for additional stay or travel incurred at the request of management.



## New Member Welcome Letters

by Dave Shelton, Lexington Philharmonic and ROPA Member-at-Large

A welcome letter from the union steward, orchestra committee, and/or local officers can be an effective first step in educating, and therefore protecting, musicians joining the orchestra. This letter may also serve as partial fulfillment of §5.12 of the Bylaws of the American Federation of Musicians, which requires each local to “conduct an orientation program for new members.”



ROPA MAL Dave Shelton, with Nathan Kahn

### Introduction

You may attach to this letter your collective bargaining agreement, an application for AFM membership, a work dues check-off authorization, and the Notice to Musicians Who Are Employed Under U.S. Collective Bargaining Agreements [<http://members.afm.org/member/page/id/10346>]. The collective bargaining agreement can be introduced as follows:

*This document is the result of many months of negotiations between \_\_\_\_ and Local \_\_\_\_ of the American Federation of Musicians, which represents the musicians of the \_\_\_\_\_. The terms and conditions of your employment with the \_\_\_\_ are governed by this agreement. Please inspect the document carefully and contact \_\_\_\_ regarding any questions you may have.*

### Membership

Essential to these letters are details regarding membership in the American Federation of Musicians local. If your collective bargaining agreement includes a union security clause, your introduction might borrow language

from our incoming Symphonic Services Division Director, Rochelle Skolnick, as follows:

*Pursuant to Article \_\_\_\_ of the CBA, you must, as a condition of employment, either join Local \_\_\_\_ or pay an agency fee to Local \_\_\_\_ once you have been employed for 31 days. These alternatives for fulfilling your obligation to Local \_\_\_\_ are explained in the attached “Notice to Musicians Hired to Work Under U.S. Collective Bargaining Agreements.*

*“As you consider which method you will use to satisfy your obligation, I hope that you will place a high value on obtaining rights as a union member to participate in union governance, contract negotiation, and contract ratification in your employment with the \_\_\_\_\_. I hope you will also remember that solidarity - and a unified membership front - make you and all the \_\_\_\_ stronger and better able to negotiate and maintain collective bargaining agreements that require professional compensation, benefits, and treatment for all of the musicians.*

*If you choose membership, your obligation takes the form of membership dues. If you choose to remain a nonmember, your obligation takes the form of an agency fee. The standard agency fee is the same as the initiation fees, annual dues and work dues paid by union members.*

*I have attached an application for AFM Local \_\_\_\_ to this letter. In order to join Local \_\_\_\_, you must complete and sign the application in addition to remitting the amount described below. Applications and checks made payable to “\_\_\_\_\_” should be mailed to the following address...*

### Union Membership in Right-to-Work States

If your orchestra resides in a state restricted by anti-union laws, also known as “Right to Work (for less),” you will require alternate language. In this instance, you might begin with,

*“Musicians of the \_\_\_\_\_ are members of Local \_\_\_\_ of the American Federation of Musicians. We invite you to join in our efforts to negotiate contracts that guarantee fair wages and working conditions.”*

### Membership Dues Information

When describing membership dues, include information for musicians who (1) are not currently a member of the AFM, (2) are a member of another AFM local, whether they intend to transfer membership or maintain concurrent memberships, (3) have resigned in good standing from an AFM local, or (4) have been suspended or expelled from an AFM local.

### Rights of Union Members

Your letter should also detail the musicians’ legal rights as a union member, which can be introduced as follows:

*As a member of the American Federation of Musicians, you are part of an organization that works tirelessly to protect the rights and general well-being of professional musicians in the United States and Canada. Local \_\_\_\_, based in \_\_\_\_, is the sole representative of the musicians of the \_\_\_\_, both in collective bargaining agreement negotiations and on an everyday basis.*

This section should outline your orchestra’s grievance procedures as governed by your collective bargaining agreement. You should also advise your new members on their right to union representation, commonly referred to as Weingarten Rights.

*The Weingarten, Inc. legal decision of 1975 gives employees the right to union representation during interviews or “one on one” meetings with supervisors or other management officials regarding their work or conduct. Our union strongly suggests that you request union representation if you believe that the consequences of any meeting could be negative and/or result in discipline of any kind.*

*To exercise your Weingarten Rights before*

## ROPA 2016 Resolutions

### Adopted at the Annual Conference

#### Resolution N°. 1 Americans for the Arts Resolution

Whereas, Since 1960, Americans for the Arts has served, advanced, and led the network of organizations and individuals who cultivate, promote, sustain, and support the arts in America; and

Whereas, The research and data developed by Americans for the Arts provide tremendous social, economic, and educational benefits to arts and cultural organizations within our communities; and

Whereas, Americans for the Arts has realized great success in its lobbying efforts on behalf of arts funding, educational funding, tax policy, and charitable giving policies; and

Whereas, The mission of Americans for the Arts is to ensure that every American has access to the transformative power of the arts; now, therefore, be it *Resolved*, That the Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA) does hereby recognize and commend Americans for the Arts for its focus in providing action-oriented research that assists arts organizations in advocating better local, regional, and national level arts policies; and

*Resolved*, That ROPA wishes to thank Americans for the Arts' Vice President of Arts and Policy, Randy Cohen, for allocating time and expertise with his presentations at ROPA Conferences; and

*Resolved*, That ROPA thanks Americans for the Arts for its unwavering devotion to and support for the arts in our nation, and, further, be it

*Resolved*, That ROPA recommends that ROPA musicians do support and promote the efforts of the Americans for the Arts.

**Submitted by:** The ROPA Executive Board

#### Resolution N°. 2 Support of the Musicians of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra

Whereas, The Regional Orchestra Players' Association asserts that fairness and good faith are the cornerstones of effective collective bargaining; and

Whereas, The Musicians of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra bargained fairly and openly with their management for 19 months; and

Whereas, When the Musicians of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra thought they had reached a conditional tentative agreement with their Employer, the Employer unilaterally changed terms and conditions of employment by issuing drastically changed rehearsal schedules while the final details of the agreement were being worked out prior to ratification; and

Whereas, These changes in rehearsal schedules would impact the majority of the musicians of the orchestra by making it difficult for them to meet their obligations under the collective bargaining agreement to

continue to perform with the orchestra; and

Whereas, The American Federation of Musicians Local 228, as bargaining representative of the Musicians, filed an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charge against the Employer; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the membership of ROPA deplores the actions of the Employer which undermine the Musicians' ability to work and earn a living; and

*Resolved*, That the membership of ROPA supports AFM Local 228 in its insistence on the Employer's fair treatment of its Musicians by its filing of an ULP charge; and

*Resolved*, That ROPA and its 87 orchestras with over 7,000 members stands in solidarity with the Musicians of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra; and, therefore, further, be it

*Resolved*, That ROPA encourages the Employer to rescind the change in the rehearsal schedule and refrain from unilaterally imposing such changes and future unlawful conduct.

**Submitted by:** The ROPA Executive Board

#### Resolution N°. 3 Code of Ethical Audition Practices Resolution.

Whereas, The Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA), understands that orchestras incur a significant expense when running auditions; and

Whereas, Those orchestras may need to limit the number of candidates for a vacancy through resume screening; and

Whereas, ROPA believes that the Code of Ethical Audition Practices provides excellent guidance for running auditions efficiently and fairly, including during the resume screening process; and

Whereas, ROPA recognizes that not all orchestras are aware of or follow the Code of Ethical Audition Practices; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That ROPA encourages its member orchestras to follow the guidelines in the Code of Ethical Audition Practices; and, further, be it

*Resolved*, That ROPA encourages its member orchestras to consider incorporating the Code of Ethical Audition Practices into its Collective Bargaining agreements.

**Submitted by:** Naomi Bensdorf Frisch, Member-at-Large, ROPA Executive Board and Cory Tiffin, Delegate, Las Vegas Philharmonic

#### Resolution N°. 4 Resolution Honoring Bruce Ridge

Whereas, Bruce Ridge has been involved in the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musi-

cians (ICSOM) for 23 years; and

Whereas, Bruce Ridge has been involved with the work of the Governing Board of ICSOM for 14 years; and

Whereas, Bruce Ridge has been Chairperson of ICSOM for 5 terms, a period covering 10 years, longer than any of his predecessors; and

Whereas, Bruce Ridge is concluding his final term as ICSOM Chairperson in August of 2016; and

Whereas, Bruce Ridge has not only been a strong leader and Arts Advocate but he has been a true advocate for Symphonic Musicians throughout his career by working tirelessly to promote a positive message about symphony orchestras to the public; and

Whereas, Bruce Ridge's inspirational work will continue to positively impact the lives of symphonic musicians for decades to come; and

Whereas, Bruce Ridge has provided invaluable leadership to the musicians of ICSOM orchestras has been crucial in ensuring the survival of each; and

Whereas, Bruce Ridge has initiated numerous campaigns that have provided monetary assistance to symphony orchestra musicians, exceeding one million dollars in contributions; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Regional Orchestra Players' Association hereby applauds and commends Bruce Ridge for his service to ICSOM and its members and for his tireless friendship and support of ROPA; and, further, be it

*Resolved*, That ROPA wishes to thank Bruce Ridge for his true support, devotion, and friendship to ROPA and our 7,000 members; as we wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

**Submitted by:** The ROPA Executive Board

#### Resolution N°. 5. Recognition and Appreciation to Janice Galassi

Whereas, Janice Galassi became a member of the Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA) Executive Board in 2013, bringing to ROPA a wealth of knowledge and experience as a grassroots organizer; and thereafter for the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) as a Contract Administrator/Organizer, Director of Symphonic Services Division, and as AFM Director of Organizing and Education while concurrently negotiating many contracts across the country; and

Whereas, Janice Galassi has been unrelenting in her support for ROPA, by sharing her vast experience, knowledge, and wisdom with ROPA and the AFM; and

Whereas, Janice Galassi has steadfastly stood for strong union principles of fairness, common sense, and compassion; and has shared those values with ROPA and

(continued on page 9)



(Resolutions, continued from page 8)

all who know her; and

*Whereas*, The Delegates of ROPA, ROPA orchestras, and ROPA as an organization have benefited greatly from Janice's knowledge, experience, and solid values; and, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the membership, delegates, and the Executive Board of ROPA hereby sincerely thank Janice Galassi for her years of professional assistance, advice, and service to ROPA, its delegates and membership; and

*Resolved*, That ROPA sends our thoughts and prayers to Janice Galassi together with best wishes for a healthy, joyful and fulfilling retirement; and, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That ROPA truly hopes that Janice Galassi will continue to be part of ROPA for many years to come.

**Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board**

#### **Resolution N<sup>o</sup>. 6 Resolution Honoring Nathan Kahn**

*Whereas*, Nathan Kahn is one of the founding members of The Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA); and

*Whereas*, Nathan Kahn is the founding President of ROPA; and

*Whereas*, Nathan Kahn has been a musician member of a ROPA orchestra for the majority of his career; and

*Whereas*, Nathan Kahn has provided invaluable assistance to the musicians of ROPA orchestras as a contract negotiator for 28 years, negotiating over 300 contracts; and

*Whereas*, Nathan Kahn is retiring from his position as an American Federation of Musicians (AFM) Symphonic Services Division (SSD) Negotiator as of August 31, 2016; and

*Whereas*, Nathan Kahn's contributions to the success of ROPA, its musicians, and its member orchestras have been crucial in ensuring the health and well-being of each; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That ROPA applauds, recognizes, and commends Nathan Kahn for his lifetime devotion of outstanding service and unwavering commitment; and

*Resolved*, That ROPA hereby thanks Nathan Kahn for his support and unfailing friendship to ROPA and its members, and to unionism itself; and

*Resolved*, That ROPA truly hopes that Nathan Kahn will continue to be a part of ROPA, in any capacity, for many years to come; and, further, be it

*Resolved*, That ROPA wishes Nathan Kahn all the best in his retirement.

**Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board**

#### **Resolution N<sup>o</sup>. 7 Resolution in Gratitude to Carla Lehmeier-Tatum**

*Whereas*, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum has been a musician member of a Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA) orchestra for the majority of her career; and

*Whereas*, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum has been involved with the work of ROPA for some twelve years; and

*Whereas*, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum has provided passionate and invaluable assistance and leadership to the musicians of ROPA orchestras as President for nine years, making her the longest serving President of ROPA; and

*Whereas*, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum is completing her service as ROPA President on July 28, 2016; and

*Whereas*, under her leadership, ROPA has gained more than 20 member orchestras; and

*Whereas*, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum's determination and dedication have ensured that ROPA, its orchestras, and its musicians have a strong voice and are able to participate prominently in the national discourse of our Union; and

*Whereas*, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum has led and managed ROPA responsibly with an eye toward the future; and

*Whereas*, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum's leadership has been the catalyst for the growth of the strong reputation of Regional Orchestras in the United States; and

*Whereas*, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum's contributions to the success of ROPA, its musicians, and its member orchestras have been crucial in ensuring the growth and well-being of each; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That ROPA thanks, applauds, and commends Carla Lehmeier-Tatum for her long service and strong leadership to ROPA and its members; and

*Resolved*, That ROPA thanks Carla Lehmeier-Tatum for her untiring commitment to all ROPA orchestras and musicians; and, further, be it

*Resolved*, That ROPA truly hopes that Carla Lehmeier-Tatum will continue to be a part of ROPA, in any capacity, for many years to come.

**Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board**



#### **Resolution N<sup>o</sup>. 8 Praise for ICSOM and its Modern E-Voting Resolution**

*Whereas*, Symphonic bargaining units often face difficulties in ratifying collective bargaining agreements through in-person voting; and

*Whereas*, Mail balloting is not a viable option in circumstances where a ratification vote must be held quickly, or where eligible members are away from home for extended periods; and

*Whereas*, The International President's Office is now maintaining a list of one or more vendors whose online balloting services meet the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) requirements; and

*Whereas*, the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians (ICSOM) was instrumental in recognizing and creating those guidelines to be recognized by the AFM; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA) praises ICSOM for its work on this important resolution; and, further, be it

*Resolved*, That ROPA recommends that its orchestras take advantage of this helpful and useful change to the AFM bylaws and use the guidelines to conduct online ratifications.

**Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board**

#### **Resolution N<sup>o</sup>. 9 Orchestral Musicians' Employee Status Recognition**

*Whereas*, The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) found that the Musicians of the Lancaster Symphony Orchestra are employees and not independent contractors; and

*Whereas*, The Musicians' status as employees entitles them to form a union and receive all the benefits therefrom; and

*Whereas*, The United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit affirmed and upheld the NLRB's finding; and

*Whereas*, The Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA) supports and agrees with the determination that orchestral musicians are employees and not independent contractors; and

*Whereas*, ROPA supports the unionization efforts by the Musicians of the Lancaster Symphony Orchestra and others like it; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That ROPA and its 87 orchestras with over 7,000 members applauds the Greater Lancaster Federation of Musicians, AFM Local 294 (Lancaster, PA) for its extraordinary efforts to help classify the Musicians of the Lancaster Symphony Orchestra as employees; and


*Resolved*, That ROPA applauds Local 294 for its organizing efforts; and, further, be it

*Resolved*, That ROPA congratulates the Musicians of the Lancaster Symphony Orchestra on the negotiations of their first union contract.

**Submitted by: The ROPA Legislative Committee**

## A Blast From The Past—the First ROPA Newsletter!

In going through the ROPA archives, ROPA Historian Rachel Cox came across a copy of the very first ROPA Newsletter, published in 1985. Putting together the newsletter was Dana Karr of the Nashville Symphony, a member of the bass section with Nathan Kahn, who was at the time the ROPA President. The empty box at the top is there because *The Leading Tone* name had not yet been selected for the publication. Included below are the first two pages of Volume 1, No. 1. The remainder of the issue, as well as other back issues of *The Leading Tone*, can be found on the ROPA website, [www.ropaweb.org](http://www.ropaweb.org).



Official Publication of the Regional Orchestra Players Association

VOLUME 1, NO. 1

MAY, 1985

# ROPA ORGANIZED; 23 Charter Members!

On January 1, 1985, the Regional Orchestra Players Association was proud to list the following 24 orchestras as Charter Members of ROPA:

- AUSTIN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- CHARLOTTE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- COLORADO SPRINGS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- COLUMBUS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- FLORIDA ORCHESTRA (TAMPA)
- FT. WAYNE PHILHARMONIC
- FT. WORTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- GRAND RAPIDS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- HARTFORD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- JACKSONVILLE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- MEMPHIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- NASHVILLE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- NEW MEXICO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- OMAHA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA OF FLORIDA (Ft. Lauderdale)
- RICHMOND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- SACRAMENTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- SAN JOSE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- SAVANNAH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- SHREVEPORT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- SPOKANE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- TULSA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
- VIRGINIA ORCHESTRA GROUP (NORFOLK)
- WICHITA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

ROPA is a communication organization for all Regional level symphony orchestras in the United States and its Territories. To realize the potential of ROPA, one only has to look at where the ICSOM orchestras were 23 years ago (prior to the formation of ICSOM), and where the ICSOM orchestras are today. ROPA's goals and objectives will parallel those of ICSOM, but with awareness of the special needs and desires of both the full-time and part-time musician.

This first newsletter includes a full report on the ROPA convention held in Columbus, Ohio, September 7-9, 1984, news of contract settlements in member orchestras, and other information. We solicit your contributions, news, suggestions and support.

By-law proposals are being studied by all the ROPA officers, and the committees appointed at the convention are involved in research. Other regional orchestras are still being contacted concerning membership in ROPA. Plans for the 1985 convention in Ft. Worth, Texas are well under way.

ROPA Page 2

## First Convention Huge Success

After much discussion, research, and communication between the AFM Symphony Department and the Regional Orchestras, the first ROPA Convention was held September 7-9, 1984, in Columbus, Ohio at the Sheraton-Columbus Hotel. Delegates from thirteen Regional Orchestras were in attendance. We were extremely fortunate to have Victor Fuentealba, President of the American Federation of Musicians, in attendance during the entire convention. Lew Waldeck, Assistant to the President and Administrator of the AFM Symphony Department, organized and led the convention. Fred Zenone, Chairman of ICSOM, and John Palanchian, former ICSOM officer and currently Vice-President of Local #802-New York, provided endless support and enlightenment during these three days. Thanks go to Maynard Yost and Lynn Johnson of the AFM Symphony Department, who supplied a wealth of current information to the convention participants.

Special thanks are due to Tommy Dale, President of Local #103-Columbus, Ohio, for providing a special delegates' dinner, and to Columbus Symphony members Chris Durham (delegate), Mike Buccione, Chris Allen, Brian Bell and Steve Secan for their endless hospitality. We were also gratified to have the support of the following Local officials who were in attendance: Tommy Dale, President #103-Columbus, Ohio; Dennis Danders, President #297-Michigan, Kansas; John Palanchian, Vice-President #802-New York; Buddy Pitts, Secretary #444-Jacksonville, Florida; Richard Totusek, Board Member #105-Spokane, Washington; Weymouth Young, Secretary #94-Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Gary Wisner, Secretary #659-Miami, Florida.

The convention proceedings were opened by Lew Waldeck, who asked all the convention delegates what they wanted ROPA to be. The consensus of the delegates was that ROPA should be a communication organization, both between member orchestras and to the Federation, and that research should begin on the various concerns currently facing Regional Orchestras.

AFM President Fuentealba addressed the convention, expressing his enthusiastic support for ROPA. He felt that ROPA's goals should be to better the working conditions of symphony musicians, and to foster a healthy and open relationship between symphony musicians, their Locals, and the AFM.

Darrell Edwards, general manager of the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, gave a brief history of the Columbus Symphony, and his thoughts on management style.

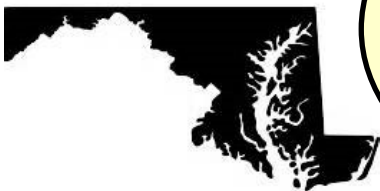
Lew Waldeck then led a discussion on the role and function of the Orchestras Committee. As the voice to the board and the conductor, the role of this committee encompasses administration of the contract, functioning as an advocacy group, and acting as the grievance conduit.

Upholding the contract was discussed: Lew mentioned that no contract can foresee and address every situation that might arise, but that in the administration of the contract the Committee must ask: "When do we go to the letter of the law of this contract, and when should we do what's for the good of the orchestra or the individual?"

Welcome New ROPA Orchestras!

Annapolis Symphony  
Derek Smith, Delegate

Boston Ballet Orchestra  
Robert Marlatt, Delegate



## Tropikordia String Vault Project

Tropikordia Foundation was created to promote string performance around the world and to preserve the art of live acoustic string playing. Founded in 2010 by Mark Tanner (Principal Cellist, New West Symphony) and his wife, violinist Janna Lower, the Foundation's mission is to support both the performance and appreciation of string music. The Foundation seeks to nurture string performers, both beginners and those already developing their potential as performers, with an emphasis on those in underprivileged circumstances. The Tropikordia Foundation promotes string performance around the world, and has engaged in a number of projects in such diverse locations as Cuba, Albania, and South America.

Tanner describes a service project run by the Tropikordia Foundation – the String Vault:

"Young string players around the world face numerous obstacles, but one of the most challenging is acquiring strings to play on. In many parts of the world, they are either completely unavailable or cost-prohibitive - a set of cello strings can cost more than a month's wages. In Cuba & other countries, we have even seen strings made from the steel treads in tires.

"Fortunately, there is an easily-overlooked solution: used strings. Most professional string players change their strings long be-

fore the strings are worn out; these may have several years of use left in them and are perfect for passing on.

"As part of its ongoing international projects, the Tropikordia Foundation has partnered with numerous professional string players to ensure an ongoing supply of used strings. All of our collected strings are provided to young string players for free. By our founding principles, 100% of all contributions goes directly and completely to string players worldwide. We have no paid staff, and all U.S. and international administrative work is done by the



founders or volunteers, who donate their time and resources. We would love to see every ROPA and ICSOM orchestra on the String Vault Roster. It's so great to be able to provide these strings to kids around the world — it really makes a difference!"



*If you would like to learn more about this project, please go to their website:*

[www.tropikordiafoundation.org](http://www.tropikordiafoundation.org)

*Or email Mark at [cellist@tropikordiafoundation.org](mailto:cellist@tropikordiafoundation.org)*

Do you have news about your orchestra?  
An article to submit? A letter to the editor?

We'd love to have you contribute to  
the *Leading Tone*!

Submit articles to Karen Sandene at  
[karensandene@gmail.com](mailto:karensandene@gmail.com)

The deadline for the next issue of the *Leading Tone* is  
December 15.

*The Leading Tone* is the official voice of ROPA and reflects ROPA policy. However, we do appreciate and encourage the contribution of articles and letters by others. These submissions may cover topics on which ROPA has no official position; the opinions expressed therein are solely those of the author(s) and not necessarily of ROPA, its officers or members.



## SSD Union Education Webcasts & Presentations

As a service to AFM Members, Locals, Players' Committees and Negotiating Committees, the AFM Symphonic Services Division has held a number of educational webcasts in recent years, on a variety of relevant topics. An archive of these webcasts can be found on the AFM website (afm.org), in the "For Members" area (requires your AFM log-in and password). The webcast archive has been recently re-examined and the content is current. What follows are the descriptions of the topics that are currently covered in the archive.

### Contract Enforcement Series

### Collective Bargaining Series



#### Part 1 - Grievance and Arbitration - Identifying, Filing and Processing Grievances

This video is part 1 of the three-part AFM Symphonic Services Division educational webinar series on the grievance and arbitration process, presented by SSD Director and Special Counsel Rochelle Skolnick. Viewers will learn basics of grievance handling as the mechanism to enforce collective bargaining agreements and defend the rights of members working under the terms of a union contract.

#### Part 2 Grievance and Arbitration - Investigation and Advocacy:

This video is part 2 of the Grievance and Arbitration series. The major focus is on the principle of just cause and due process in labor contract jurisprudence. Viewers will learn key things to look for in discipline cases and how to investigate and argue contract interpretation cases.

#### Part 3 - Introduction to Arbitration:

This is the third in the Grievance and Arbitration series. Viewers will gain an overview of the arbitration step of the dispute resolution process, where grievances are ultimately decided. Especially helpful for any advocate from the officer level through to the committee member.

#### Part 4 - Due Process Obligations in Artistic Dismissals and Peer Review:

Essential viewing for peer review committee members and others involved with the peer review process. Musicians terminated for artistic reasons are entitled to due process both before termination and during the peer review appeal. Find out what due process requires in this context and how you can ensure musicians receive such protections.

#### Part 1 - Collective Bargaining 101

Collective Bargaining 101 is the first in a series of short educational webinars on collective bargaining. The video is a recording of a webinar presented on Dec 12, 2011. It will be of interest to symphonic musicians who are activists in their union. This 45-minute piece briefly describes some of the reasons for collective bargaining and takes a short walk through standard clauses in an AFM symphonic, opera or ballet orchestra union contract.

#### Part 2 - POWAH!

Negotiations are about power. The first step in any negotiation is power analysis. This webcast is the second in a five-part series on collective bargaining presented by the Symphonic Services Division of the AFM. The presenter is now-retired SSD negotiator Nathan Kahn. Nathan has seen every type of negotiating scenario. His experience and insight are a great resource for any member seeking to protect and advance the interests of fellow musicians.

#### Part 3 - Building A Better Union:

This video is a must-see for new committee members and an excellent refresher for experienced hands. Methods to maintain maximum effectiveness in the partnership between the Local union and the orchestra committee in service to the interests of musicians is the focus of this webcast. It is presented by experienced AFM staffers Janice Galassi, (now retired) Organizing Director and International Representative Barbara Owens. This webcast illustrates how to put the building blocks of communication and solidarity into place, how to operate effectively and how to be true to the foundation principles of a democratic union.

#### Part 4 - Collective Bargaining 102

Presented by veteran SSD negotiators Chris Durham and Na-



#### Navigation Path to the Union Education Webcast Page (requires AFM log-in/password)

**WWW.AFM.ORG -> For Members -> Symphonic Services Resource Center -> scroll down to and select Union Education Webcasts**

than Kahn (now retired). This webcast recording covers aspects of preparing to negotiate including making information requests, anticipating demands for concessions and starting an escalating campaign to get the best contract possible in the realities.

#### **Part 5 - Understanding Symphony Financial Statements:**

Understanding financial statements is essential for bargainers. This video is a recording of a webinar held on May 16, 2011 for members of the American Federation of Musicians with some level of responsibility in collective bargaining. It is sponsored by the AFM Symphonic Services Division. The presenter is CPA Gregory Dickson.

#### **Part 6 - Using Social Media in Union Contract Campaigns:**

Presentation to the 2011 ICSOM conference on using social media for contract campaigns by former AFM Symphonic Services Division staff member Joel LeFevre. With labor reporters almost vanished from the nation's newsrooms understanding alternate methods to advance union communications is increasingly important. Developing new media capacity is an important addition to the union activist and organizer's toolbox.

#### **Part 7 - Introduction to Bankruptcy:**

This educational video is a webinar recording on federal bank-

ruptcy statutes and procedures with a focus on section 1103 on collective bargaining agreements. The presenter is Jennifer Garner, formerly a practicing bankruptcy lawyer and now AFM Counsel.

### **Organizing**

#### **Organizing 101 – The Basics**

First in a series of webcasts, (now retired) AFM Organizing and Education Director Janice Galassi and former SSD Contract Administrator Joel LeFevre walk through the organizing process. The process of going from a non-union orchestra to contract negotiations is the topic of this webcast introduction to union organizing.

#### **Organizing 102 - Process and Power**

Process and Power is the second in a series of AFMSSD webcasts on organizing. In this webcast AFM (now retired) Organizing and Education Director Janice Galassi and former SSD Contract Administrator Joel LeFevre examine charting, inoculation, and communications for organizing from a power building perspective.

## **SAVE THE DATE: 2017 ROPA Conference**

**Tuesday, Aug. 1—Thursday, Aug. 3**

Negotiating Orchestras Workshop: Monday, July 31

Phoenix, Arizona

Westin Phoenix Downtown Hotel

Hosts: AFM Local 586, and Musicians of the Arizona Opera Orchestra



Phoenix skyline. Photo credit: Nick Cote / Visit Phoenix

(Welcome Letters,, continued from page 7)

*or even during an investigative meeting, please read the following statement to management, word for word:*

***"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated or have any effect on my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union representative, officer, or steward be present at this meeting. Without representation, I choose not to participate in this discussion."***

*When the management grants your request, and upon arrival of the union steward or other union representative, the management must explain the reason for the interview. The union representative is then allowed to meet privately with you before questioning begins. The representative or steward may also counsel you on how to answer questions. It is an Unfair Labor Practice for the management not to allow you representation in any of the above circumstances. If you are ever denied such a request, contact the union steward immediately.*

This section may also include information regarding the rights of union members internal to union business, which includes (1) equal rights and privileges, (2) the freedom of speech and assembly, (3) the right to secret ballot votes, (4) the right to sue, (5) protection from improper union discipline, and (6) the right to receive a copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

#### **Union Representation**

Welcome letters should also include contact information for and a description of the function of union representatives,

including local officers, the union steward, the orchestra committee, and any musician organizations. This section should also include information about ROPA (or other conference affiliation) and associated delegates, as well as the web addresses of musician websites and/or social media outlets.



#### **Function of Union Steward**

The description of the union steward's function might read as follows:

*The Union Steward is a \_\_\_ musician and union official appointed by the local to represent and defend the interests of his/her fellow musicians. The steward is the primary liaison between the musicians and union leadership and also the first line of defense in the event that a musician's rights or safety has been violated.*

*The steward enforces the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement and works to ensure that the \_\_\_ is in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations. The steward also represents and defends his/her fellow musicians whom the \_\_\_ believes violated company policy or the terms and*

*conditions of the collective bargaining agreement, often via the grievance process. The union steward may stop a rehearsal or performance in order to protect the musicians' safety.*

#### **Orchestra Committee Information**

While the description of the orchestra committee's function may vary between orchestras, all should include a listing of the committee members and their specific offices, term expiration, and contact information. Such description might begin as follows:

*Contracted members of the \_\_\_ elect a committee of \_\_\_ musicians to serve as the musicians' official liaison with the local and to assist the union in the enforcement and administration of the collective bargaining agreement. The orchestra committee is also part of the local's collective bargaining agreement negotiating committee. Elections are normally held at the beginning of each season during a full orchestra meeting.*

#### **Coda**

While details of each orchestra's welcome letter will differ, the advantage of creating one is common to all. As well as to new orchestra members, union leadership should distribute updated versions to every orchestra member each season. If you would like a Microsoft Word version of the welcome letter used in Lexington, please email me at [hornbop@gmail.com](mailto:hornbop@gmail.com). I look forward to hearing your suggestions, additions, or comments. By working together, we best protect the musicians whom we are so fortunate to represent. As in all endeavors, our solidarity is our strength!



Regional Orchestra Players' Association



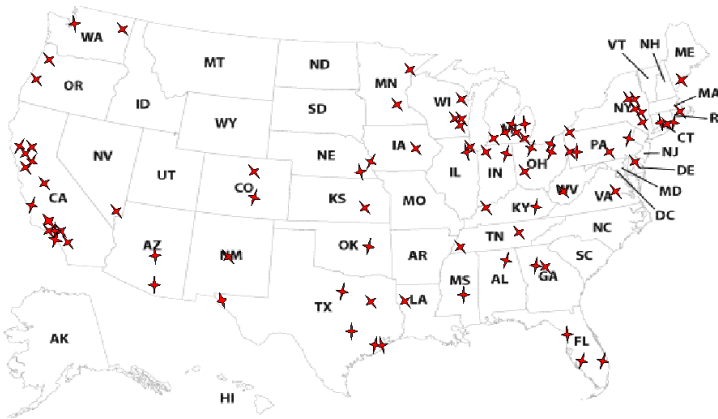
## ROPA Guiding Principles

### 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.



ROPA Orchestras, 2016

### 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 important defining roles the ROPA Executive Board performs in the organization?

- Assist orchestras in need and identify resources for the issue at

hand;

- Build relationships to develop industry contacts to provide sound advice;
- Provide professional musicians of ROPA with labor education and strengthen networking;
- Collect regional orchestra data for the industry;
- Strengthen rights and working conditions of our member musicians;
- Educate our membership on what is possible and how other musicians have arrived where they are;
- Work to bring our constituents together: AFM, Players Conferences, Locals, Orchestra Committees, and Musicians.

### 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



# ROPA

Regional  
Orchestra  
Players'  
Association

A conference of the American Federation of Musicians, AFL-CIO

The Leading Tone  
204 Magic Shadow Drive  
Santa Teresa NM 88008

## ROPA Officers

### John Michael Smith, President

Minnesota Opera Orchestra  
johnmichaelsmith@comcast.net

### Nancy Nelson, Vice-President

Houston Grand Opera Orchestra  
Houston Ballet Orchestra  
nancy.nelson4756@sbcglobal.net

### Karen Sandene, Secretary

Omaha and Lincoln Symphony Orchestras  
karensandene@gmail.com

### Donna Loomis, Treasurer

El Paso Symphony  
silverdonna@elp.rr.com

### Members-at-Large

Taylor Brown  
Chattanooga Symphony &  
Opera Orchestra  
tbrown84@gmail.com

Lisa Davis  
Mississippi Symphony  
horn3mt@gmail.com

Sean Diller  
Southwest Michigan Symphony  
smdiller84@gmail.com

Mary Anne Lemoine  
Colorado Springs Philharmonic  
maryanne154@att.net

Dave Shelton  
Lexington Philharmonic  
hornbop@gmail.com

Maya Stone

Huntsville Symphony  
astonemay@gmail.com

Steve Wade

Hartford Symphony Orchestra  
steve.wade58@gmail.com

### Delegate-at-Large to the AFM Convention

Naomi Bendsdorf Frisch  
Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra  
Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra  
nhb713@gmail.com

### Adjunct Officers

Linda Boivin, Conference Coordinator  
New Mexico Philharmonic  
rt66.violinda@gmail.com

Rachel Cox, Historian

Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra  
RacRCox@cs.com

Lisa Bressler, Social Media Coordinator  
Madison Symphony, Illinois Philharmonic,  
Kalamazoo Symphony  
adgc@spcglobal.net

Karen Sandene, Strike Fund Trustee,  
Leading Tone Editor  
Omaha and Lincoln Symphony Orchestras  
karensandene@gmail.com

Martha Warrington, Webmaster

Paul Austin, Conductor Evaluation Bank  
Administrator  
horncallad@gmail.com

## 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 Philharmonic  
California Symphony Orchestra  
Canton Symphony Orchestra  
Chattanooga Symphony & Opera Orch.  
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  
Lansing 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  
Shreveport Symphony 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  
West Virginia Symphony  
Wichita Symphony Orchestra  
Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra

### Associate Members

Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra  
Flint Symphony Orchestra  
Glimmerglass Opera Orchestra  
Green Bay Symphony Orchestra  
Hudson Valley Philharmonic  
Lincoln Symphony Orchestra  
Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra  
Pittsburgh Ballet Orchestra  
Tri-Cities Opera Orchestra  
Tulsa Opera Orchestra