

Summer
2026

REGIONAL ORCHESTRA PLAYERS' ASSOCIATION

The Leading Tone

Regional	
Orchestra	
Players'	
Association	

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



Notes from the President

by Steve Wade, ROPa President

June 2026

ROPa comes to Dallas, Texas next month for our annual Conference. I am greatly looking forward to this event, as I'm sure all of you are as well. We are graciously hosted by the Dallas Opera Orchestra and The Dallas-Fort Worth Professional Musicians' Association, AFM Local 72-147, led by President Stewart Williams. These musicians work in a city that, by all accounts, has devoted effort and resources to revitalizing its Downtown and Arts District, and it shows.

Without a doubt, there is a lot going on in Texas politics these days, both on the national and local fronts. For a right-to-work state, things are remarkably fluid. There are no less than 35 ROPa orchestras in right-to-work states,

and one can only hope the trend towards more independent and critical thinking will continue to spread in these places. While union membership has declined in some sectors due to globalization, technological change, and the growth of temporary or gig work, unions continue to influence labor policies and collective bargaining. We remain a voice for people with otherwise little power, and a force for the greater good.



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