

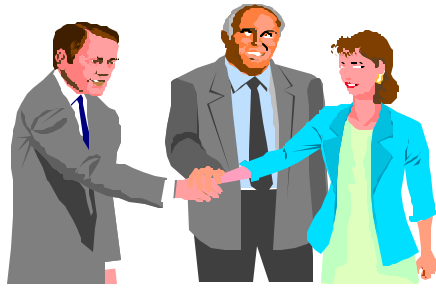
Fund Drive Settles Shreveport Strike

by Andrew Brandt

On March 11, 1997, the musicians of the Shreveport Symphony Orchestra unanimously ratified a Memorandum of Agreement, ending a two-month strike and approving a four-year contract retroactive to Sept. 1, 1996. The agreement was made after a joint "Make the Difference" Campaign and benefit concert which raised over \$116,000 to fund the difference between the two side's proposals. The results were major improvements in wages and benefits after two previous years of wage freezes.

This dispute brewed for a long time but the conflict was actually rather simple. The musicians, represented by AFM Local 116 and ably assisted by SSD negotiator Chris Durham, wanted gradual growth in the SSO budget to fund better wages with employer contributions to health insurance and to pension. SSO Board and management negotiators wanted minimum increases in salaries (and actually succeeded in forcing wage freezes for the previous two seasons) and consistently refused to fund health and pension benefits. For three years management negotiators refused to consider any financial plan other than one that was previously approved by their own Executive Board. The management also refused to implement an agreement that they had signed the previous year to engage in negotiations to produce a liveable wage with health and pension benefits.

In fact, the management missed its own deadline of producing a proposal in June, 1996, saying that they were unable to make a proposal until the entire board of directors approved a budget in mid-August. Management's subsequent proposal was for a two-year



Musicians distributed press releases and passed out leaflets before major concerts to make our patrons and the public aware of the major issues....

contract with a 2% wage increase the first year, and a 1% wage increase for the second, with none of our requested benefits. Subsequent negotiations got a 1% increase in each of those figures, but that was still considered unacceptable by the musicians' negotiators.

The musicians voted to defer a strike in early September by agreeing to work-and-talk. SSO musicians began distributing press releases and passing out leaflets before major concerts to

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Call for Unity

by Liza Hirsch Medina,
ROPA Counsel

The time has come to issue a little reminder about something that goes to the heart of our greatest need, our most potent tool, our deadliest danger. It's not wholly a legal issue, but rather one beside which the legal issues pale, and without which they are pretty useless regardless of the good lawyering and other advice and skills an orchestra may have at its disposal. That something is unity, the key to the power of musicians or any bargaining group trying to better its lot. Nothing is more crucial than unity to the effort of leveling the playing field. Without it, you lose, sooner or later - more likely the former.

Although it is not a new trend, certainly, there is still a disturbing escalation in the number and variety of efforts to disturb and undermine unity and solidarity by striking (you'll excuse the expression) at the majoritarian structure of orchestra representation. Simply put, there are so many instances of trying to go around the orchestra's elected leadership that it's practically an anti-democratic epidemic!

It's always understandable - though still wholly wrong - when managements and boards try to go around the committee. After all, their interests are *not* the same as the musicians' even though there are some areas of commonality. They may think (incorrectly in every instance I have seen, bar none) that the committee is the orchestra's radical fringe. And even if not, they may have been tutored in how to go around the committee - it's a classic divide-and-conquer labor relations tactic guaranteed, if done skillfully, to weaken the power of the musicians both to meet their artistic,

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Fund Drive

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make our patrons and the public aware of the major issues in the negotiations. Involvement of a federal mediator did not change management’s intransigence.

Musicians voted to begin a strike on January 11th, the date of our new music director’s second subscription concert with our orchestra. A major goal of our strike was to get public support of our musicians to try to persuade our board of directors to meet our demands. Towards this end we engaged in a public

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relations campaign unlike any we had done before. In addition to sending out press releases, we leafletted in the downtown business district and other locations, gave chamber music concerts in malls and churches and a chamber orchestra concert. With strong support from the Shreveport area Central Trades and Labor Council, a labor rally was put together with Florence Nelson, director of the AFM’s Symphonic Services Division, as one of the key speakers. We also started a letter writing campaign to involve Mayor “Bo” Williams of Shreveport to bring the Symphony board back to the negotiation table. Both sides of the dispute met with the editorial board of the Shreveport’s paper, The Times, which resulted in an editorial supporting the mayor’s intervention.

Six weeks into the strike, the Mayor chaired a meeting including a federal mediator. The union made a proposal which significantly reduced demands for wages and deferred spending for health and pension by increasing the length of the proposal from three to four years. In spite of all this, the Board’s negotiators refused to move from their earlier positions. In fact, it became apparent that they had done nothing during the six weeks of strike to try to plan for increased fund-raising or to consider other options to settle the

strike.

Faced with no movement by management and the increasing likelihood of the remainder of the season being canceled, the musicians finally made an unprecedented proposal for all sides in the dispute to put away their differences for a joint fund-drive and benefit concert to raise money to fund the differences between what the musicians were proposing and what management was offering. (The

difference was estimated to be approximately \$105,000 over the life of a three-year contract.) The musicians agreed to

return to work afterwards with whatever amount we raised being used to increase management’s last offer. We knew of no other orchestra which had ever attempted such a thing. We were also concerned about setting a precedent for such an unorthodox way of settling the strike. The crux of management’s position centered, however, on their belief that it was impossible to raise any more money than they had already planned. Our experience and the degree of public support we had already seen during the strike convinced us otherwise.

In four days, the orchestra committee

put together a plan for a week-long fund-drive, culminating in a benefit concert with tickets ranging in cost from \$5 for students to \$500. An organizing meeting was held with orchestra musicians, board members, some representatives of the Shreveport Symphony Guild, and the Pit Krewe (another volunteer group). The fact that we were on strike (and not getting a paycheck) made it imperative that we conclude the project quickly.

All members of the orchestra handed out “Make the Difference” pledge forms, sold tickets, spoke to civic groups and choirs, or met privately with potential donors. Finding a conductor and soloist for the benefit concert proved more difficult. The conductor, Kermit Poling (our concertmaster and also music director of the South Arkansas Symphony) and a guest soloist were finalized only three days before the actual concert. Concert violinist Stephanie Chase generously volunteered her time and performance as soloist in Mendelssohn’s Violin Concerto.

The benefit concert on February 28 turned out to be an electrifying and emotional affair. When acting concertmaster Elizabeth O’Bannon first came onstage to tune, the audience began to applaud, eventually rising to their feet until the orchestra itself stood

Unity

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economic and workplace needs and to preserve their dignity and self-respect as an artistic and otherwise organized unit.

Compounding the danger, there has been a recent surge in ROPA orchestras and others of self-appointed orchestra members in some orchestras, union officials in others (and both in an unfortunate few cases) trying to second guess, undermine, or make end runs around elected orchestra/negotiating committees. Sometimes these efforts are truly innocent and well-meaning, such as where a small group in the band disagrees with the committee holding the line on an issue, believing it too risky. Sometimes it is probably intended to sow division and implosion, such as where a small group attempts to exploit a threatened or real closure as “an opportunity to rid the orchestra of some deadwood,” as a musician described it to me in one orchestra recently. Either way, the process is inexorably destructive at best. Its uglier face is nothing if not cowardice. It is the ultimate in being misguided, the classic instance of

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to acknowledge their applause. It was then apparent that this was an audience which was there for political reasons as well as musical ones. Their enthusiasm didn't flag throughout the concert. More standing ovations for our soloist and, finally, for *1812 Overture*, and the encore, *Stars and Stripes Forever*, left no doubt in anybody's mind that the public was in full support of our musicians.

Delays still ensued before a settlement could be reached. It took management four days to tally the pledges, donations and ticket sales, arriving at a figure of over \$113,000. (It would eventually increase to over \$116,000 in the coming weeks.) This well exceeded our goal. The Board's chief negotiator, however, then claimed that although they agreed to fund a pension plan, they did not agree to the AFM-EP plan (which had been clearly stated in our proposals). The final compromise was to agree on the amount but delay the selection of the actual pension plan until a joint committee looked at the alternatives during the third year of the contract. Final agreement came on March 11th, exactly two months after the strike began.

The new agreement is for a four-year contract, retroactive to the beginning of

the 1996-97 season, with 4% raises in each of the four years. An additional payment of \$500 in the first two years, \$600 in the second two years, will be made to the full-time musicians' flexible benefits plan for health expenses. Pension will be implemented the fourth year of the agreement at 5% of scale wages. Our 15 contracted per-service players will receive higher guarantees of services and, for the first time, will be given two days paid sick leave. For further information, see the ROPA Bulletin of April 21, 1997.

We received assistance from many sources (not the least of all was a very large strike fund contribution from Local 47 member Randy Newman) but, ultimately, it was the unity and sheer determination of the Shreveport Symphony Orchestra musicians which made this settlement possible. With a successful public relations campaign, the Shreveport community backed the musicians when we most needed them and gave generously. We are grateful to all who participated and helped us.

For further information, see the May, 1997, ROPA Settlement Bulletin.

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cutting off one's nose to spite one's face. As one orchestra musician not on his committee observed last season, the "mostly me festival" attitude pure and simple is injurious to the common goals of the group.

This sounds harsh, I realize, but it is so important as to have cried out to be exposed and discussed, if for no other reason than to help prevent doomed orchestra labor history from repeating itself. This doesn't mean the committee is always right. Nor does it mean its constituents need slavishly follow its every dictate. It does mean, however, that if there is an intra-orchestra problem or controversy, *it can only be properly resolved from within, and in a scrupulous, democratic and discreet manner.*

There is no shortcut to the process or the struggle that accompanies it. And, like most clichés that became clichés because of the depth and certainty of the truth they evince, in unity there is strength and, by implication and experience, in disunity there is none.

[In respectful memory of Murray Kempton]

ROPA Welcomes 51st Member

ROPA is pleased to welcome the California Symphony Orchestra as its fifty-first member. The orchestra began as a small community orchestra in Contra Costa County, California. About ten years ago, Barry Jekowski, then principal timpanist with the San Francisco Symphony became the conductor. Later Mr. Jekowski resigned from the San Francisco Symphony; he currently serves as Music Director of the California Symphony and Assistant Conductor of the National Symphony.

The orchestra is composed of freelance musicians from San Francisco, Oakland and the Bay Area, as well as members of the San Francisco Symphony. With an estimated budget between \$800,000 and \$1 million, the California Symphony performs four sets of concerts each season in the Regional Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek. This past season the orchestra was involved in a limited pressing of Lou Harrison's music with Al Jarreau.

From the First Desk

It's Your Money! *by Andrew Brandt, ROPA President*

In recent months there has been a great deal discussed and written about restructuring the AFM. This discussion has led to proposals that will be considered at the June, 1997, AFM Convention in Las Vegas. These proposals range widely, and many of the issues will be debated long past this Convention. However, no proposals are likely to produce more conflict than those dealing with money.

Brandt's Rules of Unionism

Let us first admit Rule No. 1 of Unionism. Almost everybody in every union complains about paying too much in dues. This is a given. It makes no difference which union you belong to or how high or low the dues actually are, or what services you get in return. Every member wants lower dues. In fact, AFM dues are much lower than what you will find in most other active unions.

Rule No. 2 follows: Every union member expects services in return for their money. AFM members get services both from the International office in New York as well as from their local.

The reader can easily see that these two rules ensure that there will be conflict over the cost of dues and how many services the union provides at what cost.

Collective Bargaining and Money

The problem is that, generally, orchestra musicians need MORE services from the AFM, in the form of more professional negotiators for contract negotiation, to comparative studies, to political lobbying, to support for grievances and arbitrations, to legal support, to training for orchestra committee members and local officers, and so forth.

Why do we need more services? Briefly, contract negotiation and administration, grievance and arbitration services, and training for local officers and orchestra committee

members are all components of collective bargaining. With a highly structured and regulated system of collective bargaining in the U.S. and Canada, these are complicated fields with lots of legal and other land mines. We need to deal with legislation in Congress and elsewhere which may make our tasks in collective bargaining easier or more difficult. In order to continue to engage in collective bargaining more effectively, we need to organize more of our orchestras and to recruit members. Compared with club musicians, touring musicians, weekend performers and many other segments of the AFM, symphonic and recording musicians find themselves in a much more complicated workplace with employers who are better organized to oppose our goals. Also, local officers whose experience is from other segments of the AFM may find

symphonic affairs complicated, befuddling, and expensive. Many of our locals will not or financially

...generally, orchestra musicians need more services from the AFM....

cannot offer the services that ROPA members need. That's why we have a Symphonic Services Division.

The lack of services from many of our locals, for symphonic or other musicians, forms a persuasive argument for eliminating locals altogether in the AFM structure. In fact, there has been discussion of implementing various levels of trade division or even forming a separate union for symphonic and recording musicians in recent years. This will NOT be decided in this June's AFM Convention; however, the way that the AFM deals with its financial problems will certainly influence future debate on these topics.

AFM Finances

AFM money problems occur at both the local and the federation levels. The biggest problem is that the AFM membership is shrinking. With the loss of members, a greater percentage of

those remaining are those who require more expensive services, such as symphony and recording musicians. Many AFM locals are receiving a very large percentage of their total dues from symphonic players but are using those dues to fund overhead, general expenses and services to other players, with little left for serving their orchestral musicians.

A few locals collect large amounts of dues but provide few services. More locals are financially incapable of surviving with the level of professional work available in their jurisdictions. Some have tried to reduce overhead by joining with other locals to provide joint services. Mergers and consolidation of other AFM locals have occurred and will continue. Some locals are in a position to serve their members and survive financially, but these are more the exception rather than the rule.

At the Federation level, most of the money comes from two sources: the annual per-capita dues which every AFM member pays each year (currently \$46 goes to the Federation, the rest to the local), and symphonic and electronic media work dues.

The Federation has attempted to reduce expenses and provide services more efficiently. Another priority is finding less expensive office space. This effort is hindered by a long lease, the high cost of moving, and the potential loss of many Federation employees if the move is to a location any great distance from New York City.

Lately, the Federation has had to tap symphonic work dues, in order to help fund other departments (such as PR, Organizing and Education, the *International Musician*, Touring and Booking) as well as cover general overhead expenses. This is where the Players' Conference Council and the AFM come into disagreement.

Symphonic Work Dues

Although all orchestras under a

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collective bargaining agreement pay work dues, not all of these orchestras pay symphonic work dues to the Federation. Currently, the AFM mandates symphonic work dues of 1/2% of scale wages only from those orchestras which have sixty players under personal service contracts for the season (and a few other conditions, see the AFM Bylaws: Article 8, Section 8 (b)). A few other locals voluntarily pay these dues in order to receive SSD services. This means that a significant number of ROPA orchestras do not pay Federation symphonic work dues even though they receive considerable services from the Symphonic Services Division. Historically, larger orchestras (many of whom are in large locals which actually do fund substantial services locally) fund SSD for use of smaller orchestras.

Legislation proposed for the 1997 AFM Convention will change some of that, if approved. In our recent meetings in New York City, the Players' Conference Council (or PCC, the leaders of ROPA, ICSOM, OCSM, and the RMA) made a proposal to give locals representing orchestras a choice. They could create a local Symphonic Services department and keep a higher percentage of symphonic work dues, or they could let the Federation's SSD take over those responsibilities and send most of those work dues directly to the Federation. The International Executive Board (IEB) felt this proposal would never pass at the Convention and proposed, instead, that all orchestras with budgets of over \$800,000 will now be required to pay Federation work dues. (See Recommendation No. 3 as listed on page 19 of the May, 1997, *International Musician*. Note that this conflicts with Resolution No. 8 on p. 26, as presented by the Restructure Committee.) Most of the affected locals will send a portion of those work dues they already receive, so this does not necessarily increase the total

amount of dues paid by orchestra musicians.

As a response, the PCC said, OK, we might support that, but we're also proposing language that would dedicate symphonic work dues to be used for SSD expenses, not general, "turn-key" expenses, or pay for other departments (except as they provide services to symphonic musicians). (See Resolution No. 28, May *IM*, p. 30.) Many members of the International Executive Board are opposed to this restriction. Thus we have conflict in how the AFM should be funded for future years.

In the May, 1997, issue of the *International Musician*, Steve Sprague (the AFM Secretary-

Treasurer) speaks out against our proposal, calling it "dollar-in, dollar-out" unionism. The PCC argues otherwise, saying that annual per-capita dues should cover the general or "turn-key" expenses for the AFM. In our view, using Symphonic work dues to pay for other departments means symphonic (and recording) musicians are paying twice for these expenses (through per-capita dues and work dues) where other AFM members pay only the per-capita dues. We find that funding formula to be unfair, and contrary to the goals of the Roehl Report and the Blue Ribbon Committee report, both of which were approved by the IEB and previous AFM conventions.

Even if we did believe work dues should pay for part of other AFM expenses, the IEB still makes no guarantee of any level of funding for SSD and related services, even if they increase work dues income.

Before anybody accuses me or the PCC of a personal vendetta, let me say that I like Steve Sprague. I believe he is an honest, dedicated union official who is doing his personal best to serve the

AFM members. I wish more people would follow his model of service to our union. Philosophically, however, I find myself at odds with Steve in several matters. The use of AFM Symphonic work dues to finance non-Symphonic departments is one major area of difference.

Coming to Agreement

How do we settle these differences? Is it possible to find mutual agreement in our positions before the soon approaching Convention? My honest

answer is, "I don't know." Certainly, we might be able to come closer if we could come to a clearer

The use of AFM Symphonic work dues to finance non-Symphonic departments is one major area of difference.

understanding of what "turn-key" expenses actually are. Should symphonic work dues cover part of the rent, air-conditioning and heating costs for the SSD or should that be covered by per-capita dues? Is it really more efficient for the Organizing and Education Department to cover all symphonic organizing, or would it be more efficient to have SSD personnel pursue symphonic organizing full-time and coordinate with O&E for additional services? Should SSD pay part of the *International Musician* expenses, which are (according to the bylaws) paid through our per-capita dues? Although most AFM members think the per-capita dues are too high (see Rule #1 above), do they actually need to be even higher than the IEB is currently proposing to cover the expenses that they are supposed to be covering?

Also, if the AFM is unwilling to dedicate Symphonic work dues, is there another formula that we can agree on? Is there a long-range plan which can gradually meet the PCC's

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Restructuring the AFM *by Laura Ross, ROPA Secretary*

Restructure. You've seen this word mentioned over and over again in the past few months in the pages of the *International Musician*. What exactly does it mean and who will it affect? The answer right now to both of these questions is we don't really know. Why restructure? Because the American Federation of Musicians as it exists right now is in serious trouble financially, members are not receiving services from their locals, and the electronic media services and symphonic services divisions are underfunded for the services they need to and are providing to AFM members.

Restructuring is not a new concept to the Federation. Back in 1991 the Roehl Report was adopted by the AFM Convention and the structure of the AFM was changed forever to accommodate the two largest constituencies who were paying the lion's share of dues to the Federation. These two groups are the recording and symphonic musicians whose leaders now make up the Players' Conference Council (PCC). The PCC is made up of the Presidents of each of the Players' Conferences - the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians (ICSOM), the Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA), the Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians (OCSM), and the Recording Musicians Association (RMA). ICSOM, the "grand daddy" of the players' conferences is over 30 years old and represents 44 major symphony, chamber and opera orchestras with budgets above \$5 million; ROPA represents over 50 orchestras with budgets between \$500,000 and \$6 million; OCSM represents the 18 Canadian orchestras, and the RMA represents those musicians working in the electronic media area.

The Roehl Report readjusted the status of the Symphonic Services Division (SSD) and Electronic Media Services Division (EMSD) and funding for those divisions

comes directly from the work dues collected for this work - 1/2% of scale wages paid on all symphonic work funds SSD, and 1 1/4% paid on all electronic media work funds EMSD. All other work dues stay with the local (except touring/ traveling musicians working under Pamphlet B). The per capita dues paid each year as part of our annual dues funds the rest of the Federation operating expenses. Unfortunately, due to

...a vast majority of locals receive a sizable portion of their operating income from orchestras, the only group of musicians who are employed on a regular basis.

discrepancies in AFM By-laws, many orchestras served by SSD do not pay one cent to the Federation because they do not fit the By-laws description of a symphony orchestra. Last year SSD (which has 7 employees) served over 135 orchestras, half paid nothing. Also, symphonic work dues which are being sent to the Federation are not all being spent exclusively on SSD expenses. Another big problem leading to the financial dilemma the Federation now faces is caused by the locals - they are not sending the per capita owed to the Federation. Instead the locals are using it to keep their own offices afloat. EMSD

(which has close to 30 employees) is in better shape to oversee electronic media work since it is directly responsible for their National contracts.

Symphonies are especially important to the Federation right now because a vast majority of locals receive a sizable portion of their operating income from orchestras, the only group of musicians who are employed on a regular basis. (Nashville and Los Angeles are probably the only two locals which do not fit this description.) If these musicians cannot receive basic services from their local, then how can the local justify its existence? Beyond that, if a local is misusing funds or cannot provide even the most basic services to all its members, how can it justify its existence?

These are the problems the AFM faces after 100 years of existence. The AFM needs to focus on what's important. The music industry has changed radically over the last hundred years and technology is constantly changing. We need to tend to those areas that work and find ways to improve services. This was the focus of the meeting I attended in Las Vegas from February 27 - March 3, 1997. I attended as the representative of ROPA since

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ROPA to Hold Conference in Omaha

The 1997 ROPA Conference will be held in Omaha, Nebraska, from Wednesday, August 6, through Sunday, August 10 at the new Doubletree Hotel (currently the Red Lion Inn in downtown Omaha). In addition to ROPA Delegates, Local officers and musicians of member orchestras are cordially invited to attend. The deadline for hotel registration is July 11; all ROPA delegates should have received conference packets by now. Please contact your ROPA delegate or any ROPA officer for further information.

In the last issue of *The Leading Tone*, there were a number of articles about the services ROPA provides and the responsibilities of ROPA officers. One issue which will be addressed at the conference is the evaluation process mentioned. It has been suggested that we survey members of ROPA orchestras. The survey will probably be included with the first issue of *The Leading Tone* to be shipped next season. If there is a particular subject you would like to see included in the survey, you or your orchestra's delegate can bring it up at the conference.

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President Brandt's orchestra, Shreveport was on strike and performing a huge benefit concert that weekend.

We heard from all the division heads of the Federation - Organizing, SSD, EMSD, Travel/Touring, and Computers - who told us what worked, what didn't, and what each division really needed. We heard about the finances of the Federation. We reviewed the history of the Blue Ribbon Panel which was responsible for examining the Roehl Report. We also heard about restructuring in other unions including the most recent restructure of AFTRA. Most illuminating however, was the report from the International Representatives (IRs) who are assigned to travel around their assigned territories, visiting and advising all the locals in their jurisdiction. The IRs presented three scenarios to us, all concerning per capita dues: 1) dues stay as they are; 2) raise of \$5; 3) raise of \$10 or more. The results were staggering. Even if the first scenario were to occur, that is status quo, they estimate we will lose 75 locals in the next 5 years. If the dues increase, we could lose close to 100 locals! What disturbed us most was to hear these men discuss the status of many of the locals they visit - no work in the local, "mom & pop" operations, no services to their members, paying out more in salaries and such than the local takes in.... It forced us to examine our own locals and the service priorities due to our members.

A few highlights recommended by the Restructure Committee are: By-law requirements for the number and type of services provided by the local to the members will be enforced; the By-law defining a symphony orchestra for the purpose of collecting work dues will be changed (it is anticipated that there will be a number of proposals that will try to address this problem); Federation officers will be elected for 4-year terms; the delegate's convention expenses (hotel & per diem) will be covered by the locals not the Federation; there will be significant changes in the number of convention delegates apportioned to each local; there will be a tiered system of work dues

payment for electronic media work sent to the Federation ranging from the current 1.25% to the full 3%, based on the amount of services provided by the local; and discussion will continue in the investigation of merging locals, regionalizing offices, the exploration of separate trade divisions for symphonic and electronic media, and ties to other unions.

I suggest you read the May *International Musician* which will print all proposed changes to AFM By-laws which will be discussed and acted upon at this summer's Convention in Las Vegas. I am sure a report on the Restructure Committee will be included as well as our resolutions. Be assured that this very dedicated group of individuals worked very hard to find solutions or at least continue to lead discussion in the right direction to begin to find those solutions. There was great concern that there would be some sort of political agenda at work during these sessions, but I assure you we made every effort to avoid that. The chairs of each of the 6 subcommittees as well as the Chair of the Restructure Committee, Mark Massagli (former AFM President) and Tammy Kirk, Secretary of the Restructure Committee (and Secretary of Local 94 - Tulsa), went to New York for the International Executive Board (IEB) meeting at the end of March to make a formal presentation. As I write this our recommendations have been put into resolution form for the AFM Convention to consider this summer. I encourage all of you to look to your locals, to urge them to support these resolutions this summer. There will be many tough questions to answer as well as an uphill battle to fix the problems the Federation faces right now. I urge you to continue to ask questions as this process moves forward.

[Editor's note: The report of the Restructure Committee is on the front page of the May, 1997, *International Musician*. The Restructure Committee will meet again just prior to the AFM Convention]

First Desk

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goals instead of making a sudden change this Convention? Is the most realistic option for Symphonic players to form a separate trade division, or even a separate union to get the most efficient use of our work dues?

I do know that all parties to this discussion agree that we have a problem, which is the first step in finding a solution. I suspect that we will be discussing this problem well beyond the end of this year's convention. I hope that AFM leadership will engage in a dialogue with the PCC to try to find mutually agreeable solutions to our funding and service problems. Perhaps there are other solutions that neither side has considered. In any case, the alternative to dialogue is a festering dispute that can tear the AFM apart. I believe we all have a responsibility to prevent that from happening. I challenge the International Executive Board to engage in this discussion.

ROPA Conference



The fourteenth Annual Conference will be August 6 - 10, 1997, in Omaha, Nebraska. Join us at the new Doubletree Hotel downtown (corner of 16th and Dodge) for meetings, mixers, and a special workshop for negotiating orchestras. Our hosts will be the musicians of the Omaha Symphony and Local 70-558. Ask your ROPA Delegate for more information.

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Rhode Island Philharmonic
Richmond Symphony
San Jose Symphony Orchestra
Santa Rosa Symphony

Savannah Symphony Orchestra
Shreveport Symphony Orchestra
Spokane Symphony Orchestra
Toledo Symphony
Tucson Symphony Orchestra
Tulsa Philharmonic
Virginia Symphony
West Virginia Symphony
Wichita Symphony Orchestra

Associate Member Orchestras

Atlanta Ballet Orchestra
Flint Symphony
Lincoln Symphony
Richardson Symphony Orchestra

The Leading Tone is the official newsletter of the Regional Orchestra Players Association, a conference of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada.

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Printed by Diamond Printing Co.
611 North Third St.
Memphis, TN 38107
901/527-1455

Subscriptions available at \$8.00 per year, payable to: ROPA c/o Irene Wade, 450 South Greer, Memphis, TN 38111-3308