



AGMAZINE

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A Branch of the Associated Actors and Artistes of America • Affiliated with the AFL-CIO

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Summer 2000

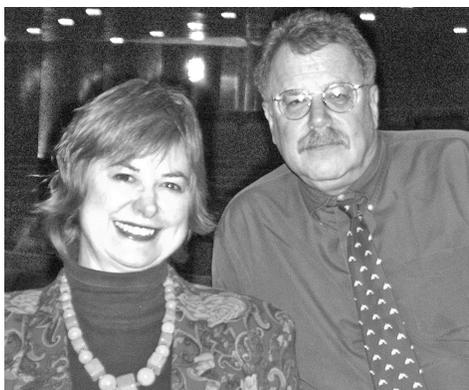
After eight years in office, President Linda Mays has decided not to seek re-election, so, this will be the last *AGMAZine* over which she presides.

You might think that it would be an easy task for me to write something eloquent and meaningful about Linda, but, in fact, it's one of the most difficult tasks I've had in the seven years that I've been here.

During her tenure, AGMA successfully undertook fundamental changes in its governance, staff, operations, fiscal structure, and relationships with other unions. To me, Linda Mays is so inherently bound up in what I understand as the "essence" of AGMA, that it's almost inconceivable to me to think that I won't be seeing her on a daily basis.

Since I cannot possibly list all of the things that Linda has been to AGMA, and to me, let me simply say that she is a great president, a great leader, and a great friend.

Alan S. Gordon
National Executive Director



Spring 2007

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AGMA Relief Fund

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BALLOTS ARE DUE BACK AT THE NATIONAL OFFICE BY
FRIDAY, MAY 18, 2007

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FROM THE PRESIDENT LINDA MAYS



The last eight years as your president have passed like a great dream — sometimes a nightmare, but mostly an action-packed thriller.

My first term began at the end of a semi-hostile takeover of AGMA by the elected leadership. Starting in the early 80s, AGMA had been in a slow downward spiral as elected leaders became disillusioned, complacent, and/or absent.

Professional staff had become unsupervised, unmotivated, non-responsive, and directionless. Contracts were poor and often lapsed. In the early 90s, AGMA was New York-centric and nearly bankrupt; President Gerald Otte, with a group of nationally-elected leaders, started to painstakingly restructure and rebuild AGMA. When I joined the Board of Governors in 1994, a great deal of structural repair work was in progress, but the burden of “saving” AGMA fell to a few smart, talented, and feisty elected leaders. During this chaotic time, AGMA lost one of its major signatory companies and nearly lost another. In 1996, I jumped in with both feet and from then until now, my every waking moment has somehow been connected to AGMA and to you.

During my first six months in office, there was no National Executive Director, so the Executive Council and I searched for a new director for our professional staff while simultaneously administering and governing the Union. Andrea Bradford, John Coleman, Candace Itow, Jimmy Odom, Gerald Otte, Colby Roberts, George Scott, and Burman Timberlake, among many other elected leaders and professional consultants, kept us moving forward through a difficult and exhilarating period in AGMA history. Your elected leaders are not compensated financially, so they (we) all had full-time jobs in addition to our AGMA commitment. The light at the end of the tunnel was the hiring of National Executive Director Alan Gordon. We knew when we hired him that he was a visionary who could help us make necessary changes in order to thrive and take our rightful place in members’ futures and in the artistic union world. We also knew we were in for a wild ride.

Alan, as a strong leader with a strong personality, artfully challenged every aspect of AGMA. Wisely, he hired the incredible Gerry Angel who brought about instant stability and revamped AGMA’s technical administration.

I am happy to report that AGMA has now achieved the ultimate balance of elected leader/staff cooperation, support, productivity, and mutual respect that I have ever seen in my history with AGMA, or in my associations with other unions. We are far from perfect, but we are neither totally staff-driven nor totally member-driven. This is a difficult, delicate, and vital balance to achieve and to maintain. I challenge you to protect it for the good of all AGMA members for all time. The benefits are boundless. You now have a strong, prestigious, responsive, effective union with an exciting future. You also have a first-rate staff and an excellent pool of elected leaders.

I leave the AGMA presidency knowing you have two great choices for your next president. They differ in leadership qualities, life experiences, and styles, but their commitment to you and the brilliant future of AGMA is equal. My successor will have the continued benefit of the organizational skills, knowledge, support, and sense of humor of our extraordinary Board Assistant, Elizabeth Drorbaugh.

My life has been enriched by your courage, solidarity, generosity, compassion, ingenuity, and commitment to your colleagues and your art. Thank you all — members, elected leaders, and staff — for the opportunity of a lifetime: the privilege of spending eight years as your proud president.

Procedure for Requesting Waivers

by Alan S. Gordon, National Executive Director

Because of a large number of recent, last-minute waiver requests being sought by AGMA signatories, we have once again advised all employers of AGMA members as to the correct procedure for requesting waivers. The following is the text of a letter sent to each signatory:

When requesting waivers of provisions in your AGMA collective bargaining agreement, please be advised that AGMA has revised, streamlined, and standardized our waiver request procedure so as to accord each request an opportunity for sufficient consideration.

Please also remember that the only entity with authority to act on requests for waivers is the AGMA Board of Governors, which meets on a monthly basis. No AGMA Officer, AGMA Delegate, AGMA Area Representative or AGMA member has any authority whatsoever to discuss, consider, or grant a waiver request.

All requests for waivers should be addressed, in writing, to Membership Department Supervisor Candace Itow. We prefer electronic requests, which can be sent to candace@musicalartists.org. If you cannot access the internet, regular mail should be sent to her at AGMA's National Offices (1430 Broadway, 14th Floor, New York, New York, 10018).

The request should specify:

- 1) The reason for the request,
- 2) The specific provision(s) of the contract for which you are seeking a waiver,
- 3) The facts, time, dates, duration and circumstances relating to the waiver being sought, and the reason(s) that a waiver is necessary,
- 4) Any corresponding waivers sought from, and granted or denied by, other unions representing employees of the company involved in the production.

The request should be made well in advance of the need for action by AGMA. If less than two months advance notice is given, the waiver request must clearly state the reasons for the late or insufficient notice.

Requests for waivers of contract provisions regarding smoke and fog effects a) must be made with at least two months notice, b) must identify with specificity the effect sought to be used and c) must demonstrate conclusively, with ample scientific evidence, that the effect sought to be used is entirely safe. Such requests must also include those artists who will be exposed to the effect and the length of time of such exposure. Most requests for this kind of waiver do not contain such proof and are, consequently, denied.

Upon receipt of your waiver request, made in compliance with all of the foregoing, we will process it as expeditiously as possible. Any requests made in any other manner will not be considered. It is inappropriate for any company official to discuss the waiver request with individual members of the bargaining unit prior to AGMA's consideration of the request. Please remember that AGMA's Board of Governors retains the constitutional authority to deny the waiver even if a majority of the bargaining unit is in favor of it.

PLEASE NOTE: With regard to "emergency" waivers made at the last minute, the conditions giving rise to the last minute or "emergency" nature of the request must have been unforeseen and unforeseeable. Any waiver request that reasonably could have been made two months in advance will be summarily denied.

MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT NEWS

HAVE YOU RECENTLY MOVED?

If you change your mailing address, it is important that you notify AGMA's Membership Department in writing. **Additionally, AGMA's Retirement Plan and Health Fund Plans must also be notified separately.**

IN MEMORIAM

*Edith D'Addario**

*Edgar Baitzel**

Natalie Bodanya

Ruthanna Boris

Therese Cura

Colin Graham

Ernst Haefliger

Gian Carlo Menotti

Kostas Paskalis

Dennis Perren

Glen Tetley

*Antonina Tumkovsky**

**Indicates a distinguished individual in a related profession.*

ELECTIONS 2007

Below you will find election information and short biographies of the candidates for the National Offices and the Board of Governors. Their nominations have been submitted either by a petition or by a nominating committee as defined by AGMA's Constitution.

CANDIDATES FOR NATIONAL OFFICE

PRESIDENT

LeRoy Lehr



Now in 16th Season at the Metropolitan Opera.

Joined AGMA 1959, joined Board 1997.

Serves on Disciplinary Committee, former shop delegate, Collective Bargaining Negotiating Committee member at NY City and Metropolitan Operas, and the current Met Media agreement.

In my ten years on the Board AGMA has changed in attitude and practice thanks especially to Linda Mays, her predecessor Gerald Otte, a smaller, more active Board, and all those who have served so unselfishly on various committees. Plan B is now in most collective bargaining agreements, the National Office is now highly professional and member-friendly, we're financially sound and membership is growing impressively — all this without a dues rate increase!

Soloists started AGMA, but now are a disproportionately small percentage of AGMA leadership. If elected President, I would try to engage more soloists nationally and locally for more inclusive, balanced representation for the entire nation.

James Odom



AGMA member: 28 years. Current and past service: 2nd, 3rd Vice President, Board of Governors, Executive Council, TEXCOM; Board Committees: Budget and Finance, Merger and Affiliation, Administration and Policy; Relief Fund Task Force (Chair); Chicago Area Committee

(Chair); Negotiating Committees: Les Six, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Dallas Opera, Florentine Opera, Chicago Opera Theatre, Opera Theatre St. Louis, Cincinnati Opera; Shop Delegate (Dallas Opera). AFL-CIO Convention Delegate, Alternate Representative to the Four A's.

*During my terms as a National Officer, the focus of my work has been to empower members by strengthening AGMA. I believe this is best accomplished in three ways: through member education, effective contract negotiation and diligent contract enforcement. These three goals can always be improved upon and must always be worked upon. I also believe that **all** members must receive fair and effective representation, and will continue to work to ensure that all members receive that representation.*

1st VICE PRESIDENT

Gerald Otte



I am asking for your vote so that AGMA can continue the advances of your union in the areas of contract negotiations and enforcement, union prestige in the workplace, and responsible and responsive leadership. I have been the National President of AGMA, a previous 1st Vice

President and a governor for 19 years. I am currently 1st Vice President and Chairman of the Administration and Policy Committee. I serve on the Executive Council of the Board of Governors. I will continue to represent all categories of membership but particularly issues affecting dancers and choral singers. I also strongly support increasing the membership of AGMA, organizing more shops and covering more workers in the field of live classical performance. If this sounds familiar it's because it's what I've done in the past and pledge to do in the future. You will strengthen your union by your full participation. Please vote today.

2nd VICE PRESIDENT

John Coleman



AGMA member since 1990. Currently: Stage Manager for Lyric Opera of Chicago, National 4th Vice President (14 years service on the Board of Governors, 12 as an Officer), Executive Council, Work Rules and Contracts Committee, Chicago Area Committee, Lyric Opera of Chicago

Negotiating Committee, Production Staff Delegate for Lyric Opera of Chicago. *We are a diverse organization, but are united by common goals: a living wage, reasonable working conditions, a safe working environment, and quality health insurance and retirement benefits for all our members. Your participation in your Union helps ensure that AGMA has the best interests of all members in mind, and I will continue to do my best to serve the needs of all AGMA members.*

(continues on page 5)

Officer Candidates (continued from page 4)

3rd VICE PRESIDENT

Colby Roberts



Currently 5th Vice President, Trustee of the AGMA Health and Retirement Plans and member of Administration and Policy. *Current and founding member of AGMA's Executive Council, I have previously served on all standing committees of the Board, as well as on Merger and Affiliation. I joined AGMA while working in New York as a freelance singer, before being hired as a chorister in San Francisco. I have worked as a concert chorister, opera chorister and soloist under AGMA contracts, and have participated in negotiations for opera, symphony chorus and ballet contracts. It is my firm belief that AGMA should be the vehicle to strengthen artists' rights, and to ensure decent wages and working conditions for all artists. AGMA must see that all members are well represented and protected in negotiations, grievances and arbitrations.*

4th VICE PRESIDENT

Sara Stewart



As an AGMA board member for over 12 years, I would be extremely honored to serve as 4th Vice President. My AGMA career has included work as dancer, ballet mistress, and choreographer; and has influenced my decision to attend Chicago-Kent College of Law part time beginning in the fall of 2007. Meanwhile, I will continue to work in the Opera world next season for three different AGMA signatories.

My committee service includes: Vice Chair of Work Rules and Contracts, Disciplinary Hearing Panel, National Officer Nominating Committee, Chicago Area Executive Committee. In addition, I was honored in 2006 with a Life Membership Award to AGMA, and I have been selected by my colleagues to be involved with my fourth series of negotiations for another agreement with the Lyric Opera of Chicago. With your support I will continue to endeavor to raise AGMA standards. Remember your vote counts!

5th VICE PRESIDENT

Gregory Stapp



Governor; Chaired Membership, Merger committees; Vice-chaired Administration committee; Crafted & served TEXCOM, Auxiliary Committee on Negotiations; Served Work Rules, Schedule C, Adapt, Negotiating, S.F. Area, committees; Guided Manager/Artist

Ethics Code adoption; Spearheaded inaugural National Leadership Conference.

Performing professionally for 35 years across America and abroad has made me appreciate the needs of AGMA artists, particularly those of traveling soloists. During the past decade I have fought for AGMA to better address those needs with companies while correcting deficiencies in its own relationship with members.

As a designated spokesman during collective bargaining negotiations, I've helped principals achieve unprecedented gains at San Francisco Opera, Los Angeles Opera and New York City Opera while lending assistance to choristers, dancers and production staff.

I support a secure, member's only, membership directory & interactive web-site; sufficient staff for optimum organizing, representation and enforcement; updating AGMA's Constitution; a strike fund; and, health coverage for all members.

TREASURER

Lynn Lundgren



In the last six years AGMA has come from being a moribund establishment to a thriving union that is organizing new shops, providing quality professionals to negotiate contracts and, most important in the view of the treasurer, standing on solid ground financially. We are collecting dues in a consistent, modern manner and providing balanced, reasonable budgets which accurately reflect our union's ability to care for its members. With careful planning we have a small surplus of funds which is being conservatively invested. I would like to continue to serve as your treasurer and help guide the union through the next two years.

RECORDING SECRETARY

Mitchell Sendrowitz



AGMA member 27 years. Currently, National Recording Secretary, New York Area Chair, member of the Executive Council, the Administration and Policy Committee, the Committee on Committees, and the Personnel Joint Sub-committee. *As a national officer, I continue to work toward a vision of AGMA as a vibrant and vital component of the American Labor Movement, locally and nationally. We need to protect the dignity and respect our professions deserve, with better wages, benefits and working conditions, and better contract enforcement. We need to make*

(continues on page 6)

Election Information (continued from page 5)

good health insurance available to all our members. We need better member education and more member participation. It is imperative that all voices be heard by the national staff and the Board. In my vision, we're a union whose constituents are proud and happy to be members of AGMA. I pledge to give my all to work toward these goals. Thanks!

CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF GOVERNORS

01 NEW YORK AREA CHORISTERS (2 Vacancies)

Rose Anderson



An experienced member of AGMA, Rose Anderson has performed frequently as chorister and soloist in opera, oratorio, and concert. She has had

two years of service on the AGMA Board of Governors.

I have been honored to serve as your representative on the Board. I have been responsive to the concerns of opera and concert choristers regarding financial issues, working conditions, performing opportunities, and employment security. My experience has given me the perspective to work effectively for your benefit. I appeal for your support so that I may continue to energetically represent the interests of AGMA's membership.

Linda Doria



Active AGMA member, in good standing since 1989. Freelance soloist, chorister in the tri-state area; an actor with the MET since 1986. Current member

of the NY Area Committee and the Sub-Committee to Review Contracts where I have raised many questions and concerns. Served on the Board of Governors. *I am deeply committed to our democratic process, support change that enables all performers to be represented and share in the benefits of our Union. A cancer survivor and activist I am fearless and not afraid to ask tough questions and fight for change benefiting all our concerns and interests.*

Robert Maher



Two terms served on the Board and 13 years on the Met Opera AGMA Negotiating Committee (9 years as Chorus Committee Chair) have given me

an opportunity to be part of our union's dedication to its membership and to the trade that is both our vocation and avocation. Thanks for your support.

01 NEW YORK AREA DANCERS (1 Vacancy)

Christine McMillan

I have been a member of AGMA for the past nine years. As a dancer at the Metropolitan Opera, I have served as delegate for three years. Currently, I am a member of the Metropolitan Opera's negotiating committee where we recently worked on contract and media negotiations.

Ian Thatcher



I am a graduate of the National Ballet School of Canada where I danced as an apprentice with National Ballet of Canada. I went on to

dance with San Francisco Ballet, Ballet de Monte Carlo, Pacific Northwest Ballet and the Metropolitan Opera.

I have been an AGMA member since 1989 and have been the extra ballet dancer representative for the Metropolitan Opera for the past 3 years. In 1994 I was also on the negotiating committee for the Pacific Northwest Ballet dancer contract.

01 NEW YORK AREA SOLOISTS (4 Vacancies)

Osceola Davis



Hello! I'm Osceola Davis and have been a Board of Governors member for six years and have learned a lot. As a member of the Membership and

Member Relations Committee, I spear-headed the sub-committee PAAC (Pre-AGMA Awareness Committee) which I am chairing. Our college visitations to introduce AGMA to prospective members have included Juilliard, Curtis Institute, Manhattan School of Music, and University of the Arts, among others. As we attempt to widen our outreach, the program is warmly received. I hope to have the opportunity to remain on the Board and continue this project as it continues to grow.

Craig Montgomery



AGMA member for 12 years. Regular MET Chorister for three years. Having worked for an opera agent, been a freelance musician in New

York and continuing to work as a soloist, I feel I have a broad perspective to offer my fellow AGMA members. I have been fortunate to collaborate with so many fellow singers, dancers and stage directors/managers, and I look forward to serving all members and areas.

Membership education, development and growth; maintaining and building upon recent contract gains; and strengthening our relationships with

(continues on page 7)

Election Information (continued from page 6)

companies and industry organizations are issues I feel are most important.

**01 NEW YORK AREA
STAGE MANAGERS/DIRECTORS/
CHOREOGRAPHERS**

(1 Vacancy)

Jan Holland



Member since 1974; Board since 1999. Currently Chair, Personnel Joint Sub-Committee, member Executive Council; also Budget & Finance Committee, Staging Staff Caucus. Contracts under AGMA jurisdiction include Stage Manager, Stage Director, Principal, Opera Chorus and Concert Chorus; also Equity Stage Manager. *Much has been accomplished since I joined the Board, and I feel tremendous enthusiasm about putting my Board experience to work under a new President. I love working—hard!—to benefit my colleagues, and hope you will let me put my energy, knowledge and good will to work on the challenges facing all performing artists in these difficult times.*

Raymond Menard



Metropolitan Opera since 1987. NYCO 1979-1988. AGMA negotiating committee for past four MET contracts and current Media contract. Member NY Area Committee. Former member Board of Governors.

I am now able to offer greater service to AGMA. Experience in negotiation of contracts and resolution of AGMA's recent internal conflicts at the MET have proven mine to be a voice of reason and a builder of consensus. My position affords me contact with all groups at the MET, especially with the soloists, who would be well-served by greater knowledge of their rights and responsibilities as members of AGMA.

**02 SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AREA
CHORISTERS**

(2 Vacancies)

Scott Blois



Scott Blois has been a union member since the eighties, when his first AGMA job was with Opera Pacific. He currently works with both the L.A. Opera, and the L.A. Master Chorale, and he has been a union rep in both companies. (Although not currently.) He has served three terms on the board, with time spent on various committees during his tenure. After a year off, he is ready to get back to representing his colleagues on the National Board of Governors.

Tim Smith



Member of AGMA since 1996, when he joined the Los Angeles Opera Chorus.

Current: Vice-Chair of the Membership and Member Relations Committee.

Past: Area 2 Committee; Regularly elected as Delegate at LAO; also part of their Contract Negotiating Team in 2000 and 2004. Never afraid to fight for all Member's rights and improved working conditions during productions, contract negotiations and mediation/arbitration sessions.

Representing you, my AGMA colleagues, is something I truly enjoy doing. It's been an honor and privilege to serve you over the years and I would be happy to continue serving you on the Board of Governors.

Jennifer Wallace



An AGMA member since 1986, I currently serve locally as an LA Opera chorus delegate and as Southern California Area Chair. Additionally I have participated in contract negotiations for

LAO and LAMC. Since beginning my AGMA service I have consistently fought for all member's rights and working conditions during productions, contract negotiations and mediation/arbitration sessions and have striven to facilitate open, honest communications between AGMA and management. First elected to the Board of Governors in 2004, I would be honored to continue representing Southern California members at the National level.

**02 SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AREA
STAGE MANAGERS/DIRECTORS/
CHOREOGRAPHERS**

(1 Vacancy)

Lisa Kable

Kerry Masek

An AGMA member since 2003, Kerry Masek is currently in her 4th season as an Assistant Stage Manager for San Diego Opera, where she is also an active member of the shop's contract negotiation team. In addition to SDO, Kerry has worked as a Stage Manager and ASM in several AGMA houses including Opera Pacific, San Francisco Opera, Opera Company of Philadelphia, and Chautauqua Opera.

**03 CHICAGO-MIDWEST AREA
CHORISTERS**

(3 Vacancies)

Chuck Coyl



AGMA member since 1999. Member of the Chicago-Midwest area committee. Served as part of the Lyric Opera of Chicago negotiation committee. Served on the committee to gain AGMA representation for Fight Directors. Currently serving as president of the Society of American Fight Directors.

Lawrence Montgomery

(continues on page 8)

Election Information (continued from page 7)

Lorene Richardson



I have been a member of AGMA since 1959 (Chicago Symphony Chorus) and have served on the Board of Governors for more than 25 years; a member of the Administration and Policy Committee. My concentration has been the common welfare of AGMA members and concert choristers and dancers in particular. Very few concert singers are employed full-time as singers, but we need some benefits. My focus is on better working conditions for all of our members in all categories. Talking to each other is the key.

As a "Life Member for Distinguished Service" that is my dedication.

03 CHICAGO-MIDWEST AREA SOLOISTS

(1 Vacancy)

Rodell Rosel



Filipino-American tenor Rodell Rosel recently sang Altoum/ *Turandot*, Second Jew/*Salome*, Ruiz/II *Trovatore* and Benvolio/*Roméo et Juliette* with Lyric Opera of Chicago. Since his debut in the 2005-2006 season as Remendado/*Carmen*, he has appeared in *Magic Flute*, *Rigoletto* and *Der Rosenkavalier*. The Manila native studied at UCLA, singing the title role in *Albert Herring* and leading roles in Mozart, Rossini and Ravel, also appearing as tenor soloist in *The Creation*, *Messiah* and *Mozart Requiem*. Mr. Rosel was a 2005 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions Grand Finals Winner, and is an alumnus of Lyric Opera of Chicago's Ryan Opera Center.

04 SAN FRANCISCO AREA CHORISTERS

(1 Vacancy)

Julianne Booth



To the members of the San Francisco Area, I would be honored to serve a second term on the AGMA Board of Governors and would do my best to represent my peers. I am currently Area Chair for the San Francisco Area and on the Membership and Member Relations Committee of the BOG. On that committee I have fought for establishing a strike fund and for maintaining our current Smoke and Fog Policy. This Policy is still being threatened. I would like to continue working toward establishing a stronger, more informative policy.

In Solidarity,
Julianne Booth

04 SAN FRANCISCO AREA DANCERS

(1 Vacancy)

Christopher Anderson

I have been an AGMA member for seven years. I started my membership with Boston Ballet, and am currently a member with Ballet West. This is my sixth season with Ballet West, and we are completing the second year of our first three year AGMA agreement. I currently serve as a delegate with Ballet West, as well as on the Area Committee. I was also a member of Ballet West's first Contract Committee. I feel I have both the tools, as well as the desire, to excel on the Board of Governors, and hope to have an opportunity to serve.

Gregory Dawson



I have been a member of the SFO corps de ballet and the San Francisco dance community for over 20 years. The knowledge that I have gained in working and performing with the many members of the union has equipped me

with a good sense of the pulse of the dancer membership. I am confident that I can work with the community in making the union more accessible to existing members as well as others who may want to join. Also serving as a member of the last negotiating committee for the SFO contract has renewed my commitment.

05 NEW ORLEANS AREA

All Board positions currently filled.

06 PHILADELPHIA AREA SOLOISTS

(1 Vacancy)

Sara Blann



Active Member since 1992, and current Chairwoman of the Membership and Member Relations Committee. Through my work on MMRC I have witnessed national changes that have affected the Philadelphia Area. By insisting nationally that American soloists be hired in American houses, we have been able to change the OCP policy to reflect this trend. Other important strides have been made as well, including the limitation of Smoke and Fog. Most importantly, by sitting on a national Committee, I have had the opportunity to generate national support for local causes. I look forward to continuing the work of representing you.

07 WASHINGTON/ BALTIMORE AREA CHORISTERS

(2 Vacancies)

Tim Kjer



I have performed as an AGMA chorister with Washington National Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Washington Concert Opera and, most frequently, with Baltimore Opera. I have served on the

(continues on page 9)

Election Information (continued from page 8)

Board of Governors Budget & Finance and Administration & Policy Committees. I currently serve as chair of the Washington/Baltimore Area Committee. AGMA is a union, and I am proud to be part of America's organized labor force. Unions serve a vital function in our system of democratic capitalism. If AGMA members want a union that will support them with effective and aggressive representation we must all stand together in solidarity.

**07 WASHINGTON/
BALTIMORE AREA**
SOLOISTS

(1 Vacancy)

J. Austin Bitner



I perform continually throughout the Mid-Atlantic region as both soloist/chorister in the W/B area since joining AGMA (1997), performing with all four area opera companies in that time. I served on the negotiation committee for BOC's

2006-2010 agreement, achieving first time Health Plan B contributions and a bereavement leave clause for choristers in addition to re-engagement, leave of absence language and overtime protections/penalties for production staff. An active member of the W/B Area Committee and the WNO & WCO Negotiation Committees, where I bring a timbre of free-spirited openness while striving to provide my livelihood thru professional artistic pursuits.

08 PITTSBURGH AREA

All Board positions currently filled.

09 NEW ENGLAND AREA
CHORISTERS

(1 Vacancy)

No Candidates

10 TEXAS/OKLAHOMA AREA
DANCERS

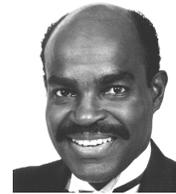
(1 Vacancy)

No Candidates

11 NORTHWEST AREA
CHORISTERS

(1 Vacancy)

George Scott



Member of AGMA since 1977. Member Board of Governors since 1995. Past 4th Vice President of AGMA. Currently member of the Executive Council, Personnel Joint Subcommittee, Budget & Finance Committee, Committee on Committees, AGMA shop steward, Seattle Opera, Regular Chorister with Seattle Opera since 1992. *It has been a privilege to serve on the Board of Governors representing the Northwest Area. There have been some real challenges in helping to improve the working conditions for singers and I am glad to have played a small role in helping to achieve that.*

Important AGMA Health Fund News

The Trustees of the AGMA Health Fund have announced a trial program that will allow eligible participants to apply their Personal Medical Reimbursement (Plan B) account balances toward the purchase of Standard Health Insurance (Plan A) coverage. In addition to the uninsured medical expense reimbursement program, Plan B accounts have always been available to help participants pay premiums for the purchase of health insurance coverage from other sources; however, in some cases, that can be a challenge for an individual.

In order for a Personal Medical Reimbursement account balance to be used for this purpose, a participant must, in a relatively recent period of time, have had a reasonable amount of employment that requires employer contributions to their Personal Medical Reimbursement account. Specifically, in order to be eligible to use a Personal Medical Reimbursement account balance to purchase Standard Health Insurance coverage, starting September 1, 2007, when this program will first be available, a member must meet **ONE** of the following requirements.

(1) Have a minimum of \$1,200 in employer contributions to his/her Personal Medical Reimbursement Account based on Covered Employment between June 1, 2005 and June 30, 2007,

OR

(2) Have at least 32 weeks of Personal Medical Reimbursement Covered Employment in the period from June 1, 2005 through June 30, 2007.

For newer Personal Medical Reimbursement participants, or for participants who do not meet the eligibility requirements as of June 30, 2007, a similar, rolling two-year covered employment test will determine eligibility to start Plan A Health Insurance on each succeeding September 1.

If you would like additional information on this program and the coverage provided by AGMA Health Fund Plan A, please contact the Fund Office at (212) 765-3664, or via email at agmaretirement_health@yahoo.com.

AREA NEWS

PITTSBURGH

by Carol Wolfe, Pittsburgh Area Vice-Chair

Pittsburgh Area members are pleased to welcome the new Music Director of the Pittsburgh Opera, Antony Walker. Maestro Walker will conduct spring productions of *The Magic Flute* and *Billy Budd* as well as three out of four productions next season: *Madama Butterfly*, *Aida*, and *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*. He also serves as Artistic Director and Conductor for Washington Concert Opera and is Co-Artistic Director of Pinchgut Opera in Sydney, Australia.



Pictured, from left to right: Julie Barkovich (Production Delegate), Barbara McDonough, Pittsburgh Area Committee Chair Bill Buchanan, Pittsburgh Area Committee Vice-Chair Carol Wolfe, Maestro Walker, Chorus Master Mark Trawka (front), Ed Moore, and Kathryn Ambrose

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

by Heidi Herzog, Board member



On March 10, Opera Pacific in Costa Mesa, California, concluded four performances of Bizet's *Carmen*. This production was memorable in many ways, particularly for the celebration and retirement of Mezzo-Soprano Milena Kitic, the Opera Pacific Guild Alliance's 2005 "Diva of the Year" and portrayer of several roles at Opera Pacific. At the conclusion of the performance, Maestro John DeMain and President/Executive Director Robert Jones presented Ms. Kitic with a customized poster of scenes from the production.

Shira Renee Thomas
and Milena Kitic



Act I from *Carmen*, cigarette girls — from front, left to right, first row: Eve Marie Bordoli; second row: Melodee Fernandez, Jacqueline Crist-Franzen, Shari Mowlavi, Janette Anastasia, Stephen Anastasia; third row: Jeralyn Lambourne, Robyn Frey-Monell, Jonas Silis; fourth row: Ron Rapp, Kristina Engel, Heidi Herzog, Ernie Alvarez, Mary Ella Cummings, and Michael Foreman



Act III from *Carmen*, gypsies — from front, left to right, first row: Shelly McDowell, Erin Pence, Judy Hur, Lilly Mettler, Mary Ella Cummings; second row: Christina Engel, Maria Cristina Navarro, Melodee Fernandez, Corinn Kopczynski, Eve Marie Bordoli, Jeralyn Lambourne, Janette Anastasia, Caroline Carter-Nelms, Jacqueline Crist-Franzen; third row: Ron Rapp, C. Leonard Coduti, Shari Mowlavi, Michael Foreman, Torbjorn Pedersen, Andy Watson, Dante Gumucio, Heidi Herzog, Dylan Thomas, and Lesili Beard

NEW YORK



James Fayette met with the dancers of the New York City Ballet on the first day of the spring rehearsal period in order to discuss all the union benefits available to the dancers. AGMA Delegates Ashley Boudier, Gwyneth Muller, Austin Laurent, and Adrian Danchig-Waring led a discussion about the new programming strategies the company initiated last season.



The School of American Ballet invited AGMA's New York Area Dance Executive James Fayette and his wife, principal dancer with the New York City Ballet, Jenifer Ringer, to talk to its students about being employed as an AGMA dancer. James and Jenifer talked about the advantages of working under an AGMA contract and how to take care of oneself during the first year of working as a professional dancer.

TEXAS/OKLAHOMA



The Houston Ballet dancers took time out of their busy rehearsal and performance schedule on February 24 to meet with James Fayette, the New York Area Dance Executive. The responsibilities of AGMA membership and the great benefits that it provides dancers were discussed as well as issues pertinent to

Houston Ballet. Nicholas Leschke and Jaquel Andrews (shown front and center in this photo) are the AGMA Delegates who arranged this meeting; both danced beautifully in a performance later that evening. Mireille Hassenboehler, AGMA Board member and principal dancer with the Houston Ballet, was also in attendance supporting AGMA and its Delegates.

SAN FRANCISCO

by Nora Heiber, National Dance Executive



San Francisco Symphony Chorus Negotiating Committee, left to right: Terry Alvord, Marilyn Vaughn, Pamela Sebastian, Western Counsel John Russum, John Russum, Jay Moorhead, Tiffany Cromartie



Left to right: Western Counsel John Russum with members of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus Negotiating Committee, Kevin Gibbs, Chung-Wai Soong, David Meissner, Pamela Sebastian, Marilyn Vaughn. Not pictured: Jay Moorhead, Tiffany Cromartie and Terry Alvord

AGMA began negotiating a new Chorus contract with the **San Francisco Symphony** in mid-March. AGMA's Western Counsel John Russum and National Dance Executive Nora Heiber are leading the negotiating committee (Terry Alvord, Tiffany Cromartie, Kevin Gibbs, David Meissner, Jay Moorhead, Pam Sebastian, Chung-Wai Soong, and Marilyn Vaughn) through what they hope will be a swift and successful contract negotiation. Ms. Heiber and Area Chair Julianne Booth have been meeting with the negotiating committee to put proposals together since early February.

Ballet San Jose has just finished performing Artistic Director Dennis Nahat's very popular "Blue Suede Shoes". The ballet, set to well-known Elvis Presley songs, has prompted interest in touring the ballet in China this coming May. Details regarding the terms and conditions of this tour are being finalized and should be ready for ratification shortly. In addition, Ms. Heiber has recently completed negotiating tour provisions for Ballet San Jose's collective bargaining agreement that will cover the company's November return to its native city of Cleveland, Ohio. Originally the Cleveland Ballet, the company added San Jose to its name after performing in San Jose became a consistent summer event. By 2000, the company completely moved its operation and became known as Ballet San Jose. The November trip marks the company's first return to its roots. Can we expect to see this dual-city relationship come full circle in the future towards becoming Ballet San Jose/Cleveland? The side-letters for both the Cleveland

and China tours are intended to serve as the blueprint for general tour provisions that will be negotiated into Ballet San Jose's next contract.

After eight months of extensive searching, which included participation from dancers, **Ballet West** announced that Adam Sklute will take the company's helm this summer. Sklute has been the Associate Artistic Director for Chicago-based Joffrey Ballet since 2005 and a member of that company for twenty-five years, having served as an AGMA delegate from 1992-1995. The company has been operating under the direction of interim director and long-time veteran dancer and Ballet

Mistress Pamela Robinson-Harris. AGMA successfully negotiated a provision into the Ballet West collective bargaining agreement that secured the reengagement of all company dancers for any season that followed the engagement of a new Artistic Director. As a result, each Ballet West dancer has had their contract automatically renewed through the 2008-09 season.

San Francisco Opera (SFO) has announced that it is back on the air. Beginning April 1, 2007, Classical 102.1 KDFC will present monthly broadcasts of live recordings of current and past seasons. The program will be hosted by Dianne Nicolini and will begin with SFO's acclaimed 2006 production of

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San Francisco Area Chair Julianne Booth with Ballet San Jose dancers



From Ballet San Jose's **Blue Suede Shoes** production, photo left: Haley Henderson and Kaleena Opdyke; center photo: Kendall Teague, Amy Briones, Robert Raney, Erena Ishii, and Mallory Welsh; photo right: Yui Yonezawa

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San Francisco Opera Chorus



Ballet West dancer and AGMA Board member Nicholas James Smith with San Francisco Area Chair Julianne Booth in Salt Lake City.

Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* starring renowned soprano Karita Mattila and tenor Misha Didyk. The series continues on the first Sunday of each month at 8:00 p.m. Members can find a full broadcast guide and additional information online at <http://sfopera.com/broadcasts>. The announcement included a statement by SFO's General Director, David Gockley, that these broadcasts were made possible, in part, through the "ground-breaking work" that culminated in AGMA's Electronic Media Agreement, negotiated by Linda Bartlett and Nora Heiber. SFO AGMA artists returned to work in March to begin their summer season.

San Francisco Ballet will be traveling to Artistic Director Helgi Tomasson's native Iceland this July. This will be the second time in the last ten years that the company has been invited to perform there.

AGMA PARTICIPATES IN CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

San Francisco Opera's Musical Administrator, Clifford Cranna, recently invited National Dance Executive Nora Heiber to speak to his class of students at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music about AGMA. Ms. Heiber was also invited to participate as a coach to students of Berkeley Law and Business Schools in a mock mediation exercise.

NORTHWEST



New York Area Dance Executive James Fayette and AGMA Board member and Northwest Area Chair George Scott

James Fayette met with George Scott during a trip to Seattle where James attended a scheduled labor management meeting with the dancers and management of the Pacific Northwest Ballet. Rebecca Johnston, Kiyon Gaines and Jodie Thomas were the AGMA delegates that participated along with several of their fellow dancers. James also took this opportunity to join George Scott in conducting a meeting with a group of new dancers working with the Seattle Opera to introduce them to AGMA membership.

COMING IN MAY

UNION PLUS ONLINE SAVINGS

You and your family can apply for an online savings account (provided through HSBC) starting May 1, 2007 at www.unionplussavings.com. To be eligible you must be a U.S. Citizen or a Residential Alien with a U.S. address and tax identification number. After completing the application, you can make your initial deposit by mail or by transferring funds from a checking account. You will be notified by e-mail when your account is approved. Security passwords and an ATM card are mailed. Deposits can be made by mail or by direct transfer from any checking account. You can choose paper or electronic monthly savings statements. Withdrawals can be made online, by using the HSBC ATM card or by calling the toll-free customer service line dedicated to the union program. The HSBC, Buffalo, NY call center is open 24 hours, 7 days a week. The special Union Plus line is 1-866-655-5324. Members with a balance of \$5,000 on September 30, 2007 will receive a member-only bonus of \$100 deposited directly to the member's account. (Please allow 8 weeks for bonus deposit.)

Please keep checking the Union Plus website www.unionplus.org for updated program information.

Note: Accounts opened prior to May 1 will not be eligible for the \$100 bonus.

**SAVE ON FLOWERS WITH UNION PLUS
FLOWER DISCOUNT**

The Union Plus Flower Discount can now save members even more. Just in time for spring (and Mother's Day, Sunday, May 13), union members now save 20% on every order of beautiful flowers, plants, baskets, balloons and more. Visit UnionPlus.org/Flowers or call 1-888-667-7779.

WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE

by Eleni Kallas, National Director of Organizing and Training and Mid-Atlantic Area Representative

Area Spring General Membership Meeting

The Washington/Baltimore (W/B) Area Spring General Membership Meeting was held on Sunday, March 18. Jennifer Blades was elected to the W/B Area Committee to fill the expired term of George Ingram, who served his colleagues so well during his tenure. A presentation was given by the Washington National Opera (WNO) Negotiating Committee Chair, Don Schramm, which included the distribution and completion of a chorister and corps dancer survey. Discussion of WNO negotiation concerns ensued. (Members should note that copies of the survey will also be distributed by mail so members unable to attend the meeting will have the opportunity to participate in the survey.) A committee was established for the Washington Concert Opera (WCO) negotiations and members were asked for their input regarding concerns for the successor agreement. Any member who wishes to join the WCO Negotiating Committee should email Eleni Kallas at AGMADC@comcast.net. An

announcement was made that J. Austin Bitner and Tim Kjer have filed petitions for the AGMA Board of Governors election. One chorus position on the Board remains open and Joe Minor agreed to run for the position in a write-in campaign. The Employee Free Choice Act posters from the AFL-CIO were displayed throughout the meeting room and the Act was discussed.

The Washington Ballet

After a very successful run of *¡Noche Latina!* in February (see photo above right) at the Kennedy Center, The Washington Ballet performed *Carmina Burana* in March.

Luis Torres (Delegate), Brianne Bland (Delegate), Elizabeth Gaither, Jonathan Jordan, and Chip Coleman, along with Mid-Atlantic Area Representative Eleni Kallas, have been hard at work holding planning sessions in preparation for the monthly Joint Committee meetings with management representatives (see photo right). These meetings, designed to build a relationship of trust and cooperation, have become very productive in brainstorming how to resolve issues and set in motion



W/B Membership Meeting, seated on floor, left to right: Amanda Heuermann, Lourdes Elias, Chris Dalen; seated: Tim Kjer (W/B Area Chair), Paul Edson, John Artz, Michele Kunz, Leslie Luxemburg, Paul Klingenberg, Shawnee Ball, Dorothee Bodner, Rosemary Fisher, Lisa Berger, Tony Torchia, Tricia Lepofsky; first row standing: Don Schramm, Lynn Krynicki, Grace Gori, Katie Katinas, Mimi Legat, Prince Havelly, Patricia Simmons, Jennifer Anderson, Ros Manier, William Heim, Rebecca Ocampo, Denise Gulley, Teresa Reid; second row standing: Jeffrey Tarr, Ling Ling He, Anne Sommers, Stephen Stokes, Eve Kornhauser, J. Austin Bitner, Keith Pennick, Sarah Richey, Joe Minor, Tim Augustin, Michael Talley; last row: Ole Hass, Bill Commins, John Boulanger, Benjamin Smith, Gary Deering, Harvey Fort, Vito Pietanza, James Shaffran, Beth Krynicki, Alan Reed, Doug Dykstra and Kurt Hoffman



WNO Negotiating Committee Members, left to right, first row: Chris Rhodovi, J. Austin Bitner, Chris Dalen, Lourdes Elias, Eleni Kallas (Mid-Atlantic Area Representative), Grace Gori; second row: Paul Edson, Dorothee Bodner; third row: Tricia Lepofsky, Lisae Jordan and Don Schramm (Chair). Missing from photo: John Boulanger, Teresa Reid, Lynn Krynicki and Laura Krause



Washington Ballet Dancers' Luis Torres, Jason Hartley and Jonathan Jordan performed in *¡Noche Latina!* earlier this year at the Kennedy Center.



Washington Ballet AGMA Joint Committee Members: Eleni Kallas (Mid-Atlantic Area Representative), Luis Torres (Delegate), Brianne Bland (Delegate), Chip Coleman, Elizabeth Gaither and Jonathan Jordan

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proactive ideas to minimize problems in future productions.

Jason Palmquist, Executive Director of the company for the past two seasons, has announced his departure at the end of the 2006-07 season. He has accepted the position of Executive Director at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago.

2007-08 Baltimore Opera Season and Chorus Auditions

Baltimore Opera Company chorus auditions will be held by appointment on May 12 (10-2), May 14 (5-8), and May 15 (5-8) at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, located at 1900 St. Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21217. For an audition appointment please email jharp@baltimoreopera.com or call (410) 625-1600 x306 after April 1, 2007. See the AGMA website www.musicalartists.org for audition requirements. The 2007-08 season consists of *La Forza Del Destino*, *Maria Stuarda*, *Roméo et Juliette*, and *Madama Butterfly*.

Employee Free Choice Act

by Eleni Kallas, National Director of Organizing and Training

On March 1, 2007, the U.S. House of Representatives passed labor law reform legislation known as the Employee Free Choice Act. This bipartisan legislation was introduced in February 2006 by Senators Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Arlen Specter (R-PA), and Representatives George Miller (D-CA) and Peter King (R-NY).



AGMA ballerina Nikkia Parish met with Congressman George Miller (D-CA) (above left) and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (above right) in March.

The reforms of the Employee Free Choice Act are designed to equalize the playing field between management and labor. In addition, these reforms will prevent employers from using intimidation and retaliation to harass or nullify union organizing efforts.

When workers have a union they possess a voice and a means to speak out against injustices in the workplace. Did you know that in the workforce union wages are on average 27% higher than non-union wages, and 93% of union members are covered by some type of health insurance? Those artists and production staff members working under AGMA contracts clearly have seen the benefits of a Union contract, yet there are hundreds of other artists and production staff members out there in the opera and ballet world working without the benefit of a union contract. Becoming a union company is not always easy, as has been witnessed by events that have transpired at some of our own companies along the road to unionization.

The Employee Free Choice Act was created because current law does not adequately protect employee rights. While the Act has passed in the House, it is now before the Senate and it is paramount that all of us become aware of the process

and how this Act can protect employees, including prospective AGMA members. Because of loopholes in existing law, employers often respond to employees' attempts to unionize with tactics of intimidation, harassment, and retaliation. As Lance Compa, senior lecturer at Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations, stated in his *Washington Post* article entitled *A Shield Against Corporate Bullying*, "...what companies really prize is management's power to exploit the election procedure to mount aggressive, one-sided attacks on workers' freedom of association."

During the unionization process some activist employees have actually lost their jobs, precipitating an end to their careers. Another tactic used by employers is to draw out the negotiation process for a first contract for years even though a union has been certified. In the current system the remedies for these actions can take years. Last year alone the National Labor Relations Board settled only one-third of the unfair labor practices that had been filed.

The following fact sheet prepared by the AFL-CIO outlines the contents of the Employee Free Choice Act.

1. Certification on the Basis of Majority Sign-Up.

Provides for certification of a union as the bargaining representative if the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) finds that a majority of employees in an appropriate unit has signed authorizations designating the union as its bargaining representative. Requires the board to develop model authorization language and procedures for establishing the validity of signed authorizations.

2. First-Contract Mediation and Arbitration

Provides that if an employer and a union are engaged in bargaining for their first contract and are unable to reach agreement within 90 days, either party may refer the dispute to the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) for mediation. If the FMCS is unable to bring the parties to agreement after 30 days of mediation, the dispute will be referred to arbitration, and the results of the arbitration shall be binding on the parties for two years. Time limits may be extended by mutual

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agreement of the parties.

3. Stronger Penalties for Violations While Employees Are Attempting to Form a Union or Attain a First Contract

Makes the following new provisions applicable to violations of the National Labor Relations Act committed by employers against employees during any period while employees are attempting to form a union or negotiate a first contract with the employer:

a. Civil Penalties: Provides for civil fines of up to \$20,000 per violation against employers found to have willfully or repeatedly violated employees' rights during an organizing campaign or first contract drive.

b. Treble Back Pay: Increases the amount an employer is required to pay when an employee is discharged or discriminated against during an organizing campaign or first contract drive to three times back pay.

c. Mandatory Applications for Injunctions:

Provides that just as the NLRB is required to seek a federal court injunction against a union whenever there is reasonable cause to believe the union has violated the secondary boycott prohibitions in the act, the NLRB must seek a federal court injunction against an employer whenever there is reasonable cause to believe the employer has discharged or discriminated against employees,

threatened to discharge or discriminate against employees or engaged in conduct that significantly interferes with employee rights during an organizing or first contract drive. Authorizes the courts to grant temporary restraining orders or other appropriate injunctive relief.

AGMA ballerina Nikkia Parish, formerly of The Washington Ballet, accompanied AFL-CIO President John Sweeney to the Hill on March 1 for the vote count of this monumental bill. Nikkia became active with the AFL-CIO in April of 2006 when she gave a presentation at the National Conference of State Legislatures. She has brought the need for unionism in the entertainment industry, especially for dancers, to the forefront in the union arena along with those of nurses, factory workers, and school teachers, etc. Take time to visit the AFL-CIO website at www.afl-cio.org to see her story and those of other workers, while reading more about the Employee Free Choice Act.

AGMA does not engage in political activity of any sort, or endorse candidates, or support or oppose legislation. Because the AFL-CIO asks its member unions to make individual members aware of this pending legislation, this article is presented as a courtesy to any individual member who is interested in learning more about this bill.

Listings for audition notices, area meetings and other news can be found at
AGMA's website: www.musicalartists.org

Actors Work Programs in Los Angeles and New York

ACTORS WORK PROGRAM ORIENTATION

An introduction to all Actors Work Program services, including group and individual career counseling, job training and education, financial assistance, and job placement services.

Prerequisite for participation in Actors Work Program services.

LA - Every Monday, 1:00-2:00 PM

NY - Every Monday, 12:00-2:30 PM

JOB SEARCH AND INTERVIEW SKILLS CLINIC

Get support, job leads & referrals. Specific strategies to boost your job search skills. *Participants must attend the Actors Work Program Orientation before attending.*

LA - 1st & 3rd Tuesday of every month, 2:00-4:00 PM

NY - Every Wednesday, 12:00-2:00 PM

RESUME WRITING

Learn how to write a targeted resume that presents you as a viable candidate. *Participants must attend the Actors Work Program Orientation before attending.*

LA - 2nd & 4th Tuesday of every month, 2:00-4:00 PM

NY - 3rd & 4th Thursday of every month, 12:00-2:00 PM

All Los Angeles programs are held at: The Actors Fund, 5757 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 400, Los Angeles, CA 90036
Info: (323) 933-9244 ext. 50

All New York programs are held at: The Actors Fund, 729 Seventh Ave., 11th Floor, New York
Info: (212) 354-5480

BY-LAW CHANGE

ARTICLE XXIV: PROXIES

(Originally adopted February 21, 1994, revised January 9, 2007)

Whereas, the use of proxies allows the action of the Board to reflect greater participation of Board members, and by extension the general membership; and

Whereas, the appointment of a proxy and the acceptance of appointment as a proxy imposes great ethical responsibilities on both parties;

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Board of Governors adopt the following regulations for the issuance of proxies:

A. A proxy may be one of two types, a General Proxy covering any vote taken at a specific meeting, or Specified Proxy. A Specified Proxy is for a predetermined subject, as listed in the proxy **form**.

B. A proxy's duration is for a single meeting, as specified in the proxy **form**. All ~~proxy forms must be physically present at the site of the Board meeting~~ proxies must be received at the National office not later than 48 hours after the adjournment of the Board of Governors meeting specified in the proxy. ~~This includes New York and any local area that is participating by teleconference.~~

C. The person who is appointed on the proxy **form** must be present at the meeting. Proxies ~~must~~ may be faxed or emailed to ~~mailed to New York within a time period of two weeks~~ the National office. The minutes will state whether the vote took place in person or by proxy. The Chair will ask for the names of all held proxies at the beginning of each meeting. A member who must leave a meeting early may execute a proxy **form** and so advise the Chair by requesting a point of personal privilege.

D. The Constitution provides that there be no proxy for purposes of voting by referendum. A proxy must be given to a member of the Board and a proxy cannot be used to determine a quorum.

Proxy authorization **form** for a General Proxy:

I, the undersigned, do hereby constitute and appoint (name) as my lawful proxy to attend and represent me at the meeting on (date) of the Board of Governors of the American Guild of Musical Artists or any continuation or adjournment thereof, with full power to vote and act for me and in my name, place and stead, in the same manner, to the same extent, and with the same effect that I might, if I were personally present thereat, and I hereby revoke any other proxy heretofore given by me.

Signed: _____ Date: _____.

Proxy authorization **form** for a Specified Proxy:

I, the undersigned, do hereby constitute and appoint (name) as my lawful proxy to attend and represent me at the meeting on (date) of the Board of Governors of the American Guild of Musical Artists for any continuation or adjournment thereof, with full power to vote and act for me on the following subject or subjects, in my name, place and stead in the same manner, to the same extent, and with the same effect that I might if I were personally present thereat, and I hereby revoke any other proxy heretofore given by me on the following subject or subjects:

_____.

Signed: _____ Date: _____.

AGMA Procedure on Dues Objections

This is a formal notice, required by law, for all members, new members, joining members, and all other persons working under, or being hired to work under a collective bargaining agreement between AGMA, the American Guild of Musical Artists, AFL-CIO, and an opera, ballet, dance programming, concert, or other company producing operatic music, dance, concerts, or other types of productions. This notice covers all such singers, dancers, stage and production personnel, choreographers, and others rendering services to or employed by such opera, ballet, dance, concert, or other companies producing operatic music, dance programming, concerts, or other types of productions.

The following notice and the procedures related thereto were developed in response to the holdings in a U.S. Supreme Court case known as *Communication Workers of America v. Beck*, relating to the expenditure of dues income for non-representational purposes.

All persons working under an AGMA collective bargaining agreement containing a union security clause are required, as a condition of employment, to pay dues and initiation fees to AGMA. Employees have the right to decide whether they wish to be members of AGMA. Employees who decide not to join AGMA remain obligated, under the union security clause, to pay an agency fee to AGMA equal to regular AGMA dues.

Employees who are not members of AGMA, but who pay dues to AGMA pursuant to a union security clause of a collective bargaining agreement, have the legal right to object to supporting certain activities which are not related to collective bargaining, contract administration, or grievance adjustment (representational activities) and may obtain a reduction in their dues and initiation fee.

Employees who choose not to become AGMA members and object to paying full dues should be aware that by electing not to become full members, they forfeit the right to enjoy a number of benefits available to members only. Among the benefits available only to full AGMA members are the AGMA Relief Fund; Union Privilege, insurance, health, and loan benefits; the right to attend and participate in Union meetings; the right to run for Union office and to nominate and vote for candidates for Union office; the right to participate in contract ratification and strike votes; the right to participate in development and formulation of Union policies; and the right to participate in the formulation of Union collective bargaining demands.

Audited financial statements are prepared for AGMA which calculate the percentage of expenditures made for representational and non-representational activities. While the exact amount varies slightly each year, approximately 99% of the expenditures each year are for representational activities. Non-members may object to payment of that portion of AGMA dues which are spent on non-representational activities. These include expenditures such as community service and charitable contributions; lobbying; legislative efforts and political activities; members-only benefits; and litigation which is

not germane to collective bargaining, contract administration or grievance adjustment. Non-members are legally obligated to pay for expenses connected with representational activities, which include negotiations with employers; enforcing collective bargaining agreements; meetings with employer representatives; member and staff committee meetings concerned with matters relating to employment practices and/or collective bargaining provisions; discussion of work-related issues with employers; handling employees' work-related problems through grievance and arbitration procedures, before administrative agencies or in informal meetings; and union administration, litigation, publications, and professional services relating to any of the above.

We believe that without the concerted political activity of the union movement, the great social legislation of this century such as the Social Security Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, minimum wage laws and the Occupational Safety and Health Act would never have become law. This remains truer than ever today. In our opinion, community service, legislative activity, lobbying, political activities, and litigation related to broader issues of concern to Union members as citizens are critically necessary for the improvement of working conditions of all members we represent. It is for this reason that we believe that it is essential for AGMA to support such activities which benefit all working people in the United States.

You have the right to decide whether to be a part of this important effort.

AGMA's procedure regarding non-member dues-payers and their right to seek a partial reduction of their dues and initiation fees has been developed in response to decisions of the United States Supreme Court.

Pursuant to AGMA's procedure, there is an annual period for a non-member to indicate an objection to AGMA's expenditures. Objections filed within thirty days of your receipt of this notice will be effective immediately. If you choose to object at a later time, an objection may be filed in the thirty days following your resignation from membership or in the objection period. The objection period is from December 1 through December 31. Non-members who express their objection within that period will have their dues (and, if applicable, initiation fees) reduced for the 12 months beginning January 1 and running through December 31. AGMA estimates that any such reduction will be less than 1% of total dues and fees otherwise due.

The AGMA objection procedure works as follows:

Dues and initiation fees payable by objectors will be based on AGMA's expenditures for those activities it undertakes to advance the employment-related interests of the employees it represents, described above as representational activities. Non-members who object to payment of full dues will receive an explanation of the basis for their reduced dues/fees. That explanation will include a list of the major categories of expenditures for activities deemed to be both "representational" and

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“non-representational,” and an accountant’s report verifying the breakdown of these “representational” and “non-representational” expenditures. Objectors have the option of challenging AGMA’s verified calculation of the reduced dues/fees before an impartial arbitrator appointed by the American Arbitration Association, and a portion of the objector’s dues/fees reflecting sums reasonably in dispute will be held in escrow pending the arbitrator’s decision. Details concerning the arbitration process will be provided to any objectors who challenge the dues/fees.

Non-members who have objected to payment of full dues will

be required to pay that percentage spent on representational activities and will have their dues reduced by the amount spent on non-representational activities. They will not receive any members-only benefits or privileges.

Objections should be directed to the AGMA Membership Department Supervisor, 1430 Broadway, New York, New York 10018. All objections must contain the objector’s current home or mailing address. The reduced dues/fees of objectors will be calculated and reflected in the dues/fees bills. Individuals desiring to retain “objector” status must renew their objections during each annual objection period.

CONTACT LIST OF ASSISTANCE, MEMBER-ONLY SERVICES, AND DISCOUNTS

Actors Federal Credit Union	(212) 869-8926	www.actorsfcu.com
The Actors Fund		www.actorsfund.org
The Actors Fund - East Coast	(212) 221-7300 (800) 221-7303	seligson@actorsfund.org
The Actors Fund - Midwest	(312) 372-0989 (800) 221-7303	dtowne@actorsfund.org
The Actors Fund - West Coast	(323) 933-9244 (800) 221-7303	intakela@actorsfund.org
The Actors Work Program (www.actorsfund.org/services/Sideline_Work_and_New_Careers/Actors_Work_Program)		
The Actors Work Program - New York	(212) 354-5480	blevinso@actorsfund.org
The Actors Work Program - Chicago	(312) 372-0989	dtowne@actorsfund.org
The Actors Work Program - Los Angeles	(323) 933-9244, ext. 50	ltrotter@actorsfund.org
AGMA Relief Fund - Donations	(800) 543-AGMA (2462)	susan@musicalartists.org
AGMA Relief Fund - Intake East	(212) 221-7300 or (800) 221-7303	
AGMA Relief Fund - Intake Midwest	(312) 372-0989 or (800) 221-7303	
AGMA Relief Fund - Intake West	(323) 933-9244 or (800) 221-7303	
AGMA Retirement & Health (Plan A, AGMA Retirement Plan and AGMA Health Plan)	(212) 765-3664	www.agmaretirement-health.org agmaretirement_health@yahoo.com
AGMA Health Plan B (“Administrative Services Only”)	(866) 263-1185	www.asonet.com
Artists’ Health Insurance Resource Center - NY	(212) 221-7300, ext. 165	www.ahirc.org
Artists’ Health Insurance Resource Center - LA	(323) 933-9244, ext. 32	AHIRC@actorsfund.org
Career Transition for Dancers - Outside of New York and Los Angeles	(800) 581-CTFD (2833)	www.careertransition.org
Career Transition for Dancers - New York	(212) 764-0172	info@careertransition.org
Career Transition for Dancers - Los Angeles	(323) 549-6660	info-la@careertransition.org
TEIGIT (The Entertainment Industry Group Insurance Trust)	(800) 886-7504	www.teigit.com teigit@teigit.com
Union Privilege/Union Plus	(800) 452-9425 (202) 293-5330	www.unionplus.org

AGMA members Phyllis Fay Farmer and Debra Vanderlinde held a concert at St. Peter’s Lutheran Church in New York City on January 23, 2007. Ten percent of the proceeds to the concert were donated to the AGMA Relief Fund. Thank you Phyllis and Debra!

Much Ado About... Jobs

Players of Olde Never Had The Actors Fund

by Carlos A. Guevara, AGMA member

Have you ever had nightmares about experiencing great need while completely lost, helpless, and without resources? Could you almost feel the moments of despair within a world that offers no guidance and support? These musings are neither an acting exercise nor the preamble to a casting call. I am, in fact, addressing two of the greatest challenges to the development of an artistic career — maintaining a steady income and providing for the basic essentials of daily living during unpredictable dry seasons. In short, I'm talking about survival beyond the stage. Well, agonize no more! We can all count our collective lucky stars and express our gratitude for the existence of human resource organizations such as The Actors Fund.

My first encounter with The Fund came as a benefit through my membership in AGMA. As a singer and actor, my cyclic fortunes are primarily linked to the moods of a highly demanding employer, my audience. On a secondary level, the abundance of available talent makes it a challenge to seamlessly migrate from one success to another. Sometime in 2005, this highly talented, skilled, and motivated performer found himself on the unemployment line looking for a job in order to get out of his J.O.B. (just over broke) situation. The majority of temporary jobs available through traditional job-hunting sources were, unfortunately, offered by employers who were apprehensive about hiring performers.

After playing hit or miss with the job boards at the unemployment office, I ventured onto the AGMA website and followed the link to The Actors Fund. I was instantly amazed and impressed by the variety of services and programs available to artists. There is a wealth of information to be found under the categories of social services, health care, insurance, financial assistance, and housing options, all geared toward assisting performers. Of course, my immediate need was employment. Much to my very pleasant surprise, The Fund also offers a dedicated work program for actors, appropriately named the Actors Work Program (AWP).

One of the linchpins of AWP is the list of organizations that are amenable to performers. AWP makes continual efforts to cultivate business contacts seeking talented, skilled, and motivated people to staff their companies on a temporary or part-time basis. Through leads provided by AWP, I was able not only to find regular work in different fields, but I also managed to meet many people and enhance the many skills I had already acquired as a survivor.

The Actors Work Program is not only an ideal foothold for performers who are auditioning, but still in need of temporary work, it is also a gateway for those performers who are interested in making the transition out of the industry and into full time employment. In order to assist its members in preparing for the work force, AWP offers computer training courses, career counseling, weekly job search meetings, seminars, computer labs, and many other useful resources.

The multifarious adventures of the typical entertainer are akin to a variety show running the gamut between brilliant moments and tomato-pitching contests. Artistic rewards are incalculable, but the reality of daily survival demands disciplined accounting plus a generous mix of creativity, flexibility, and wherewithal, or chutzpa! Of course, a little guidance and support are always welcome to help smooth out the rough spots. So before you venture on once more into the breach, it may be a good idea to enlist The Actors Fund and Actors Work Program on your side. Onward!

Information about the Actors Work Program can be found on The Actors Fund's website, www.actorsfund.org, by clicking on Services and Programs and then Sideline Work.

REMEMBER:
SEND IN THE BALLOT
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DEADLINE:
FRIDAY, MAY 18, 2007