



AGMAZINE

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Alan S. Gordon
National Executive Director's Report
Thank You

I feel a very unusual sensation—if it is not indigestion, I think it must be gratitude.
Benjamin Disraeli

As AGMA approaches its 75th anniversary, this is also my tenth anniversary working for your union. Consequently, this Executive Director's Report in *AGMAZine* is something like the 40th one I've written, and many of them have started with either a relevant quotation or the dictionary definition of a central word. In that regard, this one begins with a quotation about what I want to say: Thank you.

The phrase is easy to define: *An expression of appreciation often used in an utterance containing no verb and serving as a courteous and somewhat informal expression of gratitude.* And the phrase best expresses my feelings about the past ten years, and the future: **Thank you all** for giving me the opportunity to help make AGMA unique among entertainment labor unions.

As many of you know, I've spent the past four decades of my legal career working for unions and, thus, never had to ask myself "which side are you on". But I've often had to ask myself whether it made any difference. The lawyers at the Textile Workers Union fought the good union fight, but none doubted that it was ultimately a losing battle in the face of economic globalization. The Directors Guild of America, where I worked for 26 years, amassed a great treasury and immense power, but I found it hard to believe that hard bargaining just to get the director of *Halloween* a final cut was the mark of a life making a meaningful contribution to the world in which we live.

And then, in January of 2000, I was given the chance to become your Executive Director, and to remember that I wanted to represent workers because first, they needed security and, second, because what they did made a difference and needed to be protected:

Performing artists live to perform. But their talents, their skill and the beauty they create won't necessarily pay the rent, put food on their tables or guarantee the necessities of life. Without forceful advocacy and defense of their rights, artists may be vulnerable to exploitation or illegal discrimination. They need protection. They can find it by joining AGMA, the American Guild of Musical Artists, the labor organization that represents the men and women who create America's operatic, choral and dance heritage.

Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.
Theodore Roosevelt

Over the past ten years, I have tried to use everything I know to justify your trust and, along with your staff and your officers, to make the working lives of our

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Please visit

AGMA's website:

www.musicalartists.org

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FROM THE PRESIDENT JAMES ODOM

**Happy Birthday!**

In my family, birthdays are not a particularly big deal. I only remember one birthday party when I was a child. I believe it was my seventh birthday and it was a pirate theme. My recollection is that it was not particularly successful, but as I grow older I find that my memories of my childhood do not match up with my siblings' and childhood friends' memories of my childhood. They remember that I was popular, privileged, and pampered. Me, not so much. Other than that one party, I believe that most of my birthdays were marked by a special meal (usually steaks grilled in the firepit down on our beach) with the family and a cake that I had usually baked and decorated myself. Yes, I have ended several family arguments with the declaration, "At least you didn't have to bake your own birthday cake!"

There are a few exceptions. The summer I turned thirteen, I got a dishwasher for my birthday. It was what I really wanted. My mother told me I couldn't have one and I responded by going on strike. After the dishes hadn't been washed for two weeks and I had quit cooking because there were no clean pots and pans, I came home to discover a brand new portable dishwasher with a butcher block top and a big red bow on it in the kitchen. Oh, and a note reading, "Happy Birthday! You're grounded for a month." For my twentieth birthday, I was doing summer stock in Houston, and was on a strict diet. The director of the company felt that at 120 pounds I was just a little heavy to play the lead in *The Fantasticks* and was insisting that I lose ten pounds. After rehearsal on the night of my birthday, the rest of the ensemble spirited me away for clandestine pizza and beer. Forbidden fruits are always sweeter. I didn't lose the ten pounds, but I did lose five. And now you understand why I have weight issues. "You need to lose ten pounds" is a theme I have heard consistently over the course of my adult life.

For a recent milestone birthday, my friend Deborah (whose birthday is two days after mine) and I went on an Alaskan cruise. We had an amazing time, and I will be more than happy to sit down with you at lunch or over drinks and tell you all about it. We'd do it again in a heartbeat—if we can ever find a time that we can both take the same week off and both have the money.

My point, and I know you're beginning to be concerned that I don't have one, is that some birthdays really are milestones that should be marked in some way. AGMA is about to reach one of those milestones. In 2011, we will celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the founding of the American Guild of Musical Artists, and we want you to take part in the festivities. There are several things planned already. When you receive your membership card for 2011, you will also receive a 75th anniversary lapel pin. Each issue of *AGMAZINE* in 2011 will have features remembering our history and looking forward to our future. And we will be trying to plan special events in as many places around the country as we possibly can.

Here's what I'd like you to do. Think about how **you** think we should celebrate. Be real, some things just aren't possible. We don't have that kind of money, and you'd be mad if we spent it that way. But we can plan special meetings, picnics, movie screenings or other events in your Area. I will be glad to bring you my cabaret show or host an open mic night to benefit the AGMA Relief Fund. Think about articles for the *AGMAZINE*—things like "when and why I joined AGMA" or important moments in your shop's history. A personal interest of mine is AGMA

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Executive Director's Report (continued from page 1)

members better, to protect their careers, and to secure for them the opportunity, in turn, to give their gift to the rest of the world.

The purpose of life is not to be happy—but to matter, to be productive, to be useful, to have it make some difference that you have lived at all.

Leo Rosten

Early on, I had my first example of the fact that I had been given a chance to “matter”. On my second day of working for AGMA the *corps de ballet* of the Metropolitan Opera made an unannounced visit to my office. They demanded to know what I intended to do for dancers in the future. I had no idea whatsoever, but I wanted to get these 16 angry people out of my office, so I told them, “I’ll devote myself to representing the working lives of dancers, and all of AGMA’s members, to the very best of my ability.” On my third day of working for AGMA I had a call from a writer who asked, “As the new guy, do you think that AGMA members are better off this year than they were last year?” Again, I had no idea. But I knew the answer: “I have no idea, but I can guarantee you that next year’s opera contracts and dance contracts will be better than they are this year, and I’ll try to make certain that this remains true every year that I’m here.”

And for the last ten years that’s exactly what I’ve tried to do. Without hesitation, I can say that it’s been the most rewarding ten years of my professional life, and for that, I have immense gratitude.

You may not have saved a lot of money in your life, but if you have saved a lot of heartaches for other folks, you are a pretty rich man.

Seth Parker

One of my goals over these ten years, and hopefully onward into the future, has been to make membership in AGMA equally rewarding for its members and relevant in their professional lives.

I’m sometimes fond of saying that after the first of the 26 years I worked for the DGA, there was never a day that I looked forward to going to work, but in the ten years at AGMA,

there’s never been a day that I didn’t. In drafting this Report I Googled “what percentage of Americans love their jobs?” Most hits said 20%. One other said it was only 10%, and that the other 10% were simply mentally ill. Sometimes, particularly after dealing with New York City Opera, I’m not sure which category I’m in, but there’s no question that I truly do enjoy my job, and that I appreciate it for the gift that it is.

At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have again lighted the flame within us.

Albert Schweitzer

The challenge to repay that gift, of course, goes on. As AGMA celebrates its 75th Anniversary in 2011, so also must we renegotiate many of its major collective bargaining agreements. The nature of bargaining has changed over AGMA’s 75 years, as has the world, but the goal is still the same—to protect the men and women we represent and to get for them what every worker wants: a good, rewarding and safe job that gives them the time and the financial resources to spend time with their families.

All of your professional staff join with me in thanking you for the chance to wage that battle on your behalf. It’s what we do.

Obviously, I wanted to find an apt quotation with which to end this Report, and there were two possibilities. The first, from Bertrand Russell, would have tempered all of my gratitude with the other-side-of-the-coin:

One of the symptoms of an approaching nervous breakdown is the belief that one’s work is terribly important.

In the end, however, I decided to quote myself, from my First Annual Report to the Board of Governors on February 1, 2001, a quote which is just as valid today:

It would not, of course, have been possible to come as far as we have without the active support and encouragement of the President, the Board and the members, upon whom I have relied for guidance and advice and, for that, I thank you most sincerely.

Welcome, New AGMA Member!

AGMA’s Board of Governors would like to welcome you to AGMA and introduce you to *AGMAzine*, the official publication of your union. *AGMAzine* covers AGMA news and events and provides helpful information about the benefits of AGMA membership including contact information for services provided to union members, and much more. In each issue you’ll hear from AGMA’s president and National Executive Director and on the Area pages you’ll see photographs of your colleagues along with news from around the country. *AGMAzine* is also the place to keep track of changes to AGMA’s Constitution and By-Laws and to review the details of the union’s finances.

What do you want from your *AGMAzine*? This is your union, this is your *AGMAzine*. Let us know how we can make *AGMAzine* better for you.

AGMAzine is published three times a year—watch for it! Send all comments and suggestions to AGMA@musicalartists.org.

Union Plus Scholarships Take the Sting Out of Tuition

In today's economy, more and more adults are headed back to college for an undergraduate or advanced degree, whether for a career change or advancement in their current field. The money to support such a move can be hard to come by. But YOU, as a union member, have a unique opportunity to apply for scholarship funds!

AGMA members have already been winners. In 2009, Union Plus Scholarships were awarded to AGMA members Christopher Rendall-Jackson (\$4,000 scholarship) and Steven Davis (\$1,000 scholarship). And in 2010, out of more than 5,000 applicants from 42 unions, AGMA, once again, has two members that have been awarded prestigious Union Plus Scholarships. Steven Davis has won for his second consecutive year (\$2,000) and Sara Stewart Schumann, AGMA's 3rd Vice President, won a \$1,500 scholarship.

The 2010 AGMA Honorees

Steven Davis, of Providence, Rhode Island, has been an AGMA member since 2004. Six years ago he was chosen by his fellow dancers at Ballet West to be president of their in-house union. Knowing that strength can be found in numbers, Steven helped his union to affiliate with AGMA for stronger representation. Now retired from dancing, Steven has retained his union values and membership as he continues his studies. "I hope that one day I will be able to apply all I have learned by returning to the labor movement as a union lawyer," he says. Steven currently attends Brown University where he continues to help others by resolving conflicts creatively and constructively as a trained mediator for his fellow students.

Sara Stewart Schumann, of Chicago, Illinois, has been an AGMA member since 1990. She has served on the AGMA Board of Governors and is currently a National Vice President of AGMA and chair of the Board's Membership and Member Relations Committee. After many years of working as a dancer, "My dream of becoming a labor attorney began with my first union contract negotiations," she says. Sara, as a dancer and as a choreographer, was a member of the bargaining committee at the Lyric Opera of Chicago for six consecutive contract negotiations. She currently attends Chicago-Kent College of Law; is a Law Clerk for the Firm of Asher, Gittler, and D'Alba, Ltd.; and, an Extern at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Alternate Dispute Resolution Unit.

What is a Union Plus Scholarship?

According to www.unionplus.org, "Since 1992, the Union Plus Scholarship Program has awarded more than \$3 million to students of working families who want to begin or continue their post-secondary education. Over 1,900 families have benefited from our commitment to higher education. The Union Plus Scholarship Program is offered through the Union Plus Education Foundation."

Leslie Tolf, the president of Union Privilege, which is the organization that provides a variety of Union Plus programs that benefit union families, states that, "During these challenging economic times, with college tuition rising and many working families struggling just to get by, we're pleased to be helping some of the labor movement's most promising students

achieve their college dreams."

Who Is Eligible?

The Union Plus Scholarship program is open to all AGMA members, their spouses, and dependent children. Members do not have to purchase any Union Plus program product or participate in any Union Plus program to apply.

Scholarship awards are granted to students attending a two-year college, four-year college, graduate school, or a recognized technical or trade school.

All recipients are selected based on academic ability, social awareness, financial need, and appreciation of labor.

How to Apply

The first step is to go to <http://UnionPlus.org/Education> and download the application. Each year the deadline for scholarship applications is January 31, with winners notified by May 31, so do not delay.

Other Union Plus Programs

- Mortgage & Finance Benefits such as refinancing and FREE credit counseling
- Safety Net & Insurance Benefits
- College Savings Grants to help families save for their young children's futures
- Scholarships to help union members and leaders finish their degrees at the National Labor College with an affordable, flexible and convenient online program
- Scholarships to obtain a Green Workplace Representative Certificate from the National Labor College
- Money-saving offers on Goodyear tires, entertainment, and AT&T service

MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT NEWS

If you change your mailing address or contact information (i.e. telephone or email) it is important that you notify AGMA's Membership Department in writing. You can send it via email to membership@musicalartists.org or a Change of Address form is available at our website www.musicalartists.org.

Additionally, AGMA's Retirement Plan and Health Fund and Administrative Services Only (Plan B) must also be notified separately.

AGMA to Receive Career Transition For Dancers' Award

by James Fayette, New York Area Dance Executive

On November 8, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. at New York's City Center, the American Guild of Musical Artists will be receiving the "Career Transition For Dancers' Award" in recognition of its 25-year commitment to CTFD and its mission of empowering dancers.

AGMA has always recognized that dancers sacrifice their future in order to focus on a performing career that will inevitably end long before the traditional age of retirement in America. The average length of a professional dancer's career is 10 to 15 years and performing beyond that is enjoyed by only a small percentage of dance artists who have avoided the pitfalls of injury and artistic preferences for younger talents. AGMA has worked hard to alleviate the difficulties of retiring from full-time performing that every dancer eventually has to confront; our contracts provide for advance notification when a dancer will no longer be engaged by a company and, in most cases, a career transition payment to help finance a change.

Career Transition For Dancers was founded in 1985. AGMA was one of the original supporters along with Actors' Equity Association, American Federation of Television and Radio

Artists and the Screen Actors Guild. AGMA's support, along with these other performing arts unions, continues today. In 1988, CTFD became a self-governing organization that operated out of the home of the American dancer, the offices of the American Guild of Musical Artists. Today, CTFD reports that it remains the only nonprofit organization solely dedicated to the career needs of dancers. With offices in New York City, Los Angeles and Chicago, as well as a mobile National Outreach Project, they have helped thousands of dancers in 47 states take their first steps toward discovering rewarding second careers.

AGMA has been a part of this amazing organization for the past 25 years and is actively involved in CTFD's Board of Directors, always helping to reach out to dancers and provide the necessary resources to support CTFD's mission. We are honored to be receiving this award and to be so closely associated with an organization that provides such needed resources to our members and dancers across the country.

Career Transition For Dancers' website is www.careertransition.org.

A Whole New AGMA World

by Seth Hoff, AGMA Member and Staging Staff Caucus Member

When I started working as an assistant director and choreographer in regional opera about five years ago, having come from a musical theatre and dance background as a performer, I felt like I had entered a whole new world. Terms like "light walker" (a volunteer who stands in for the performers at lighting sessions) made me wonder if I was working on an opera or a *Star Wars* movie. As a long-time member of Actors' Equity, I had to become familiar with a new art form and a new union, AGMA.

I danced under AGMA contracts at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, but as I began working as a freelance assistant director and choreographer, questions would come up regarding union regulations that were unfamiliar to me. I learned to go to stage managers if I had questions about anything from rehearsal provisions for dancers to overtime for myself.

More questions arose after I attended my first Chicago/Midwest Area Meeting in February of 2009. There I saw how officers were elected, company reports were presented and how union business was conducted. I saw AGMA professionals with years of experience and wondered where I fit in.

After that meeting I emailed AGMA President Jimmy Odom to find out how freelancers are represented in negotiations. From him I learned that "anyone who has worked for a signatory during a specific contract period, and/or has a reasonable expectation to work for that signatory under the next agreement is considered a member of that shop." It was good to hear that I didn't have to be a "regular" at a company to be considered a member of the shop. He also wrote that if I had questions or concerns, the first people to go to would be "the Delegates at the company. The second would be the Area Chair or Area Rep of the geographic area that the company is located in."

An opportunity to learn about AGMA contracts presented itself when I joined the Staging Staff Caucus. The Caucus is putting together a database to compare working conditions of staging staff in AGMA opera companies. I was assigned several contracts, which are all currently available on the AGMA website, to review. The contracts' differences and complexities opened my eyes to the importance of being familiar with the contract under which one is working.

As a freelancer and a member of several shops, I am trying to be aware of AGMA issues and concerns in the cities where I work. I have discovered that the more I learn about opera and AGMA, the more interest I have in becoming better informed and more involved. I recommend that all AGMA members invest time and energy in getting to know their union better. Attend a meeting, read a contract, ask a question; it may open up a whole new AGMA world to you.

For more information about the Staging Staff Caucus, or if you are interested in becoming a member, contact Christine Sanzone, Caucus chair, at cmsanzone@cox.net.

Actors Fund Work Program Works for You

The Actors Fund Work Program (AWP) supports its participants in identifying and finding meaningful work to complement their industry career or for a new career.

The following is an interview with AGMA member Marlana de la Mora, conducted by Kathy Schrier, the Director of The Actors Fund Work Program.

Marlana de la Mora was born and raised in El Paso, Texas. As an adolescent, she knew she had a natural talent for singing, performing in her school choir. Her love of classical music started at age 16. She went on to receive her Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Texas at El Paso.

Kathy Schrier: *I would assume there was not much opera in El Paso, Texas when you were growing up. Had you ever been to the opera before you decided to study classical music? How did you learn about classical music?*

Marlana de la Mora: No, I had never heard live classical music, but I was totally addicted to “Live from the Met” on Saturday afternoons. I never missed listening to a performance. Actually, the first opera I saw was as a chorister—I was a college student and we did *La Bohème*.

Kathy: *When you made the decision to study voice, what did you do?*

Marlana: Luckily, I was able to find an excellent voice teacher in El Paso and that paved the way for me being admitted to the voice program at the University of Texas, El Paso.

Kathy: *What were some of your challenges during the early years of your career?*

Marlana: Even though I had good teachers in Texas, my performance was riding on natural talent, not perfected technique. I knew I needed to come to New York—for both training and work—and I did at age 26.

Kathy: *Tell me about joining AGMA.*

Marlana: I joined AGMA a year after coming to New York when I was offered a job with the New York City Opera.

Kathy: *Did you perform with opera companies before NYC Opera?*

Marlana: Yes.

Kathy: *Was work different working under an AGMA contract?*

Marlana: Oh, wow, yes.

Kathy: *Please explain.*

Marlana: It is hard to explain, but my experience working non-union, well, I didn't feel human. It was rare that we had regular breaks, the pay was dreadful, and they expected us to work 12-hour days. And forget health insurance or decent housing when on the road. When I started to work AGMA, a new world opened up. The pay is good, you get breaks, what is expected

of you is clear, and you get a decent stipend when touring. It's a good feeling to know that management can't randomly change the rules.

Kathy: *Today, would you work for a non-union opera company?*

Marlana: No. I am, however, fortunate to get relatively steady work at both New York City Opera and the Metropolitan Opera. I also sing at my church and occasionally do solo recitals.

Kathy: *So, if you get relatively steady work at New York's major opera companies, why did you come to AWP?*

Marlana: Getting opera work regularly does not mean that I have enough money to pay my bills. I knew I had to add to my career and a friend recommended that I go to AWP.

Kathy: *How has AWP helped you?*

Marlana: In so many ways. The career counseling services helped me re-evaluate my situation, and made me recognize that I could remain a classical singer and also use my skills and interests in other careers. I also took the AWP computer classes—and did I need them! AWP staff told me about The Actors Fund's social services' “Money and the Performing Artist” group. I signed up and it has helped me think about money in a healthier way.

Kathy: *I believe you are currently in school. Is that correct?*

Marlana: Yes.

Kathy: *Tell me about school, what you are studying, and a bit about your decision to return to school.*

Marlana: I forgot to mention—like so many other classical singers—one of my sideline gigs is teaching voice, and I really love to teach. I have had, however, students that I could not help because they really needed speech therapy. Putting this all together, I decided to return to school for a Masters in Speech and Language Pathology. Through AWP I knew how to do labor market research and I found that the demand in this field is very high. I also confirmed that one needed a strong science background. Although I didn't have this background, I do love science. I had to do a year and a half of pre-requisite courses. I just started the Masters Program at Lehman College and it is great. I should finish in two years.

Kathy: *And when school is over?*

Marlana: My intention is to help other performers as a voice therapist.

The Actors Fund is a national human service organization that helps all professionals in performing arts and entertainment. The Fund is a safety net, providing programs and services for those who are in need, crisis or transition. For more information call (212) 221-7300 or visit www.actorsfund.org.

AGMA Answers

I'm having trouble with my agent. What should I do?

If you cannot talk to your agent directly, or if you feel that they are behaving in an unethical manner, consult the Agent Code of Standards on AGMA's website (musicalartists.org) under the "Agreements" tab. If you feel that you need someone to speak for you, please contact Alan Gordon either by telephone (212) 265-3687 or by email AGMANY@aol.com.

I'm performing on a stage that feels dangerous. What should I do?

Your safety is of utmost importance to AGMA. If the stage you are working on is in an AGMA house, first talk to your union Delegate. If your shop hasn't elected one, do so immediately. Your Delegate can then speak to someone with the company to address the problem. If that doesn't work, contact your Area Chair, Area Representative (if your Area has one or if applicable), or the National Office.

I haven't worked an AGMA job for a while and I don't want to pay dues anymore.

AGMA encourages members to keep their membership current as long as there is a possibility of future work. However, it is possible to request Honorable Withdrawal status if you are temporarily inactive in the field. You can return to Active membership when you resume work by paying a reinstatement fee of \$50 plus \$78 annual dues (as opposed to a possible \$250 fine for non-payment of dues!). The process of going on Honorable Withdrawal requires that your dues be up-to-date before requesting such status. Bear in mind that if you've been reinstated to Active status after being on Honorable Withdrawal, you will be ineligible for Honorable Withdrawal status for three years.

If you're sure you will no longer be working under an AGMA agreement, you may find the form and instructions for going on Honorable Withdrawal on AGMA's website under the "Membership Info/General" tab, or you may call the office to request the information.

I received a statement from "AGMA Health Fund Plan B" and the balance was very different from what shows up on the Administrative

Services Only (ASO) webpage for my account. Please explain why the amounts are different and tell me which one is accurate.

The mailed statement is a quarterly snapshot of the account activity as of the date on the statement. It is possible that activity has been posted to your account since the statement was produced. The information on the ASO website (www.asonet.com) is current and most correct. If you have any questions about your Plan B account, call Administrative Services Only toll-free at (866) 263-1185.

I'm going to be visiting New York. May I stop in at the National Office?

Absolutely! AGMA office hours are 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. weekdays. The National Office also has free wireless internet available to members over a secure wireless router. Go to the 14th floor of 1430 Broadway (between 39th and 40th Streets), show your current AGMA membership card, and you will be given the network password. Be sure to call ahead, (212) 265-3687, to make sure the conference room is available.

President's Message (continued from page 2)

legacies—members whose parents or grandparents were also AGMA members—so if you're one of those folks, or you know one of those folks, let us know.

The Membership and Member Relations Committee of the Board of Governors is going to be coordinating all these activities. If you have an idea, or would like more information,

please contact the Chair of MMRC, Sara Stewart Schumann, at mmrc@musicalartists.org.

Happy Birthday, AGMA! You look great at 75!

IN MEMORIAM

*Philip Eisenberg**
Maureen Forrester
Sally Lambert

*Charles Mackerras**
Anthony Rolfe-Johnson
Raymond Serrano

Cesare Siepi
Paul Herbert Simon
Joan Sutherland

**Indicates a distinguished individual in a related profession*

A R E A N E W S

NEW YORK



The Metropolitan Opera opened its 2010-11 season on September 27 with a gala performance of director Robert Lepage's **Das Rheingold**, the first of Wagner's "Ring" cycle, which will be seen in its entirety in 2012. The much-publicized technical wizardry includes video images of pebbles that interact with the singers on stage, moving when they move. From left, Stephanie Blythe as Fricka, Franz-Josef Selig as Fasolt, Hans-Peter König as Fafner, Lisette Oropesa as Woglinde, Tamara Mumford as Flosshilde and Jennifer Johnson as Wellgunde.



In attendance at the Metropolitan Opera's opening night were Alan Gordon, AGMA's National Executive Director, Ann Hackett, the Met's Director of Labor Relations, and Tino Gagliardi, President of AFM's Local 802.

PHILADELPHIA



The chorus of the Opera Company of Philadelphia gathered for a shop meeting during a dress rehearsal of **Otello**.

NEW ORLEANS

by Julie Condy, Board Member, New Orleans Area Chair and Chorister

It's been five years since Katrina came through New Orleans. In her wake she left the worst man-made disaster ever to hit an entire metropolitan area in the United

States. Afterward, 80% of New Orleans was under water and the Mississippi Gulf Coast looked like a bomb had gone off. The tidal wave swept entire towns into the Gulf of Mexico. Both of the parishes of St. Bernard and Plaquemines were either under water or destroyed. Wow,

August, 2005. That was five years ago. It seems like yesterday, and yet it seems like a lifetime ago.

The day the city flooded I called in to an AGMA Committee on Committees meeting. The storm had blown through northern Mississippi, where I was staying, and as a result there was no power. It may seem odd, but there was nothing else to do that day. I didn't even know how my home had fared. There was, however, a landline phone still working so I figured I'd call in to the meeting. (I don't know why, but I had printed out the info and put it in my wallet. Go figure.)

That was my last semblance of normalcy for a very long time. Life would never be the same. The New Orleans Opera Association (NOOA) had to cancel the fall half of their season. The chorus, the life blood of any opera company, was drained and dispersed across the country.

But we persevered. Concerned for everyone's well being, the chorus kept in touch via email. (Too bad Facebook wasn't around back then.) Many artists such as Placido Domingo and Fredericka von Stade, to name just two, and many opera companies nationwide reached out to New Orleans. The Gala in March of 2006 was tremendously emotional for all of the performers **and** the audience. We feel a deep sense of gratitude to Maestro Placido Domingo for his continued care and concern for New Orleans and to the singers who donated their time and talent to appear in the Gala that brought in much needed revenue for the company. Special thanks go to all the AGMA members who held benefits to raise money for the AGMA Relief Fund for Katrina victims. You are too numerous to mention here, but we New Orleanians thank each of you from the bottom of our hearts.

The Mahalia Jackson Theater for the Performing Arts, which has housed NOOA since 1973, marinated in 20+ feet of water for weeks after the storm and its infrastructure had to be rebuilt from scratch. The Gala re-opening in January 2009 brought the New Orleans Opera home after spending the interim seasons at Tulane University in an auditorium not intended for grand opera. The New Orleans Opera was happy to be home in the Mahalia Jackson Theater; it felt as though we had never left and had just awakened from a bad dream.

In New Orleans, there is always talk of the NEW normal. Life has drifted back slowly to this new normal over the past five years. Many people have returned to their original homes, some of them renovated, and others built new. While many people are still gone, some have made new lives elsewhere and others yearn for home.

My old house is gone—taken in pieces to a potter's field for houses somewhere in Louisiana—and a new one has just started going up on the same lot. I've been living an hour outside of New Orleans and just can't wait to live close to the city again.

The new normal is the way we live post-Katrina. The

old normal was life pre-K which will never, ever return.

I learned from Katrina just how important the people in your life are and that people make the place. The people in New Orleans make the place extra special. The music, the food, and the rich cultural heritage are all parts of a life that I can't live without. It is said that 80% of the population has returned to New Orleans and the surrounding areas. Clearly, they can't live without it either.

Having nearly lost their opera company, I believe that New Orleanians value it now all the more. We, the choristers, value each other more. As time progresses, the memories of Katrina will fade but my hope is that the new cultural vigor I see in New Orleans will continue. We all know that what we very nearly lost for good, we loved too much to let go.

A toast to the NEW New Orleans!

by Givonna Joseph, Chorister

When I think back on being a New Orleans Opera Chorister after Katrina hit, I remember feeling afraid the company would not come back from this. Without the New Orleans Opera Association (NOOA), life would never be the same.

Then, when the 2006 Gala brought the NOOA back, it was the first time I felt that maybe things would be okay.

It was great how Area Chair Julie Condy and Carol Rausch, NOOA's Chorus Master, reached out to chorus members to see how we were doing. Julie made me aware of AGMA's Katrina Relief Fund and other local grants for artists who had lost everything, and that made a big difference for me. Shortly after we evacuated to Houston, Carol checked in on my daughter (Aria Mason, also a NOOA chorister) and me in person when she went there briefly.

The upside of being displaced in Houston was having the opportunity to sing with Houston Grand Opera chorus for the 2006-07 season. Chorus Master Richard Bado and all were wonderful to me! As much as I enjoyed the experience, I kept thinking about home and wishing that NOOA would one day enjoy the kind of budget that Houston has.

I was finally able to come back to New Orleans in 2008 but had to move into an apartment because my home had been destroyed by flooding. It is five years later and I am still lacking some of the funds needed to rebuild my house, but I am going forward in faith.

Katrina gave me a new and intense resolve to focus on my singing career—to do what is my joy. Because my full-time job had been eliminated after Katrina, part-time singing and teaching jobs mean there is a lot of ebb and flow in income. But there is great comfort in knowing that I have work at the New Orleans Opera and will be singing Lily in the upcoming *Porgy and Bess*!

I am on my way...

NORTHWEST

by Joanna Ceciliani, former Portland Opera Chorister

The Second Annual Portland Opera Chorus Picnic was held on Sunday, July 25 on a beautiful day. The whole picnic went really smoothly. Committee members were: Jennie Spada (Volunteers), Maria Leatha (Donations), Darlyn Jablonski (Artistic Director, i.e. signs, etc.), Chris Harper (Advertising), Barbara Berger (Bake-off coordinator), Tom Skyler (Barbecues) and Joanna Ceciliani (Coordinator).

The Bake-off Contest was a hit again this year. We asked Chorus Master Robert Ainsley, Costume Shop Manager Francis Britt and AGMA's Northwest Area Chair George Scott (visiting from Seattle) to be our judges. They really worked hard at it too! The winners were: Esther Moses Bergh (Tutti Frutti), Eva Wolff Hortsch (Opera Cake) and Jennie Spada (Chorus of Chocolate). Opera people certainly know how to create fabulous desserts! People were digging into the dessert table even before the winners were announced!

Volunteers played a big part this year. My husband, Doug Beckman, helped move the massive amount of supplies to and from the car; Raoul Bellis-Squires helped with anything we needed; Kirsten Hart and Eva Wolff Hortsch helped with the bake-off contest and clean up; and Paul Wright and Bob Kingston assisted barbecuing all day with Tom Skyler.

We were able to add an exciting raffle prize this year. The



Portland Opera Company generously donated two tickets to the opening show of the season, *Pagliacci/Carmina Burana!* Matt Erickson was our lucky winner.

Anyone who is currently a Portland Opera Chorus singer, or was in the past for any length of time, is invited to attend the annual picnic. Invitations are also extended to anyone who has worked closely with the opera chorus in any way, e.g., orchestra members, supers, backstage crew, administration, prop crew, and we would love to see some of our guest artists and leads if they are in town, too!

Each year, the event is posted on Facebook and on AGMA's website. We look forward to the Third Annual Portland Opera Chorus Picnic next year.

PITTSBURGH

by AGMA Governor and Chorister Kellie McCurdy Ryan and Dancer Stephen Hadala



Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's Company dancers and Artistic Staff on a break at Heartwood Acres.

It was a busy summer in Pittsburgh. The shops at both Pittsburgh Opera and Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre successfully renegotiated their collective bargaining agreements with the indispensable help of AGMA Special Counsel Gail Lopez-Henriquez and AGMA President Jimmy Odom.

Pittsburgh Opera's new collective bargaining agreement includes increases in compensation and Plan B contributions in each year of the agreement. In addition, Principal Artists will be receiving substantial increases in the Plan B contributions that they receive. The negotiating committee consisted of: Chair Kellie McCurdy Ryan, Pittsburgh Area Chair Bill Buchanan, Sean

Donaldson, Bill Fisher, Stephanie Kasper, Ed Moore, Cynthia Pratt, Christine Schott, Katy Shackleton-Williams, Cheryl Shenefelt Bush and Carol Wolfe.

For Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, the negotiating committee and company were able to agree on salary increases in each year of the contract, 401(k) matches and, for the first time, a guaranteed minimum number of dancers.

The dancers of Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and the singers and production staff of Pittsburgh Opera would like to thank Gail Lopez-Henriquez for all of her hard work and tireless energy, as well as Jimmy Odom for his added gravitas during both contract negotiations.

Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre kicked off the 2010-2011 season with a free outdoor performance at Hartwood Acres outside of Pittsburgh. The company performed Paul Taylor's *Company B*, the wedding pas de deux from *Coppelia* and Dwight Rhoden's *Step Touch*.

Pittsburgh Opera is well underway on their fall season with productions of *The Barber of Seville* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE

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



Contract negotiations were held for Washington National Opera (WNO) on June 17, 2010; left to right, seated: WNO Artistic Administration Manager Scott Guzielek, WNO Director of Artistic Operations Christina Scheppelmann, WNO Production Director David Foti and Director of Finance and Administration Michael Mael; standing: Teresa Reid, Blanche Hampton, Negotiation Committee Chair J Austin Bitner, AGMA Executive Director Alan Gordon, AGMA National Director of Organizing and Training and Mid-Atlantic Area Representative Eleni Kallas, Lori Clark, Daryl Ott, Washington/Baltimore Area Chair Tricia Lepofsky, Lynn Krynicki Bayer, Laura Krause and WNO Manager of Production Services David Butler.



Following a rehearsal of Washington National Opera's production of *Un Ballo in Maschera*, the Washington/Baltimore Fall General Membership Meeting was held on August 28. Attendees, left to right, on floor: Shyam Khadgi, Andrea Dorf, Lisa Berger, Annadaire Ingram, Mimi Legat, Laura Krause, J Austin Bitner, Sean Pflueger, Tricia Lepofsky; second row, seated: Stanley Webber, Patricia Simmons, Shawnee Ball, Kurt Hoffman, Joyce Lundy, Ana Castrello, Don Carter, Tony Torchia, Tim Augustin, Brendan Cooke, James Shaffran, David Toulson; standing: Diane Lin, Lisae Jordan, Denise Gulley, Jennifer Mathews, Pat Hussey, Eve Komhauser, Jane Ingalls, Catrin Davies, Teresa Reid, Connie Bailey, Joe Minor, Laura Zuiderveen, Beth Krynicki, Vito Pietanza, Harvey Fort, Bill Commins, Peter Burroughs, Robert Cantrell, William Jones, Wayne Jennings, Tim Kjer, Jason Buckwalter, Elizabeth Freeman, Jeffrey Tarr and Joshua Hong.



Eleni Kallas gave an AGMA presentation on July 14 to the Studio Artists at Wolf Trap Opera.



Don Jones, a 14-year veteran chorister with Washington National Opera, was murdered in early June just days after he had sung a performance at the Kennedy Center. His AGMA colleagues contributed \$2,500 to his family in his memory.



On July 28, 2010, Washington Concert Opera contract negotiations took place. Present at the meeting, left to right, front: Bailey Whiteman, Tricia Lepofsky, Denise Gulley, WCO Executive Director Judy Gruber; back: Grace Gori, J Austin Bitner, WCO Artistic Director/Conductor Maestro Antony Walker, AGMA's National Director of Organizing and Training and Mid-Atlantic Area Representative Eleni Kallas, WCO Board Member Harlowe Case, Negotiating Committee Chair Tim Kjer and Stephen Stokes.

SAN FRANCISCO

by Nora Heiber, National Dance Executive

This year has been incredibly busy for the Northern California Area. Ballet West requested a concession reopener while negotiations with Ballet San Jose, San Francisco Symphony and San Francisco Ballet were in full swing. AGMA is happy to report that with the help of four extraordinary negotiating committees, National Dance Executive Nora Heiber was able to complete the successful negotiation of all of these contracts by September 8.

Ballet West

This was Ballet West's second consecutive request to reopen negotiations during their three-year contract with AGMA for the purpose of asking for concessions from the dancers. This request was specifically for a reduction of the Dancer Guarantee from 36 to 35 dancers, the Weekly Employment Guarantee from 37 to 36 weeks, and a suspension of Ballet West's obligation to make contributions into the company's matching retirement account. Ballet West dancers Katherine Lawrence, Christopher Anderson, Rex Tilton, Katie Critchlow and Christopher Sellars represented their fellow dancers in reviewing the company's financial documents and determining whether or not such concessions were necessary. After a thorough review, the concessions were granted with the understanding that, upon expiration of the 2008-11 collective bargaining agreement, the terms and conditions set forth for the 2010-11 contract year will be the starting point for the next contract negotiations. Ballet West agreed to use the same sprung floor that is used in the Capitol Theater for all performances at the Rose Wagner Theatre; two dancers will maintain positions as non-voting members of the Ballet West Board; and IATSE, AFM and members of the Ballet West's staff agreed to make concessions comparable to those requested of AGMA artists.

San Francisco Ballet

Ms. Heiber led Luke Willis, Quinn Wharton, Sofiane Sylve, Kimberly Braylock, Shannon Roberts, Steven Morse, Charlene Cohen, Elana Altman, Jeremy Rucker, James Sofranko and Gaetano Amico through the process of negotiating a contract with the San Francisco Ballet, coming to a successful resolution at midnight on July 28. Achievements for this three-year contract include increases in compensation and significant increases in vacation days and pension contributions. After having agreed to a one-year contract that included concessions in all of these categories for the 2009-10 contract year, these increases came as a relief to the artists of San Francisco Ballet.

Ballet San Jose

The negotiating process with Ballet San Jose was incred-

ibly challenging and arduous. After experiencing a dramatic change in their financial situation, Ballet San Jose sent out an email on July 8 to all of its dancers notifying them that the weekly guarantee would be reduced from 29 weeks to 25 and that there would be a 10% reduction in their wages.



Ballet San Jose shop

Ms. Heiber immediately met with Ballet San Jose's Artistic Director Dennis Nahat and Executive Director Stephanie Zeisel to try to arrive at an amicable resolution. The company felt strongly that if these concessions were not approved by AGMA they would be facing the strong possibility of having to file for bankruptcy. With the help of Federal Mediator Joel Schaefer, AGMA and Ballet



Ballet San Jose's Negotiating Committee, left to right: Maria Jacobs-Yu, Tiffany Glenn, Cynthia Sheppard, Kaleena Opdyke, Harriet McMeekin, Damir Emeric and Heather Aagard

San Jose were able to agree to a one-year contract that secured the dancers the previously promised wages and 27 weeks of work. In addition, Ms. Heiber was able to negotiate a long list of improvements to the contract that include a physical therapist, a physical maintenance allowance, and reduced eligibility requirements for severance payments. As members of the tireless negotiating committee, Kaleena Opdyke, Damir Emeric, Harriet McMeekin, Tiffany Glenn, Heather Aagard, Sarah Stein, Anton Pankevich, Cynthia Sheppard, Maria Jacobs-Yu, Ramon Moreno, Mallory Welsh and Francisco Preciado are to be thanked profusely for all of their time and effort on behalf of their fellow dancers. At the completion of these negotiations, Artistic Director Dennis Nahat demonstrated his respect for AGMA and the negotiating process by sending the following email to the members of the negotiating committee:

Congratulations, I can't express enough gratitude for all

your conviction, care and dedication to Ballet San Jose and to your union. I'm so proud of you. I told you that I was here for you—and that stands. So is our Chairman, John Fry, I know that. The world isn't on its axis just now, nor are the arts or indeed the City of San Jose. We all feel it. I know how difficult it is for us during this kind of painful process, but imagine those that don't even have a job to fight for. My heart goes out to them. I hope and pray that we can push to do more and create more so that our lives are not union negotiation bound, but bound for high aspirations toward the reason we are here. AGMA is a cushion to support us and we'll always strive to make that better. My hope is eternal and my love for you—the dancers—is steadfast. It will be better—Keep dancing...Love, Dennis



Members of the San Francisco Opera Chorus, directed by Chorus Director Ian Robertson, sang the National Anthem before a packed stadium of San Francisco Giants fans on Friday, September 17, 2010.

*One week later, on a beautiful moonlit night, a record-setting number of opera fans (34,000) attended the free presentation of San Francisco Opera's production of *Aida*, simulcast live from the stage of the War Memorial Opera House to the big screen at AT&T Park, the fifth annual "Opera at the Ballpark" event.*



San Francisco Symphony Negotiating Committee, left to right, seated: Brenda Bonhomme, Micah Epps, Maria Meyer and Terry Alvord; standing: Kevin Gibbs, Chung-Wai Soong, Melody Moore, Karen Carle, Nora Heiber

San Francisco Symphony

Of all of these negotiations, the San Francisco Symphony (SFS) Chorus negotiations proved to be the most challenging in terms of motivating management to engage in a mean-

ingful discussion to address the needs of our members. After months of sitting at the table making what seemed like infinitesimal progress, it took a serious strike threat to compel SFS to arrive at an agreement that was acceptable to AGMA. On September 8 with only hours to go before an opening night gala featuring Jesse Norman and the Grammy-winning members of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, AGMA successfully garnered the support of the San Francisco Symphony instrumentalists and the San Francisco Labor Council to help motivate the San Francisco Symphony management to negotiate. The effort led to a three-year contract that included increases to the Minimum Base Compensation, Plan B and broadcast fees; parity with the instrumentalists in most electronic media terms; and significant increases to all solo fees. The entire San Francisco Symphony Chorus shop vigorously rallied behind the negotiating committee, made up of Kevin Gibbs, Pamela Sebastian, Howard Baltazar, Jay Moorhead, Dianne Terp, Kaethe Henning, Terry Alvord, Chung-Wai Soong and Meryllyn Telle Vaughn. AGMA would also like to thank the members of the Players' Committee and Federal Mediator Joel Shaefer, who were instrumental in this process.

San Francisco Opera

Ms. Heiber is currently meeting with members of the San Francisco Opera negotiating committee in preparation for beginning their negotiations on October 18.

DOES AGMA HAVE YOUR CURRENT EMAIL ADDRESS?

In our continuing efforts to "Go Green," we will be communicating with you even more via email, but we can only do that if we have your updated address. Not sure if we have your email? Please check with the Membership Department at membership@musicalartists.org.

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 "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.



AGMA's staff and elected leaders met in New York City in July for the annual Leadership Conference. Front row, left to right: New York Area Dance Executive James Fayette, New York Board Member Karen Grahn, Pittsburgh Area Vice-Chair Carol Wolfe, President Jimmy Odom, 3rd Vice President Sara Stewart Schumann, New Orleans Area Chair Julie Condy; second row: 2nd Vice President Gregory Stapp, 5th Vice President LeRoy Lehr, New York Area Chair Tim Breese, Membership Department Supervisor Candace Itow, Recording Secretary Louis Perry, former President Linda Mays, Northwest Area Chair George Scott, Washington/Baltimore Area Chair Trisha Lepofsky and Philadelphia Area Chair Evelyn Santiago-Schulz; back, on right: Southern California Area Chair Jennifer Wallace, 1st Vice President John Coleman, National Dance Executive Nora Heiber, Work Rules and Contracts Chair David Schnell, Director of Operations Gerry Angel, National Director of Organizing and Training and Mid-Atlantic Representative Eleni Kallas, Texas/Oklahoma Area Chair Matt Woodbury, Washington/Baltimore Board Member J Austin Bitner, Western Counsel John Russum. Not shown: Treasurer Ray Menard and National Executive Director Alan S. Gordon. Unable to attend were Eastern Counsel Deborah Allton-Maher and 4th Vice President Colby Roberts.

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DONATION FORM**

Please send to: Susan Davison, c/o AGMA Relief Fund; 1430 Broadway, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10018;

(800) 543-2462; Fax: (212) 262-9088; Email: susan@musicalartists.org; *Make checks payable to the AGMA Relief Fund*

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Check this box if you do not want to be listed in AGMA publications

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

AGMA Relief Fund

The AGMA Relief Fund provides emergency assistance to AGMA members. To make a donation or for more information, contact Susan Davison at:

AGMA Relief Fund
1430 Broadway, 14th Floor
New York, NY 10018; or
Telephone: (800) 543-AGMA (2462)
Email: susan@musicalartists.org

If you are in need, call an intake worker at The Actors Fund, which administers the AGMA Relief Fund:

East Coast: (212) 221-7300 or (800) 221-7303
Midwest: (312) 372-0989 or (800) 221-7303
West Coast: (323) 933-9244 or (800) 221-7303

AGMA Retirement and Health

For assistance with AGMA Health Plan A, AGMA Pension Plan, and AGMA Retirement Plan, contact AGMA Retirement and Health at:

1430 Broadway, Suite 1203
New York, NY 10018
Telephone: (212) 765-3664
Fax: (212) 956-7599
Email: agmaretirement_health@yahoo.com
Website: www.agmaretirement-health.org

For assistance with AGMA Health Plan B, contact Administrative Services Only at (866) 263-1185; outside U.S. (516) 396-5543

Website: www.asonet.com

The Actors Fund — General Services

For more information, please contact:

East Coast: (212) 221-7300 or (800) 221-7303
Midwest: (312) 372-0989 or (800) 221-7303
West Coast: (323) 933-9244 or (800) 221-7303
Email: info@actorsfund.org; www.actorsfund.org

The Actors Fund — The Actors Work Program

For employment and training information and services, contact:

New York: (212) 354-5480;
Email: blevinso@actorsfund.org
Los Angeles: (323) 933-9244;
Email: ltrotter@actorsfund.org
Website: www.actorsfund.org/services/Sideline_Work_and_New_Careers/Actors_Work_Program/index.html

Artists' Health Insurance Resource Center — The Actors Fund

This resource offers comprehensive health insurance information on their website at: www.ahirc.org. E-mail them at: ahirc@actorsfund.org. If you need to speak with someone, call The Actors Fund in New York at: (212) 221-7300, ext. 265, or in Los Angeles at (323) 933-9244, ext. 32.

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TEIGIT administers health insurance plans for members of participating associations in the arts and entertainment industry. To find out if you are eligible, to enroll, or to have your questions answered:

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Website: www.teigit.com; E-mail: teigit@teigit.com

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Washington, DC 20005
Toll-free Union Plus Benefits Number: (800) 472-2005
Telephone: (202) 293-5330
Fax: (202) 293-5311
Website: www.unionplus.org

Conrad Cantzen Shoe Fund

Conrad Cantzen left money to create a fund to help out-of-work actors get shoes for auditions. One can get reimbursed for up to \$40.00 for shoes. Contact the Actors Fund for more information (see The Actors Fund website under Services & Programs, Social Services & Financial Assistance) or to access the actual page, http://www.actorsfund.org/services/Social_Services_and_Financial_Assistance/Conrad_Cantzen_Shoe_Fund

Career Transition for Dancers

The Career Transition for Dancers (CTFD) was established to give dancers the opportunity to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for new careers after dance. Nationwide and local assistance includes career counseling and reference materials, scholarship aid, peer support and mentoring programs.

Website: www.careertransition.org

CTFD office in New York

The Caroline & Theodore Newhouse Center for Dancers
165 West 46th Street, Suite 701
The Actors Equity Building
New York, NY 10036-2501
Phone: (212) 764-0172; Fax: (212) 764-0343
Email: info@careertransition.org

CTFD office in Los Angeles

Phone: (323) 549-6660; Fax: (323) 549-6810
Email: info-la@careertransition.org

CTFD office in Chicago

Phone: (312) 766-0234; Fax: (312) 455-8240
Email: info-chicago@careertransition.org

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