Exercise Your Rights In The Board of Governors Elections

It is important that all members of AGMA in good standing exercise their rights to vote for their representatives to the Board of Governors. It is the Board of Governors which, among other things, makes the policy decisions, approves all collective bargaining agreements and generally sets the direction of the union. While marking the ballot, one must keep a few important thoughts in mind.

For your vote to count, you must be a member in good standing of AGMA. This means that you must be fully paid up in your dues to February of 1994. If you are not a member in good standing, your ballot will be declared invalid and your vote will not count. Should you have paid your dues by deduction made by your employer, it is possible that your dues will not have reached AGMA in time for the ballot qualification deadline. Check with the membership department to verify your standing if you have any doubt. The deadline for this election qualification is May 23, 1994.

There are a specific number of seats to be filled in each area. Should you not know enough candidates to meet the number of available seats, it is acceptable for a ballot to contain fewer votes than the number of vacant seats. However, should you vote for more candidates than there are seats available, your ballot will be declared invalid.

There are a few areas which do not have enough candidates running to fill the available seats in that area. In this

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Regina Resnik Resigns Office; Gerald Otte Appointed President by AGMA Board

The AGMA National Board of Governors has named Gerald Otte to fill a vacancy in the office of AGMA President, serving until a new president is elected in the 1995 general membership election. The Constitution and Bylaws authorize the Board to fill officer and Board vacancies until the next scheduled election for the positions. The presidency had been open due to the resignation of Regina Resnik earlier this year.

Upon being named president at the March 14, 1994 Board meeting, Mr. Otte remarked:

"I hope to be in the forefront of the leadership of this Union, to make it as strong as it can be, to be responsive to its membership, and to carry it into the next century."

Gerald Otte toured nationally and internationally as a soloist and leading dancer with the Nikolais Dance Theatre, 1969-1985. He teaches and choreographs in the United States and Europe. In 1992, he was selected as an Erasmus Professor for the European Community. In New York, Otte is the director of OTTECO, a dance company and teaches at Hunter College of the City University of New York.

Mr. Otte's other AGMA positions include: AGMA Board of Governors; Computer Committee; Chair, Committee for Policy Reform; Chair, Policy and Administration Committee; Original delegate from the Nikolais Dance Theatre.

At the January 3, 1994 Board meeting, Ms. Resnik submitted her letter of resignation. The Board immediately created a special committee on the

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Greetings from the National Executive Secretary

Dear AGMA Colleagues,

Contemplating our acronym, I wish it would guarantee to all of our members in all of your enterprises: Accolades, Glamour, Money, and Apotheosis. We’re working on that-especially apotheosis. In the meantime, together with your artistic endeavors, I ask you to peruse this edition of the newsletter carefully. It contains information about AGMA leaders and invites you to select as your representatives the artists who will govern and shape Union policies in your names with the aid of your dues. Inform yourselves about the candidates and exercise your franchise. Make certain that your dues are current so that your ballot will count. Then mark your ballot and mail it back. VOTE!

Study the articles. You will observe that the AGMAzine does not exclude controversy any more than the Union is homogeneous. Union entails unity but does not necessitate unanimity. AGMA has been changing in its objectives and through its efforts to reach and include more of the members in planning and policy-making. We are teleconferencing nationwide, encouraging geographically diverse input. We are organizing additional companies. Renovations are taking place at our headquarters. Growth and reformation are time-consuming and painful. Your dedicated and able Board of Governors, area executive committees, delegates and representatives can provide some insight into the visions and processes which are guiding us. I welcome your inquiries and have tried to answer personally all of our members’ letters which I receive. If my travels have not taken me to your area, or you have not journeyed to New York, I look forward to meeting you.

Thank you for your involvement. We need your participation.

Yours in unity,

Louise Gilmore

A Message from the President

What a way to introduce myself. When you last read AGMAzine, I was your First Vice-President. Since the resignation of Regina Resnik, the Board of Governors has chosen me to fill the office of the President until the regularly scheduled officer elections in 1995.

Now it’s election time 1994. Who do you want to represent you on the National Board of Governors? As you know through AGMAzine, your local newsletters, local officers, and in speaking with your sister and brother artists, our Union is involved in a serious self-examination of its responsibilities and goals.

How can we provide the best representation and greatest benefit for our diverse membership? It all starts with communication, first with each other, then to your local delegates and officers, to the National office, and right back to you. Communication is the foundation for a responsive leadership. Talk to your candidates. Make your choices. Together we can lead the performing arts into a new century.

Sincerely yours,

Gerald Otte
Continued from page 1 instance, the extra seats will be filled by write-in votes. Should you be interested in voting for someone as a write-in candidate, it is important that you first discuss your desire to vote for them with that person. Otherwise, that person may not be available to serve on the Board during their three year term, limiting your representation to the Board.

In any event, exercise your right given to you by the Constitution of AGMA. Use the primary method of making your voice heard by the Officers and members of the Board of AGMA. VOTE!

* indicates incumbent.

New York Area

Solo Singers
(11 Vacancies)

Russel Christopher
AGMA member since 1958. Former Board member. Previous service, Met negotiating committee for 3 contract periods, Committee IV. Previous and current service, Nominating Committee. “During a Metropolitan Opera career which spanned 28 years, I previously served on the AGMA Board for six years. After a three year hiatus, I again wish to devote my time and efforts to benefit and aid the future of AGMA and its membership. With funding for the arts being diminished, we must work harder!”

John Russell
Member 14 years. Currently with Metropolitan Opera, also appeared with the Goldovsky Opera, Tri-Cities Opera, Boston Symphony. “Our main concern should be the welfare of all members—working or not. We need to support the AGMA Relief Fund, strive for better insurance coverage for everyone, and improve the lines of communication between the union and the membership. Let’s bring the union to its members.”

Dulce Reyes
Soloist, New York City Opera, including “Live from Lincoln Center” telecast, Minnesota, Palm Beach, Sarasota Opera, Carnegie Hall, Weill Recital Hall, debuts in Switzerland and Russia (national telecast), upcoming debut in Germany. “AGMA has become, for solo singers, a useless, expensive, necessary evil. Our interests have been shamefully neglected. We provide the majority of income, yet receive minimum representation. Direct involvement is the key to changing this reprehensible situation and making the union work for us. I will fight for the rights of solo singers by increasing our active representation and making our needs a priority.”

Don Yule
AGMA member 33 years. Past President and First Vice President of Board of Governors. Past service, Nominating Committee, New York City and Central City Opera Negotiating Committees. Current service, New York City Opera Negotiating Committee, Work Rules Committee, Search Committee, Policy Committee. Past delegate, New York City, Central City, Santa Fe Opera Companies. “Our profession—and our union—is being transformed by current socio-economic conditions. I want to do my part to assure that this is a change for the better.”

Joseph Sophier
AGMA member since 1958. Has performed in over 400 U.S. cities. Orchestral dates include Boston, New York, Pittsburgh, Washington, New Orleans, Vancouver, Oklahoma and Mexico City Symphonies, plus Milan, Italy concert and recording by Angelicum Records. Opera dates include Boston, New England, Metropolitan Opera Studio, Mexico City, Royal Shakespeare Theatre and ABC-TV. “My objective is to focus my combined musical and business experiences on increasing the financial position of AGMA members.”

Luigi Vellucci
AGMA member 48 years. Current Board member. Past service, Auditing Classification and Soloists Committees. Current AGMA delegate, Four A’s, member Small Opera Companies Committee. Past delegate, NYC Opera and NBC On Tour. Now teaching in New York and Rutherford, N.J. “I am a Life Member and grateful that AGMA members considered me worthy of serving them in the past. If re-elected, I’ll continue to work for those principles which have made AGMA outstanding as a member-oriented, democratic union.”

William Fleck
AGMA member 34 years. 100+ roles in this country, Mexico, Australia and Canada. 20 year member of Chautauqua Opera Association, 8 years at the Metropolitan Opera. “I believe in the motto of AGMA, and I intend to involve myself more actively toward merger with Actors’ Equity”

Choristers
(10 Vacancies)

Lee Bellaver
AGMA member 25 years. Current Board member. Previous service, Committee IV, Search Committee. Current service, Administration and Policy Committee. Former delegate, New York City Opera. “This is an exciting period for AGMA, and I would like to continue on the Board of Governors to be a part of the forward movement.”
Megan Friar
Current service, Concert Singers Committee. Previous service, Nominating Committee. Connecticut, Connecticut Grand and Fort Lauderdale Operas. Apprentice with Des Moines Metro Opera. Regular performer with Musica Sacra, Ascension Music and New York Choral Artists. Appearances on Garrison Keillor Radio Show with Gregg Smith Singers, and on "The Guiding Light". Recordings for RCA, MusicMasters Classics, Newport Classics, Delos Records. "I am a recent member of AGMA, and feel that more attention should be given to the needs of Concert Singers. We, as a group, need to be more represented and have more of a voice in AGMA's activities."

Lora Kane
Current Board member. Past service Finance Committee, Search Committee for new National Executive Secretary, Metropolitan Opera Chorus Negotiating Committee, Electronic Committee. Seventeen years with Metropolitan Opera Chorus. "These are exciting times at AGMA: a new National Executive Secretary, plans for achieving financial stability, a refining of our office procedures. We must work diligently on these changes, but always continue to make our main concern—as a professional artists union—the wants and needs of our membership. I would like to continue helping to make progress in both of these directions."

Lila Herbert
AGMA member since 1962. Current Board member. Previous service, Chorus Committee; delegate, New York City Opera. Current and previous service, Membership Committee. "AGMA must be the force behind any member to protect, guide and enhance contracts, to make singing a liveable career. The image of the union must be improved so that smaller companies will join. There should be seminars for the transition period that singers need when the career ends."

Suzanne Der Derian
AGMA member over 28 years. Current Board member. Past service, Co-chairman Metropolitan Opera Chorus Negotiating Committee. Past, current service, Met Chorus Negotiating Committee, Electronic Committee, Grievance Committee, Committee I. Past delegate, Metropolitan Opera Ladies Chorus. Met Chorister in 25th season. Performed with The Concert Choir, Schola Cantorum, other ensembles. Soloist, many concert, oratorio groups in Midwest and on East Coast; toured with Goldovsky Opera. "If elected, I will do my best to represent all members of AGMA."

Robert Kuehn
AGMA member for many years as soloist and chorister. Current service, Concert Singers Committee. "The principles on which AGMA was founded are as important today as at any time in its history, and I welcome the opportunity to maintain and strengthen them in whatever capacity possible."

Ben Foster
AGMA member since 1951. Current Board member. Past service, Chorus Committee, AGMA/Equity Merger Committee, Concert Choristers. Current service, AGMA Rep. to UPA, Chorus Committee. Past delegate, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. Former Secretary/AFTRA Credit Committee, former Chairman AEA Credit Committee. Member, AEA, AFTRA, SAG. "AGMA is finally able to truly extend its representation to all members, thanks in great part to the Board of Governors. As a member of the Board, I want to help continue this up and outward movement to the membership."

Mary Meyers
AGMA member 15 years. Current Board member. Currently Administration and Policy Committee. Previous Policy Reform, Committee IV (Finance), Administration and Policy Committees, Metropolitan Opera Chorus Contract Negotiating Committee. Nine years Metropolitan Opera Chorus. "My first term on the Board has been an active and rewarding one. The business of reform requires vast amounts of time and energy, but the results are worth it. AGMA has come a long way in becoming more responsive to its members. But this is not enough. For our union to survive, we must have a more efficient and fiscally responsible way of doing business. I am prepared to continue working for the members to achieve those goals."

Bernard Fischer
AGMA member 36 years. Current Board member. Past service, Chorus Committee. Past delegate, New York City Opera. Extra chorister, Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera. Free-lance opera and concert appearances. "I can't sit by and watch injustice or inequality prevail. I will continue to fight for the singer even at the risk of my own position."

Alan L. Sokoloff
AGMA member over 38 years. Current Board member. Past service, Concert Singers Committee, Committee IV. Member, AFTRA, SAG. Has performed in free-lance concert field. "During my years on the Board, I have participated in concert chorus negotiations. Proper groundwork has been established to insure a workable climate with our employers. I should like to continue to devote my energy in that direction."

Jonathan Guss
Past Delegate, NYC Opera National Company. Current Chair, NYCO Regular Chorus Negotiating Committee. "In my six years as a Board member, I have never witnessed as much zeal for reform and re-organization as I have in recent months. Although some have found this new direction a difficult adjustment, the majority of the current Board is optimistic that these changes will make AGMA more responsive to the needs of the membership. As AGMA and the NYCO Opera try to forge a new relationship, I hope to continue to communicate effectively to the Board the problems faced by the NYCO AGMA shop."
**Linda Mays**  
Current Board member. Currently serving on Personnel and Policy and Administration Committees. "During my first term, I have served on committees dealing with policy reform, finance, personnel and our president's resignation. I am happy to report that we now have a budget, Board contact with our auditors, and many plans in the works to use your dues money more responsibly and to keep you better informed in the future. There are many hard issues yet to tackle, but I feel that our efforts will strengthen our union. My attendance record is excellent and I would be honored to have the opportunity of completing some of the crucial 'works in progress'".

**Kenneth Young**  
AGMA member 14 years. Former Board member. Past service, Policy Reform Committee, Committee IV, Search Committee, Metropolitan Opera Chorus delegate. "The need for a strong union ready to support its membership has never been greater. AGMA has made the commitment to reform itself so as to better meet the current and future needs of its membership. Real change has already happened if elected to serve again, I will continue '...to promulgate and carry into effect such policies as will secure united action of all members for the common good.' (AGMA agreement)"

**Deborah Saverance**  
AGMA member 21 years. "As a first time candidate, I pledge with my fullest capabilities to listen to you, attend meetings and represent you with honesty, fairness and intelligence."  

**Dancers (11 Vacancies)**

**Griff Braun**  
AGMA member 5 years. Previous service, Dallas Ballet Dancers Committee. "Swedish Ballet, Feld Ballets-NY, American Ballet Theatre."

**Michael Byars**  
AGMA member since 1984. Current Board member. Previous service, Chair - Search Committee, Secretary - Committee for Policy Reform, Committee IV, Ad Hoc Grievance Committee, Chair - Dancers Committee, New York City Ballet. Current service, Chair - Work Rules and Contracts Committee. "I am honored to have served AGMA during the recent period of reform. The next three years will see the realization and growth of many of the changes discussed by an invigorated local and national representation. As Chair of the new Work Rules and Contracts Committee, I look forward to continuing my participation in this vital process."  

**Frank M. Dellapolla**  
AGMA member since 1988. Currently dancing for the Metropolitan Opera. Performs as guest artist for companies across the U.S. and has toured worldwide. Still acting in musicals and drama. "Serving on the AGMA Board these past 3 years has been challenging and exciting. Much good has been done for the benefit of performing artists; much more will be done. Good, positive solutions can always be found for both artists and management. I hope to continue serving on the Board and working toward the betterment of all."  

**Stephanie Godino**  

**Paul Sackett**  
AGMA member 25 years. Current Board member. Previous service, Committee IV, Search Committee, Current service, Policy and Administration Committee, Personnel Committee. Dancer with NYC Ballet 18 years, on-going theatrical involvement, BA in Arts, MBA in Finance, Phi Kappa Phi, Beta Gamma Sigma, published author and dealer in Fine Arts. "It is rewarding to see our membership and Board more actively involved in AGMA's future. I look forward to serving another term."

**Stas Kniec**  
AGMA Member since 1982. Dance affiliations: Boston Ballet, Nureyev's Don Quixote World Tour, Metropolitan Opera. Member, AEA, SAG. "Unions were formed to promote harmony and protect a common interest. The rights of all union members – dancers, singers, and directors alike, must continue to be monitored and improved in order for AGMA to be an effective and powerful force. With a diverse performing background, and an understanding of other unions, I hope to offer a well-informed voice and arouse an interest in the workings of AGMA."

**Chicago Area**

**Solo Singers**

**Candace How**  
AGMA member over 18 years. Current Board member. Past service, Negotiating Committee, New York City Opera. "I believe personal involvement is the key to a strong union."

**Tom Sillitti**  
AGMA member since 1978. Current Board member. Previous service, Chicago Lyric Opera Bylaws Committee. Current Service, Lyric Opera Negotiating Committee, Work Rules and Contracts Committee. "As a member of the Lyric Opera Negotiating Committee, I have seen how important it is to support one another. It has been shocking to learn how far a company will go to withhold appropriate wages, benefits and working conditions from AGMA members. We have tried desperately to close the financial gap that exists between orchestra musicians and members of AGMA. In order to accomplish our goals, we will need the support of every member, especially our soloists."
Choristers (5 Vacancies)

- Michael Cook
  AGMA member 14 years. Current Board member. Current and previous service, Chicago Executive Board; delegate, Chicago Symphony Chorus; Committee for Contract Negotiations since 1984. Previous service, Tenor Section representative. "Educator, organist, pianist and vocalist throughout the Chicago area. Since my first year in the Symphony Chorus, I have been actively involved with AGMA, and I will continue to represent our rights and benefits."

- Richard A. Livingston
  AGMA member 22 years. Current Board member. Previous service, Negotiating Committee, Chicago Symphony Chorus (five times). Current service, Member and Member Relations, Chicago Area Executive Committee. "Delegate, Chicago Symphony Chorus. "Now that meetings are teleconferenced and my schedule enables me to attend regularly, I'd like very much to continue to serve on the AGMA Board of Governors. The recent reorganization of the Board offers increased potential for openness of communication, financial accountability, and representation of the membership nationwide. If re-elected, I'll work for the fulfillment of these important possibilities."

James Odom
AGMA member 14 years. Previous service, Dallas Opera Chorus Negotiating Committee. Current service, Chicago Area Nominating Committee. "Former delegate, Dallas Opera. "It has been my goal to strengthen AGMA by encouraging membership participation and solidarity. This means nationwide participation in national matters as well as individual participation at the local level. We are a small union, and we cannot 'let someone else do it.' We must also, as choristers, impress upon management the vital part we play in their companies and remind them that we should be valued no less than any other part of their organizations."

Theresa M. Ozers
AGMA member since 1986. Over 40 years as vocal/choral musician, Chicago Symphony Chorus, Grant Park Festival Chorus. "I am a diligent advocate for the vocal/choral musician. I will not hesitate to confront various entities within the music industry to attempt to improve the level of recognition and appreciation deserved by these musicians. I would also like to see and encourage our membership to become more vocal when they witness misuse or abuse of their colleagues. Very often, approaching the source in a fair and honest way will open up a meaningful dialogue and bring about noticeable changes."

Maggie Crenlon
AGMA member since 1990. Previous service, Michigan Opera Theatre contract negotiating teams (1990, 1993), Current and previous service, Michigan Opera Theatre delegate. "The Midwest region that exists outside of Chicago is home to a strong, supportive AGMA membership, and is fully deserving of a voice on the Board of Governors. My involvement as both negotiating team member and as delegate for Michigan Opera Theatre has well prepared me to represent this constituency. We need this representation in order to continue our growth in membership!"

Bryan Miller
AGMA member since 1974. Current Board member. Previous service, AGMA Relief Fund Benefit Raffle Committee (top ticket seller 2 years); Co-Chair, Chicago Lyric Opera Chorus Bylaws Committee. "Previous and current service, Lyric Opera Negotiating and Executive Committees, Chicago Area Executive Board. "We have made strides in making AGMA accessible and responsible to all of its members. We must continue making progress on this and other fronts, particularly in view of the challenges faced by the performing arts today."

Catherine Vartanian Duke
(no photo available at press time)
AGMA member 15 years. Alto representative of the Chicago Symphony Chorus for over 6 years. Very active role in negotiating last 2 contracts with the orchestral association. "I consider myself an advocate of all members of the CSC with the responsibility of helping to construct and negotiate fair contracts and then stay vigilant to insure the chorus of all rights and benefits our contract has to offer."

Dancers (1 Vacancy)

- Sara Stewart
  AGMA member since 1990. Current service, Lyric Opera of Chicago Negotiating Committee, Dancers' Representative, Delegate. Performed with Chicago Lyric Opera Ballet, Ruth Page Nutcracker Production, Boissel Classical Ballet, Japan International Ballet & Modern Dance Competition. "Over the past year, I have become interested in the union, and its efforts to strengthen the artist's working situation. I will continue to strive toward better working conditions and support my fellow dancers. I would welcome the opportunity to serve on the Board of Governors."

Samuel F. Bennett
(no photo available at press time)
AGMA member 8 years. Previous service, Negotiating Committee, Chicago City Ballet. Previous and current service, Negotiating Committee, Ballet Chicago. Delegate, Ballet Chicago, Chicago City Ballet. "I find that a great many members do not realize that they themselves are AGMA; that AGMA is not a distant, formless entity that should take care of them. It is essential for the health of the Guild to foster a sense of community and responsibility. As a member of the Board of Governors, I would work to get more members actively involved."

Washington/Baltimore Area

Choristers (3 Vacancies)

- Wilson Nichols
  AGMA member 14 years. Current Board member. Past service, Local Executive Committee. Past, present service, Washington Opera Negotiating Committee. Past delegate, Washington Opera, Kennedy Center Productions, Houston Opera, Royal Ballet. "We are undergoing exciting changes in AGMA, led by our new Executive Secretary, Louise Gilmore. With the advent of teleconferencing, which allows all areas to be actively involved in our Board meetings for the first time, members from throughout the country finally have input into the daily business of our union. I urge all members to become actively involved. Your union needs you!"
**Philadelphia Area**

**Choristers**

(1 Vacancy)

- Judith Russo
  AGMA member 14 years. Past service, Executive Committee, Secretary-Treasurer, Opera Company of Philadelphia and Philadelphia Singers Negotiating Committees.
  Current Chairperson, Executive Committee, Negotiating Committee for Opera Company of Philadelphia. Past and current delegate, Opera Company of Philadelphia and Philadelphia Singers. “I’ve dedicated a significant amount of time to representing membership in the Philadelphia area. I’ve tried to educate members about their rights and responsibilities under a union contract. I continue to be interested in establishing and maintaining good communication between management and membership, and in keeping membership informed about current issues that affect their professional life.”

**Southern California Area**

**Solo Singers**

(1 Vacancy)

- Anne Marie Biggs
  “I have seen AGMA address itself to the membership through yet another outlet: the current Teleconferences. I will continue to attend these and encourage members to do the same.”

**New England Area**

**Dancers**

(1 Vacancy)

- David Porter
  AGMA member 5 years. Current Board member. Delegate, Boston Ballet. “I have been an AGMA member for five years. In that time, I have held a seat on the Board of Governors, negotiated several contracts, served as Dancer Representative, founded the Re: Porter, a newsletter for dancers, and am regarded as Master Thespian by my peers.”

**Choristers**

(4 Vacancies)

- Andrew K. Black
  AGMA member over 33 years. Current Board member. Previous service, assisted in writing of Basic Touring Agreement - Norman Luboff Choir, Los Angeles Master Chorale Singers Committee, LAMC Contract Negotiating Committee. Delegate, Norman Luboff Choir, Los Angeles Camarata, Gregg Smith Singers. Currently performing with the Los Angeles Master Chorale and LA Music Center Opera. Inventor of famous “black choral folder”. “I would like to continue my duties on the Board, and I am particularly interested in working out ways our union can make it possible for classical choirs to record.”

**Pittsburgh Area**

**Dancers**

(1 Vacancy)

- Brian Bloomquist
  AGMA member 16 years. Current service, Co-Chair of Pittsburgh Executive Committee; delegate, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre. “As a member of the Board of Governors, I will continue the efforts to create a stronger, more unified union, and obtain the best possible contracts for its members.”

- Paul Hinshaw
  AGMA member 38 years. Current Board member. Member, Local Executive Committee 18 years. Past delegate, Roger Wagner Chorale. “In this era of political conservatism it is necessary to reaffirm the principles of AGMA unionism among singers and dancers of this community; let them know that the benefits that have been obtained and taken for granted by many are always in jeopardy without solid union membership support. To this purpose I will dedicate myself if elected.”

- Kenneth Knight
  AGMA member 23 years. Current Board member, Southern California Local Executive Committee. Past service, Southern California Local Executive Committee (Past President), Los Angeles Master Chorale Singers Committee. Delegate, LA Master Chorale, I Cantori. “This is an exciting time to be involved in AGMA. We have new national leadership, and participation by members from outside New York has increased dramatically. Do your part—get involved and vote!”

- Sally Etcheto
  AGMA member since 1968. Current Board member. Past service, AGMA Contract Negotiating Committee for Los Angeles Master Chorale. Currently serving on AGMA Local Executive Committee, Singers’ Committee LAMC, Singers’ Rep to LAMC Board of Directors Program Committee. Has sung with LA Music Center Opera Chorus, LA Master Chorale. Member AEA, MM, DMA degrees in vocal performance, USC. Currently Assistant Professor of Music, CSU Dominguez Hills. “Our survival as professional performing artists depends upon working successfully with management to interest and educate current and new audiences. AGMA should constantly promote cooperation and respect.”
Scott Blois
Current and previous service, Los Angeles Master Chorale Singers Committee. LAMC delegate. "Taking part in the current contract negotiation between AGMA and the LAMC has given me a better understanding of, and appreciation for, the kind of constant work that has to be done to maintain any improvement in working conditions that our union has gained for us. Since I've enjoyed the fruits of others for the past four years, I feel it's now time for me to do some of the work."

Janet Goggins
AGMA member over 10 years. Negotiating Committee for San Diego Opera Chorus. Delegate, San Diego Opera. "As a union chorister, I've enjoyed the benefits of AGMA membership. Now, I want to work toward strengthening the National organization to be more effective and more responsive to all its members. My goals are: to provide more representation from the Southern California area; to be an active link from AGMA membership to National and to widen the scope of representation throughout the performing arts community. Your input to AGMA is important—please vote and make your voice heard."

San Francisco Area
Choristers
(4 Vacancies)

Kenneth Rafanan
AGMA member since 1976. Current Board member. Previous service, San Francisco Local Executive Committee. Current service, Chair - San Francisco Local Executive Committee; delegate, San Francisco Opera. "I thank the San Francisco Region for the nomination, and have enjoyed serving a term on the National Board. Currently, AGMA is undergoing a restructurings which allows for greater regional participation. I hope to be able to contribute in this exciting transitional phase, which hopefully will result in a stronger union."

Northwest Area
Choristers
(1 Vacancy)

Raoul Bellis-Squires
AGMA member 14 years. Current Board member. Previous and current service, Chorus Executive Committee; delegate, Portland Opera. Previous service, Contract Negotiating Committee. Current service, Membership Committee. "As a Board delegate for the past 5 years, I have seen many opportunities for positive growth and communication within AGMA become lost in an inefficient mix of apathy and isolated deliberations. Recent changes have given us the chance to learn from past experience and rise to the challenge. Please join with all artists of AGMA as we learn new skills in networking, making efficient decisions, and communicating AGMA's new direction to all areas."

Burman Timberlake
Chairman, AGMA negotiating teams for ten contracts. Former delegate, LA Music Center Opera Chorus (joined 1985) and LA Master Chorale (joined 1972). AGMA member since 1973 (1992, Life Member). Current Board member. Southern California Executive Committee, 1978 (Chair, 1989-91); National Board, 1980. "AGMA must continue to cut expenses and provide better services to members at lower cost. I have contributed hundreds of uncompensated hours annually to save AGMA's limited funds. However, we must also increase participation in AGMA's affairs by members, especially those outside of New York."

Donna Turchi
(No photo or bio available at press time)

AGMA Election 1994 for the Board of Governors

Dancers
(1 Vacancy)

Evelyn Cisneros
(No photo or bio available at press time)
Resignation, continued from page 1

As a result of the committee’s findings and recommendations, the Board, at its next meeting, asked Ms. Resnik to reconsider her resignation and continue in office. It also directed the new AGMA Board committees to make recommendations to the Board regarding this vacancy. The committee recommended that the Board name someone to complete the presidential term. This is the only method for filling an officer vacancy authorized by the AGMA Constitution and Bylaws.

Thus, on February 14th, the Board scheduled March 14th as the date on which the office of President would be filled, and directed that special notices be sent to all Board members. As a result, eight regional areas participated with the New York Board members via teleconference. The total present plus proxies was 97 Board members!

The loss of a distinguished volunteer of many years experience is always regrettable. The Board believes that the steps it has taken will strengthen AGMA’s operations and prevent a recurrence of such a misfortune. The dialogue in meetings and correspondence during the resolution of this matter were often spirited; however, an attitude of cooperation and a reassertion of unity have emerged among Board members.

Following is the text of Regina Resnik’s letter of resignation, after which appears a fact sheet of the events surrounding the resignation, as compiled by the Board.

March 18, 1994

TO ALL AGMA MEMBERS:

It is with profound regret that I am obliged to announce my resignation as President of the American Guild of Musical Artists.

When I accepted the nomination and was elected unopposed, I felt honored to undertake the responsibilities as chief officer of this union. I also felt that my election was the culmination of my experience with AGMA for fifty years as a member, Board member and Vice President previously to becoming President.

I also felt deeply grateful to have received AGMA’s highest honor, the Lawrence Tibbett Lifetime Achievement Award, on an evening which benefitted the AGMA Relief Fund. My fervent desire was to repay AGMA’s membership by being their voice to present the problems facing our classical artists in these difficult years. Aside from employment and working conditions, the large issues of government in the arts, health coverage and possible full union representation for our sister performance unions were my agenda. I felt also that I needed to get closer to the membership to begin seminars for younger artists who needed advice and older artists in transition to other careers, and to set a tone that would put the President directly in touch with the area membership, by being visible and audible — to go back to the original tradition that a well known, experienced artist be the head of AGMA. My own fifty year experience as singer, stage director and producer, nationally and internationally, has given me a large overview of how we operate as contrasted to other unions and our counterparts abroad.

Early in October, when the new Executive Secretary and the new Board met in our first encounters, I felt that we might well be able to exchange ideas in a highly professional way, and that I could indeed be an active officer of AGMA. But soon after, it became evident that very stringent and aggressive forces on the Board were about to follow their own internal political agenda. This group set goals to “reform and reorganize” AGMA, allowing the Executive Secretary to summarily dismiss trusted employees; allowing important matters to be tabled into committees to appear or not appear again at ensuing Board meetings; Robert’s Rules and parliamentary procedures became a primary objective of study, while the pressing issues that could have been undertaken by the President and many noted members who volunteered from the outset to be part of my program — were set aside. In the following weeks the Board became increasingly fractured, and many of us on the Board felt there were questions to be answered about these authoritarian procedures and the use of questionable proxies. As a result of some of these moves, AGMA lost two highly competent and experienced staff members. My own agenda was set aside completely by this group and my purposes tabled. Many of our most de-voted long time Board members, whose time for AGMA can never be repaid, are resigning and not running for re-election. They include some of our most noted names.

There is no way for me not to include the fact that on March 14, 1994, the ultimate deception of the membership took place. The Board decided to undertake that step of electing the successor to me as President without accepting the responsibility the right to know that I have indeed resigned and my reasons for doing so. In the meeting of March 14 as well, a motion to send a special newsletter to that effect before a new President was named and elected by the Board was voted down.

Surely one of my greatest regrets is the fact that the President of AGMA is by tradition also the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the AGMA Relief Fund. That fact automatically precludes my working for the Relief Fund in an official capacity. That work was among the most important on my agenda. I have assured the Relief Fund that as Regina Resnik I will continue to support them in every way possible in the future. To those members of the Board who have continually supported my position throughout these difficult months, my very special and affectionate thanks.

To the general membership, my most fervent wishes that AGMA will once again become the harmonious and democratic institution that it has been over these many years, and that it will represent your needs through the Board members you will elect carefully to support your views.

Very sincerely yours,
Regina Resnik

American Guild of Musical Artists

National Board of Governors Fact Sheet on the Presidential Transition, 1993-1994

April 1994

At the direction of the AGMA National Board of Governors, the Special Committee on the Presidency and the Membership Committee provide the following information on the circumstances surrounding the resignation of Regina Resnik as President of AGMA.

Continued on next page
BACKGROUND

AGMA Governing Authority

AGMA’s Constitution (Article V, Section 1) specifically assigns “the general management, direction and control of the affairs, funds and properties of the Guild” to the National Board of Governors (the Board). The AGMA President and officers have no legal power to contravene the decisions of the Board.

Reform of AGMA Structure and Operations

In recent years the Board has increasingly recognized the need for improvements in the union’s governance and operations. In 1992 it undertook three major initiatives. It created a search committee to recommend a new National Executive Secretary. Board members around the country began to attend Board meetings via teleconferencing. Under the direction of then President Nedda Casel, it created the Special Committee on Policy Reform to restructure AGMA. This group began a major overhaul of the Board’s committees. The new structure was approved by the Board July 19, 1993.

Definition of Officer, Board and Staff Authority

Up to this point the Board had not formally specified the duties, responsibilities and authority of officers, Board members, and staff. These matters were primarily handled via informal conversations with past officers and staff, without Board approval.

THE PRESIDENCY OF REGINA RESNIK

Major AGMA Changes, Fall 1993

In the fall of 1993 four major events occurred almost simultaneously: the arrival in New York of President Resnik to assume the duties of office; the engagement of a new National Executive Secretary to head the staff office; the widespread use of teleconferencing of Board meetings so as to involve on a regular basis Board members around the country, whose participation infused the Board with new views and energy; and the opportunity of the Board to implement the newly adopted committee structure. This combination of circumstances put an unprecedented strain on the Board, officers, and staff. Despite two Board resolutions so directing, Ms. Resnik did not begin the process for naming members to the new committees, a duty of the President. Thus with no one on the committees, it was impossible to implement any agenda.

AGMA Financial Constraints, Fall 1993

As a result of the economy’s effect on the arts and members’ incomes, it became apparent during the summer of 1993 that AGMA’s revenue projections would not be realized. At the recommendation of the Treasurer, the Board demanded and got a detailed budget, the first in a decade. Presented with this information, the Board and the new National Executive Secretary adopted an austerity program, constraining all but the most essential spending.

Presidential Accommodation

In a December 20, 1993 letter to the Board, Ms. Resnik delineated a number of facilities, services, and authorizations that she felt were necessary for her to discharge the office of President. All of these requests were met before the Board approved her resignation on January 3, 1994, with one exception, namely, the authority to spend AGMA funds without Board approval.

Conduct of Board Meetings

Article XII of the By laws requires that Board meetings be conducted according to Robert’s Rules of Order, as is done in most organizations in the United States as a way to ensure a fair, democratic process. Moreover, AGMA’s legal counsel advised the Board that it would be at legal risk if it did not do so. In a December 20, 1993 letter to the Board, Ms. Resnik declared that she would not abide by this requirement: “I do not regard mastery of Robert’s Rules to be the reason for which I was elected President, and I do not intend to be drowned in the miasma of these procedures in the Chair.”

Legal Counsel to the Board

At recent meetings the Board’s legal counsel advised the Board that on occasion it was essential to go into executive session when it was discussing personnel matters of the AGMA staff, to minimize the potential for litigation against the Union. Counsel also advised on and approved the Board’s handling of a staff termination, proxy policies, and the appointment of a new President of the Union.

Special Committee on the Presidency

Immediately upon receipt of Ms. Resnik’s resignation, the Board created an ad hoc committee on the presidency to review events leading up to this unfortunate situation and make recommendations to the Board in two weeks. Board members from New York and five other regions served on this committee. The group took a long-range view to fix systemic problems and serve AGMA far into the future. Its recommendations:

1. Ask Ms. Resnik to reconsider her resignation.
2. Refer several matters to committees for priority action:
   - Develop position descriptions for all officers, Board members, and the National Executive Secretary.
   - Review the Bylaws as they relate to succession, and make recommendations so that AGMA is in compliance with the Bylaws.
   - Review and develop recommendations on the matter of unopposed Officer candidates.
   - Develop a recommendation for the appointment of a Parliamentarian for Board meetings.
   - Develop explicit reimbursement policies for all travel and other expenses paid for by AGMA.
   - Develop a recommendation for a line item for officer and staff travel in the budget.
   - Develop an Advisory Board as authorized under Article V, Section 7 of the Constitution, as an alternative vehicle of service for distinguished members unable to accept the obligations of elective office.

The Board adopted these recommendations and sent a letter to Ms. Resnik asking her to withdraw her resignation. She declined to do so in a February 13, 1994 letter to the Board. The committee has already implemented some of these proposals, and are working on the rest.

SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

Appointment of a New AGMA President

The AGMA Constitution (Article V, Section 6) and the By laws (Article II, Section 3) provide only one way to...
fill a vacancy of an officer or Board member: by appointment of the Board until the next regular election for that position.

Ms. Resnik's Correspondence to Opera Companies

More than a month after her resignation Ms. Resnik wrote to several AGMA signatory companies on AGMA letterhead, casting grave aspersions on the union's ethics and the propriety of its operations. Members around the country have expressed dismay and alarm, as they feel these communiques will seriously jeopardize AGMA's negotiating position in upcoming contract talks and other discussions with these organizations.

Board Efforts on the Presidential Transition

In the past six months the volunteers on the Board have spent thousands of hours in meetings of the Board and committees, in phone calls and correspondence, trying to resolve this situation in a manner that is fair to Ms. Resnik and the union. The Board has also expended enormous amounts of physical and emotional energy in the process. This focus has impaired the Board's ability to perform its duties in a timely fashion. The Board feels that its actions will serve the long-term interests of the union and the members it serves.

Board Communications and Effectiveness

One of the positive outcomes of this process is that communications, understanding and participation among Board members have improved dramatically. The interest in these events, coupled with the teleconferencing and additional committee assignments, have fostered the development of relationships among Board members to a level never achieved before in AGMA's history. Members across the nation now routinely call one another to exchange ideas and concerns. The Board is measurably more democratic and is striving to reach consensus on issues that will best serve the members of AGMA.

Report on Dance
Alexander J. Dubé Administrator for Dance

AGMA is pleased and proud to have negotiated successful improvements in all of our collective bargaining agreements, despite cutbacks in grants, tax reform and the current economic climate that exists nationwide.

Let us not forget that without the efforts and dedication of each company's board of directors/trustees, whose primary purpose is to raise enough money for a company to fulfill its vision each fiscal year, AGMA's efforts on behalf of our members would certainly be minimized.

To those directors and trustees who dedicate their time and effort and volunteer their wisdom and guidance to promote the dance, we salute you.

Free Workshop
Taking Charge of Change: Dancers Speak

Join Cynthia Gregory and dancers for a "career conversation" on Monday, May 2, 1994 from 5-6:30 P.M., in the Conference Room of the Screen Actors Guild, 1515 Broadway, 44th floor. Come hear dancers in the Career Transition For Dancers program tell their "stories of change": what they did, how they did it, and how they feel about it. Learn how you too can "find your voice". You'll have the opportunity to ask questions relevant to your own change, as well as meet the Career Transition For Dancers staff.

In 1994, change is the hallmark of the times in which we live and managing change is a necessary life skill. To register for this important workshop, call Career Transition For Dancers at (212) 581-7043.

AGMA Members Participate in San Francisco Opera La Bohème Benefit

On November 29, 1993, the San Francisco Opera Chorus, Corps de Ballet, Production Staff and soloists donated their services for a benefit performance of Puccini's La Bohème. Proceeds from the performance will fund a new Music Education program for Bay Area public schools. This outreach program will consist of several months of music training in schools, culminating in a week of performances in the San Francisco Opera House for all participating students.

Members of the AGMA Executive Committee and the AFM committee approached the San Francisco Opera administration in December of 1992 about the possibility of organizing a benefit concert, which would reach out to the community and also build the opera audience of the future. Many meetings and a year later, the idea became fully realized with a special performance of La Bohème which utilized the donated services of every labor organization in the Opera House, a "first" in the history of the San Francisco Opera.

In an era of decreased funding for the arts in public schools, we, the AGMA members of the San Francisco Opera, feel it is our responsibility to give young students an opportunity to experience firsthand the importance of music in their lives.

(Reported by San Francisco reps Donna Turchi and Sue Ellen Schepke.)
AGMA Emergency Relief Fund ...enriching the art by aiding the Artist

From the Administrator's desk:

“A small line to say a very big THANK YOU to all the members of AGMA for their tremendous support and work for the AGMA Relief Fund. You really make a difference!”

Floran Yagoda

January 10, 1994

Board of Trustees
AGMA Relief Fund
1727 Broadway
New York, NY 10019

Dear Board Members,

I am writing to let you know that my cataract surgery was an unqualified success. I am also writing to express, however inadequately, my deep gratitude to the Relief Fund for making it possible. Special thanks are also in order to Floran. She not only works to provide financial assistance, but also provides emotional support and encouragement in stressful times. All of us are fortunate to have her talents and dedication working for us.

During the holiday season, I had much to be thankful for and I received many lovely gifts, but the most precious gift I have ever received was a return to normal vision. It was my own small Christmas miracle, and I thank you for your part in it.

The work of the AGMA Relief Fund touches so many lives in distress and provides caring support. I feel doubly blessed because you have helped me on two occasions. Enclosed is a small contribution. I wish it could be a thousand times more.

Sincerely,

(an AGMA member)

To the employees of Lyric Opera of Chicago...

...who bought a t-shirt designed and distributed by Claudia Kierski-Nienow and Janet Farr - we thank you for supporting this endeavor and would like you to know that $500 was donated to the AGMA Relief Fund from this project.

1995 marks the 50th anniversary of the AGMA Relief Fund ...

We would like to put together a photographic calendar of AGMA companies - Yesterday and Today. We are looking for submissions of photos for any and all AGMA Opera and Dance companies. Submissions may be sent to Katherine Leonard at the AGMA Relief Fund, 1727 Broadway, New York, NY 10019. Any ideas or suggestions, please call (212) 265-3687.
Happy, Happy, Happy 103rd Birthday, Eugene Birlenbach

AGMA member Eugene Birlenbach, who enjoyed a long career as first tenor in Europe and made his debut with the Metropolitan Opera in 1923, celebrated his 103rd Birthday on Saturday, March 13, 1994.

He was surrounded on this magnificent day by his many friends - oldsters and youngsters alike, his friends from AGMA, Floran Yagoda, Alan Olsen and Emile Renan with his lovely wife, Doris, and most importantly, his best friend and confidant, Johanna Schroock, in whose home he resides.

He continues to enjoy and share his love of opera with Mrs. Schroock, and shows an incredible awareness and curiosity, especially for new faces.

Our photo says it all - what more could Mr. Birlenbach wish for on his birthday, but lovely music in the background, a glass of wine to cheer with, a birthday present, one of many, and his favorite Birthday cake. BRAVO!!!
Gene Boucher, Former President and National Executive Secretary, Dies at Age 60

The Officers, Board of Governors, Members, and Staff of AGMA as well as the Trustees and Staff of the AGMA Relief Fund were deeply saddened by the death of former President and National Executive Secretary, Gene Boucher. Boucher, a former baritone with the Metropolitan Opera, died on January 31, 1994, at the age of 60.

His funeral was held at the Cooke Funeral Home in New York City on February 4. It was attended by over 100 of his friends and colleagues. Eulogies were given by Alan Olsen, and Regina Resnik, and the service ended with a reading of the 23 Psalm by Robert Ackart. Music was provided by Lawrence (Lan) Schreiber, organist of the National City Christian Church in Washington, DC. Gene’s remains were interred later in the columbarium of that church.

Born December 6, 1933 in the Philippine Islands, Mr. Boucher grew up in Missouri, where he attended Westminster College and began his singing career with the St. Louis Municipal Opera. Following graduation, he studied in France on a Fulbright Fellowship and received a diploma in voice from the Conservatoire de Lille. He won the American Opera Auditions in 1958, and made his operatic debut in Milan, Italy.

Mr. Boucher toured as soloist with the Robert Shaw Chorale; starred in a highly praised revival of Gilbert and Sullivan’s Ruddigore; performed with opera companies in Cincinnati, Tulsa, Philadelphia, Lansing, Chautauqua and Washington, D.C., and made his Metropolitan Opera debut in 1965 as Master of Ceremonies in Tchaikovsky’s Queen of Spades. In 19 seasons with the Met, Mr. Boucher performed 42 roles in over 900 performances, prompting the New York Times to call him “abundantly-gifted and always reliable.”

A specialist in French repertoire, he performed in oratorio and recital, as well, and his recording of Howard Hanson’s Four Psalms for Baritone and Strings is the recipient of many awards. Mr. Boucher also performed contem-
American Guild of Musical Artists, Inc.

General and Administrative Expenses
(Cash Basis)

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<th>Year Ended September 30</th>
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<tr>
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<td>1993</td>
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<td>Staffing Expenses:</td>
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<td>Member services:</td>
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<td>Amortization of leasehold improvements</td>
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$1,982,417 $1,960,368

AGMA, Inc.

Statements of Revenue, Expenses and Fund Balance
(Cash Basis)

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<th>Year Ended September 30</th>
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<td></td>
<td>1993</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revenue:</td>
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<td>Excess of Expenses over Revenue Before Investment Income</td>
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<td>Excess of Revenue over Expenses Before Investment Income</td>
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<td>Investment Income:</td>
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<td>Interest and Dividends:</td>
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<td>Excess of Expenses over Revenue</td>
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<td>Excess of Revenue over Expenses</td>
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<td>Payment of deferred compensation</td>
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<td>Fund Balance, End</td>
<td><strong>$373,879</strong></td>
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1992/93 Financial Statements

The Guild's complete Financial Statements drawn by the Accountants are available for inspection at the AGMA office. Copies will be provided on request.
Got a story?

If you have an interesting news item that you want included in the next issue of AGMAzine, bring it to the attention of your local AGMA representative, who can forward it to the National Headquarters for consideration. We’re interested in hearing what’s going on with AGMA members across the country...

Have You Moved?

Sending your AGMA notices, announcements, AGMAzine and other Guild documents to wrong addresses is costly and wasteful. Please be certain that AGMA has your correct address in its files. If you have moved recently and have not notified AGMA of your new address, please do so at once.

A separate change of address should go to the AGMA Pension and Health Fund, as well.

Call the AGMA Hotline...
(212) 247-0247

For news and auditions, services available, union business, fellowships, competitions, career assistance and health matters. The Hotline is available seven days a week, 24 hours a day, and is updated regularly.

In addition, AGMA shares a Hotline with SAG and AFTRA in San Francisco, at (415) 433-6266.

From the Actors’ Fund of America, New York City

Survival Guide: A Free, Confidential Series of Four Seminars

FOR: Entertainment professionals in recovery from drug and alcohol dependency
WHEN: May 2nd: Reclaiming Confidence and Self-Esteem
May 9th: Eating Healthily
May 16th: Rebuilding Relationships
May 23rd: Getting Back to the Business of Show Business
TIME: 5:45 PM to 7:45 PM
WHERE: Manhattan Plaza Health Club

If interested, please call Rosalyn Gilbert for specifics at The Actors’ Fund, (212) 221-7301 (ext. 114) in advance. Space is limited.

Planned Giving Ideas and Bequests to Benefit the AGMA Relief Fund

Our counsel, Mortimer Becker, Esq., is pleased to offer his services, free of charge, in advising and preparing a will that can be used to make bequests to the AGMA Relief Fund.

Recently, the AGMA Relief Fund has been named in the wills of some of our members. Bequests of this nature are a humanitarian way in which to provide critical support to the Relief Fund’s efforts in these difficult economic times.

Information and assistance is also available to prepare a planned giving document. For instance, with a Charitable Remainder Trust you can benefit the AGMA Relief Fund, retain a lifetime income, and provide for the future of your loved ones.

For more information, please call Mr. Becker at (212) 541-7070.

What’s In A Name?

It is a common practice for performers to use a variety of professional names, for their own good reasons. But unless AGMA members notify the AGMA Membership Department about the various names by which they are known, considerable confusion results. Please take a moment to write or phone the National Office to register with the Membership Department each name by which you are known. It’s in your best interest.

Employee vs. Independent Contractor

It has been seriously suggested that those of our members who are Directors may properly be recognized by the IRS as Independent Contractors. The suggestion is valid in any instance in which the relationship of the Director with the "employer" meets the tests set up by the IRS. As always, check with a qualified tax consultant for the latest rulings on this subject before filing.