New Members Elected to AGMA
Board of Governors; Mentzer and Byars Appointed to National Office

Two National Officers were appointed to fill vacant offices, and 26 Board members were elected—or re-elected—during the recent AGMA elections. Ballots in the secret mail vote totaled 1,441. 1,364 were valid and 77 were declared invalid for having arrived too late or for other reasons. All active members in good standing as of February 1, 1994 were eligible to vote.

The Board of Governors made the following appointments to National Office, to fill positions recently vacated. Susanne Mentzer, a mezzo-soprano with the Metropolitan Opera, was appointed by the Board to fill the office of 1st Vice-President vacated by Gerald Otte when he assumed the Presidency. Michael Byars, dancer with the New York City Ballet, was appointed to fill the office of 4th Vice-President recently vacated by Barbara Bystrom, who has assumed an administrative post with the Metropolitan Opera. Biographical information and statements from both these recent appointees appears on page three of this issue.

Results of the regular Board election follow, with the names of elected candidates appearing in larger type. Several members were elected by write-in vote. Those names will be announced in the next issue of AGMAzine, following confirmation of acceptance of their nominations.

Continued on page 5

American Ballet Theater Moves to Decertify AGMA as Principal Bargaining Agent

On May 17, 1994, a petition to decertify the American Guild of Musical Artists as the union representing the artists of the Ballet Theater Foundation, Inc. (American Ballet Theater) was filed with the National Labor Relations Board. An in-person vote was held under NLRB auspices on June 9th. Mail ballots to artists who did not vote in person are to have been returned by July 11th; ballots are to have been counted on July 13th, after this edition goes to the printer.

Following are letters of support for AGMA, which were sent to the artists of American Ballet Theater in response to the petition for decertification from the AFL-CIO:

Letter from the Central Labor Council

Dear ABT Members of AGMA:

It has come to our attention that the American Ballet Theater members of AGMA are voting on the question of disaffiliation and, consequently, disaffiliation from the AFL-CIO. While this is your right under the labor laws governing such matters, we would ask you to consider the following points before making such an important decision.

As members of the American Guild of Musical Artists, you are part of the national AFL-CIO, the largest democratic trade union movement not

Continued on page 6
Greetings from the National Executive Secretary

Dear AGMA Colleagues,

Independence means liberty. It connotes liberation from something. As we go to press, the artists of ABT may have become independent of AGMA through a petition to decertify. If so, from what will they be liberated?

1. From the standards of a national collective bargaining contract? One dance company failed to budget for travel overtime. AGMA secured payment for the artists.

2. From exploitation via unpaid media appearances? Dancers with another company appeared on PBS without compensation. AGMA threatened arbitration and the company paid for the infringement.

3. From arbitrary termination? A company attempted to fire dancers in violation of their contracts. AGMA intervened and the artists were paid and reinstated.

4. From health insurance enforcement? AGMA interceded when dancers did not receive benefits under the health plans. Do these episodes sound familiar? The occurrences are not unusual. The short list above is a condensation from recent case histories involving a number of companies and artists.

AGMA is increasing in membership and strength through organizing, negotiating, contract enforcement, and Board action. In the past three months we have organized five new companies.

Declare your independence: from inadequate compensation, from abusive terms and conditions of employment, from arbitrary dismissal. It is my belief that only a national union can set and maintain the standards which protect all artists equally. Act collectively on behalf of your rights and the rights of your colleague artists. In national unity there is power and it belongs to you.

Yours in unity,
Louise Gilmore

A Message from Jane Powell

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing in my role as President of Theatre Authority to remind you that this 60-year old organization is still here, still protecting us, and still providing a way for us to help our friends when they need it most.

Theatre Authority is the non-profit organization created in 1934 by our performer unions to protect us from exploitation and to insure that telethons and other

Continued on page 14
Susanne Mentzer, 1st Vice-President

Susanne Mentzer assumes the office of First Vice-President, vacated by Gerald Otte when he took over the office of President.

Mezzo-soprano Susanne Mentzer is an internationally renowned singer who has appeared on most of the world's major operatic stages, including the Metropolitan Opera, the Chicago Lyric Opera, Milan's La Scala, London's Covent Garden, the Paris Opera, the Vienna State Opera, and the companies of Washington, Dallas, Bonn, Cologne, and Munich. She is also a frequent guest at such festivals as the Salzburg Festival, the Rossini Festival in Pesaro, the Santa Fe Opera, Tanglewood, Ravinia, and the Mostly Mozart Festival. She has collaborated with the majority of today's celebrated conductors, including James Levine, Riccardo Muti, Neville Marriner, Richard Bonynge, Pierre Boulez, Daniel Barenboim, Zubin Mehta, and Sir Georg Solti.

Mentzer was born in Philadelphia, and attended the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California and the Juilliard School of Music. Her first professional exposure came in 1981, when she toured as Cenerentola with Houston Grand Opera's Texas Opera Theater. In 1983 she made her European debut in Cologne as Cherubino in a Jean-Pierre Ponnelle production of Le Nozze di Figaro. This led to her becoming his protege, and to introductions at many of the important European music centers.

"To the Officers and Board of Governors of AGMA: Thank you for your support of my election to First Vice-President. I hope to be of good service to the union and look forward to working with you all."

Michael Byars, 4th Vice-President

Michael Byars assumes the office of Fourth Vice-President, vacated by Barbara Bystrom when she accepted an administrative post with the Metropolitan Opera.

Michael Byars is a soloist with New York City Ballet and has been an AGMA member since 1984. He participated in the negotiation of several agreements as Chair of the New York City Ballet Dancers' Committee from 1989 to 1993, and has served on a number of AGMA committees since his election to the National Board in 1991, including his present position as Chair of the national Work Rules and Contracts Committee. He is a degree candidate for a Baccalaureate of Labor Studies at the SUNY Harry van Arsdale School of Labor Studies and the Cornell University Industrial and Labor Relations program. He is the first active dancer from an AGMA ballet company to hold National Office.

"I am honored to be selected by my colleagues on the National Board to fill the Vice-Presidency recently vacated by the resignation of Barbara Bystrom. As a National Officer during this exhilarating process of revitalization at AGMA, I look forward to identifying new ways to offer my energy, experience, and educational background as an added resource to the activism shown by AGMA members across the country. During my term I hope to hear from any and all AGMA members to whom I may be of service. With your help we can continue to keep AGMA a union at the forefront of the arts."
Board Members Elected

Ledbetter  Christopher  Reyes  Yule  Russell  Vellucci
Fleck  Davis  Sopher  Mays  Harper  Bellaver
Manno  Guss  Keane  Der Derian  Meyers  Young
Foster  Itow  Godino  Dellapolla  Byars  Sackett
Braun  Kmiec  Timberlake  Etcheto  Knight  Blois
Black  Hinshaw  Russo  Cook  Livingston  Miller
## New York Area

### Solo Singers (11 Vacancies)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAM LEDBETTER</td>
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<tr>
<td>RUSSELL CHRISTOPHER</td>
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<tr>
<td>DULCE REYES</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DON YULE</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN RUSSELL</td>
<td>312</td>
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<tr>
<td>LUIGI VELLUCCI</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAM FLECK</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.B. DAVIS</td>
<td>268</td>
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<tr>
<td>JOSEPH SOPHER</td>
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### Choristers (10 Vacancies)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LINDA MAYS</td>
<td>292</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELINOR HARPER</td>
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<tr>
<td>LEE BELLAVER</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROBERT MANNO</td>
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<td>JONATHAN GUSS</td>
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<td>LORRAINE KEANE</td>
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<td>SUZANNE DER DERIAN</td>
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<tr>
<td>MARY MEYERS</td>
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<td>KENNETH YOUNG</td>
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<tr>
<td>BENO FOSTER</td>
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<td>Lila Herbert</td>
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<td>Megan Friar</td>
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<td>Deborah Saverance</td>
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<td>Alan Sokoloff</td>
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<td>Bernard Fischer</td>
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<td>Robert Kuehn</td>
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## Chicago Area

### Choristers (5 Vacancies)

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<tr>
<td>MICHAEL COOK</td>
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<tr>
<td>RICHARD LIVINGSTON</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRYAN MILLER</td>
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<td>MAGGIE CLENNON</td>
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<tr>
<td>CATHERINE VARTANIAN DUKE</td>
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<td>Theresa Ozers</td>
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<td>James Odom</td>
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### Solo Singers (1 Vacancy)

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## Southern California Area

### Choristers (5 Vacancies)

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<td>BURMAN TIMBERLAKE</td>
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<tr>
<td>SALLY ETCHETO</td>
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<tr>
<td>KENNETH KNIGHT</td>
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<td>SCOTT BLOIS</td>
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<td>ANDREW BLACK</td>
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### Solo Singers (1 Vacancy)

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<td>PAUL HINSHAW</td>
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<td>Anne Marie Biggs</td>
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## San Francisco Area

### Choristers (4 Vacancies)

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<tr>
<td>CLAUDIA SIEFER</td>
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<td>DONNA TURCHI</td>
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### Solo Singers (1 Vacancy)

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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## Philadelphia Area

### Choristers (1 Vacancy)

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<tr>
<td>Write-In Votes</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued on next page
Continued from page 1

only in the United States, but in the
world. That is not an insignificant mat-
ter when one considers the immense
global pressures which multinational
corporate interests have at their dis-
posal. Virtually every worker, includ-
ing you, is affected by these corporate
forces; and only the AFL-CIO can rep-
resent your interests effectively in this
arena.

The national AFL-CIO also has a
special department called the Depart-
ment for Professional Employees, dedi-
cated solely to the issues which are im-
portant and unique to union members
in professional careers, such as artists
and performers like yourself. Your
union has at its disposal assistance
from the national AFL-CIO and the De-
partment for Professional Employees
based on your affiliation with the
American Guild of Musical Artists and
the 4A’s. That availability would be
severed if you decertify from AGMA.

In addition to all the services
which are available through affiliation
with the national AFL-CIO, there are
equally important resources available
to you at the State and local levels of
the AFL-CIO. The New York State AFL-
CIO and our New York City Central
Labor Council, AFL-CIO, are effective
advocate organizations for you and
your sister/brother members. By vir-
tue of your affiliation with these orga-
nizations, your issues are addressed
with the force of a combined 2.5 mil-
lion other union members in our State,
which includes 1.5 million in New York
City. Whatever the issue affecting you
“on-the-job,” your voice will not be
heard as a group of independent mu-
sical artists and don’t think that man-
agement will not take advantage of
that point sooner or later. But, as part
of one of the strongest and most effec-
tive State and City labor movements
in the country, you are guaranteed a
strong and effective voice, as part of
the AFL-CIO, in the State legislature in
Albany and in our City’s City Council
and Mayor’s office.

There are a multitude of other rea-
sons to consider when deciding to stay
within the AFL-CIO, including access
to our Community Services/Rehabili-
tation Council, just to name one. It
would be too lengthy to outline all in
this letter. But the New York City AFL-
CIO would be happy to offer its good
offices to resolve your displeasure with
your current AFL-CIO union, AGMA
with the concurrence of AGMA and the
4A’s. If offered that opportunity, we are
confident you would realize the impor-
tance of maintaining your membership
within the AFL-CIO.

We would welcome your invita-
tion to answer whatever specific ques-
tions you may have and look forward
to your continued AFL-CIO participa-
tion.

Letter to AGMA Dance Delegates from Gerald Otte and Michael Byars

To our colleagues at ABT: The follow-
ing letter has recently been sent to
AGMA dance delegates across the coun-
try. We thought it might be of spe-
cial interest to you.

Dear Delegate:

The members of ABT are presently
voting on whether to continue their
affiliation with AGMA. We believe that
there is a strong likelihood that this
vote will result in AGMA’s decertifica-
tion as the exclusive bar-
gaining representative for ABT. ABT
members apparently think that the
only role for a national union is to pro-
vide funds for individual shop needs,
including non-AGMA counsel, and
assume they will receive more imme-
diate economic benefits from forming
their own union. We disagree with that
evaluation.

Separation diminishes bargaining
power.

The management’s perception of
the employees’ ability to prepare an
organized and effective strike option
is central to serious negotiation,
whether or not a strike is actually
called. While the exercise of the strike
option is not necessarily appropriate in
every instance, ultimately the willing-
ness to withhold labor is the only eco-

demic protection employees can wield
to enforce their bargaining power. De-
certifying a national union alters the
power balance of negotiations by re-
ducing the legal authority underlying
the strike.

Why: Labor law allows a union
to enforce the strike of its own mem-
bers through disciplinary action, in-
cluding fines. But under the law, a
union may not require compliance
with another union’s strike. A manage-
ment facing a company-wide union knows that the employees have no recourse if potential replacements from outside the company decide to cross a picket line. (This means that if ABT decertifies AGMA, we will be prevented from enforcing any labor action by their “union.”) The lack of legal support for a strike threat can only serve to lessen the seriousness with which management will consider the bargaining positions of its employees.

A national dialogue in a national union is essential:

Managers of opera and dance companies meet regularly on a national basis, some as often as every six months to discuss mutual concerns, including the treatment and costs of employees. Our AGMA delegates need to share our common experiences and aspirations on a national basis too, or risk losing our rightful participation in the determination of our future. All AGMA companies have benefited significantly in the past from the gains of our national colleagues. Decertification of the national union by an individual shop will perhaps not end that benefit for the short term. It will end that shop’s contribution to national goals.

In AGMA, we already have a national forum for our concerns. Our association between employees of dance, opera, and concert companies has already produced mutually-beneficial results. If AGMA is to remain a viable and evolving representative for your colleagues, both within your company and throughout the nation, we need your input during this time of change.

Your colleagues need your help:

Nationally: Join the October teleconference convention discussing national concerns. (Details to follow.)

Regularly: Write or call your union leadership. We look forward to hearing from you.

Letter from Teresa Goetz and Brad Phillips, AGMA delegates, Pacific Northwest Ballet

To the dancers of ABT:

We’ve recently been made aware of the company’s intent to leave the union. We feel that would be more harmful than helpful to you and to all other dancers protected by AGMA. We understand that ABT has had some rough times recently and it may seem to you that leaving AGMA will have the effect of lessening some trouble between the dancers and management. But let us reassure you that, having completed a year’s worth of National Negotiations, we’re certain that management will not hesitate to whittle away at the important rights and protections you’ve gained and enjoyed as AGMA members.

It seems that your primary motivation for wanting to leave is the AGMA Board’s refusal to pay independent counsel for your contract negotiations. While this may have been past practice, we ask you to consider the new direction AGMA is taking with regards to financial stability and responsibility as well as future growth. A large part of this new direction is the arrival of new National Executive Secretary Louise Gilmore. We were fortunate to have the opportunity to work closely with Ms. Gilmore during the National negotiations, and were very impressed with her skills as a negotiator and as someone who truly cared about our welfare. Louise, along with Gerald Otte as the new union President, and Michael Byars as the new 4th Vice-President, will give dancers a new level of power and recognition within the ranks of the union and its Board. This can only be beneficial to our needs and concerns being heard and met.

But most importantly, Louise Gilmore kicks ass at the bargaining table. She and the rest of the AGMA negotiating team are EXTREMELY well qualified to go in and fight for the best possible contract for you and the dancers that follow you into ABT. Stick it out, let them work for you, and we are completely confident that you’ll be happy with the results.

We and everyone here at PNB were shocked and upset to learn that the company, who, by their brave actions in the late 70’s and early 80’s, did so much to further the dancers’ cause and bring recognition to our needs, was thinking of pulling out of the union in which they helped to forge a place for all of us. We urge you to reconsider, ask questions, talk to your reps, Alex Dubé, anyone, but don’t back out now. You need AGMA, and we all need you.

Letter from Lindsay Fischer, Chair, New York City Ballet Dancers’ Committee

Dear Colleagues:

I am writing to express my concern with American Ballet Theater’s dancers’ recent decision to discontinue their relationship with the American Guild of Musical Artists. I am of course not, and do not wish to be party to the exact details of the dispute, but I do feel obligated as an AGMA member to take note of the manner in which it seems the decision is being taken.

Briefly, AGMA has informed me that they would like to continue to explore possible solutions to your differences, but that they have been refused any sort of dialogue. This does not seem to me to be fair or responsible with respect to either the members of ABT, or dancers in other companies. I believe that a decision of this importance should only be taken after all affected parties have had an opportunity to explain their positions, and respond directly to the complaints against them. Failure to do this may obscure the issue to the point where action may be taken without an awareness of the consequences involved.

Specifically, from what I have been told, there has been very little concrete information about how ABT will function as an unaffiliated shop. How will an independent union insure that other unions will respect their picket lines, or prevent management from hiring scabs in the event of a strike? And because this union will undoubtedly appear weaker to management than unions such as the musicians and stage hands which have national membership, who will insure that this impression does not lead to concessions which would not be expected from an AGMA supported shop?

It may be that all these and other questions have in fact been thought of and attended to. If that is so, it cannot do any harm to let an AGMA representative pose the questions and hear the answers in public. If answers to these questions have not been found, perhaps at least AGMA may do a last service in helping to find them.

Finally, I would urge you to consider that your relationship with AGMA, whatever its drawbacks, has been a partnership, which you entered with mutual agreement. It cannot be right that you break it unilaterally, without offering AGMA a chance to compromise and repair whatever misunderstandings there are. If they are unable to meet your conditions for a continued relationship, I believe you are obligated to show them why that is, and why you believe they will not

Continued on page 16
Focus On...

Santa Fe Opera

The Santa Fe Opera House (Photo by Hans Fahrneyer)
The thirty-eighth season of the Santa Fe Opera opened with Giacomo Puccini's "Tosca" on July 1. The production, directed by John Copley, runs 11 performances through August 27 at the Santa Fe Opera Theater.

A highlight of this season is the American premiere of composer Judith Weir's opera "Blond Eckbert", based on the story by Ludwig Tieck. The production, which is directed by Francesca Zambello, features Emily Golden, Brad Cresswell, Elizabeth Futral, and James McGuire, and runs for three performances from July 30 through August 12.

Rossini's comedy "Il Barbiere di Siviglia" runs for 11 performances from July 2 through August 26, with a cast including Delores Ziegler as Rosina, Dwayne Croft as Figaro, and Jeffrey Francis as Almaviva.

On July 16, Mozart's "Die Entführung aus dem Serail" takes the stage for seven performances through August 24. It features Sally Wolf as Constanze, Susannah Waters as Blonde, Richard Croft as Belmonte, and Kevin Skiles as Pedrillo.

Richard Strauss's "Intermezzo", which received its American professional stage premiere here in 1984, plays in the theater for six performances starting July 23 through August 25. It stars Sheri Greenawald, Dale Duesing, and Erie Mills.

Soprano Elizabeth Futral (above) stars in the American premiere of Judith Weir's opera Blond Eckbert. (Photo by Christian Steiner)
Mary Jane Johnson and Timothy Noble (left) in a scene from the John Conklin production of Puccini's Tosca. (Photo by Hans Fahrmeier)
After you've sold T-shirts, held rummage sales or just plain asked for contributions, you know that you'd like to increase your profit margin on every venture. You've tried the rest, now try one of the best.

Probably the best return on your fundraising efforts and energy is the raffle. This is what we did in Chicago. It's not the only way, but it wasn't hard AND it was successful.

Begin by contacting and working with the Relief Fund office staff. They will provide you with wonderful resources to help you get started and to keep going on the right track.

Next, get a small committee together and discuss the following—then assign responsibilities. Set the date and place of the drawing. We hold ours at our Annual Area Meeting. If that doesn't work for you, think of a special occasion or performance to connect it with, to make it all the more special. Plan ahead and allow about 2–3 months for actual ticket sales.

1. Know your market—make prizes appealing and limit the number of prizes. In Chicago, we kept all of the prizes related to the fields in which AGMA artists perform. No other raffles offered symphony, opera, concert or dance subscriptions or tickets.

2. Get prizes donated—Not as hard as it sounds. Don’t be afraid to ask and explain what the Fund is all about.

3. Set ticket price—Have faith! Don’t sell tix for $1. Think of a minimum of $10 each. We sold ours for $20 each. It’s much more productive to sell ten tix for $10, than ten tix for $1.

4. Limit number of tickets—Improved odds make tickets much more appealing and easier to sell. A realistic goal for your market also helps insures success. Think of it this way—200 tix @ $20 = $4000.

5. Get tickets printed—on HEAVY STOCK. Many printers have pre-cut, pre-numbered stock. Stub and ticket should both be numbered. Stub format should have lines to include Name, Address and Phone number. Ticket portions should contain information such as Benefit Title, list of prizes, date and place of drawing. REMEMBER, donor gets large or ticket part, SELLER GETS STUB (filled in!) ALONG WITH CASH OR CHECK. Checks should be made payable to the AGMA Relief Fund. All stubs and receipts should be returned to ONE designated person.

6. Have appropriate publicity ready—Flyers explaining what the Relief Fund is, who benefits and how wonderful the prizes are. Also very useful are: 1) Letters to AGMA members asking them to participate by BUYING tickets AND SELLING tickets and 2) Letters that members can send or give to friends, relatives or co-workers asking them to buy tickets.

7. Distribute tickets for selling—Ask individuals to take small blocks of tickets. Keep a record of who takes what number tickets (it’s helpful to keep track because you may need to remind people or redistribute tix to others).

8. Sell tickets—One of the benefits of doing a raffle is that you can reach many people outside your own group. The personal approach is best. Tell sellers they need only ask. That’s the hardest part. Many people buy just because you’re their friend. Some people will sell ten or twenty others one or two. Encourage everyone!

9. Keep ACCURATE records—When stubs and money come in, keep stubs in a safe envelope or box. Don’t wait to reconcile stubs and cash. Make every effort to record them as soon as you receive them. THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF ADVICE IN THIS LIST! A simple method would be to record across a page: ticket no./name/sold by/check no. or cash. If you have a computer, transfer all information to disk. Printouts are easy to read and a great way to keep track of progress.

10. Send receipts to AGMA office as they come in, say once every other week. People appreciate having their checks clear sooner rather than later. It’s helpful to keep a record of what each one sends and when so that you can tally your records with the NY office. Send a cashier’s or personal check to cover current cash receipts.

11. Keep a record of your expenses—Try to keep expenses to minimum. Remember, they eat up the profits. Send a record and the receipts for your expenses to NY for reimbursements as they occur. Remember, discuss major costs with NY first.

12. Hold the drawing. Notify winners by telephone and make arrangements for them to receive their prize. Lastly—Don’t forget to send thank you’s to those who donated prizes.

One last reminder—Help is only a phone call away. Samples of publicity letters, record keeping and tickets are all available from Katherine Leonard, Director of Development in the AGMA office.

And finally, keep telling yourself how great it will be when you reach your goal!
Report on Dance
Alexander J. Dubé
Administrator for Dance

Ms. Dorothy Kochiras and I have successfully concluded collective bargaining negotiations with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and the Feld Ballets/NY. Other New York based companies’ ongoing negotiations include the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, the Martha Graham Dance Company, Dance Theater of Harlem, and outside of New York, Ballet Chicago.

We are pleased and proud to announce that AGMA’s organizing activities have been very successful and this activity was conducted in an unprecedented 3-month period of time. The companies are BalletMet, Inc., Atlanta Ballet, Tulsa Ballet Theater, Phoenix Opera, and the Tucson Opera.

The desire to achieve better working conditions, higher wages, a better quality of life, and more of a say in how work is being conducted, are the major goals of not only the artists of these five prospective new companies, but continue to be the goal for all AGMA members nationwide. The new National Dance Basic Agreement, as amended by companies, continues to serve our members well. AGMA salutes the on-going efforts of the employers nationwide who identify a dancer representative to attend meetings on the executive committee and board level. Communication is the most important life line of any performing arts organization. Having the appropriate forum to share information and insight contributes to a better work place and the best possible product available to the ticket buying public. Proposals for new AGMA Basic Agreements will be submitted within the next few weeks to Tulsa Ballet Theater and BalletMet.

Ms. Kochiras joins me in wishing everyone a healthy and successful 94/95 season.

The San Francisco Ballet (right) in a scene from Agnes de Mille’s Rodeo, music by Aaron Copland. This summer the company performs this and other works from their diverse repertory, in a first time ever engagement at the prestigious Opéra de Paris-Palais Garnier.

“I am very excited to be bringing our company to the beautiful Paris Opera House,” says San Francisco Ballet Artistic Director, Helgi Tomasson. “I look forward to presenting our Parisian audiences an eclectic collection of works that are in our repertoire.”

(Photo by Marty Sohl)

The Company (left) in Alvin Ailey’s “The Mochoh” Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater embarked June 20th on a world tour which will include Japan, Cannes, Vienna, and Geneva, before returning in the fall for their New York season, as well as appearances in several U.S. cities. (Photo by Jack Mitchell)
AGMA Emergency Relief Fund
...enriching the art by aiding the Artist

Networking Provides More Benefits to AGMA Members

An important part of the services offered by the AGMA Relief Fund is networking with other relief funds and organizations. This partnership provides classical performing artists of opera and dance not only with financial assistance, but with the most up-to-date information regarding counseling, additional sources of assistance, financial and legal workshops, and much more.

One such organization is the Society of Singers (SOS). Since 1985, SOS has offered counseling, case management and financial aid to singers in need whose primary income is derived from professional singing for at least five years. SOS is a non-profit organization that came into existence through the love and toil of founding members Gilda Maiken, Ginny Mancini, Tony Martin, Tess Russell, Randy Van Horne, Donna Manners and Anthony Adams. SOS was created to help singers who often have no access to group health insurance programs, health and welfare benefits or pension funds. Today SOS is a thriving organization.

Through our association with SOS and other organizations such as Actors’ Fund and Episcopal Actors Guild to name a few, many AGMA members have been given assistance to help defray the financial burdens placed on them in time of crisis. Since our mission is to ensure the quality of life for classical performing artists, we actively seek affiliation with organizations which offer valuable benefits to our members.

Houston Grand Opera Chorus Performs Spectacular Benefit Concert for AGMA Relief Fund

Last year, members of the Houston Grand Opera Chorus planned and performed a Concert of Care to “help keep the curtains up for our classical performers.”

On June 18th, under the baton of Richard Bado with Leticia Austria on piano, and featuring Diane Kesling, Richard Paul Fink, and Darrell Pucciarelli, HGO choristers performed “Un Bel Coro”, an evening of favorite opera choruses at the Cullen Theatre.

With Houston weatherman Frank Billingsley as Master of Ceremonies, the local TV station KTRK did live coverage of the show, which added to the excitement of the entire production. The program itself was truly an ambitious one, ably carried out by the Houston Grand Opera Chorus. Act one commenced with Wagner’s “Freudig Begrüssen wir die Halle”, from Tannhäuser and included among other pieces, Verdi’s Temple Scene from Aida, Bizet’s Toreador Song and the Habanera, ending with the “Inneggiamo” from Cavalleria Rusticana. The final act began with Puccini’s “Gira la cote” from Turandot, and the Te Deum from Tosca, the Finale from Desert of Roses by Moran, closing on a joyous note with “Leavin’ for the Promise’ Lan” from Gershwin’s Porgy and Bess.

Prizes, sponsored by Continental Airlines, Pro Hotels, Inc., and Houston Grand Opera were given to choristers who sold the most tickets. First prize was a trip to Mexico City which went to Sharon Shepley-Fink. Second prize of season tickets to Houston Grand Opera was earned by Debra Alons and third prize of tickets to various Broadway shows went to Daren West. Thanks to Quality Graphics Center for underwriting costs of all printed materials.

Over 500 people attended the concert, which grossed approximately $8,500. Among the many people to congratulate for the success of this benefit concert are Doug Threeton for his overall organization and enthusiasm, and the wonderful members of the Houston Grand Opera Chorus. The gifts from their music will assist performers in need in Houston as well as across the United States.
Philadelphia Tenor Wins 1994 Grace Bumbry Student Assistance Award

Bravo to Jorge Garza, winner of the 1994 Grace Bumbry Student Assistance Award! Mr. Garza received $1,500 in cash and fully paid initiation fee for membership in the American Guild of Musical Artists.

This year, with over 100 submissions, the judges - Chester Ludgin, Marni Nixon and Elinor Ross - after careful consideration narrowed the competition down to six finalists. From this talented and diverse group of six, Jorge Garza, a graduate of Juilliard and the Manhattan School of Music, was chosen as the recipient of the Award.

The presentation of the award, at the Players Club in New York City, was made by Louise Gilmore, National Executive Secretary of AGMA. The celebration included a champagne toast to Mr. Garza, with Gerald Otte, President of AGMA, Floran Yagoda, Executive Administrator, Katherine Leonard, Director of Development, and the judges on hand to offer congratulations.

We would like to thank Miss Grace Bumbry for giving young singers from across the nation, the opportunity to participate in this vocal competition through her generous support.

AGMA
Emergency Relief Fund

YOUR WILL AND THE AGMA RELIEF FUND

There are so many reasons for not making a Will, such as:
- Inability to plan for the future.
- Too little money.
- Reluctance to face death.
- Too expensive.

However, by drawing up a will you are able to plan the distribution of your estate, however small or large, to your loved ones and favorite charities.

With a charitable bequest to the AGMA Relief Fund, you are showing your support for what we are doing now and in the future. There are many ways to prepare a planned giving document. 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. For more information, please call Mr. Becker at (212) 541-7070.
Giulio Gari, Leading Tenor with Metropolitan Opera, dies at 84

Giulio Gari, a tenor who sang with the Metropolitan and New York City Operas, died April 15 at the age of 84. The Romanian-bom tenor studied at the Verdi Conservatory in Milan, Italy. He made his formal debut at the Teatro Reale in Rome, as a last-minute replacement for Tito Schipa. His American opera debut was in Gian Carlo Menotti’s *Amelia Goes to the Ball*, at the St. Louis Grand Opera.

His New York City Opera debut came in 1945 in Wagner’s *Die Fliessende Holländer*, and his Metropolitan Opera debut followed in 1953, as Pinkerton in Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly*.

Mr. Gari sang 22 roles with the Metropolitan prior to his retirement in 1961, and made recordings of *Aida* and *Carmen*, and a film version of *La Traviata*. He later taught at Philadelphia’s Curtis Institute and Temple University, as well as privately in New York.

Herva Nelli, Favorite Soprano of Toscanini, dies at 85

Herva Nelli, the Italian-born soprano renowned for her long association with conductor Arturo Toscanini, died of leukemia in Sharon, Connecticut on May 31. She was 85.

Raised in Pittsburgh, she made her American operatic debut in 1937 in New York. But it was a 1947 concert performance of Desdemona in Verdi’s *Otello*, under Toscanini’s baton, that was to bring her to notoriety. The New York Times critic Olin Downs reported that her voice “most touchingly communicated Desdemona’s gentleness and purity of soul.” She continued to appear with Toscanini and the NBC Symphony Orchestra in several now-famous performances of Verdi operas, and was chosen by the maestro to appear in the postwar reopening of Milan’s Teatro La Scala.

She made her Metropolitan Opera debut in 1953 as Aida, singing several other roles there until her retirement. Her final New York performance was in 1962 as Norma, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

POWELL, continued from page 2

normal function. These are all prohibited, except under very specific terms and conditions.

There’s another big advantage to working through TA: If we’re asked to do a benefit, and are unavailable or unfamiliar with the sponsoring organization, or if we simply don’t want to participate, we needn’t feel pressured or embarrassed to decline. By referring the sponsor to Theatre Authority, the situation is taken out of our hands.

TAs’ offices all serve without pay. Only the small professional staff is salaried.

Theatre Authority East is located at 16 East 42nd Street, Suite 202, New York, NY 10017-6907. The telephone number is (212) 682-4215. This office has jurisdiction over all benefit performances east of Omaha, Nebraska, and is headed by Executive Director Helen Leahy.

Theatre Authority West, 6464 Sunset Boulevard, Suite 640, Hollywood, California 90028-9098, is headed by Executive Director Judy A. Bailey. It has jurisdiction west of Omaha. The telephone number is (213) 462-5761. Please call before making any commitment.

Our peers created TA for our benefit. It’s there to help us, so that we can help our fellow performers.

Warm regards,

Jane Powell
New York
Report on Concert Singers

Pamela Warrick-Smith
New York Concert Singer

For AGMA Concert Singers, the past year has been an especially difficult one. Sadly, these singers are working under the jurisdiction of both AGMA and AFTRA, and have had no signed agreements in place with either union for a year or more. The amount of available employment has dwindled at an alarming rate over the past several years, and a flagging economy, rising anti-union sentiment, a traditional lack of union support, and the crippling singer apathy have all brought the free-lance field to a point of crisis. Here, briefly, is what has been going on in New York:

Negotiations have been taking place with the New York Philharmonic, Opera Orchestra of New York, and Mostly Mozart, with the Philharmonic acting as chief negotiator for these companies. Musica Sacra has not come forward to negotiate. The negotiations have been slow and difficult, however National Executive Secretary Louise Gilmore has proved to be a powerful negotiator and ally for concert singers. Proposals for the new contract include designating contractors as agents of the employer, and exclusive use of professional singers, as well as other significant changes.

A serious problem arose when it was discovered that, after the last negotiation, the companies involved signed a document other than the Concert Singers' Basic Agreement, and therefore now question the validity of that agreement. Negotiations have been suspended until September, when the Philharmonic's new negotiator will be available to resume talks.

While working on strategy for these negotiations, questions have arisen concerning the views of the singers involved and what steps they are willing to take to support any strong stand the union might take. It was decided to send out a survey to determine where the singers stand on certain issues. Out of approximately 270 surveys mailed, only 30 were returned. This is a strong message in itself. Assessment of the survey is not complete, but certain trends have been emerging:

- The New York Philharmonic should use professional singers exclusively.
- Singers are willing to take strong action to support such a move.
- Singers are willing to support action to bring signatories to the negotiating table, although they will continue to work for these companies whether or not they do so.
- AGMA should attempt to unionize non-AGMA companies, and singers are willing to support such attempts, short of refusing to work for them.
- Parity with the orchestra should be a long-term goal.
- Steps should be taken to clarify the singer/contractor relationship.
- The union should not be in charge of the union process, however it should set guidelines for the audition procedure.
- AFTRA should grant AGMA jurisdiction over classical recordings.
- Changes are needed in the "troupe rule."
- Most concert singers doing AFTRA recordings are not fully vested members of AFTRA.

Complete results of this survey will be made available at a later date. In the meantime, please fill them out and send them in to the AGMA office. Our goals will not be well served if 240 singers allow the remaining 30 to determine the action to be taken. If you have not received a survey, please contact the AGMA office at (212) 265-3687. Telephone also if you have expressed interest in serving on a committee, but did not sign the survey.

Additionally, the negotiation of the AFTRA Phono Code has been delayed and postponed for more than a year. A strong representation of concert singers and AFTRA singers was present at the initial session, which was very helpful to our cause. It is important that this participation continue; telephone Ralph Braun at AFTRA, at (212) 532-0800, from time to time to determine when negotiations are taking place.

Efforts are also being made to place concert singers in a category of their own. It is hoped that they will gain fairer representation on the Board of Governors by this change. This move is being reviewed by the Policy and Administration Committee.

Continued on next page
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.

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Career Transition For Dancers

Career Transition For Dancers' counseling services and scholarships are available to dancers outside the New York City area by telephone, as well as in person at the New York headquarters. Please call (212) 581-7043 to set up a telephone consultation with a member of the Counseling Staff. Leave your name, address, and phone number, and a good time to call you back.

ABT, continued from page 7

be able to do so at some point in the future. If you do not, it suggests that you do not have the courage of your convictions, and are merely using AGMA as a scapegoat for past management's financial difficulties.

I hope you will forgive my approaching you on what probably seems to you a purely internal matter, but I, and every other dancer in the country, will be affected by your decision. I do not suggest that you put others' welfare ahead of your own, nor take their opinions for your own. I do, however, respectfully request that you will consider what I have said in this letter.

CONCERT, continued from page 15

Singers must protect their rights on the job. Elect union reps on all AGMA jobs, and on non-AGMA jobs as well if the majority are AGMA members. All singers should take a turn at being a rep, so no one becomes marked as a troublemaker or risks future employment. Report infractions to the AGMA office if they cannot be dealt with easily on the job, and pass on ideas that you might have for improvements in working conditions or in the contract. Vote in all elections—only for those candidates you really want. It is not necessary to vote for the entire number allowed on the ballot. Be active! Vote! Save your jobs!