



AGMAZINE

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Official Organ of the American Guild of Musical Artists

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

1996 BOARD OF GOVERNORS ELECTION

A GMA members returned to the "ballot box" in the 1996 elections, with 979 valid ballots and 34 ballots being declared invalid. While the votes reflect a slight decline from the 1036 total ballots in

1995, the 1996 election did not include national officer elections and there were several areas with uncontested races. All active members in good standing were eligible to vote. See page 4 for the election counts.

JOFFREY ARTISTS LOCKED OUT UNIFIED STAND RESULTS IN GAINS

Greeting members of the Joffrey Ballet of Chicago at a rehearsal call was a notice that their services were not required. In a move which stunned the Artists of the Joffrey Ballet of Chicago and the entire Chicago AGMA Membership, the Artists of the Joffrey were locked out of the workplace on Tuesday, November 5, 1996.

The Artists have been working without a collective bargaining agreement since September 30, 1996, midnight. However both AGMA and management continued to negotiate in good faith to reach a new agreement.

On October 31st 1996, Halloween evening, the Artists were suddenly pre-

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RULE ONE CALLED FOR AGAINST THE NATIONAL CHORALE

Members of AGMA have invoked Rule One against the National Chorale. Rule One states: "Upon the issuance of an order by the Board of Governors, no member of AGMA may work for an employer

who has refused to bargain in good faith with AGMA." AGMA members should not accept new employment with the National Chorale, however, any contracts which have been signed

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IMPROVEMENTS EXPECTED TO SOLOISTS' "HEALTH PLAN B"

A GMA Pension, Health, and Retirement Funds' trustees are reviewing proposals to expand the benefits of the Soloists' Health Plan, termed "Health Plan B," by adding a "flexible medical spending account" option. It is hoped that during

the first quarter of 1997, Artists for whom contributions have been made by over twenty AGMA employers in the areas of opera and concert, may begin to use these funds not only to continue payments for the present group

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**Serving
Opera
Dance
Concert**

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Louise Gilmore
National Executive Secretary

AGMA: DEATH OR REBIRTH?

This summer, I was a witness in a National Labor Relations Board hearing which resulted from a petition filed by a group of Metropolitan Opera choristers, calling itself the Operatic Artists of America (OAA), and seeking to decertify AGMA as its union of representation. The OAA group sought, as its first objective, to represent only the regular choristers (78 members) and the steady extra choristers (2 members). Then the OAA changed its goals, attempting to enlist all of the weekly and per performance solo singers, staging staff members, and dancers of the Met. Finally, as its petition revealed, the OAA reduced its sights to the regular, steady extra, and extra choristers. Briefs from attorneys were submitted on October 7, 1996.

It is not known when the NLRB Regional Director will render a decision. One of the issues will be whether the chorus should be permitted to be severed from the remainder of the AGMA unit at the Met, thus perhaps paving the way for a splintering of sections not only in this opera house but generally. Ultimately, this would prove damaging to both the chorus membership and to every other AGMA member nationwide.

Individual artists and small in-house

or "company" unions have proven over time to be more vulnerable than national unions. No matter how benevolent any company management may be, change is inevitable. AGMA, on the other hand, is governed by and for its members. While individual leaders may change, the democratic philosophy remains constant. Virtually any artist who desires a hand in setting policy and running for local or national office has more than a good chance of success.

If AGMA were to be splintered at this critical juncture, much would be lost. In the three years since I have been employed in the National Office, AGMA has achieved these goals:

- ❖ Progressing from virtual bankruptcy to a strong and stable financial position
- ❖ Improving ties with National and Local AFL-CIO organizations
- ❖ Bolstering--perhaps saving--the NEA by 40,000 letters and repeated trips to Washington
- ❖ Inaugurating soloists' forums and a soloists' action committee
- ❖ Undertaking national delegate training and pre-professional outreach programs
- ❖ Installing a new computer system to more accurately track membership, dues, and finances
- ❖ Sharing more detailed information about the Union with our membership nationwide
- ❖ Teleconferencing all Board of Governors and national committee meetings
- ❖ Including more member input in all contract negotiations
- ❖ Organizing ten new companies in the past three years
- ❖ And many other advances engaging the talents of our members to improve conditions for themselves and their colleagues.

As a tribute to our efforts, the American Federation of Musicians has asked us to consider merger with that union, an offer which is being studied together with the prior offer from Actors Equity, by our Committee on Merger and Affiliation.

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From the President

Gerald Otto



**Is anyone
out there
reading
this?**

"A national union of performing artists" sometimes sounds like an oxymoron. Artists are some of the most independent people there are. How can they be "unionized?" The only answer is: through the dedication of everyone of us.

This union is some kind of wonderful. It is a wonder that it even exists. It was founded by soloists who saw a need to protect their fellow artists. They could have been comfortable looking out for themselves, but by building a stronger base, all artists benefit. Sometimes it will be the ones with the least needing the most help. Then there are many named artists who have benefited from the unity and strength of this union. It is not enough just to be a union. Many of us continue to make this a BETTER union, spend-

ing most of our energy working on one task after another. As the reforms continue we are amazed at how much more there is to be done. But damn, we have done a mountain of work reforming this union just in the last three years.

From successful recovery from the brink of bankruptcy to cutting to the bare bones of the national office staff to the implementation of "Rule One" we have made huge gains. We are organizing new companies, experiencing real growth, and getting more of you involved in the day-to-day work of this union. If you ever want to see democracy in action just come to a board meeting. Six years ago we worried if we would have a quorum for a meeting, seven people. Our last meeting was attended by over sixty board

members with proxy authorizations totaling 105 board members. That is amazing! We have a Local Area Executive Committee in New York for the first time. Our contracts continue to improve, especially in the areas of safety and health, work rules, and working conditions. We have reoriented our membership department from being a database to working as a true membership department working to address more issues of our members. AGMA continues to be flexible, looking for better ways to serve our members, such as a West Coast representative.

It feels good just writing these things down. Yes, there is more to do. If we as a union do not continually evolve we are doomed. We must reinvent ourselves every year. We must address the concerns of all our diverse membership. Remember, there is no such thing as "that union." If you are a member of AGMA "that union" is you.

Yours in Unionism

p.s. Have you sent a contribution to the American Guild of Musical Artists' Emergency Relief Fund recently? Try it. It feels good. Just write a check, any amount made out to AGMA Relief Fund and mail it to AGMA Relief Fund, 1727 Broadway, New York, NY 10019-5284.

BETTER MOVES®

As a reminder, we have included among your privileges as an AGMA member eligibility to participate in the Better Moves® program. As you will recall from previous mention in the AGMAZINE, this program is of great benefit to anyone in the process of buying or selling a home. The toll free number to inquire about further information for the Better Moves® program is 1-800-213-9130.

Plan B (Continued from page 1)

(TEIGIT) plan but also for payment of other health insurance premiums, co-payments, deductibles, pharmaceuticals, dental, optical, psychiatric, and other services and medically related expenditures.

A summary plan description of the revised Plan B and detailed information by mail and in this journal will be available soon.

Currently, TEIGIT offers two plans, one for active members in New York and California and a second plan to members outside of those areas. The changes should give maximum options to AGMA members by supplementing other insurance plans and by providing funds for uninsured medically related expenses.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS 1996 ELECTION RESULTS

Election Results

New York Area

387

Soloists (11 Vacancies)

JAN OPALACH	325
GWENDOLYN JONES	296
MELANIE SONNENBERG	289
JEANNE MICHELE CHARBONNET	282
EILEEN SCHAULER	278
MICHAEL LOFTON	268
JOEL SORENSEN	265
MARGARET GOODMAN	263
ANITA TERZIAN	263
JOHN LANKSTON*	3
KRISTINE JEPSON*	1
WRITE-IN VOTES	25

Choristers (9 Vacancies)

MARILYN PELLETIER	230
DEBORAH WILLIAMS	227
KAREN GRAHN	224
HARRIET GREENE	208
ROGER OHLSEN	203
NANCY KENDALL	197
HARRIS DAVIS	196
KENNETH DOVEL	193
JAMES BINGHAM	185
KAREN GRANT	176
ALAN SOKOLOFF	166
ROGER CROUTHAMEL	162
KENNETH BONJUKIAN	142
WRITE-IN VOTES	16

Dancers (2 Vacancies)

MARY BETH BUDD	276
VINCE COLLINS	250
WRITE-IN VOTES	5

STAGE DIRECTORS/MANAGERS (1 Vacancies)

PAUL KING	290
WRITE-IN VOTES	7

Southern California Area

116

Soloists (2 Vacancies)

BEVERLY ROBBINS	96
HELEN MCCOMAS	94
WRITE-IN VOTES	2

Choristers (2 Vacancies)

JONATHAN CURTSINGER	107
SUSAN BAKER	88
WRITE-IN VOTES	5

Dancers (1 Vacancy)

LOLA MONTES	97
WRITE-IN VOTES	0

STAGE DIRECTORS/MANAGERS (1 Vacancy)

PEGGY STENGER	101
WRITE-IN VOTES	0

Chicago Area

149

Soloists (1 Vacancy)

EMILY MANHART	135
WRITE-IN VOTES	3

Choristers (10 Vacancies)

ROBERT PRINDLE	144
CAROLYN BERGHOFF	141
THOMAS L..POTTER	140
TARTHA EDWARDS	139
KENNETH DONOVAN	136
BETTE MCGEE	136
JEFFREY TAYLOR	135
LORENE RICHARDSON	134
TERRY OZERS HERMAN	132
ROBERTA SAPER	126
WRITE-IN VOTES	16

STAGE DIRECTORS/MANAGERS (1 Vacancy)

CHRISTOPHER NICHOLSON	137
WRITE-IN VOTES	1

San Francisco Area

85

Soloists (1 Vacancy)

GREGORY STAPP	77
WRITE-IN VOTES	0

Choristers (1 Vacancy)

KATHERINE MCKEE	78
-----------------	----

Dancers (2 Vacancies)

NORA HEIBER	77
WRITE-IN VOTES	5

STAGE DIRECTORS/MANAGERS (1 Vacancy)

SANDRA SACHWITZ-BERNHARD	101
WRITE-IN VOTES	0

New Orleans Area

18

Soloists (1 Vacancy)

KAREN KALIN	18
WRITE-IN VOTES	0

Choristers (1 Vacancy)

DORIAN GRAY ALEXANDER	17
WRITE-IN VOTES	1

Continued on page 6

Key

Italics - Elected

* - Elected by Write-In



Alexander

Photo Not Available

Baker



Baretto



Berghoff

Photo Not Available

Bingham

Photo Not Available

Brugnolo

Photo Not Available

Budd

Photo Not Available

Camp



Charbonnet



Collins



Curtsinger



Davis



Donovan



Dorn



Dovel



Edwards



Goodman



Grahn



Greene



Hampton



Harned



Heiber



Jepson



Jones



Kalin



Kendall



King



Klingenberg



Lallone

Photo Not Available

Lankston

Photo Not Available

Newton



Manhart



McComas



McGee



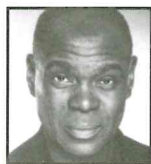
McKee



Montes



Morton



Lofton

Photo Not Available

Nicholson



Ohlsen



Opalach



Ozers Herman

Photo Not Available

Payne



Pelletier



Potter



Prindle



Richardson



Robinson



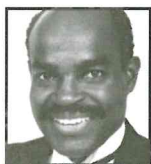
Sachwitz-Bernhard



Saper



Schauler



Scott



Sonnenberg



Sorensen



Stapp



Stenger

Board (Continued from page 4)

Philadelphia Area 14

Soloists (1Vacancy)
 NONE ELECTED
 WRITE-IN VOTES 10

Choristers (3 Vacancies)
 ENZO BRUGNOLO 2
 SHELLIE CAMP* 1
 WRITE-IN VOTES 17

Dancers (1Vacancy)
 NONE ELECTED
 WRITE-IN VOTES 3

Washington / Baltimore Area 99

Soloists (2 Vacancies)
 MARGARET STRICKLETT 95
 JOAN MORTON 88
 WRITE-IN VOTES 1

Choristers (2 Vacancies)
 JAMES HAMPTON 90
 PAUL J. KLINGENBERG 85
 WRITE-IN VOTES 2

Pittsburgh Area 149

Choristers (1Vacancy)
 ERMA THURSTON 26
 WRITE-IN VOTES 2

New England Area 20

Soloists (1 Vacancy)
 NONE ELECTED
 WRITE-IN VOTES 11

Choristers (1 Vacancy)
 GERALDINE BARRETTO 15
 WRITE-IN VOTES 4

Texas Area 149

Dancers (1Vacancy)
 JAMES PAYNE* 2
 WRITE-IN VOTES 5

Northwest Area 59

Soloists (1Vacancy)
 SHIRLEY HARNED 52
 WRITE-IN VOTES 0

Choristers (3 Vacancies)
 GEORGE SCOTT 51
 SUSAN DORN 48
 ROBERT WICKSTROM 45
 WRITE-IN VOTES 0

Dancers (2 Vacancies)
 ARIANA LALLONE 53
 CHARLES NEWTON 51
 WRITE-IN VOTES 3

Board Photos (Continued from page 5)



Stricklett



Taylor



Terzian



Thurston



Wickstrom



Williams

BRUCE SIMON RETAINED AS NATIONAL COUNSEL

AGMA recently announced that New York Attorney Bruce Simon, of Cohen, Weiss and Simon, has been selected as counsel for AGMA, serving and protecting the national interests of AGMA and its members. Mr. Simon is recognized as one of the top labor attorneys in the nation and represents unions such as the Teamsters.

Mortimer Becker, will continue as co-counsel for AGMA, possesses a wealth of AGMA history and entertainment law background.

Gilmore (Continued from page 2)

AGMA is profoundly grateful for the assistance and support of many Metropolitan Opera regular choristers and extra choristers, as well as Met dancers, staging staff members, and principal solo singers throughout this period. Principal soloist Erie Mills and stage director Bruce Donnell testified for AGMA during the NLRB hearings. Other artists were standing by if needed.

In addition, the Union has received support and encouragement from AGMA Artists around the world and from each of the other performing arts unions: American Federation of Radio and Television Artists, Screen Actors Guild, Actors Equity, American Guild of Variety Artists, and American Federation of Musicians. AGMA appreciates not only these expressions of unanimous support but the demonstration of the solidarity and protection of performing artists afforded by these unions and by the AFL-CIO, generally.

Sixty years after its founding and four years after the start of its renaissance, will AGMA's future be threatened from within? We must find a channel for the intensity and commitment shown by both sides during the NLRB hearings. This is an open invitation to work with your Union colleagues to promote the changes which will benefit all AGMA Artists. In an era when it is politically fashionable to attack human rights, the arts, and labor we must rely upon one another for protection, security, and solidarity. AGMA is growing stronger and more responsive. With your help, we will build a more perfect union.

Have you kept in touch? Be sure to notify the National Office of changes in address or telephone numbers.

PROFESSIONAL MUSINGS

Alice Parker

What's the real difference between the professional and the amateur chorus? I submit that it's not the quality of the product- there are superb amateur choirs. BUT: the professional singers focus their lives on their work it's not "on the side". They rehearse much more quickly, (my singers have nine hours of rehearsal , within the week of a concert, for each program). They bring immediate musicianship, technique, language and style to each service, and meet my demands on the same level as my training. Professionals remember: the same instruction is rarely given twice. And they perform at a consistent level. (The unions have a peculiar blindness here. Avery Fisher Hall won't allow a non-union orchestra, or stagehand, on stage, yet there seems to be no objection to an amateur chorus appearing with a professional orchestra. What gives? Can you imagine the reverse?)

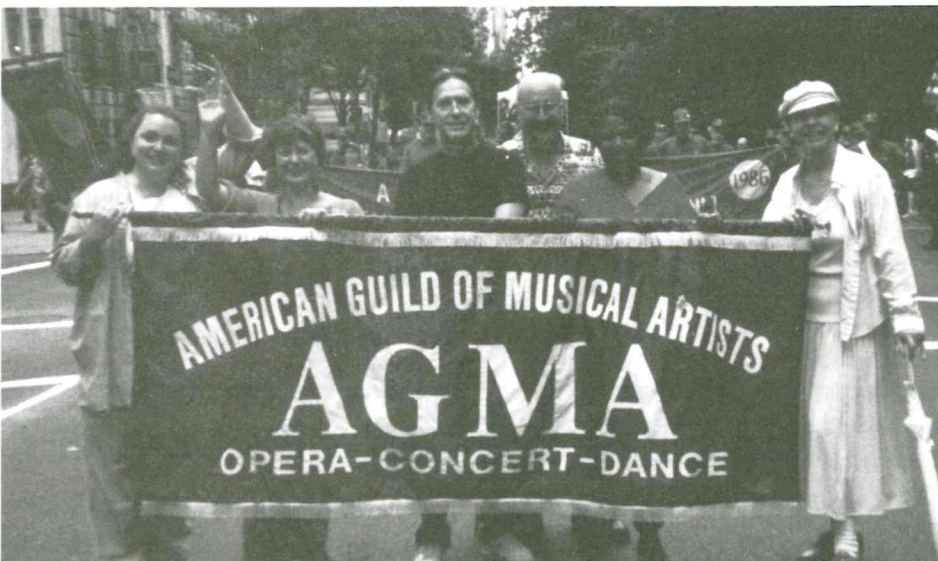
Let's separate economics from theology, and stop using amateur and professional as a measure of artistic dedication. In 20th century America, it should be possible for a singer as well as a violinist to have a variety of career

options, from solo to ensemble, from large groups to small, from specialized repertoire to all-inclusive. It's not a value judgment: it's a way (for the talented and hard-working) of earning a living.

I love all kinds of singers: old and young, church and school, community and home, paid and unpaid. I love especially working with my professional singers, who put their life-style on the line because they love to sing. When I am working with them there is a level of understanding between us-a professional base of shared knowledge that leads to immediate and secure music making. Hundreds of young singers graduate each year from our conservatories and universities. Should they not have this career open to them? I can't imagine the world without them . Long live singers and lovers!

Reprinted with permission from The Melodious Accord Newsletter.

Alice Parker, founder and conductor of Melodious Accord, which focuses on choral music, has been honored as a composer, writer, and conductor of distinction.



AGMA On The March - Once again the Labor Day Parade saw members of AGMA as part of the 4As' group. Participating here (L to R) Susan Davison (National Office), Linda Mays, Kenneth Young, Harris Davis, Julia Williams and Eileen Schauler.

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DANCE AT A GLANCE

Alexander Dubé, Dorothy Kochiras, and Barbara Hillman

Pacific Northwest Ballet. A unanimous vote by 43 AGMA Artists ratified their 3-year agreement. The wages will increase over 3 years by an additional 5% in the first year, 4% in the second year, and 4% in the third year of the collective bargaining agreement. Further increases and improvements of the collective bargaining agreement between Pacific Northwest Ballet and AGMA are in the following areas: pension, dental, disability/pregnancy, overtime, penalty, free day, travel, meal money, severance/exit pay, personal days and the NUTCRACKER pro rata. In addition, the dancers will receive copies of archival videotapes for personal use only. Increased adjustments in the ranks of soloists and principals begin in the 1996/97 season and seniority is increased and uncapped. There will no longer be a category of second year apprenticeship. And no Artist shall be demoted. This was a win-win achievement on the part of AGMA, the Dancers, and the PNB Administration. We applaud the PNB administration and the artistic directors, Kent Stowell and Francia Russell, for collectively addressing each and every need of the AGMA Members for the next 3 years of this collective bargaining agreement.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. This 3-year collective bargaining agreement was ratified by the Artists of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater by a vote of 20 in favor and 11 against. The significant improvements are in wages which will increase by an additional 5% in each year of the agreement. AGMA is pleased with the introduction of a first-time benefit in any of our collective bargaining agreements—child care in the work place.

Martha Graham Dance Company. The 3-year collective bargaining agreement was unanimously approved by the AGMA Artists of the Martha Graham Dance Company. The significant improvements in the collective bargaining agreement are in wages,

which will increase by an additional 3% in the first year, 4% in the second year, and 5% in the third year of the collective bargaining agreement. Other improvements are in the areas of seniority, overtime, penalty, and free day. The AGMA Retirement Fund contribution will increase by one half of one percent to equal a total employer contribution of 2.5%. In addition, the Artist now has a provision for personal days as well as additional compensation for merchandising.

Merce Cunningham Dance Company. The 3-year collective bargaining agreement was unanimously ratified by the AGMA Members of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. The improvement in wages, a combination of a Cost of Living Adjustment and seniority, equals an additional 4% in the first year, 5% in the second year, and 5% in the third year of the collective bargaining agreement. Other significant improvements in the collective bargaining agreement include meal money and guaranteed work weeks. The employer contribution to the AGMA Retirement Fund will be increased in the second and third year of the contract by an additional .5% percent to equal a total of a 2.5% contribution.

Feld Ballets/NY. The collective bargaining agreement was extended for one additional year and ratified by the AGMA Members of Feld Ballets/NY with the following improvements: wages will increase by an additional 5% and the employer contribution to the AGMA Retirement Fund will increase by an additional .5% percent to equal a total contribution of 2.5%. The meal money, overtime, penalty, free day and travel overtime rates will also increase.

Houston Ballet and Boston Ballet. Each of these collective bargaining agreements is extended one additional year with an increase of an additional 4% in wages.

HOUSTON BALLET REUNION - DANCER SEARCH UNDERWAY

A reunion of Houston Ballet dancers is being planned for Sunday, March 23, 1997. If you know how to contact any of the dancers listed below, please contact Suzanne Longley Morton, 826 Palmetto, Bellaire, Texas 77401, 713-663-7580 or Paul Legros, 2116 Goldsmith, Houston, Texas 77030, 713-660-6122.

Ahonen, Leo	Hernandez, Hector	Pontecava, Barbara
Allen, Judith	Hockman, Mark	Racca, Julie
Arvola, Soili	Horvath, Julius	Raimondo, Robert
Austin, Lisa	Hughes, Michaela	Reynolds, Sara
Barazovics, Stephen	Hutter, Victoria	Rilmurray, Jay
Barnes, Patricia	Ingle, Kimberley	Rivera, Amanda
Barnes, Simon	James, Adrian Vincent	Roberson, Laurence
Beaudoin, Jacqueline	Jessner, Matthew	Robertson, Coleen
Broughton, Genzi	Karlow, James	Rock, Richard
Caplan, Sharon	Kepler, Kathy	Ross, Cohen, Ira
Carbin, Robert	Koral, Meredith	Rowland, Sheryl
Clark, Cynthia	Lambson, Alauna	Sanchez, Robbie
Cleveland, Marcy	Lazphier, Jan	Sandell, Andrea
Cole, Holland	Lear, William	Santiago, Anthony
Coleman, Thaddeus	Lindholm, Karl	Schwender, Jerry
Cook, Steven	Loungway, Stuart	Scott, Christopher
Darling, Christopher	Lynn, Mary	Scott, John
Denman, Maureen	Macejunas, Deborah	Seller, Anthony
Dowker, Daniel	Martin, Lou	Shanehan, Michael
Ene, Viorica	Martin, William	Steivel, Bruce
Feder, Laura	McKechnie, Sheryl	Stewart, Nell
Ferguson Herman, Mary	McLaughlin, Mark	Studier, Johann
Fogle, Mindy	Meier, Jose	Sutton, James
Foose, Dick	Mendez, Antonia	Tarechow, Glen
Gaffikin, Shelagh	Meyer, Karen	Tikkanen, Matti
Gannon, Laura	Mossholder, Lynelle	Tillmans, Marie
Garcia, Aurelio	Myers, Kevin	Tully, Michael
Giese, Florence	Nesvadlia, Mary	Van Wickle, Rick
Giese, Jeff	Nevels, Cynthia	Vander Velde, Kathleen
Graham, Pamela	New, Shirley	Warburton, Edward
Guajardo, Adriana	Newby, Tommy	Weiss, Kathleen
Handler, Andrea	Nicolau, Dana	White, Michele
Hartung, Cheryl	Nunn, Leath	Wichterich, Betty
Haworth, Whit	Palmer, Ron	Wooley, Rafe
Hazelton, Richard	Panze, Lloyd	

AURORA RESIDENCE RECEIVES GRANT

The Actors' Fund of America was recently selected to receive a grant of \$750,000 from HUD in support of the new residence for affordable, supportive housing, The Aurora Residence.

The Fund was one of only eight recipients of the competitive grant given to community-based programs that address the needs of low-income Americans with HIV/AIDS.

Dance (Continued from page 8)

San Francisco Ballet. A new 3-year agreement was ratified by a vote of 47 to 1 (98%) on July 17, 1996, and approved by the AGMA Board of Governors on July 29. This new agreement has an effective date of July 1, 1996, through June 30, 1999. Highlights of this newly negotiated collective bargaining agreement include a total of an additional 10.5% (3% in the first year, 3% in the second year, and 4.5% in the third year) over the next three years for wages, and increases in overtime and penalty rates. Per diem and extraordinary risk rates will increase by an additional 2.5% per year. The employer's contribution to the AGMA Retirement Fund will now total 4% in the first year, 5% in the second year, and 5% in the third year. Other improvements include an increased rest span of 13 hours, a decreased work span 9 hours, a full-time physical therapist; and the inclusion of Apprentices as regular Artists under the contract. There is now a provision promoting harmonious relations and prohibiting all forms of harassment in the workplace.

Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority (Chicago's Ruth Page's THE NUTCRACKER). A new 3-year collective bargaining agreement was reached. Wages will increase by an additional 3% in each year of the collective bargaining agreement and the employer's contribution to the AGMA Retirement Fund will increase by an additional 1% to equal a total employer paid contribution of 3% in each year of this agreement.

Cincinnati Ballet. A 3-year collective bargaining agreement was reached with the assistance of a tenacious Dancers' Negotiating Committee, Bruce Meizlish, and the Artists of the Cincinnati Ballet. The improvements of the new contract are as follows: elimination of the second year apprenticeship in the 3rd year of the contract, improved language for extraordinary risk, and salary increases in each year of the collective bargaining



OPERATOR

GOODBYES, NEGOTIATIONS, AND CONTRACTS

Tom Jamerson

Ardis Krainik, General Director of Lyric Opera of Chicago, has announced her retirement from that position. Ardis was a singer and, as a result, an AGMA member who took Honorable Withdrawal from AGMA to become one of the most successful General Directors of an opera company.

One of the many achievements attained by Ardis in her tenure at the Lyric, was to bring to light the talents of the American Artist. She did not believe the ancient concept "unless it's European, it cannot be good". While the Lyric certainly did not become exclusively an "American Company", maintaining its "International Status", Ms. Krainik found that she could look to the American Artists for her casting and usually fill those positions quite successfully.

Thanks, in no small part to Ms. Krainik, her training programs for young Artists, her faith in those Artists, and her offering them a place to perform, the American Artist is seen as being among the best prepared, best trained in the world. This is not to say that other opera companies which have training programs have not contributed or are not supportive of the American Artist. In fact many companies across the country, in their training programs as well as the many Apprentice Programs, provide the excellent training needed for Artists.

However, without a place to perform, these training programs become meaningless and the Lyric is one of the major companies giving these opportunity to American Artists. Our thanks to the Lyric and all other companies who have supported the American Artists through training and performance opportunity.

And Ardis, thanks for your faith in our American Artists.

◆◆◆

The Negotiations with six of the major regional opera companies: The Dallas Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Houston

Grand Opera, San Diego Opera, Seattle Opera, and The Washington Opera (fondly referred to as "Les Six") are continuing. Thus far there have been negotiation sessions in Houston, Dallas, and Seattle, totaling approximately 156 hours of talks. For the first time in my recollection, there has been participation in these negotiations by representatives of the Principal Artists, through the Action Committee for Solo Singers known as ACSS (*pronounced access*), as well as area representatives Eleni Kallas of the Washington Baltimore Area, Carolyn Carpp of the Pacific Northwest Area, and Benny Hopper of the Texas Area.

During these negotiations, input from many solo singers on specific matters concerning the negotiations has been solicited by the negotiating committee. Response has been very good and a great deal of information has been received. This has enabled the representatives and staff to work toward the needs of the members directly affected during the negotiations. Please feel free to express your ideas concerning the National Opera Agreement.

◆◆◆

Last spring a four-year agreement was reached with the Western Opera Theater, the touring arm of the San Francisco Opera, which contained wage increases of 7% over the life of the contract. There were improvements in per-diems and working conditions. This year the company will tour "THE BARBER OF SEVILLE".

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UNION FAMILY SAVERS



SEATTLE CONCERT BENEFITS RELIEF FUND

George Scott

The idea of a chorus concert for the AGMA Relief Fund was first suggested to me by Louise Gilmore, AGMA's National Executive Secretary. During an AGMA Board meeting back in September 1995, Gerald Otte spoke about AGMA's identity and its future in a way that made a deep impression on me, and made me start thinking about Seattle Opera's chorus. I wanted the city of Seattle to know what a great opera chorus it has, to give our chorus more exposure, and to somehow let the area know about our affiliation with AGMA. I shared my ideas with Louise Gilmore, and she suggested a concert to benefit the AGMA Relief Fund.

When I brought up the idea of a chorus benefit to the Seattle Opera Chorus at an AGMA meeting, they were enthusiastic about the idea. A committee was formed, consisting of Sarah Kern, Monte Jacobson, Pauline Tobias, Lynn Muehleisen, Beth Kirchoff and myself. We approached our chorusmaster, George Fiore, who agreed to help us. With the assistance of the associate chorusmaster, Beth Kirchoff, he prepared the music for the concert. Our luck was with us as well in Sarah Kern and Monte Jacobson, members of the Seattle Opera Chorus who are also employees of Seattle Opera's marketing department. Sarah put together a budget for us,

and Sarah and Monte were able to get our tickets printed at no cost. They obtained free advertising in various fine arts programs and magazines, as well as free air time on the radio station KING-FM.

Essential to the success of the event was the full support and backing of the Seattle Opera Association. Our general director, Speight Jenkins, was our master of ceremonies for the gala concert, and provided all kinds of support. Thanks to one of our former members who is a member of the University Congregational Church, we were able to obtain the use of the church sanctuary at no charge. Also indispensable was Pauline Tobias, who allowed us full use of her personal phone for ticket sales.

Thanks to the efforts and energy of those mentioned here and many more, the concert was a tremendous success. 48 singers performed on the evening of June 16, 1996, and raised \$5961 for the AGMA Relief Fund.

Once again, thanks to the program committee, Speight Jenkins, the Seattle Opera Association, George Fiore, Beth Kirchoff, Vincent Feraudo, Cathleen Dunn and of course the fabulous Seattle Opera Chorus.

CHICAGO RAFFLE - ANOTHER WINNER FOR THE RELIEF FUND

Bryan Miller

AGMA Chicago's fourth annual Relief Fund Raffle marked another success, with all 500 tickets sold (at \$20 each) and over \$10,000 was raised for our union's charitable arm.

National Board of Governors member and Lyric Women's Chorus representative Carolyn Berghoff, whose brilliant idea the raffle was in the first place, turned the running of it over to me this year, and I built on the foundation of her earlier work. There were two innovations: the number of prizes was increased, with 24 winners (pretty good odds!), and with all but one prize donated. We still had to pay for the popular \$100 Tower Records gift certificate, but our generous friends at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Ravinia Festival, Chicago Opera Theater, Music of the Baroque and other groups were openhanded with subscriptions and special occasion tickets.

This year we turned to our soloist colleagues, asking them for autographed recordings to include as prizes, and we got a great response. Samuel Ramey gave us both his "Faust" and "Susannah" (more than one person bought a second ticket in hopes of winning one or the other!), Susanne Mentzer contributed her "Barber of Seville," with autographs from several stars, and Renee Fleming wrote a wonderful inscription on the front piece of her new "Herodiade." We're extremely grateful to them for their help. We also solicited restaurant and hotel gift certificates, to broaden the appeal of the raffle to those whose first love isn't choral music. And members of the Lyric and CSO Choruses helped out with contributions of other autographed recordings and gift certificates.

We had a new outstanding seller this year, supplementary chorister

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HOUSTON GRAND OPERA RAFFLE A SUCCESS FOR AGMA RELIEF FUND

Kimberly Lane

Houston Grand Opera Chorus' Spring Raffle was a huge success due to the tremendous effort of all the HGO choristers and the generosity of several soloists willing to give of their time and talents. Due to a scheduling conflict, a benefit concert had to be postponed.

Tickets were sold prior to performance and again at intermission, and the drawing was held at the end of intermission.

Hard-working committee members include Jan Arnold, Barbie Brandon, Kimberly Lane, Penny McCarty, Bob Sheets, Doug Threeton, and Audrey Vallance. Barbie Brandon was in charge of Public Relations, including the press releases and announcements heard on several local radio stations and listed in community

papers. Penny's responsibilities included printing and distribution of tickets as well as tracking sales. Thanks to Derek and

for two at the DoubleTree, Four Seasons, and Lancaster Hotels, dinner for four at Brennan's, dinner for two at Damian's, and dinner for four with Susanne Mentzer at Los Andes (thanks, Susanne), tickets for two to HGO's production of *Susannah* and dinner at BirraPoretti's, and airline tickets to New Orleans from Travel Tech, Inc.

The top ticket seller amongst choristers was Pat Hand, whose efforts won her dinner at Brennan's restaurant and a special commendation from Samuel Ramey. Ralph Dowden was a close second, and Honorable Mention goes to Ann Musselman.

A big, huge THANKS Y'ALL to the members of Houston Grand Opera Chorus who sang and sold their way to a highly successful raffle to benefit the AGMA Relief Fund.



Top ticket seller for the Houston Grand Opera Chorus Pat Hand (c) with husband Carl Hand (L) and Samuel Ramey (R) backstage during a performance of "Susannah" at HGO.

Audrey for manning the booth! Kimberly secured raffle prizes including: weekends

ly successful raffle to benefit the AGMA Relief Fund.

Chicago Raffle (Continued from page 11)

Charles Rhodes; he sold 125 tickets out of the 500 — because that's all we had to give him! The second place seller was Bryan Miller, with a tie for third between Candice Crane and Michael Cook. The raffle couldn't have succeeded without the help of Marilyn DeStefano and Carolyn Berghoff, or without all the hard working people who sold tickets to their friends, neighbors, colleagues and relatives. And we're also grateful to our stellar ticket-pullers at the drawing, held during a performance of "Goetter-

daemmerung," dramatic sopranos Jane Eaglen and Elizabeth Byrne.

It's not hard to have a successful raffle. All you need is enthusiasm, and a willingness to ask others for their help. We've found that if you just explain what the Relief Fund does for your colleagues, most people who can afford to are more than happy to help. Just use your imagination in soliciting prizes and ticket sales, and a little bit of time and effort can turn into a big help for the good work of the AGMA Relief Fund.

"SURF" TO UNION PRIVILEGE

AGMA members may "surf the net" and find a new site by Union Privilege. Union Privilege, AFL-CIO, celebrated Labor Day Weekend by launching a World Wide Web site. The site, located at the Internet address <http://www.unionpriv.org>, includes information about the Union Privilege benefit programs which are available only to union members (in good standing) and their families.

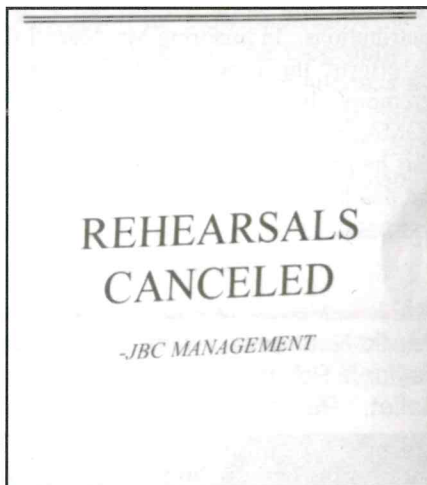
The new site includes a mission statement explaining how the organization serves union members, descriptions of each of the benefit programs, and the latest Union Privilege news, including select articles from UNION PLUS magazine. It also includes links to the AFL-CIO's Web site at <http://www.aflcio.org>.

If you are interested in learning more about planning a benefit event for the AGMA Relief Fund or volunteering your time and energy to help others, please contact Valerie Guilfoyle at the AGMA Relief Fund, (212) 265-3687.

Dance (Continued from page 9)

agreement; spanning an additional 2.4% to 4.7%; increased meal money and seniority without a cap of maximum number of years. The number of guaranteed work weeks was reduced from 32 to 31 in the first year of the agreement due to the company's loss of its sister-city arrangement; however, 32 minimum guaranteed work weeks were maintained in the 2nd and 3rd years of the agreement. The employer's paid contribution to the AGMA Retirement Fund increased by an additional .5% in the 2nd year and in 3rd years of the agreement to equal a total of 2.5%. It was further agreed that up to 3 sick days may be used as personal days in each year of this collective bargaining agreement.

Joffrey (Continued from page 1)



sented with an ultimatum unless they immediately agreed to formally extend the contract, Joffrey would cancel its Nutcracker season. On the morning of November 5th, the Artists were eventually locked out of the building where they usually rehearse.

Negotiations continued throughout November 5 and a tentative agreement was reached in the evening, which included extending the current agreement through August 31, 1997, and the following improvements in the areas of economics:

❖ The agreement will be retroactive from October 1, 1996;

Joffrey Ballet of Chicago. See related article on page 1.

Pennsylvania Ballet. A 3-year collective bargaining agreement was reached with the following improvements: increases in overtime, penalty, travel overtime, and meal money. The minimum wage scale is frozen in the first year of the agreement with an additional 3% increase in the second year and a 3.8% increase in the third year. There are increases in the seniority monies and cap, and on-stage rehearsed bows or notes will never occur during any intermission. All Artists with seniority will be offered the same number of guaranteed work weeks, new language addresses the replacement of the artistic director,

❖ All compensation related to the Agreement will be increased by 5%;

❖ Apprentice salaries will be increased by 3%;

❖ Minimum base salaries will be increased by 2%;

❖ Overscale Artists will receive a 5% increase, plus a 2% weekly bonus;

❖ Compensation for all other Artists will be increased by:

- a) moving to the next higher scale level or next higher seniority, or
- b) 7%, whichever results in a greater increase;

❖ Supplemental Unemployment Benefits (a.k.a. S.U.B.) will be increased to \$90.00 for each unemployment week.;

❖ Supplemental disability for illness and / or serious injury will be increased by 3% to \$257.50.

Credit is to be given to the Members of the Dancers' Negotiating Committee and to each and every Artist of the Joffrey, for reaching this superlative agreement.

It must also be pointed out that the Artists remained united, knowing that the threats of management (canceling the NUTCRACKER season) could

Continued on page 16

each artist shall be guaranteed reengagement for the following season, employer percentage contribution to artist's dental program increases, and each artist is guaranteed 2 pairs of complimentary tickets for each repertory season including the Nutcracker season. Severance and career transition provisions are improved as well.

Congratulations nationwide to our AGMA Delegates, Members of the Dancers' Negotiating Committees, and our AGMA Members who attended meetings/negotiations as observers.

Collective bargaining agreements for NYCB, *Dance Theatre of Harlem*, and our most recently organized company, the *Nashville Ballet*, are currently being negotiated.

Nationwide trends/observations:

1. employers wanting an Artists' representative serving on the board;
2. monthly scheduled meetings between Dancers' Committee/Delegates and management to discuss concerns/grievances in a timely manner;
3. bi-weekly payroll and direct deposit

Arbitrations/settlements:

The demand for arbitration against *The Joffrey Ballet of Chicago* was settled to the satisfaction of the AGMA member.

The demand for arbitration filed against *Ballet Hispanico of New York* for wrongful dismissal of an Artist, was settled to the satisfaction of the AGMA Member.

The demand for arbitration filed against *Pennsylvania Ballet* for not paying extraordinary risk monies has been settled in a tentative agreement to the satisfaction of the AGMA Members affected.

The demand for arbitration filed against *Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre* for not paying overtime monies due and

Continued on page 15

TIBBETT AWARD PRESENTED TO MERRILL

On May 6, 1996 the legendary Robert Merrill received the Lawrence Tibbett award from the AGMA Relief Fund for his lifetime achievements in working to support fellow artists in times of need. As his wife Marion, their grandchildren and other family and friends watched (and laughed), several of Bob's colleagues and friends told stories, every one both hilariously funny and remarkably touching, of their experiences with Bob over the

years. Skitch Henderson, Founder and Musical Director of The New York Pops, Alfred Hubay, the long-time manager of the MET box office, Barry Tucker of the Richard Tucker Foundation and Arthur Richman of the New York Yankees had the audience in tears as they recounted some of their most memorable moments with Bob Merrill. Gerald Otte, the President of AGMA and Chairman of the Relief



AGMA President Gerald Otte (L) with Robert Merrill, Marion Merrill, and Relief Fund Executive Administrator Floran Yagoda at the Lawrence Tibbett award ceremony.

Fund, presented the Lawrence Tibbett award to Bob, who surprised and delighted the audience by breaking into song.

Bob Merrill has long been a staunch supporter of the AGMA Relief Fund, offering his entertaining talents and humor to raise money for his fellow artists. He was present when Regina Resnik accepted the Lawrence Tibbett award in 1992, and stepped in at the very last moment to host

The Relief Fund's "Night at the Metropolitan Opera" when the intended presenter was unable to be there. One of the most enthusiastic and original supporters of the Fund over the years, Mr. Merrill well deserved the applause he received when he stood to accept the award named for AGMA's founder.

The AGMA Relief Fund thanks all of those who attended, including Bob's friend Sherrill Milnes, who

dropped in on his way to an engagement, and those who could not attend but sent contributions. In honoring Mr. Merrill for his efforts, the Lawrence Tibbett award ceremony also raised new funds to assist AGMA members in need. Thanks to all who helped make the evening a success, and thank you, as always, to Bob Merrill. Congratulations!

GALA BENEFITS CAREER TRANSITION FOR DANCERS

On October 7, the world of dance united in New York City in a benefit for the career counseling and scholarship programs of Career Transition For Dancers. Chaired by Donna Hanover Giuliani and Caroline H. Newhouse, the event was hosted by Chita Rivera. Honorees and presenters that evening included Herbert Ross, Gregory Hines, Mikhail



Performers for the CTFD Gala included (L to R) Carlos Acosta and Lauren Anderson (Houston Ballet), Leslie Browne (New York City Opera). In attendance was Seth Belliston along with performers Louise Nadeau, and Paul Gibson, all three with Pacific Northwest Ballet.



Baryshnikov, Leslie Browne and Donna Hanover Giuliani. An evening

of performances featured representatives from National Dance Institute,

Pacific Northwest Ballet, Sarita Allen, Taylor 2, Pennsylvania Ballet, Houston Ballet, Parsons Dance Company, Martha Graham, New York City Ballet, Philadanco, and Riverdance.

Career Transition For Dancers provides transitional assistance to AGMA dancers as they move into new careers. CTFD is located at the AGMA National Office in New York as well a west coast location(SAG-LA).

NEW YORK CONCERT SINGERS' NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUES TO PROGRESS

Pamela Warrick-Smith

In the past few years a renewed dedication among concert singers resulted in the Concert Singers Committee, a committee dedicated to addressing the membership needs in the concert field. During this period there has been use of Rule One, informational picketing, and increased communications among the New York concert singers.

As of November 27, 1996, AGMA has secured signed collective bargaining agreements with Opera Orchestra

of New York and The New York Philharmonic. Tentative agreements have been reached with Music Before 1800 and Ascension Music.

Discussions are continuing with Musica Sacra, Melodious Accord, New York Virtuoso Singers, and New York Concert Singers. Rule One remains in effect against Lincoln Center For The Performing Arts, Inc. as well as the recent action against the National Chorale.

TIBBETT BIOGRAPHY

Dear Rogue, a biography of AGMA's first President, Lawrence Tibbett, by Herzel Weinstat and Bert Wechsler, is now available from Amadeus Press. In this biography, we find a man's life so full of success and personal battles that it almost seems to be a theatre piece onto itself. From early triumphs in opera and movies to

the battle with a declining career and personal problems, this book documents important events and observations in this performer's life.

Although this book focuses more on the darker side of Lawrence Tibbett, it does provide an insight to Tibbett the man, rather than Tibbett the star. Also included in this well notated book is an extensive compact disc discography.

Dance (Continued from page 13)

owing according to the collective bargaining agreement was settled to the satisfaction of the AGMA Members affected.

The demand for arbitration filed against *Martha Graham Dance Company* for failure to provide an AGMA member with proper notice of non-reengagement and harassment is tentatively set for the beginning of 1997

Rule One (Continued from page 1)

prior to the notice of Rule One against the National Chorale should be honored. If you have any questions in this regard, please contact the AGMA office or the chairperson of the Concert Singers Committee, Pamela Warrick-Smith, at 718-292-5797

WRITERS WANTED!

Is something happening in your area? Know of an AGMA member doing something special? What about a humorous anecdote about performing. The AGMAZine needs information, stories, and ideas. Are you a cartoon artist waiting to be discovered? Submit your information (and photos) to Dianne James c/o AGMA, 1727 Broadway, New York, NY 10019-5284.

We want to hear from you.

IN MEMORIA

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 Ethel Butler*
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 John Giles
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 Pilar Lorengar
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On The Lighter Side Of Performing

Once, several years ago, there was an amateur theatrical company that had a young man around which the world should revolve (or so he thought.) He was confident that he was the brightest, the best looking, the most talented -- a legend in his own mind. He was also rude and hateful to his fellow performers, he was rude to the costumer, the make-up artists, the dresser and so on.

Night after night he terrorized the company until finally the costumer could take no more. Each night a 1/16" or so was taken in on the offender's pants. Slowly, each day, the pants became tighter and more uncomfortable. The actor then assumed he was gaining a little weight which certainly would not do for such a god. Each following day would find him working out longer and longer at a nearby gym, eating a little less at meals, and trying to avoid anyone noticing his plight. No matter what he did, he continued to have a costume problem. Only when it reached the point of the pants splitting from his "weight" did the cast and crew declare victory and restore the clothes back to the original size.

Joffery (Continued from page 13)

become a reality. This AGMA shop remains strong and united and continues to be a paradigm within the dance industry.

Congratulations to all.

AREA NEWS

Boston

Boch Center for the Performing Arts (Mashpee, MA) has announced that Boston Ballet has signed an agreement to perform at the Center's yet to be constructed Meadow Summer Stage. The agreement proposes a two to four week residency each summer, beginning in 1998 and continuing through 2003.

Boch Center's Meadow Summer Stage is part of its first phase Community Arts Center planned to begin construction in 1997, and to be opened to the public in 1998. The audience area of the outdoor venue will seat a total of 2,000 people - 800 under shelter in flexible seating and 1,200 people casually seated on the lawn. The building housing the summer stage also provides approximately 15,000 square feet of year-round performance, rehearsal, and community meeting room areas, performance support spaces, and administrative offices.

Los Angeles

John Clifford's Los Angeles Ballet has been ordered by an arbitrator to pay dancers of the defunct company monies owed them under the failed company's agreement with AGMA. The award currently stands at 1.3 million dollars.

Pittsburgh

Mr. Terrence S. Orr has been appointed as the new artistic director of Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre effective September, 1997, following the announced retirement of Patricia Wilde in November, 1995. Mr. Orr's responsibilities as artistic director will involve the selection of ballets, including the introduction of new works into the repertoire as well as commissioning original ballets; expansion of the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School by increased studio space and broadened selection of classes, and heightened community outreach programs. Congratulations to Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and Mr. Orr on this selection.

WEINGARTEN RULES

Under the Supreme Court's Weingarten decision, when an investigatory interview by an employer of an employee occurs, the following rules apply:

Rule 1. The employee must make a clear request for union representation before or during the interview. *The employee cannot be punished for making this request.*

Rule 2. After the employee makes the request, the employer must choose from three options. The employer must either:

- a. Grant the request and delay questioning until the union representative arrives and has a chance to consult privately with the employee: or
- b. Deny the request and end the interview immediately; or
- c. Give the employee a choice of: (1) having the interview without representation or (2) ending the interview.

Rule 3. If the employer denies the request for union representation, and continues to ask questions, it commits an unfair labor practice and the employee has a right to refuse to answer. *The employer may not discipline the employee for such a refusal.*