

Senza Sordino

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Toward UNITY 1998:

DUES & DON'TS

"Federation Work Dues—An Intolerable Burden" cried the headline of the August 1980 *Senza Sordino*. The anguished voice was a response to a new Federation work dues of 0.5%. Yet with or without Federation work dues, most of the money that musicians pay to the AFM never leaves the local office. The success or failure of the AFM as a trade union can only be assessed by putting the locals under the same microscope that local officers so delight in using to dissect the faults of the national office.

While there is much that the AFM does badly or not at all, it does excel in at least one area—it has its hands deeper into its members' pockets than almost any other union in the United States. Members of ICSOM orchestras pay, on average, close to 3% of their income to their union in the form of dues (exclusive of strike fund dues and internal assessments), an average of approximately \$1,350 per year per ICSOM musician. Some members of ICSOM orchestras pay twice that amount. (The average American union member paid \$425 in union dues in 1995, according to a study by the Employment Policy Foundation.) The situation for musicians in OCSM orchestras is comparable in percentage terms, while things are much worse for members of ROPA orchestras, who pay, on average, over 4% of their earnings to the union as membership and work dues.

Although there are many different dues structures and levels in American unions, the most common formula (one adopted by the United Auto Workers, the Teamsters, and the Communication Workers of America, among others) is a monthly payment of twice the members' hourly rate, the equivalent of 1.2% work dues. Unlike the AFM, membership dues in these unions includes membership in their strike funds.

Of course, these are large unions, composed mostly of workers who work full-time under collective bargaining agreements. What about other entertainment unions? The Screen Actors Guild (SAG) is probably the best-known of the entertainment unions that belong to the AFL-CIO. SAG has 90,000 members, many of whom do not work full-time as actors. It charges basic annual dues of \$85, and work dues of 1.5%, which only applies to amounts earned over \$5,000 per year. SAG's initiation fee of \$1,118 is quite high by the standards of most unions, but clearly SAG, an entertainment union comparable in size and membership demographics to the AFM, seems to need much less of its members' money to represent them and provide them service. But then, SAG has no locals; it has branch offices and local councils in cities with significant film work, but these entities are not autonomous and must report to the national board of directors.

Interestingly, the national office of the AFM also charges 1.5% work dues on work in the same industry, electronic media. Unfortunately, every AFM local with significant electronic media activity tacks on *another* 1% to 2.5% dues to that figure. Yet the problems of dealing with electronic media work are very similar for the AFM and for SAG; even the employers are largely the same. Why does the AFM need so much more of its members' money?

Other entertainment unions include Actor's Equity, which charges annual dues of \$78 and work dues of 2% (with a \$3,000 annual cap), and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA), another AFL-CIO union in the electronic media industry, which currently allows locals to set their own dues, although part of their current restructure process will institute a uniform national dues structure. Currently the major AFTRA locals appear to charge, on average, less than 2% work dues, with a typical annual cap under \$1,000. The American Guild of Musical Artists (AGMA), which represents dancers and singers and deals with some of the same employers as does the AFM, charges \$78 per year and 2% work dues, with an annual cap of \$2,000.

The AFM, in addition to charging dues that are out of whack with the rest of the labor movement, engages in another unusual practice—charging different dues depending on the workplace. Playing an instrument is essentially the same work in a Broadway pit, a bar mitzvah, a Hollywood sound stage, or Middletown Symphony Hall, but most locals charge different work dues rates for each kind of work (the work dues on the bar mitzvah generally goes uncollected because such jobs generally go unreported).

Exercise: What would you pay in dues if you were a member of SAG? How much would you save over what you pay now? If you were in the UAW, and paid 1/20th of your weekly earnings per month, what would you pay? Would you pay a different rate for assembling trucks than you would assembling cars?

(continued on next page)

In This Issue

Dues & Don'ts	1
Book Review: Organizing Genius	3
Rhapsody In Bluegrass, Part III	6
Voicings	11
Newslets	12

(DUES & DON'TS: continued from page 1)

Where does the money go?

Fundamentally, unions exist to do three things: organize workers, bargain for those workers, and administer the agreements reached in collective bargaining to benefit the workers. But just how successful are the locals of the AFM in doing these things?

While the AFL-CIO has set a goal for its member unions of spending 30% of their resources on organizing, only a few AFM locals have real organizing programs or even staff organizers, and few local officers have either training or background in organizing. As a result, few locals succeed in bringing in new members who can be helped by collective bargaining. Many locals have not even been able to negotiate agreements with employers who already employ union members, whether for local scale wages or for so-called “dark” dates (jobs that are not reported to the union, usually for below scale wages). Many locals have contractors who serve on their boards, which is a disincentive for the locals to organize those employers’ workers.

Symphony musicians have always felt secure knowing that their managements could never replace them with scabs in a labor dispute. But there are increasing numbers of large orchestral institutions in the U.S. that are non-union, such as the Portland Symphony (ME), the Naples Philharmonic (FL), and the New World Symphony (FL) (annual budget over \$7 million), and thus an increasing pool of trained and competent non-union symphony musicians exists.

Exercise: How much does your local spend annually on organizing? Does your local have a staff organizer? If not, why not? How many new collective bargaining agreements has your local signed with employers in the last five years?

Since the advent of ICSOM in the early 1960’s, the picture regarding negotiating symphony agreements is less gloomy. AFM locals are required by Section 5.34 of the AFM Bylaws to provide “competent representation in negotiations.” In most ICSOM orchestras, this has meant that the orchestra chooses, and the local pays, the negotiator, generally an attorney specializing in labor law. But the burden of preparing and conducting the negotiation remains mostly with the volunteer orchestra committee, to be done in their spare time, generally without remuneration.

Only recently has the AFM and its locals even begun to provide meaningful help in preparing for bargaining. The AFM still does not have a complete collection of current local collective bargaining agreements in the theater or symphonic fields, even though players’ conferences and orchestra committees have begged for a complete contract database for years. Nor do the AFM and its locals have a systematic program for analyzing the finances of the employers it bargains with, nor the state of the industries in which its members work, nor health and safety issues of interest to its members. Yet what could be more basic for a union than to have a complete file of the agreements that it has with employers? What could be more basic for a union than researching the employers or analyzing the industries in which its members work? And most unionists would find appalling the notion that a union could do without a major occupational safety effort, especially in a field so prone to career-threatening injuries as the music industry.

In some negotiations, local officers are very helpful in working with other unions, a local solidarity committee, or the central labor council, but all too often the orchestra committee is left to flounder around by itself in the local network of labor activists. And when it comes to developing community support through public relations, most orchestra committees are totally on their own. A handful of locals have paid for their orchestra’s efforts to publicize their cause, but most orchestras that have gone this route have had to raise the necessary resources to do so out of their own pockets. Yet when orchestra musicians spend wads of their own money to protect their jobs and their salaries, they are also protecting the local’s most dependable source of income—work dues from symphony musicians. Most other unions don’t regard public relations during negotiations as a frivolous expenditure of the money they get from their members.

Only a bare handful of locals have offered their members on-site help, provided by trained organizers, in internal orchestra organizing and sustaining a strike, even though strikes are only lost when the strikers begin to feel frightened, alone, and abandoned. And, of course, if an orchestra wants to belong to the AFM’s strike fund, additional dues are required—usually paid by the musicians, not the local.

Exercise: How much direct support (money and staff time) does your local provide for bargaining? For strike preparation? For PR? For internal organizing? Count both direct expenditures and officers’ time. Does your local have a strike fund, or pay your strike fund dues?

Contract administration is the last of the trilogy of basic union duties. Here again, most of the work is done by the volunteer orchestra committee; many local officers lack sufficient negotiating background to be able to help much in administering agreements. Few ICSOM orchestras have reported difficulty in getting arbitrations funded by their local, but then most ICSOM orchestras generate very few grievances that go all the way to arbitration—a testimony to the effectiveness of the volunteer orchestra committees in negotiating and administering their contracts.

Exercise: How many grievances in your orchestra have gone to arbitration in the past five years? How much did your local spend (staff time and legal costs) on those arbitrations? How much time did the orchestra committee spend?

So what does the local do with your dues money?

The two line items that lurk largest in most locals’ budgets are officer/staff compensation and payments to the national AFM. Whether or not the money that goes to the national is well-spent is the subject for another article; nor is it something that an individual local can control. But most of the money stays with the locals. And locals can control how much they spend on staff and officers and, equally importantly, what those staff and officers do. So, aside from the basic trilogy of union responsibilities, what *do* they do?

A great deal of staff and officer time typically is spent in dues collection and member retention (as distinct from organizing). Unlike most unions, where dues are entirely work-based and usually collected by the employer through a checkoff system, AFM locals have to bill most of their members for both annual dues and work dues. This is both costly and labor-intensive. Few engagements yield

enough work dues to make the cost of dues collection less than prohibitively expensive. And the fact that each local has its own system for tracking and billing work dues makes economies of scale impossible.

Exercise: How much does your union spend collecting your work dues (supplies, postage, office equipment, and staff time)? How much does your union spend collecting work dues on casual engagements? Calculate the ratio between income and expense for both symphonic and casual engagements work dues collection.

Another massive pile of paper for most locals are payroll forms for Music Performance Trust Fund (MPTF) performances. The MPTF is, along with "local autonomy," one of the great sacred cows of the AFM. But, while worthwhile performances come from the MPTF program, many locals find it difficult, time-consuming, and expensive to administer.

Exercise: How much time do your local officers and office staff spend in running MPTF? Does the 2.5% work dues that your local retains from MPTF gigs pay for the program's administration? What does the AFM office in New York do with the 2.5% (\$275,000 in 1996) that it gets from MPTF jobs?

Other piles of paper that are pushed around the average local union office are membership applications from musicians rejoining in order to work a job, lists of suspended, expelled, and dead members for the newsletter, charges that leaders file against other leaders for underbidding them, and letters dunning members for working unreported dates that the local discovered by scanning the newspaper. Is this what a union should be doing with its money?

Muss es sein?

A union can't be run without money. But are the needs and problems of running a union for instrumental musicians so unusual that musicians must pay higher dues than virtually any other workers in America?

A hypothetical trade division, or non-geographic local, of symphony musicians, charging 1.5% work dues, would have revenue

of approximately \$4.2 million (based on work dues paid by OCSM, ROPA, and ICSOM orchestras only), or around \$38,000 per year per orchestra. This would seem more than adequate to meet the legitimate trade union needs of symphony musicians, including organizing, health and safety initiatives, and a strike fund available to all symphony musicians. Unfortunately, the idea of a trade division has become politically incorrect in the AFM, even though the IEB promised a continuing investigation of the concept in 1991.

But there are existing examples that also suggest that a work dues level of about 1.5% could support a musicians' union as well as it supports virtually every other union in the United States. The case of the Screen Actors' Guild suggests that a fairly small union consisting mostly of part-time workers can provide good service to its members with dues of under 2%. And there are locals of the AFM that run on dues in that range. Of locals with ICSOM-level orchestras in residence, there are several with dues of 1.5% or under—San Francisco, Milwaukee, Rochester, Dallas-Ft. Worth, Syracuse, Raleigh, and Edmonton. And then there's the case of Seattle.

Since the shock of the Seattle Symphony's departure from the AFM, the Seattle local has rebuilt itself to run on 1.5% work dues even without any revenue from the orchestra. And it has done some remarkable things with that money. Not only does the local have an organizing program (partly funded by the AFM's Organizing and Education Department) and a staff organizer, but the local achieved one of the greatest victories in recent AFM history with the Fifth Avenue Theater strike. And the local is aggressively targeting the non-union work that is done in its jurisdiction, while continuing to organize and bargain for the smaller orchestras in the area.

A musicians' union that works for its members without taxing them half to death is not just a pipe dream. The AFM should work for and belong to the working musicians. It is, after all, our money.

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Book Review:

Organizing Genius:

A Study in Creative Collaboration

by Warren Bennis and Patricia Ward Biederman
Hardcover, 239 pages, \$24.00
Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.

Synergy is a condition in which the collective whole is greater than the sum of the parts, or as Warren Bennis quotes, "None of us is as smart as all of us." When those separate parts are all people of special genius, organized by a special kind of leader, the sum of the parts can be explosive. The Manhattan Project, the group that developed and exploded the first atom bomb, was literally that. Great Groups, collections of brilliant minds that, working together, change the world, are the focus of this engaging book by Warren Bennis, Distinguished Professor of Business Administration at the University of Southern California, and Patricia Ward Biederman, staff writer for the *Los Angeles Times*.

Bennis and Biederman chose seven of America's Great Groups, from the areas of science, politics, education and the arts, to show the defining characteristics that most Great Groups share and describe the incredible potency of brilliant people brought together in an environment that allows their genius and creativity full expression. The seven examples of Great Groups are the Disney Feature Animation team; the groups at Palo Alto Research Center (PARC) and later at Apple Computer that designed and built the Macintosh computer; the 1992 Clinton election campaign team; the "Skunk Works" collaboration that produced the stealth bomber; the Manhattan Project; and Black Mountain College, a communal alternative education experience emphasizing the arts, where the line blurred between faculty and students, and between learning and the rest of life. From Black Mountain emerged creative artists and thinkers such as composer John Cage, artist Willem de Kooning, dancer Agnes de Mille, director Arthur Penn, poet Allen Ginsberg, and visionary Buckminster Fuller.

(continued on page 4)

(ORGANIZING GENIUS: continued from page 3)

“People in Great Groups seem to become better than themselves.” Yet so many situations in life seem to produce the opposite result, limiting the expression of talent, stifling creativity, and frustrating our efforts to reach our full potential. What conditions are necessary to remove obstacles and foster unbridled personal and collective achievement? By identifying and studying examples of remarkable collaborative success, the authors uncovered many common threads that run through virtually all Great Groups which, taken together, are predictive of a group’s success. Here are some of the elements in their elegant formula for Greatness:

Great people. Every member of a Great Group is exceptionally gifted—intelligent, creative, versatile, and sometimes volatile.

A Great leader. The leader of a Great Group is “an equal among Titans.” “Great Groups are inevitably forged by people unafraid of hiring people better than themselves” and who exert “a more flexible kind of leadership that has more to do with facilitating than with asserting control. Like cats, the talented can’t be herded.” Leaders of Great Groups “are not creators in the same sense that the others are. Rather, they are curators.” Often Great Groups have a dual administration, one visionary leader, and another to protect the group from the outside world, deflecting “not just the criticism, but even the attention of the bureaucrats and conventional thinkers elsewhere in the organization.”

At the Manhattan Project, scientist Edward Teller, who at times vehemently disagreed with group leader J. Robert Oppenheimer, nevertheless had only the highest praise for his leadership: “He was incredibly quick and perceptive in analyzing human as well as technical problems. . . . He knew how to organize, cajole, humor, soothe feelings—how to lead powerfully without seeming to do so. Disappointing him somehow carried with it a sense of wrongdoing.”

A Great Goal. A Great Group has only one motivation—the goal. Not money, not fame, not power. “This is not a job. This is a mission, carried out by people with fire in their eyes” (or as Henry Fogel, President of the Chicago Symphony, once described it, “a fire in the belly” for the orchestra). The metaphors that leaders use to describe their mission are commonly those of war and religion. As Steve Jobs of Apple Computer says, Great Groups “put a dent in the universe.”

An enemy. “Virtually every Great Group defines itself in terms of an enemy. . . . When there is no enemy, you have to make one up. Whether the enemy occurs in nature or is manufactured, it serves the same purpose. It raises the stakes of the competition, it helps your group rally and define itself (as everything the enemy is not), and it also frees you to be spurred by that time-honored motivator—self-righteous hatred.” The Manhattan Project had Hitler; Clinton had Bush; Apple had IBM; the Skunk Works had radar beams.

Freedom and autonomy. “The late Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead once observed, ‘You do not merely want to be considered just the best of the best. You want to be considered the only ones who do what you do.’ Such people need to be freed to do what only they can do.” Great Groups answer to nobody but themselves and their internal quest for perfection. A powerful symbol of a Great Group’s autonomy is the eschewing of a dress code. T-shirts and

jeans are the rule; the “suits” are outsiders who do not understand and perhaps threaten the mission. And of special meaning to those of us in the working world where white collars have blue linings:

“Every American worker knows that a dress code is a form of social control, an unpleasant reminder that the boss can not only tell you what to do, but he or she can also tell you what to wear, just as Mommy and Daddy used to. Talented, independent thinkers always prefer to dress themselves.”

Absolute devotion and focus. Great Groups have “wonderful tunnel vision,” focussing on the project so intently that everything else escapes notice. The work of genius needs the best tools and the latest technology, but everything peripheral to the project is superfluous. Dull, even tacky, surroundings are common. “Perhaps a bland or unattractive environment spurs creativity, functioning as an aesthetic blank slate that frees the mind to dream about what might be.” Members of Great Groups are famous for having no lives outside the project. “Who has time for real life when you are making history?”

Physical and spiritual isolation. Great Groups are not of this world. They exist apart from other people, influences, distractions, and reality. “Great Groups are not realistic places. They are exuberant, irrationally optimistic ones.” This cloistered, protected, unfettered, high-intensity environment makes possible the expression of unbridled creative power. There seems to develop a mental expansion of boundaries and a resulting sense of irrelevance and even intolerance toward the limited outside world. Life is never the same thereafter: “What happens in a Great Group is always in Technicolor. Life afterwards may seem as drab as a black-and-white movie.”

A playful, decidedly adolescent subculture. “Thought is play. Problem solving is the task we evolved for. . . . On those rare and happy occasions when you are part of a Great Group, you know the truth of Noel Coward’s observation that ‘work was more fun than fun.’ Although Great Groups experience their moments of near despair, they are more often raucous with laughter.”

Youth and inexperience. Too much real-world experience can be a liability in a Great Group. Great Groups require fools to rush in where angels fear to tread. “Members of Great Groups often recall after their projects are over that they accomplished something remarkable because they didn’t know they couldn’t. They acquire “the godlike confidence—the creative chutzpah—that charges great groups.”

A powerful group dynamic. “At PARC, Taylor’s strategy for letting creativity flourish was to ‘get really great people together and manage the social dynamic.’ ” The intensity, stress, and intellectual struggle of Great Groups can produce tension and disagreement, but members of Great Groups get along better than most other groups, despite their idiosyncracies, because they are respectful of each other’s talents and mindful of the dependency of each upon the contributions of the others. They “tend to function with a sense of *noblesse oblige*, with the mind-set that much is expected of those who have received extraordinary gifts.”

A short life. “Our suspicion is that such collaborations have a certain half-life, that, if only because of their intensity, they cannot be sustained indefinitely.”

The list of Great Group identifiers goes on and on, the authors providing examples and case studies to illustrate each one. Just as each member of a Great Group builds upon the contributions of the other members, so too, each factor contributing to the group's Greatness compounds with all the others to form a strong matrix for success. At the heart is a leader who can combine the right people with the right motivators in the right environment, and then catalyze the reaction. This book also offers some practical advice for those who employ creative genius:

"The failure to find the right niche for people—or to let them find their own perfect niches—is a major reason that so many workplaces are mediocre, even toxic, in spite of the presence of talent. Too many companies believe people are interchangeable. Truly gifted people never are."

"Decency in the workplace, especially one that depends for its success on the talent and devotion of its employees, isn't just the right thing to do. It's the smart thing to do. The talent is your treasure. You don't chew it up."

Organizing Genius is full of wonderfully documented research on Great Groups and contains valuable advice for all existing or budding collaborative teams. It is also beautifully, even poetically, written. No one can read this book without feeling an emotional response, either nostalgia for one's own Great Groups, or longing to find a place in one.

"Genius is rare, and the chance to exercise it in a dance with others is rarer still. Karl Wallenda, the legendary tight-rope walker, once said, 'Being on the tightrope is living; everything else is waiting.' Most of us wait. In Great Groups, talent comes alive."

A Commentary:
Orchestrating Genius

The parallels between orchestras and the Great Groups described in *Organizing Genius* are striking. Orchestras are potentially Great Groups, and musicians instinctively know it. Their careers revolve around that moment, always latent, when the music becomes greater than the sum of the musicians—that concert, or movement, or measure that captures the essence of the music with such purity that, somewhere in the universe, it is still ringing. Creative artists are the natural raw material for Great Groups. They harbor the latent Great Group among them, and the potentiality for it follows them around like a shadow.

The personnel selection process for the Palo Alto Research Center, where the Macintosh computer began, sounds like an orchestra audition:

"Candidates were not only interviewed; they also had to give a talk before the assembled staff and field probing, sometimes sharp questions and comments. It was a grueling experience, an ordeal, and thus a time-honored way of creating fraternity. Existing members saw a successful candidate 'as someone who was going to make it more fun for them.' Acceptance was a high honor, affirmation that

you were among the best and the brightest, and everyone was aware of it."

Like all leaders of Great Groups, great conductors do not themselves create; they facilitate, clear the way for great artists to do the creating. With a great conductor there is a blossoming of freedom, a sense that all impediments to expression have been removed, as Oppenheimer removed impediments for the scientists of the Manhattan Project, or as Walt Disney gave his animators the inspiration to let their creative imaginations run wild. The book quotes Maestro Carlo Maria Giulini: "I explained my views to the orchestra. I did not impose them. The right response, if forced, is not the same as the right response when it comes out of conviction."

The leadership and control of an orchestral Great Group is found both on the podium and in the office. If the Music Director is the artistic, visionary leader of the orchestral Great Group, then it follows that the Executive Director is the protective, facilitative one. This nurturing function of management may be manifested in its stance at the bargaining table and also in day-to-day operations. Consider the matter of dress code, for example. As public performers, some sort of uniform dress is necessary and accepted by musicians. But subtle individual variations in dress, and the management's degree of tolerance toward such personal expression, indicate how well each component of the team understands its role in creating the Great Group. The nonconformity of Dennis Rodman, basketball star of the Chicago Bulls, was cited in the book as an example of the audacious display of personality in a uniformed team player that captures and emits the creative energy of a Great Group, enhancing, not disrupting, team unity and spirit.

The youthful nature of Great Groups also resonates in orchestras. In our youth we are strong, confident, trusting in our capabilities. It is a time of life that is filled with power, zeal, idealistic expectations, and high ambition—"the creative chutzpah"—and our music-making reflects that. But there is also something profound to be gained in the arts from a dose of real life experience and a mature artistic vision. Most orchestras are a healthy mix of youthful exuberance and older, perhaps tamer, wisdom, and the orchestra benefits from the interaction of the two. This was also a character-

(continued on page 10)

The Five C's for Creating Trust:

COMPETENCE
 CONSTANCY
 CONGRUITY
 CANDOR
 CARING

Warren Bennis

Rhapsody In Bluegrass, Part III

Louisville Musicians Find the Keys to Change Without Striking

Third in a Continuing Series

You will remember from Acts I & II that the musicians of the Louisville Orchestra, after years of skillful strategic maneuvering and dogged persistence, signed a progressive new collective bargaining agreement and pulled their orchestra from the jaws of a board bent on downsizing. But little did the citizens of Louisville know that the musicians' battle was really two battles being waged on two fronts. In order to slay the dragons that would destroy their orchestra, they also had to slay another dragon, this one in their very midst. . . .

ACT III

(Louisville, Kentucky 1996)

Scene 1: THE SECOND FRONT

The concessions forced on the musicians of the Louisville Orchestra in April 1994 marked the opening of two battlefronts. One, of course, was the struggle with the orchestra's board and management to move them away from the tyranny of the twin dogmas of downsizing and "getting to yes," as described in Acts I and II of this series. Tragically, the other battle was with the American Federation of Musicians and its Louisville local.

The musicians first had to recover from the shock of being forced, by their own union, to vote on mid-contract concessionary demands of the Louisville Orchestra board and management. On March 31, 1994, members of the orchestra's board distributed to each musician's home a packet of letters urging them to accept the concessions. One of the letters in the packet distributed by the board was a letter from Local 11-637 President John Roy, who, with the backing of the national office of the AFM, told the musicians that they were required to vote on the package—an act that the orchestra musicians viewed as betrayal by their union, and that caused one observer to state that the AFM "had blood on its hands."

After having been run over by a coordinated effort of their management and their own local acting hand-in-glove, the orchestra musicians realized they needed expert help and began an intensive education in trade unionism under the tutelage of their devoted legal counsel and mentor, Liza Hirsch Medina. Sadly, it soon became plain that many other members of the local did not share their new understanding of trade unionism and solidarity. Instead, some in the local promoted the view that the orchestra musicians were selfishly bankrupting the local by demanding expensive representation from out-of-town. Many of those who believed this also received little, if any, representation or benefit from the local, and viewed it as essentially a fraternal lodge, conveniently paid for by the work dues of the orchestra musicians.

At the same time, the local's financial condition had reached critical mass. The local was unable to stay current on its financial

obligations. The Louisville Orchestra musicians offered in early 1996 to raise their work dues by 0.5%, bringing their work dues up from 2.5% to the 3% charged on non-symphony work, if the additional money would go towards their negotiating expenses. The local refused their offer. Perhaps the fact that the musicians also called for an in-depth examination of the local's finances, a small increase in the annual dues, and an increase in the rate for other symphonic work in the local, played a role in the local's rejection of the orchestra musicians' offer of a work dues increase.

Following the rejection of their offer to fix the locals' financial problems, the Louisville Orchestra musicians implored the AFM to pay attention to what was happening in Louisville. Although the newly-elected president of the local, Robert "Rocky" Adcock, resisted outside intervention, AFM President Steve Young dispatched AFM staffers Jim Kitchings and Chris Durham in June 1996 to do an on-site inspection of the local's condition. Young ordered the local to make full financial disclosure and to cooperate fully with Kitchings and Durham. Ernie Gross, a member of the orchestra committee, submitted to Kitchings and Durham a detailed record of vast sums of work dues paid into the local by orchestra musicians of which the local had no record. Kitchings and Durham unearthed many other discrepancies as well, even though the local was far from cooperative in producing its records. (The local claimed that its books were at the auditor's and that the local's computer had broken.) But when the books were recovered, it was found that Adcock's figures and the auditor's didn't match.

Kitchings and Durham cut their visit short by two days because the local was unable to provide the financial information they needed. Neither their suggested budget nor their recommendations to reduce office staff and make other savings were enacted by the board or membership of Local 11-637. Instead, yet another report was compiled by the local which restored the rosy membership projections which Kitchings and Durham had revised downwards.

This continuing financial meltdown led some in the local to force a membership meeting by petition to try to disavow the contract that the local had with the orchestra's negotiator Liza Hirsch Medina. The resulting meeting on July 15 was chaotic and uncivil in the extreme, and revealed to the members of the orchestra the depths of hostility toward them that existed in the local. The meeting ended with no action taken.

The members of the orchestra, convinced that the local had neither the ability to manage its resources nor the desire to help them keep their jobs, petitioned the AFM to place the Louisville Orchestra in the Orchestra Services Program (OSP) and asked ICSOM for assistance. ICSOM Chair Brad Buckley, armed with mountains of documentation (including verbatim notes of the July 15 membership meeting), went to the AFM. Rather than placing the orchestra into OSP, however, the AFM thought it better to take the local under its direct control. President Steve Young and the IEB put

Local 11-637 in trusteeship on August 5, 1996 and appointed George Sartick as trustee.

Scene 2: THE KING IS DEAD; LONG LIVE THE KING

George Sartick, the new trustee, was a retired AFM International Representative and author of the most successful trusteeship in recent AFM history, that of Local 8 (Milwaukee) during the Milwaukee Symphony's difficult negotiations in 1993-94. Based on his success in Milwaukee, the AFM, ICSOM, and the Louisville Orchestra musicians had high hopes that Sartick would be able to bridge the divisions within Local 11-637 and deliver the services the orchestra musicians needed and had paid for.

But from the beginning of the trusteeship, when AFM President Mark Tully Massagli addressed the local membership at the trusteeship hearing August 21, 1996, the responsibilities of the local and the AFM under Article 5, Section 34 of the AFM Bylaws, i.e., to provide service to the orchestra in the jurisdiction, were neither affirmed nor explained to the membership. Instead, responsibility for the legal expenses of the orchestra musicians was consistently painted as something foisted on the local by the musicians of the orchestra. Questions from the floor about the local's responsibilities under AFM Bylaws were dodged or simply ignored. Many of the orchestra musicians felt that Sartick and Massagli had not been straightforward in dealing with their concerns, which only deepened the chasm that existed between the members of the orchestra and the rest of the local.

Sartick quickly made two decisions that profoundly alienated the members of the orchestra. He chose to retain former local president Rocky Adcock on staff, and at the same salary he had received as president, even though it was Adcock's shortcomings as president that led to the very trusteeship that he now worked for. And he placed the previous local president, John Roy, on the interim board of the local, even though Roy's role in the coordinated campaign to force the orchestra musicians to accept concessions in 1994 was well-known and well-documented. Sartick felt compelled to retain these holdovers from the past administration, for reasons which he was not entirely at liberty to disclose to the musicians, but the price he and the union paid for these decisions was the musicians' continuing and growing distrust.

Although the entire thrust of the trusteeship was to fix the financial situation of the local, the trustee fell farther and farther behind in the local's payments to the orchestra musicians' negotiator. The situation became so bad that the AFM, itself severely strapped for cash, loaned the local sufficient money to pay off its accrued debt to her. The new trustee created further mistrust among the orchestra musicians by initially excluding them from the interim committees he set up to solve the problems of the local. Only after vehement complaint did he add a few orchestra musicians to these committees, none of which were chaired by orchestra members.

The ultimate revelation of the unhealthy climate of this local came when the membership, at a meeting of the local on January 13, 1997, voted down an amendment to a resolution raising the orchestra's work dues that literally did no more than affirm that Local 11-637 was bound by Section 5.34 of the AFM's Bylaws.

Sartick, who was running the meeting, had initially tried to prevent the amendment from being introduced by a member of the orchestra, not even allowing the text of the amendment to be read. By doing this he had hoped to head off an ugly confrontation between orchestra and non-orchestra musicians at the meeting, but the attempt failed to stifle the confrontation and further outraged the orchestra.

It was clear after the depressing January membership meeting that dramatic action would be required to change the relationship between Local 11-637 and the Louisville Orchestra musicians. Having reached a tentative agreement with their orchestra management on February 6, 1997, the Louisville Orchestra musicians were able to turn their full attention to the struggle with their union. Because negotiations with management would begin again in little over a year, the Louisville Orchestra musicians felt considerable urgency in ensuring that their needs for expert help with negotiations and public relations would be met by their union.

It quickly became clear to the members of the Louisville Orchestra that the AFM would still not agree to place the orchestra in OSP, even though the Louisville mess was precisely the kind of situation that OSP was designed for, and even though the membership of Local 11-637 had made clear its unwillingness to meet the orchestra's needs (and, incidentally, abide by AFM Bylaws). Nor did the AFM seem willing to instruct its trustee, who was an AFM employee, to do what was necessary to allay the fears of the musicians that they would again be facing a hostile management without the wholehearted backing of their union.

Scene 3: READING THE TEA LEAVES IN THE HARBOR

In a letter to AFM President Steve Young on March 26, 1997, the orchestra committee wrote, "In the absence of an agreement between your trustee and the Louisville Orchestra Musicians' Association [LOMA] to guarantee that our representational needs will be adequately met into the foreseeable future, 62 of 67 current members, to date, have withdrawn their dues checkoff authorization." With their letter the committee enclosed a check for the per capita payment due the AFM on behalf of the orchestra members and stated the orchestra's intention to send Strike Fund payments and all further local dues and assessments directly to the AFM. These payments were characterized by the Louisville Orchestra committee as acts of good faith by "strong trade unionists and loyal members of the American Federation of Musicians."

The letter went on to state "in the absence of major changes and unbreakable commitments by the Louisville Federation of Musicians to honor its obligations under AFM Bylaws and show true support of its members who are struggling for survival, we cannot continue to fund a local that has so consistently shown itself unwilling and incompetent to represent us or to manage the money that we sent it." The orchestra musicians also informed the AFM of their intention to divert the work dues from their Louisville Orchestra salaries to a LOMA escrow account to be used to underwrite the upcoming negotiations, "in hopes of an eventual resolution of this situation." Although these actions were referred to by some at the

(continued on next page)

(RHAPSODY IN BLUEGRASS, PART III: continued from page 7)

AFM as a “dues strike” (even though the musicians had simply redirected the money to the AFM and to escrow rather than paying it to the local), others described it as “the Louisville Tea Party.”

AFM Secretary-Treasurer Stephen R. Sprague returned the payments made to the AFM by the Louisville Orchestra musicians, stating that there was no mechanism in the AFM bylaws that allows the Federation to accept payments from individual members, and the orchestra committee put the funds back in escrow.

So there was stalemate—the orchestra musicians refused to send any more money to the local, although they were perfectly willing to send the same money to the AFM. But the AFM would not accept the money, even though the local had clearly stated its intent to violate its basic trade union responsibilities under AFM Bylaws. This stalemate precipitated intense dialogue over the next several weeks between the Louisville Orchestra Musicians’ representatives and the AFM. This communication was greatly expedited by ICSOM Chair Robert Levine, without whom the outcome could not have been achieved.

The ICSOM Governing Board, on April 30, 1997, wrote to President Young, urging him to place the Louisville Orchestra into OSP upon the orchestra’s request. The Governing Board went on to state that “The musicians of the Louisville Orchestra have been loyal members of the AFM for as long as the orchestra has been in existence, and clearly desire to remain so. They deserve far better treatment from their local and the AFM than they have received over the past several years. ICSOM is committed to helping them get the support they deserve and have paid for, and is committed to keeping them in the ICSOM family of orchestras. We urge you to find a solution that will keep them in the AFM family of musicians as well.”

On June 24, 1997, President Steve Young placed the Louisville Orchestra into the Orchestra Services Program. The agreement signed by the AFM and the orchestra committee has specific provisions to insure the support and stability required by their “troubled orchestra” status which the Louisville Orchestra musicians had unsuccessfully sought as rank-and-file members of Local 11-637. These provisions include the payment of a reasonable sum to legal counsel of the musicians’ choice and the payment of up to \$5,000 per calendar year for Louisville Orchestra musicians’ public relations, if so requested by the musicians. The dues that had been withheld from Local 11-637 and escrowed by the Louisville Orchestra musicians were paid to the AFM.

On November 5, 1997, Chris Durham, of the AFM Symphonic Services Division staff, was appointed new trustee of Local 11-637.

Scene 4: CODA

The problems faced by the Louisville Orchestra musicians in getting basic services from their fractured local reflect, in microcosm, the problems of all the working musicians of the AFM in getting their needs met by a union that is as much a collection of small fraternal organizations as it is a trade union. It was nothing short of grotesque that the Louisville Orchestra musicians had to

fight this battle at the same time as they were fighting to save their jobs. It was also unnecessary; had the AFM put the orchestra into OSP when the orchestra first requested it, the musicians could have put all of their energy into dealing with their management, rather than constantly looking over their shoulders and wondering how and when their brothers and sisters in Local 11-637 were going to pull the rug out from under them.

Through this struggle was born a new dimension of solidarity within the Louisville Orchestra musicians. They learned the importance that activism plays in securing the future both of American orchestras and of the union that represents the workers in those orchestras. They have also learned that, at the end of the day, they did have the power to get what they needed from their union. All it took was the willingness and courage to use it.

EPILOGUE

It would be hard to find a saga of any orchestra anywhere, anytime, that better demonstrates all the different kinds of problems with management and union that an orchestra might face, than this one. The Louisville Orchestra musicians heroically demonstrated how to solve those problems, and, as each offensive was launched against them, how the true spirit of unionism—standing together, speaking and acting together as one body for the common good—works to slay even the fiercest dragons.

The Louisville Orchestra musicians realize that they could not have survived the siege of the Louisville Orchestra board and their local without the many forms of support that poured into Louisville. From over \$30,000 in financial support from many ICSOM orchestras, to countless hours of advice and action on their behalf from ICSOM, the AFM, counsel, and other unions, they learned the need, meaning and power of solidarity. Draconian “getting to yes” concessions gave way to saying another kind of “yes”—“yes” to taking a proactive stand in their local, “yes” to building broad coalitions with the rest of the labor movement, and “yes” to the complex collaboration that resulted in the Fogel Report. Today, the Louisville Orchestra, its musicians, and their union have a much better chance for survival and health than ever before.

But this was a very costly victory. For many participants on all sides, self-esteem, friendships, careers, trust, health and hope were casualties of these bitter and long-fought wars. The real tragedy of Louisville is that, although much good came from both the wars that the musicians fought, neither was inevitable or necessary. The orchestra survived without downsizing, and the union proved, in the end, that it could indeed serve its members in the Louisville Orchestra in the ways they needed. But the musicians, their orchestra, their union, and their community would have been much better served if their employer and their union had done the right thing from the very beginning, rather than at the very end.



The authorship of the “Rhapsody In Bluegrass” series belongs to many people. The editor wishes to especially thank the Louisville Orchestra musicians and their advisors, as well as representatives of the AFM and Local 11-637, for their contributions to the researching, writing and editing of this story.

**RHAPSODY IN BLUEGRASS
COMPARATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS**

UNION

LOUISVILLE ORCHESTRA

FEB 5, 1996: Local 11-637 board rejects Louisville Orchestra Musicians Committee (LOMC) proposal to raise LO Musicians' work dues by ½% with conditions for representation

JUN 12, 1996: Kitchings/Durham report re: Local 11-637 (Local 11-637 refuses to adopt AFM recommendations)

JUN 28, 1996: AFM denies LO entrance into Orchestra Services Program (OSP)

AUG 5, 1996: George Sartick trusteeship begins

AUG 21, 1996: Local 11-637 trusteeship hearing

JAN 13, 1997: Local 11-637 votes to raise work dues on negotiated contracts from 2 ½ to 3 % *without* LOMC's conditions for representation

MAR 26, 1997: LO Musicians inform AFM of voluntary checkoff withdrawal, and send per capita, local union dues, assessment, and payment for negotiator to AFM (using ICSOM ERF loan funds)

MAR 29, 1997: AFM returns above payments to LO Musicians, negotiator paid in full

APR 23, 1997: LO Musicians pay per capita to Local 11-637
LO Musicians pay Strike Fund to AFM
LO Musicians pay ICSOM dues to ICSOM

MAY 14, 1997: LO Musicians hold their work dues in escrow until OSP agreement is reached with AFM

JUN 24, 1997: LO Musicians enter OSP

JUL 10, 1997: LO Musicians repay ICSOM ERF loan

JUL 11, 1997: LO Musicians send work dues to AFM

NOV 5, 1997: Chris Durham assumes trusteeship of Local 11-637

JUN 2-3, 1996: Louisville Orchestra (LO) contract negotiations open

JUL 1, 1996: Gregg Gustafson becomes Exec. Dir. of LO

SEP 28, 1996: LO contract talks stall

OCT 26, 1996: Stan Curtis joins LO Board of Directors (BOD)

DEC 2, 1996: Commitment by BOD to 70 full-time musicians

DEC 21, 1996: LOMC/Gustafson talks stall

FEB 4-5, 1997: Negotiations resume with Fogel/Medina involvement

FEB 6, 1997: Tentative contract agreement reached

MAR 6, 1997: LO Musicians ratify agreement

MAR 21, 1997: LOMC/BOD sign 14-month agreement

JUL 1, 1997: Stan Curtis elected LO BOD President

AUG 26, 1997: Max Bragado-Darman resigns as Music Director of the LO, effective June 1, 1998

NOV 10, 1997: Three one-year conductor appointments:
Uriel Segal, Principal Conductor
Bob Bernhardt, Pops
Robert Franza, Education

JAN 1, 1998: LO Musicians' attorney sends letter to LO BOD opening negotiations for a new contract

(ORGANIZING GENIUS: continued from page 5)

istic of the Manhattan Project and Black Mountain College, where the older, more mature participants mentored, and were admired by, the youthful members of the group in a collegial, non-hierarchical camaraderie.

“Being part of a group of superb people has a profound impact on every member. Everyone in such a group becomes engaged in the best kind of competition—a desire to perform as well as or better than one’s colleagues, to warrant the esteem of people for whom one has the highest respect. People in Great Groups are always stretching because of the giants around them. For members of such groups, the real competition is with themselves, an ongoing test of just how good they are and how completely they can use their gifts.”

Musicians in Great Orchestras can hear the ring of truth in this. Working within the isolation of our Great Group, we don’t just play *with* each other; we play *for* each other, in a way we do not play for the conductor, or the critic, or the audience. Great orchestral art is a game that only the members of a Great Group can play.

That mysterious distance from us, the necessity of remaining on the outside looking in, is the price our audiences must pay, it seems, if they want to experience the fruits of a Great Group’s labor. The public can receive and benefit from the finished product of Greatness, and may observe its creation from a distance, but they may not participate. The Great pursuit cannot be made interactive; providing opportunities for mass participation destroys the essential character of the experience and bursts the bubble of Greatness. Watered-down, one-size-fits-all, lowest-common-denominator Greatness is not to be had. Like watching animals at the zoo through bars and glass windows, people may look at Great Groups, but not touch, lest they destroy the precious, fragile thing simply by trying to know it better.

Keeping audiences feeling involved and supportive, yet still acknowledging this necessary separation, presents a formidable challenge to an orchestra’s marketing and development departments. But the allure of Great Groups teaches us that audiences are attracted by uniqueness and specialness. The arts will be successfully sold to both audience and funders to the degree that they are perceived to be out-of-the-ordinary, something rare, precious, and highly desirable, worth greater attention and reverence than everyday things. It is no accident that the most successful orchestras financially are the ones that are the most successful artistically, that sell the orchestra’s Greatness first, then its utility.

Yet we argue that the arts are a necessity, not a luxury, and that a steady diet of art is vital for a healthy human life. Art, we say, should become an everyday thing. Although this seems like a contradiction, a denial of the specialness of art, it is also true, and is one of the many paradoxes of Greatness. The synergy of the Great Group produces a synthesis of yin and yang, reaching beyond the boundaries of a single discipline and revealing an aspect of universal truth. That is why great truths are so full of paradox, and are equally true from all perspectives. They contain both sides of the coin.

These paradoxes have led to enormous confusion about the arts. We mistake involvement in art for appreciation of art. We accuse artists of being “elitist,” when in fact they are only “isolationist,” as they must be, in pursuit of Greatness. And, in keeping with Great Group motivation, they often consent to work for poverty wages because their single-minded devotion to their art is more important to them than eating—a psychological condition often exploited by the very employers who should be protecting their talented Great Groups from harm. We confuse art with the uses to which it might be put—education, entertainment, therapy, economic development—forgetting that art actually exists for, and receives its power from, none of these albeit useful purposes.

There are plenty of problems in the arts that cry out for Great Groups to solve them. As daunting as the challenges are, however, there is no more fertile ground from which to harvest a Great Group than the arts—home to some of the most creative, intelligent, diligent, optimistic, exuberant people on earth. Symphony boards, in collaboration with their managers and musicians, can also be Great Groups, and especially nowadays, must be, if orchestras are to survive and flourish.

The Great Group’s need for an enemy gives me pause, however. When employers engage in overt union-busting activity—breach of contract, unilateral implementation of salary cuts or arbitrary firings—they are not just provoking their employees into confrontation and strike, but may also be providing just the kind of diabolical enemy needed to inspire their employees to reluctant Greatness in defending themselves. The corollary to this is equally sobering. When we bury the hatchet, become “one big happy family,” when we stifle or sublimate our anger, are we denying to ourselves the passionate motivation that drives us toward extraordinary achievement? In losing our enemy, our focus, are we precluding the very Greatness we need to solve our thorniest problems?

Rather than submerging our anger, let’s redirect it. Adversaries-turned-allies, if they aspire to Greatness, must stop seeing each other as the enemy (that is, stop giving each other *cause* to see the other as the enemy) and find a common enemy outside their collaboration to galvanize them. The shared collective mission—not money or power or partisan desires—must motivate every member of the team, and the level of dedication from each member must be equal and absolute.

Orchestra economics and labor relations are not where the focus of an orchestral organization’s attention should be. Downsizing and union-busting are not worthy goals for a Great Group. An expansive artistic vision, not a narrow financial one, is necessary to excite our imaginations and lift us to the higher plane of artistic creativity and intellectual integration where Great Groups are found. Certainly there are nobler goals to be pursued and plenty of enemies to be engaged on that higher plane, should we all choose to direct our considerable skills and energy there.

*Review and Commentary by Marsha Schweitzer
Editor, Senza Sordino*



The vision and sacrifice of many now-retired ICSOM orchestra musicians made possible the vocational opportunities that today's working orchestra musicians now enjoy. Our friendship, respect, and gratitude for our retired colleagues' contributions to art and job demand their continuing membership in the ICSOM family. To that end, the ICSOM Emeritus Program was founded, serving musicians who are retired from ICSOM orchestras but are still interested in maintaining contact with the orchestra world through *Senza Sordino* and the ICSOM Directory. Abe Torchinsky, retired tubist of the Philadelphia Orchestra, led the way in creating the Emeritus Program and continues to direct it.

Over the last several months, a survey of ICSOM's Emeritus members was done by the ICSOM Governing Board to find out which benefits of Emeritus membership were most utilized by the Emeriti and assess the value of the program. The Emeriti have voiced their appreciation for the program loud and clear. Here is a sampling of what they had to say:

- *Senza Sordino* has galvanized our profession. Thank you. – Ben Armato (Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, ret.)
- I am particularly interested in Part III of the Louisville Orchestra saga. I am now a member of the Louisville Orchestra Audience Association (after 25 years as a player) and hope to help as a “watchdog” participant for the upcoming negotiations. – Sally Brink (Louisville Orchestra, ret.)
- Knowing who is where in the ICSOM Directory helps me feel I'm keeping in touch. – Esther Gilbert (New Jersey Symphony, ret.)
- I am very grateful to the ICSOM Emeritus Program. It helps me stay current with developments in orchestras from the musicians' point of view. – Charles Gottschalk (Florida Symphony, ret.)
- Thanks for keeping me informed. As a “lifer” I have enjoyed keeping abreast of things relating to this interesting and fabulous business. Lorton Lives! – Charles Lorton (Los Angeles Philharmonic, ret.)
- When one is retired, receiving *Senza Sordino* helps a lot to keep in touch and still feel a small part of the musical world, which, at one time, was practically one's entire focus. – Josephine McAndrew (Houston Symphony, ret.)
- Having been a member of the Chicago Symphony and for many years the Met Opera Orchestra, and formerly a delegate to an ICSOM conference, I retain a great interest in all related news. I appreciate being included in a subscription to *Senza Sordino* and read it with pleasure. – Clare Van Norman (Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, ret.)

“Voicings” graphic design and concept by Michael Gorman and Norman Foster (bass and clarinet, respectively, of the Honolulu Symphony)

First, my deep appreciation and best wishes to Abe Torchinsky for sending *Senza Sordino* to me and the other retirees. I retired from the St. Louis Symphony many years ago and just celebrated my 85th birthday, but I am still vitally interested in my profession, my union, and the activities of ICSOM.

The news that the AFM is in deep trouble is disturbing. The labor movement is now on a dramatic upswing and needs strong Internationals in every field, including ours. The unity among the four players' conferences is a good beginning.

Structural changes in the AFM seem to be needed, but as you work on that problem, I hope you won't lose sight of the fact that structure, no matter how well designed, is only as good as an active membership makes it, and only as good as it serves to strengthen the union as a whole.

The story of “A Thousand People in the Street” (*International Musician*, April, 1997) teaches the lesson: Unity and activity among the musicians themselves, assistance from the Local, the International, and the King County Labor movement—that's the way unions are supposed to function, and that's the way they win their struggles.

I was not able to be one of the thousand in Seattle, but my wife and I expressed our solidarity with the UPS strikers by joining their nearest picket line. They, too, won their fight by member activity and unity with the support of the whole labor movement.

Musicians have much to offer and much to gain in the reinvigorated labor movement. Good luck as you work toward a better structured and more active AFM.

Russell V. Brodine
St. Louis Symphony, retired



ICSOM Emeritus member Frank Ruggieri (left), retired New York Philharmonic bassoonist, keeps plenty busy for a nonagenarian. He is Conductor Emeritus of the Ocean City (NJ) Pops Orchestra, which recently presented a concert in honor of another ICSOM Emeritus, retired Philadelphia Orchestra bassoonist Sol Schoenbach (right).

Newslets

1 (800) ROAD-GIG is no more. Following a decision by the International Executive Board in September, the AFM's toll-free number was discontinued on January 1, 1998. The IEB estimates this may save the AFM up to \$21,000 per year.

Musicians who need help from the AFM should remember that their local, under Article 5, Section 34 of the AFM Bylaws, is obligated to pay for out-of-pocket expenditures, including long-distance phone calls, by the orchestra committee when they are assisting the local in contract administration and negotiations.



On December 5, 1997 the **Theatre Musicians Association became the fifth players' conference of the AFM**, joining ICSOM OCSM, ROPA, and RMA.



The five players' conferences will all meet together this summer at the first-ever **Unity Conference**, to be held August 19 – 23, 1998 at the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada.



The **ICSOM CD-ROM** is now completed and available. It contains the current and past collective bargaining agreements of all ICSOM orchestras and most OCSM, ROPA, theatre, and other orchestras; AFM electronic media agreements; ICSOM bulletins; the complete archives of *Senza Sordino*; AFM Bylaws; ICSOM financials and conference minutes. All ICSOM delegates have been sent a copy for use by their orchestras. Any other ICSOM musicians who would like a copy may purchase one by sending a check for \$10.00, payable to ICSOM, to Robert Levine at his address below.

In addition to the ICSOM Governing Board, many people around the country work diligently on behalf of ICSOM and its members. Many thanks to all those who have served so well, and without compensation, except for the satisfaction of knowing that they have helped make life in ICSOM orchestras a little better. Among the most notable ICSOM "special agents" are:

Abe Torchinsky (Philadelphia Orchestra, retired)
ICSOM Emeritus Program Director

Tom Hall (Chicago Symphony)
ICSOM Conference Coordinator

Brad Buckley (St. Louis Symphony)
AFM Electronic Media Negotiator

Bill Buchman (Chicago Symphony)
ICSOM Conductor Evaluation Coordinator

Herb Winslow (St. Paul Chamber Orchestra)
ICSOM Strike Fund Trustee

and

Anonymous

(from an orchestra that slogs through a lot of lake effect snow)
Senza Sordino Liaison

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