



95th AFM Convention

by Marc Sazer, RMA Secretary

This June RMA participated in the AFM 95th Convention in Las Vegas. In accordance with AFM and RMA Bylaws, three RMA Delegates were in attendance; President Phil Ayling, myself, Delegate Steve Gibson and Alternate Delegate Brian O'Connor. It would be fair to characterize this Convention as an exciting one, and the RMA turned out to be central to the outcome of several major issues of importance to both our members and the Federation as a whole.

In preparation for this Convention, in my role as Legislative Chair, I worked with the Legislative Committee and the Executive Board to put together proposals for the Convention. President Ayling spearheaded communication with the heads of the other Players Conferences (Players' Conferences Council), successfully pursuing mutual understanding and solidarity. At the end of that long process, we submitted two Resolutions; one calling for the inclusion of a second rank-and-file Pension Trustee, and a second reinforcing OCSM's (Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians) call to end the Canadian exemption in the existing Bylaw forbidding contractors in musical theater from being Local Officers.

Once our two Resolutions were submitted we awaited the publication of all the other Resolutions and Recommendations facing this year's Convention. When they arrived, we found some unpleasant surprises. Resolution 47 would have placed 2% work dues on our Electronic Media Funds. Recommendation 11 was vague in its requirement that we send "annual financial statements" to the AFM President's office every year. The so-called Canton Resolution would have slashed the obligation of Locals to send Players Conference Delegates to their Conferences. There were a variety of other issues which seemed contrary to the interests of recording musicians and/or our symphonic and theatrical Player Conference colleagues.

We developed a set of arguments against Recommendation 11. We prepared ourselves to present testimony before the relevant committee at the Convention, and worked to educate our members about this issue.
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Attention Record Musicians! It's Your Money!

by Neil Stubenhaus

RMALA Phono Committee

The Sound Recording Special Payments Fund check (previously the *Phonograph Manufacturer's Special Payments Fund*) has always been an August 1st payday anticipated by busy session players specializing primarily in records.

The Fund's yearly gross peaked at just over 18 million in 1981 and plummeted to a meager 6 million by 1984. Calculations that determined industry contributions to the Fund were severely slashed because of industry proposals that were based on the 1979-82 recession, when there was a decrease in record sales.

The Phono Fund and MPTF (Musicians Performance Trust Fund) contribution cuts were negotiated with Industry by then AFM President Victor Fuentealba.¹ Fuentealba, in an act of arguable self-delusion, considered himself qualified to personally represent musicians working under National AFM contracts against highly skilled Industry attorneys with no AFM Counsel present, other than himself. At that time, in the early eighties, the record industry was a multi-million dollar industry. As the economy recovered, the record industry, through major corporate buyouts and acquisitions, coupled with the onslaught of new CD technology and sales turned into a *multi-billion dollar industry*. Apparently, since
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Videogames - it's happening!

by Phil Ayling, RMA President

Walk into any Wal-Mart, Target or Best Buy and you'll see thousands of square feet, which formerly held phono/CD product now dedicated to the sale of Video Games. **Game revenues now outpace motion picture box office in North**
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AFM Convention continued..

We also tried to educate our members about the positive issue of Resolutions 33 and 34, which called for a second rank-and-file Pension Trustee.

RMALA spearheaded the opposition to Resolution 47, the SPF work dues resolution, almost immediately. The LA Chapter developed a petition calling for Delegates to oppose this Resolution. President Ayling and I spoke with IEB members, spoke with the other RMA Chapters and Player Conferences, and worked as hard as we could to organize recording musicians to effectively oppose this onerous Resolution.

When the Convention finally arrived, we had received (in less than two weeks) almost 1000 petition signatures in opposition to Resolution 47, and felt that we had done all that we could to generate interest in these issues among our membership.

We arrived in Las Vegas Sunday morning, and immediately began hearing talk of a “financial package” that the Committees had been developing, that would include SPF work dues. When we were invited to participate in discussions on a solution to the financial problems of the Federation, we nervously but eagerly complied. It turned out that the intent of the Joint Law and Finance Committees was to combine several different proposals that had been submitted to the Convention, and put what ultimately became “Emergency Recommendation 8” before the Convention, which would have placed 1 ¼% work dues on the Funds. We felt that we had to represent our members in opposing this, and proceeded to do so by giving lengthy testimony before the Joint Law and Finance Committee, talking with Delegates and Officers, and working to find alternatives. We recognized that although the amounts needed by the AFM were murky, and the process had begun behind closed doors, it was also true that the financial needs of the AFM were real, and that money did need to be raised to support the Federation. The RMA “brain trust” created several alternative concepts which could have provided significant amounts of money for the Federation. Each of these alternatives was rejected by the Joint Committee. We reached an impasse, and we all feared for the unity of the AFM at more than one point in this process.

Finally a concept was presented to us that seemed workable; a chart of tiered flat payment levels to be paid by Participants in the Funds. This allowed us to ward off the precedent of work dues, which seemed an open-ended slippery slope, but also allowed us to participate in funding the Federation’s legitimate needs. In recognition of the sacrifice we would be making, we asked for, and were ultimately granted, a couple of other items. One was a reaffirmation of the Roehl Report, which empowers the Player Conferences and provides for

Steering Committees for both the Symphonic Services Division and the Electronic Media Division. The other is Federation recognition of the principle of our need to have the Participants who will make these payments ratify any future projected increases. While future AFM Conventions have ultimate governing authority, there was good-faith recognition that these specific numbers were intended to be a long-term solution to the financial woes facing the Federation.

One of the consequences of our actions is that for the first time our members will be making payments based on their Funds distributions. I don’t believe many of our members will be delighted to hear this. On the other hand, I think it is fair to say that we protected their community interests as well as could possibly be done. We ended up with basically a tiered membership fee; a sort of special per capita dues for Participants in the Funds.

I think it should also be said that we recognized the real and urgent financial needs of the AFM. When the debate on the “financial package” began on the Convention floor, a number of Delegates rose to thank the RMA for giving generously to help their fellow musicians. After the “package” was approved (on a lopsided voice vote), the RMA was given a standing ovation by the Convention. I have to admit that the expression of support and appreciation for the RMA was overwhelming.

My personal hope is that the results of the 95th AFM Convention will lay the groundwork for a more successful future. The health of the Film Musicians Secondary Markets Fund and the Sound Recording Special Payments Fund will now play a huge role in ensuring the financial health of the AFM. As the Funds grow, Participants will jump into higher categories and payments to the Federation will grow. In essence, there is a built in natural increase for the Federation as long as the Funds continue to grow. RMA leadership should gain recognition for having played a hugely positive role in helping the Federation survive. And the relationships between the AFM and its Player Conferences (including the RMA) should be on a more solid and successful footing. 🎵

“The Chart” as it applies to each Fund

Annual Fund Distribution	Musician’s Payment
\$0 to 999	\$ 0
1,000 to 4,999	50
5,000 to 9,999	150
10,000 to 24,999	250
25,000 to 49,999	350
50,000 to 74,999	450
75,000 to 99,999	650
100,000 to 199,999	750
200,000 +	1,000

Attention Record Musicians! continued..

the AFM (under Fuentealba's leadership) did not have the foresight or negotiating savvy to provide a sunset provision for the cuts given the temporary nature of recessions, the Fund cuts were made permanent while the weak state of the Record Business of the early eighties was history.

By the mid-eighties, the Record Business was indeed in full swing. Profits from CD's were soaring, and overall revenues were up by *more than 200-300%* from the 1980 figures, yet the Phono Fund distribution amount remained depressed, averaging a paltry 8 million a year or less through the end of the eighties and into the nineties. Naturally, the musicians felt a very strong sense of betrayal by the AFM and its leadership, primarily President Victor Fuentealba. Anti-Fuentealba sentiment grew strong enough by 1987 to vote Fuentealba out of office to be replaced by then retired former Secretary Treasurer Marty Emerson. Emerson, who had better sense than Fuentealba, immediately appointed legal counsel to once again represent the AFM at the bargaining table, and George Cohen took over the lead role at all our National Contract negotiations from then up to the present.

RMA involvement, led by then RMA International President Dennis Dreith immediately came into strong prominence at all rounds of bargaining with every recording contract, and by 1989 RMA (including yours truly) was on a mission to do everything in our power to improve and hopefully restore the original Phono Fund formula.

While the major record labels were still on their own mission to reduce MPTF, often referring it as "nothing but charity", they acknowledged the value of the musicians who played on the records and expressed a willingness to increase the formula of the Phono Fund, but insisted on substantial cuts to MPTF. Through hard bargaining and mutual cooperation between RMA and the AFM along with the negotiating expertise of George Cohen, Phono Fund improvements were finally a reality, although not the full restoration of the cuts made in the early eighties as we had hoped. It wasn't until 1994 that the Fund distribution of 9 million finally broke the stagnant 8 million figure, and subsequently jumped to 12 million by 1995. With strong AFM commitment and cooperation with the RMA, our efforts and hard work had finally paid off.

During these years, Ed Peters administered the Phonograph Special Payments Fund, the Motion Picture & Television Special Payments Fund as well as the AFM-EPW (Pension Fund), which in the aggregate constitutes an incredibly large sum of AFM participant dollars. Peters was, as far as we know, entrusted with near autonomous control of the expense accounts for all three Funds. By the early nineties, as abuses of Pension Fund monies/expense accounts were discovered, Peters was dismissed and replaced at the Pension

Fund by Delores Thrower in October 1993. (Thrower was subsequently replaced by Maureen Kilkelly, who serves currently). Peters was later replaced at the Motion Picture Special Payments Fund in 1999 by Dennis Dreith, and finally dismissed at the Phono Fund by year 2000, to be succeeded by Enex Steele, an employee of the Phono Fund at that time.

Deja Vu All Over Again

Steele wrote more than one yearly letter to musicians and was somewhat braggadocios about what a good job he was doing for the Phono Fund, hyping new and "highly skilled" employees, improved auditing and a proposed web site to be up-and-running by June 2001. (As of today's date, no such web site is operative). The most revealing of Steele's communications was the inclusion in his cover letters² (which accompanied your Phono Fund check) of not only the total distributed amount for the year, but also the actual amount collected. Simple subtraction of the two figures reveals the amount spent in taxes and administrative expenses. Sadly, few musicians participating in the Fund read the letters carefully. Here are the figures from the last three years:

2001	
Collected:	20.4M
Distributed:	17.5M
Total Expenses & Taxes	2.9M (14%)
2002	
Collected:	21 M
Distributed	16.8M
Total Expenses & Taxes	4.2M (20%)
2003	
Collected:	14.9M
Distributed:	9.8 M
Total Expenses & Taxes	5.1M (34%)

How is it possible that administrative expenses and taxes could be 5.1 million in 2003, a whopping 34% of total collections? The taxes paid by the Fund *had to be* substantially lower due to less money distributed.

What happened to all that money?

On 8/21/03 Enex Steele was dismissed after the results of an internal audit revealed "Mr. Steele's actions were in *flagrant disregard of the fiduciary obligation he owed to the Fund and its participants*" as reported by AFM President Tom Lee (via an announcement posted at www.afm.org). The investigation is ongoing. A new Administrator has not yet been appointed as of this writing. Steele was reported,

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Attention Record Musicians! continued..

among other things, to have thrown lavish parties, flown First Class, and rented flashy sports cars in the cities he visited—all on our dime. Also noteworthy is the reduction in the totals from 21 million in 2002 to 14.9 million in 2003. The recent cover letter (authored by Steele) states that illegal downloading and recent bad times in the Record Industry have caused the Fund's decline. But Fund collections for the 2003 distribution are from sales from at least 2 years ago, a minimum lag time due to final sales figures and accounting, as well as time-consuming audit procedures. *Who do you trust?*

Complicating matters further is the announcement that two AFM musicians (via an announcement posted at www.afm.org) have allegedly scammed the Phono Fund. The Fund formula rewards every phono session recorded, regardless of whether or not the recording ends up as a multi-platinum hit, or worthless tape in the trash. According to the AFM, these musicians have been arrested and charged with allegedly filing multitudes of phony record contracts to increase their share of the Phono Fund, (consequently decreasing everyone else's). If proven that would mean they also artificially increased their Pension Fund accounts. Ten years ago, a New York area musician was also accused of defrauding the Phono Fund—filing so many sessions for himself and his wife that their combined Phono Fund checks totaled over \$150,000 in a single year! To date, The AFM never disclosed the “incident” to its members. At the very least, disclosure would surely have discouraged others from engaging in similar activities, not to mention the membership's right to know.

Why weren't we informed of the outcome? Why the secrecy? After all, it's our Fund and our Money!

This time, we expect the AFM to do a complete investigation and deliver a public accounting.

How many times do we need to be defrauded before those with a fiduciary responsibility to this Fund finally employ the appropriate safeguards and oversight?³

Even back then, this staggering discovery begged an even more pertinent question: *'What's wrong with this Fund's formula?'* Answer: Plenty. The Phono Fund rewards participants of recording sessions whether or not that record actually paid into the Fund, or worse yet, whether or not that record is even released! Could that latter fact *alone* possibly have caused these few musicians to conclude that they could defraud the Fund with nothing more than the filing of some fairly simple paperwork? This is the *only* AFM contract that rewards musicians who do not directly participate in the product that generates the actual monies collected. Would all songwriters throw their royalties and mechanicals into a fund and distribute the proceeds according to who wrote the most songs? *Of Course Not!*

Solutions

So far, we've been burned by two consecutive Fund Administrators.

We deserve better!

We're 0 for 2, we can't afford to be 0 for 3!

Who can we get?

On the Motion Picture Fund side, Dennis Dreith has cut expenses to the bone and raised collections and distributions through the roof. During his three and half years as Administrator he has created a myriad of new programs and services for the Participants. Had Dreith been appointed to the Sound Recording Fund back then, we wouldn't be in this mess now.

If he we're there now, just for starters, we could probably save upwards of one million dollars per year or more based on his current knowledge of the system and the Fund itself. Considering his proven honesty and integrity, not to mention his expert handling of the Film Secondary Markets Fund, shouldn't the record industry be begging Dreith to administer this Fund on an interim basis, at the very least? The Sound Recording Fund is a disaster and we need someone with experience and proven skills to set this right immediately.


At the end of the day, the AFM President has a responsibility to his members. It is *his* members' money that has been wasted and squandered. While the appointment of the new administrator is ultimately up to the Record Industry, AFM President Tom Lee has an obligation to use all of his power and influence to see that the most qualified person gets the job.

Music Performance Trust Fund and Sound Recording Fund monies come from the same source. If the Fund deteriorates further, AFM BEWARE! – As goes the Sound Recording Fund, so goes MPTF.

Could the RMA and the participants possibly have a say in this matter? We should, but within the present structure of the AFM, don't count on it. Word on the street has it that many members of both AFM and RMA are more than simply bothered by all of this. Maybe it's time to pay closer attention to where the money is coming from and where it went. Ask questions. After all, it is your money.

¹ Victor Fuentealba is currently a compensated “Senior Advisor” to the AFM.

² For those interested RMA has Phono/Sound Recording cover letters dating back to 1979.

³ Steve Gibson had been appointed by RMA International several years ago to be in charge of oversight of the Sound Recording Fund and has consistently reported that Mr. Steele was “doing a great job”. Feel free to contact Mr. Gibson if you have any questions. 

Northern California News

by Irene Sazer, President, RMA Northern California

We've had a flurry of recording work up here recently at **Skywalker Ranch** (the George Lucas scoring facilities) which included Robert Rodriguez's newest film called "**Once Upon a Time in Mexico**", a Disney project for the fireworks show at a Disney theme park in Florida and a CD made from the same music.

The player pool of highly talented recording musicians up here play primarily in the San Francisco Symphony, the San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco Ballet Orchestras, all three of which are world class ensembles. We also rely on our marvelous free lancers, who integrate their musically diverse recording and live performance careers. Our player pool is highly talented, with tremendous depth in jazz, folk and ethnic styles. Such a wonderful variety of musicians offer a wide-range of music to both our composers and our community.

Skywalker Ranch is a state-of-the art facility, both behind the board and in the fantastically large recording room. It's a pleasure to work there. It's the most comfortable gig we do up here, with its incredibly scenic grounds. The studio is set in the hills of Marin County and feels like a retreat center, but is only 30 minutes from San Francisco. We hope to do more and more work at Skywalker Ranch...we're rarin to go!

There is a large volume of video game development happening all over the Bay Area and we are very hopeful that we will be able to work on the music for them. More and more game publishers are employing live musicians as the sound technology advances in the field of games. The video game industry will be our main focus during the next year.

Also, like every recording center in the country, we have contracts that are not getting filed and we would like to take the lead in making more of this happen.

Hope you all had a lovely summer. 🌀

Phillip Yao Appointed AFM Pension Fund Trustee

AFM President Thomas F. Lee has appointed RMA Pension Committee Chair Phillip Yao to the position of Trustee on the American Federation Of Musicians And Employers Pension Fund.

Phillip succeeds David Schwartz, the first rank-and-file AFM Pension Trustee, who submitted his resignation in

mid-February of this year. President Lee announced the appointment on Friday Aug. 22 at the annual ICSOM Conference (*International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians*), held this year in Vail, Colorado.



Phillip has extensive experience as RMA's Pension Fund representative, as well as a very successful career as a recording, symphonic and theater musician. His role as RMA Pension Committee Chair has allowed him to work closely with former Trustee Schwartz, Pension Fund Executive Director Maureen Kilkelly, as well as with 100's of rank-and-file musicians seeking information about the Pension Fund in the workplace—making him well prepared for his new position! When asked to comment on his appointment, Phillip stated that "I have some very large shoes to fill and I will be in the company of very dedicated Trustees. With continued diligent oversight, I hope that we can all ensure that the Fund remains strong and prosperous."

At the AFM Convention held in Las Vegas in June, the AFM Players Conference Council *unanimously* recommended Phillip as their choice for AFM Pension Trustee, and pursuant to AFM By-Laws, forwarded his name to President Lee for his consideration.

President Lee has chosen an extraordinarily knowledgeable, talented and dedicated Trustee in Phillip Yao. We are confident that Phillip will serve all AFM musicians as an outstanding successor to David Schwartz on the Pension Fund. Congratulations, Phillip. 🌀



The RMA Booth at the 95th AFM Convention Pam Gates and Piotr Jandula were among the amazing staffers! A million thanks to Piotr Jandula, Jay Rosen and Wendy All for booth design and setup!

Videogames continued..**America alone by more than 2 billion dollars annually and growing.**

Recognizing this trend, Brian O'Connor, President of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Recording Musicians' Association (**RMALA**), began meeting with video game composers, music supervisors and publishers more than two years ago to discuss crafting an **AFM** agreement uniquely designed for this fast growing industry. Together with composers Jack Wall and Tommy Tallarico who are leaders in the organization called **G.A.N.G.** (Game Audio Network Guild), Brian helped organize a series of discussions with major musical players in this industry.

After a great deal of input from these meetings, as well as their own independent research, Phil Ayling, Intl' **RMA** President, and Marc Sazer, Chair of the **RMALA** WebTech Committee, presented a proposed Video Game Agreement to the International Executive Board of the **AFM** for their review last October. The new agreement was unanimously and enthusiastically approved by the **IEB**, which referred the document to legal counsel for final language and formatting. The agreement as finalized is expected soon and **RMA** plans a large publicity blitz to bring it to the industry's attention.

Meanwhile, Orchestra Manager David Low had begun discussions with composer Christopher Lennertz and Audio Director/Producer Erik Kraber of **Electronic Arts** (the world's leading independent developer and publisher of interactive entertainment software) about recording the next installment of the hugely successful "**Medal of Honor**" video game series using the provisional terms of the new agreement. On April 11, at the historic MGM/Sony Studio, an orchestra of 84 **AFM** musicians played two scoring sessions of *great* music written by Christopher Lennertz for "**Medal of Honor: Rising Sun, Part 1.**" On hand at the scoring stage was Chris Millner from the **AFM** West Coast office, who worked tirelessly with all parties to make this success happen.

We were on our way! More sessions with **EA** followed.

Todd Fay from **G.A.N.G.** attended some of those sessions and reported to his organization as follows: "*The orchestra's ability blew me away! The only word I can use to describe it is "superhuman." Kudos to all involved in the project! You are raising the bar for game audio once again!*"


*More **AFM** activity has occurred in the Game industry in the last six months than all prior **AFM** recording for Video Games over the last decade combined!*

Recently **EA** recorded music for its' James Bond series (**James Bond 007: Everything or Nothing**; Sean Callery composer, Dave Sherr, contractor) under the agreement and Michael Giacchino, composer for the TV series **Alias** and a

highly respected Game composer, did the music for **Call of Duty** (Reggie Wilson, contractor) under the new agreement. The latter was the first union project for **Activision**, one of the big players in the industry.

There are a number of locations throughout the **AFM** where game software development takes place. In Northern California, Texas, Montreal and Seattle as well as in the traditional recording centers, there should be the opportunity to organize video game music scoring onto this **AFM** contract.

Until now, almost all Video Games have been recorded non-union in Seattle or in Europe. That is now changing. New income streams will be coming our way as a result of the efforts begun by your **RMA**. The potential for growth is tremendous and virtually untapped.

*If you have questions about the Agreement or would like assistance in organizing game music in your area, please contact **RMA** President Phil Ayling or **AFM** (West Coast) Contract Administrator Chris Millner.* 

RMA Officers Visit Nashville

by Phil Ayling, President

This past August, having been invited to address the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists Convention, which was being held in Nashville, I had the opportunity to meet many of the area's **RMA** members, as well as other recording musicians who are members of Local 257. On Wednesday August 13, Nashville President (and **AFM** Vice-President) Harold Bradley was gracious enough to show me around the Local and share the better part of the afternoon discussing the record business and the changes he has seen during his legendary career as a session guitarist. The next evening I attended a performance of the **Grand Ole Opry**, where I was privileged to enjoy some great music and meet more of **Music City's** finest.

On Friday, August 15th **RMA Secretary** Marc Sazer arrived in town so that we might speak with Nashville musicians about (among other things) the **AFM** Convention in June. Special thanks to **RMA Nashville President** Bobby Ogden and **Secretary** Christine Maggs for organizing and hosting a meeting with the Nashville Chapter of the **RMA** and other interested parties.

We arrived early at Local 257 at 8:00 am in order to accommodate working musicians and were warmly greeted by Bobby Ogden, former Executive Officer Biff Watson and the **RMA** Nashville Board. **RMA** 1st Vice

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President Steve Gibson joined us briefly, and Harold Bradley graced us with his presence as an observer. We discussed the developments at the AFM Convention. We reported on the RMA booth at the Convention Trade Show, and the many RMALA members who attend the Convention as guests. There were also a number of questions raised about the responses of various Chapters in advance of the Convention. Marc and I gave a timeline of the efforts that had been made to oppose the work dues proposals, as well as the efforts to pass legislation that the RMA had officially sponsored.

There were also many questions about the process by which the "financial package" was developed and the resulting payment schedule. The fact that the chart of payments was not invented or presented by the RMA, but was proposed to us by AFM representatives was noted and discussed. There was considerable unhappiness expressed by Nashville musicians about the new payments, and the process by which the payment structure was arrived at.

We moved on to an extensive discussion of the Sound Recording Fund. There was already a great deal of concern focused on the small checks that players got and the high percentage of operating costs claimed by the Fund. We went over the structure of Fund oversight and explained the rank and file oversight responsibilities which reside with the rank and file representative. We talked about the future of the phono industry, the growing percentage of non-union recording, the changes in the structure of music distribution via WalMart, Circuit City, etc, and what changes in the Sound Recording Fund might be helpful or should be analyzed.

There seemed to be a general sense that while digital piracy is a real issue, it is not the most significant challenge to the Fund; Certainly, hit records which are recorded non-union don't provide anything of ours to be pirated!

Our meeting lasted for several hours. A great deal of good information was exchanged. It was a pleasure to meet many of the Nashville musicians for the first time, and we ended with very warm thanks all round. 🌐



Pictured (L to R): Local 257 President and AFM Intl. Vice-President Harold Bradley, AFM President Tom Lee, Local 257 Sec.-Treas. Billy Linneman, Exec. Board Officer Bobby Ogdin.

RMA Nashville News

Following the resignation of Secretary-Treasurer Randy Ford in mid-April of 2003, the Executive Board of Local 257 appointed Board member Bobby Ogdin to serve as

interim Secretary-Treasurer of the Nashville Association of Musicians. Ogdin is also President of RMA Nashville and an RMA International Executive Officer • In an August election to fill the unexpired term of office, RMA and Local 257 Executive Board member Billy Linneman was elected by a big margin on the first ballot • While attending as a guest at a Local 257 Executive Board meeting, Federation President Tom Lee took the opportunity to administer the oath of office to our new Secretary-Treasurer. Congratulations to Christine Maggs, Nashville RMA Secretary for completing her Masters Degree in Business Administration from the University of Phoenix. Congratulations to our RMA Nashville members who won Musician Awards at the recent 2003 Academy of Country Music Awards Show in Las Vegas: Bass: Glenn Worf Fiddle: Larry Franklin Drums: Lonnie Wilson Specialty Instrument: Mark Casstevens

RMA Nashville Officers for 2003:

President Bobby Ogdin
Vice-President Bruce Bouton
Secretary Christine Maggs

Treasurer Allison Prestwood

Executive Officers: Mike Brignardello, Tony Harrell, Tom Hemby, Jimmy Nichols, Dave Pomeroy, Tom Wild
Steve Gibson- *president emeritus*
Biff Watson- *president emeritus*

RMA Nashville Committee heads for 2003:

AFM Benefits	Mike Brignardello
Events	Christine Maggs
Intellectual Properties	Biff Watson
Member Benefits	Tony Harrell
Membership	Tom Wild
Negotiations	Steve Gibson
Publications	Bobby Ogdin
Web/Info	Allison Prestwood





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Mark Shuman, *Second Vice President*

Marc Sazer, *Secretary*

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Bobby Ogden, *Executive Officer*

Roger Blanc, *Executive Officer*

Ximena Marin, *Executive Administrator*

323-462-4762 info@rmaweb.org

Jay Rosen, *Editor*

The AFM Financial Package

By Bill Moriarity (*President, Local 802*)

For more than ten years it has been recognized within the AFM that the Federation was in a precarious financial situation. At conventions in 1991 and 1993 compromise revenue and expense packages were put together that were meant to address this escalating problem. It reached crisis status at the 1997 convention when the AFM's auditors stated that, in their opinion, there existed "substantial doubt about the Federation's ability to continue as a going concern." As a result of the alarm created by this language, the 1997 convention's Joint Law and Finance Committee crafted a package of recommendations increasing the Federation's revenues and severely limiting its expenditures. While these changes have kept the AFM solvent over the past six years, expenses have continued to increase at a greater pace than revenues, and, once again, serious cuts in personnel and services had been and were being implemented.

With all that as a background, going into the 2003 convention, attempts to solve the continuing dilemma were coming from different directions and proposing different sources for increased funding.

On the one hand an IEB Recommendation proposed increases in the Federation per capita dues of \$10 per member spread over the next four years.

On the other hand, several resolutions from individual delegates asked for increased AFM symphonic work dues (payable principally from locals) and a 2 percent work dues on special payments fund distributions, monies not now subject to work dues. These were presented as an alternative to the increase on per capita dues.

The proposals created a potential split between the many lo-

cals fearful of increased dues of any kind and several of the Player Conferences, chiefly the RMA.

(Per capita dues are paid by all members; work dues are paid only by those doing the work. The RMA vehemently opposed the special payments work dues and attended the convention in large numbers so as to be able to express their disapproval.)

The Joint Law and Finance Committee, co-chaired by Local 308 (Santa Barbara) President Harry Chanson and myself saw two problems to be addressed. We needed to come out of the convention united in our policies and secure in our finances. To do this we needed to avoid the battle we saw coming over who was to pay and we needed to create a solution that would provide the AFM with real dollars.

This could not be solved, we realized, in three days by a 31-person committee. So we appointed a subcommittee of seven to meet over a 24-hour period and bring back to us a recommendation. Much to our surprise and delight, they did just that.

(The subcommittee was Ray Hair from Dallas/Ft. Worth; Bruce Schultz from Tulsa; Fred Sautter from Portland, Ore.; Bill Skolnick from Toronto; Melinda Wagner from San Francisco; John Lindberg from Norfolk; and Dick Melikian from Springfield, Mass.)

That subcommittee's package, in somewhat altered form, was presented to the convention on Tuesday night and, with one amendment, passed overwhelmingly on Wednesday. It is intended to bring to the AFM, beginning in 2004, an additional \$1 million or more annually. Increased per capita - \$2 each year for the next four years - accounts for nearly \$182,000; the retention by the Federation of 0.5 percent more on the 12 percent clip use work dues (the portion going to the locals will be reduced to 1.5 percent from 2 percent) will bring another \$20,000; an increase in Federation symphonic work dues to 0.55 percent (from 0.5 percent) obtains \$161,000; elimination of the local's portion of traveling work dues gives the AFM \$47,000; and for the majority of the increase, a newly imposed tiered payment schedule for fees to be paid to the Federation by musicians receiving special payments distributions amounts to approximately \$700,000.

In the end, the convention was unified and the feeling was positive. We are all feeling the pain, but this union belongs to us all.

It is evident that working musicians are providing the lion's share of the new monies and I'm certain they will be expecting more effective representation. They should get it. They are the reason the union exists. 🎵

This text appeared in the September 2003 edition of Allegro, the newspaper of Local 802 AFM. This is reprinted with permission.