



PITTSBURGH MUSICIAN

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF LOCAL 60-471, AFM
PITTSBURGH MUSICIANS' UNION

4th Quarter 2023

YOU ARE THE UNION!
www.afmpittsburgh.com



Overture

By George Clewer
President/Secretary

Here we are already in September. The Summer flew by once again but not without many MPTF projects played by our membership all throughout the Pittsburgh area. We made contact with the City of Pittsburgh again after a long absence and have performed a number of park concerts featuring a variety of ensembles from big bands to combos. Add to that the projects played in libraries, schools, senior centers and medical facilities and you have quite an array of venues and dollars earned. Our dollar allocation from MPTF has grown each year for the past several years and was \$29,000.00 for the current MPTF fiscal year beginning this past May. I always worry that we will not be able to use all of the dollars allotted us but so far we have been able to do just that. We have become very aggressive in our promoting of these projects and it has paid off handsomely. I should point out that these gigs run from an hour to ninety minutes on average and pay a minimum of \$143.00 per sideman. Those who qualify for cartage receive that as well. Leader fee is, of course, an additional amount. A pretty good payout for a relatively small investment of time.

The AFM Convention took place this past Summer as well and we will have more on that in the 'Burgsounds column.

Please enjoy the Newsletter.

George

MEMBERSHIP DUES

REGULAR 4th QUARTER DUES ARE DUE IN OCTOBER IN THE AMOUNT OF **\$40.00**

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE IN OCTOBER IN THE AMOUNT OF **\$23.50**

PLEASE BE ON TIME WITH YOUR DUES. IT SAVES YOU A LATE FEE AND SAVES US THE ADDED WORK OF COLLECTING THEM. THANK YOU.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

MONDAY, OCTOBER 2ND
GAETANO'S RESTAURANT
1617 BANKSVILLE ROAD, PGH. 15216

AGENDA
7:00PM SOCIAL

7:30PM DINNER

8:15PM SHORT BUSINESS MEETING
Please call the office at 412-281-1822 or e-mail at president@afmpittsburgh.com for reservations

DUES INCREASE REMINDER

BEGINNING IN JANUARY, 2024

REG. MEMBERS..... \$45.00 PER QUARTER
\$180.00 PER YEAR
\$175.00 PAID IN JAN.

HONORARY LIFE.. \$25.00 PER QUARTER
\$100.00 PER YEAR

'BURGSOUNDS

OLDTIMERS PARTY

We held our annual Old-timers Party on Monday, August 28 at Gaetano's restaurant on Banksville Road. As always, it was an opportunity to get together with musicians whom we don't always get to see on a regular basis. BTW, Gaetano's is where we held some of our General Membership Meetings going back quite awhile. Elliott Ratliff reminds me that his first ever meeting was at Gaetano's about 18 years ago. Elliott mentioned that it was the last meeting held there as we moved on to other venues. Can't believe it's been that long but time flies when you're having fun! Anyway, we had a small but elite crowd on hand

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and the accommodations were perfect for the size. Good food and music provided by the **Lou Lucarelli** Jazz Quintet. FYI-Lou just provided the music, not the food! Everyone present received an assortment of candy as a door prize. Lou's band consisted of **Don Aliquo** on sax, **Andy Yalch** on keyboard, **Bob Patterson** on bass, **Al Wrublesky** on drums, and Lou on vibes. Great sound and Don still plays up a storm well into his nineties!! It was fun sitting in for a few tunes. We had an excellent buffet dinner with lots of good food to go around. I am hopeful that we can get more of our old-timers interested in coming out for the party. The requirements for attendance are either 50 years of age or older or 20 years or more of membership. We probably have over 300 members who qualify. Hope to see more of you next year. BTW, we are holding our October General Membership Meeting at Gaetano's and really hoping to see some of you in attendance. Just let us know that you are coming. The details are on page 1 of this newsletter.

DUES INCREASE

I do wish to remind everyone that, beginning January 1, our dues rates will have increased for really the first time in over 20 years, aside from a \$10.00 tax levied by the AFM on all members quite a few years ago. As noted above on page 1, the Regular Membership Dues are now \$180.00 per year and the Honorary Life Membership Dues are an even \$100.00. The \$5.00 discount still applies for Regular Members so if you pay for the year by January 31, you will pay only \$175.00. This was enacted at the May General Membership Meeting as voted on by the membership present at Rock Bottom Restaurant. We are extremely hopeful that all members will understand why this rate hike is necessary. We've outlined here in the newsletter the many reasons for such an increase. Aside from the increase, we have seen our spending in certain areas go down in a further attempt to stay financially afloat here in the Local. It's not easy maintaining things as we want them to be with services to benefit all of our members. We are trying our best to be at our best always. We do ask your support in this effort.

AFM CONVENTION

As mentioned earlier in the journal, the 102nd AFM Convention was held this past June at the Westgate Resort and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada. Our two representatives this time around were Delegate **Stephanie Tretick** and Diversity Delegate **Elliott Ratliff**. Stephanie has served on the Law Committee for many conventions, including this one, and Elliott served as the chair of the Elections Committee which he has been a part of at the past four conventions. Elliott is also a Vice-President of the Penn-Del-Mar-DC Conference which is part of the Eastern Conference of

Locals. I should point out that Elliott serves on the Diversity Committee as well. This convention marked the end of Ray Hair's tenure as President of the AFM as it did for Jay Blumenthal as Secretary-Treasurer, and Bruce Fife as Vice-President. Ray, Jay, and Bruce had all decided to step down as officers and turn the reins over to others. Succeeding Ray as International President of the AFM is Tino Gagliardi. Succeeding Jay as International Secretary-Treasurer is Ken Shirk, and succeeding Bruce as International Vice-President is Dave Pomeroy. As always, there were resolutions and recommendations to be voted on by the delegates present. These involved everything from new member orientation issues, increases in strike fund allocation, a resolution condemning the replacement of live musicians by any electronic means, etc. Much of the days at the convention involve such recommendations and resolutions to be voted upon. There was even a resolution welcoming DJ's, hip hop and EDM artists to the AFM. My thanks to Stephanie and Elliott for their continued service to our Local. The next AFM Convention is scheduled for the summer of 2026. I did hear a rumor that the AFM is considering a move away from the Westgate Hotel due to rising costs.

EASTERN CONFERENCE OF LOCALS

Along with the AFM Convention, come the conference meetings just prior to the convention. The Federation is made up of many such conferences such as the Eastern Conference, to which our Local belongs, along with the Mid-States Conference, Illinois State Conference, Mid-America Conference, Southern Conference, etc. I won't name them all here. **Elliott Ratliff** has been representing our Local at the Eastern

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Conference for a good many years now and is Vice-President of the Penn-Del-Mar-DC Conference which is part of the Eastern Conference as mentioned earlier. Elliott tells me that there were in depth discussions involving MPTF and Freelance Services. Of course, Local 60-471 is very much involved with MPTF, much more so than many locals. We are having a definite resurgence in that area here in the local. As for the freelance issues, there are always discussions revolving around what may be done to increase Union benefits and support for this large group of musicians who, many times, are seemingly unrepresented or barely so by the AFM. Elliott served on the In Memoriam Committee and gave that report to the conference. Again, my thanks to Elliott for his work on behalf of our Local at the AFM Convention and the Eastern Conference of Locals.

FRANK SCHARBO

I was saddened to learn of the death of member and guitarist **Frank Scharbo** this past month. Frank was an outstanding musician who I used to run into a lot at various jam sessions around town back in the day. I'm thinking the better part of thirty years or so ago. A session in Dormont known as the "spaghetti jam" is one that comes to mind. That one was hosted by saxophonist **Don Aliquo** as I recall. There were others that popped up around town and it was a pretty good bet that you would run into Frank there. Board member **Tom Evans** recalls working with Frank and how musical his playing was. Frank was a really nice guy who was fun to hang out with. He knew tons of tunes and played them in a very clean and elegant way. Frank did home remodeling and actually redid my kitchen and bathroom when I lived in McKeesport. I remember that he had a great fear of cats and, of course, I owned three of them at that time. It was all Frank could do to get himself in my house each day! He finished the work in record time and I do credit the cats for that! In his later years, Frank would call the office now and again just to inquire how everyone was doing. Frank served on the USS George E. Badger during WWII proudly serving his country. Frank, rest in peace!

PITTSBURGH CIVIC LIGHT OPERA

I took advantage of an opportunity on a Sunday evening to take in the closing performance of CLO's production of "Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812". Let me point out that the CLO Orchestra is contracted by member **George Hoydich** who, in his second season in this position, is doing an outstanding job. The orchestra was excellent and consisted of **Catie Brown**, Piano, **Kathy Billie**, Keyboard/Accordion, **MaryBeth Malek**, Clarinet/Bass Clarinet, **Cindy Anderson**, Oboe/English Horn, **Jen**

Gerhard Mangone, Viola, **Rebecca Neukom**, Violin, **Joe Bishkoff**, Cello 1, **Freya Samuels**, Cello 2, **Tom Godfrey** and **Ken Karsh**, Guitar, **Jeff Mangone**, Bass, and **R.J. Heid**, Drums. The story is set in Moscow in the year 1812 just before Napoleon's invasion of Russia. The show is inspired by a 70 page slice of War and Peace, sure you all read that! Anyway, the show has received rave reviews in NY. The musical score is a mix of pop, rock, folk, electronic with more classic Broadway in the mix as well.. The music was interesting and, as mentioned, performed extremely well. I guess I'm more of a Sound of Music kind of guy at heart leaning toward the more traditional Broadway shows. However, I always enjoy the live music experience and there is no better place to hear music performed live than at the Benedum Theater for the Performing Arts and Heinz Hall. Let's not forget that one of the world's great symphonies performs at the "Hall". There will be a report on that in an upcoming journal.

PITTSBURGH PLAYHOUSE

I am pleased to report that we have a new four year agreement at Point Park's Pittsburgh Playhouse. The agreement runs through the 2026-2027 season and sports a substantial raise hike each year. The Playhouse was a brand new CBA for us beginning back in the 2021-2022 season and has worked out well for the Union and the musicians who perform there. I plan on heading down Forbes Avenue soon to catch a performance and hoping that you will too! An excellent company with a fine product. BTW, **George Hoydich** serves as the personnel manager for the orchestra.

PITTSBURGH PUBLIC THEATER

We have a new four year agreement at the Pittsburgh Public Theater and just in time for their production of Billy Strayhorn: Something to Live For. The agreement calls for 4% raises in each of the CBA's four years and adds a personnel manager and

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NOTICE

TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE MEMBERS' AREA OF OUR PITTSBURGH MUSICIANS' UNION WEBSITE YOU NEED TO VISIT WWW.AFMPITTSBURGH.COM AND ENTER THE FOLLOWING:

USERNAME: afmpgh

PASSWORD: mancini60471

Our roster and newsletter reside there!

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artistic director to each musical production. I want to publicly thank members Catie Brown and George Hoydich for their support and insight throughout the entire process. The "Public" has a beautiful home at the O'Reilly Theatre on Penn Avenue across from Heinz Hall. I would heartily encourage you to take in a musical or any of their productions there. You will be in for a treat!

RIVER CITY BRASS

We also have a new CBA at RCBB, just in time for the start of their new season. The Local employed the services of attorney **Kevin Case** once again to achieve this agreement. This has probably been one of the Local's "more challenging" CBA's over time and we believed that Kevin was much needed once again this time around. As I've mentioned before in the journal, most attorneys know exactly "zilch" about the music business. Kevin is a high level musician who knows the business inside and out. A definite plus for the Union and the members whom he represents at the table. Kevin has been involved in these negotiations for the past half dozen years or so. After a wide gap in the proposals from both sides, we did manage to come to an agreement requiring many hours of meetings and deliberations. This is a one year agreement for a number of reasons. RCB was looking for a shorter term contract as they are seemingly unable to look too far into the future to make any reliable projections as to what their financial position may be. The Local then did not want to agree to a longer term deal that would have been a bad one. We did get a **6% raise** for the musicians and a partial reimbursement for the contractual guaranteed services that were not played this past season. Actually, the top tier musicians will receive a payment totaling \$1325 with \$1075 being the lowest reimbursement. There is a service guarantee of 45 services for the one year agreement. There is also an increase in solo pay and cartage. My thanks to the RCBB Committee, especially **Hakeem Bilal** who was at the table for all sessions and **Shawn Wilson** who was on the phone. **Ross Cohen** called in from his teaching gig when able to get updates and give us his thoughts. Also a special thanks to member **Cindy Anderson** who has been running the Election Buddy online voting process for the Union for the past several years now. We have done away with all paper balloting and totally believe that Election Buddy is the way to go moving forward.

Thanks again, Cindy!!

MUSIC PERFORMANCE TRUST FUND

I do not believe that an issue of *PITTSBURGH MUSICIAN* goes out to the membership without a mention of MPTF. That's because this is one of the biggest perks of Union membership, at least here in Local 60-471. We have seen a great resurgence of dollars to MPTF over the past half dozen years or so and we have been taking full advantage of that here. Our Local's allocation of dollars from MPTF has steadily risen in each of the past four or five years. I do believe that the fact that we are putting those dollars in the hands of musicians by promoting more musical projects co-sponsored by the Fund is the reason for the increased allocation.. I've mentioned the nuts and bolts many times in this publication as to how to obtain funding and for the types of performances that qualify. I won't go into the same detail here as I have many times in the past but would encourage you to shoot me an e-mail at president@afmpittsburgh.com or call at 412-855-5137 to discuss. For the majority of these projects, there is an even 50-50 split between the music purchaser and MPTF. Again, there are only certain kinds of gigs that MPTF will support in this manner. We are not speaking of private functions such

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"The way someone perceives what you do is a result of their own experiences (which you can't control), their own preferences (which you can't predict), and their own expectations (which you don't set). If your choices don't match their expectations that is their concern, not yours."

~ James Clear

'BURG SCENES



A few photos of the AFM Convention, past and present. Elliott Ratliff, our Diversity Delegate and Chair of the Elections Committee taken at this year's convention. Next is one taken a number of years back outside on the strip featuring Elliott, my wife Becky Rothermel who was a delegate representing Harrisburg Local 269, and me. The final shot, also from a convention or so ago, is taken in the convention hall with Elliott, Delegate Stephanie Tretick, and me.

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as weddings or such affairs nor are we referring to club gigs either. Those performances that qualify for funding would include open to the public and free music meaning NO admission charge, such as senior centers, medical facilities, and educational facilities such as school performances. Park concerts or any community celebrations even including parades would be eligible for MPTF funding as well. I'm happy to discuss this with any of you. There is almost always money available for these gigs. The important thing to

remember is that the Union does not find these playing opportunities for you. There are many such venues out there. I suggest some leg work on your part. After all, we all know that gigs generally go to those musicians who are willing to be pro active and find work, sometimes where you might least expect it. As of this printing, the Local has administered 40 projects that have played or will play soon. This represents over \$40,000 in scale wages to local musicians. This looks like it will be our best year yet going back over the last 30

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years or so. I do suggest that you take advantage of this opportunity. Again, give me a call or shoot me an e-mail and we can discuss the possibilities. There is free money "out there" for you to take advantage of. I strongly suggest that you do so if at all possible.

LOU LUCARELLI BAND

As mentioned earlier in this journal, Lou Lucarelli and band performed at the Old-Timers Party in August. I stopped in at the Great Oaks Winery just a few days before our party to catch Lou and firm up their appearance at Gaetano's Restaurant, the site of the Old-Timers party. At the winery, Lou uses **Andy Yalch** on keys and **Johnny Vann** on alto and tenor sax. When Lou recorded the band and released a CD, also on hand were **Bob Patterson** on bass, and **Rich Scampone** on drums. The owner of the winery, whose name is also Lou, makes excellent wine, my favorite being a merlot which is truly excellent. I strongly recommend a trip to Finleyville, PA to sample the wines, food, and the LIVE music.

CELEBRATION

Congratulations to **Tony and Georgene Gallo** on their 60th wedding anniversary. Really hard to believe, especially Georgene. Tony must have robbed the cradle! Becky and I were honored to be guests at a party in honor of the Gallo's hosted by one of their daughters. Tony and I have known each other since the mid-seventies when we met playing in a rehearsal band that met weekly at Rodef Shalom Temple. Anyway, it was good to be with them to celebrate their special day. BTW, Tony was and still is one of the finest musicians I've had the pleasure of working with over a whole lot of years. Congrats again folks and many more!

IN CLOSING

It's time to end this newsletter but not without a really big thanks to all of our loyal members who keep the Local going. Without your support, financial

ONCE JIMMY HOFFA IS FOUND,
WE CAN MOVE ON TO FINDING
JIMMY BUFFETT'S
LOST SHAKER OF SALT.



and otherwise, we would be hard-pressed to continue to operate. As we have previously stated here in the last number of newsletters, our membership is a bit lower than it has ever been and our work dues are lower than ever as well. Our contracts call for either a straight 2% or 2.05% for symphonic work dues. These include the Pittsburgh Symphony, Pittsburgh Ballet Theater, and Pittsburgh Opera. When compared to some other Locals with 3.5 to 4% work dues, we are lagging way behind. It is what it is and we have tried to not come hat in hand to the Local asking for a rate increase of even 00.5%. We will see how things play out over the next year or so. We continue to lean on our investments to help us over the financial rough spots though, as of this writing, we have not had to go to that well yet. Hopefully this might continue for a bit and we will make it through this calendar year having to withdraw way less than the \$30,000.00 that we took out of Vanguard last year. In the meantime, please know that our Officers and Executive Board truly appreciate you and your support. We will continue to do our best to make this Local the very best it can be!

Take care of yourselves and please remember "You're all we've got!"

George

**Pittsburgh Musicians Union
Executive Board Meeting
6/12/23
Called to order 3:20 pm
Via Zoom Internet**

Attendance-All board members were present.

Minutes read from previous meeting. Motion to accept as amended by Stephanie Tretick and seconded by Mary Beth Schotting. Motion carried-unanimous.

Financial statements were reviewed.

Budget-A new budget has been submitted to the Finance Committee for review.

Old Timers Party- The party will be held at Geatanos on Monday August 28th at 6:00 pm.

Opera Grievances-Two grievances were referred to Kevin Case. Kevin has agreed in principal to the reasons for the grievances.

Budget- A new Budget has been submitted to the financial committee for review.

Pittsburgh Playhouse-Management has agreed to pay the difference between what the insurance offered and actual replacement value of equipment loss.

Motion to adjourn-Stephanie Tretick and seconded by MaryBeth Schotting - Motion carried-unanimous

Meeting adjourned 4:07pm

Next meeting 7/24/23- 4:00 pm

Respectfully submitted by Andy Yalch-Vice President

“A happy person is not a person in a certain set of circumstances, but rather a person with a certain set of attitudes.” ~ Robert Holden

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