



# UNA VOCE

October 2007 Vol. 15 No. 1

## From the Editor

Another season...and I'm behind already!! We hope you all had productive summers. Ours was filled with conferences; the AFM Convention and Canadian Conference in June, ROPA in July and OCSM and ICSOM in August. In this issue you will read up on "how we spent our summer vacations." Wishing you all a great season, I remain

Your humble servant,  
Robert Fraser – OCSM Secretary, Editor, Una Voce

## President's Report

Francine Schutzman

As a member of the Player Conference Council, along with the heads of ICSOM, ROPA, TMA and RMA, I took part in a good number of conference calls and countless e-mails that were dedicated, for the most part, to preparation for the AFM Convention in June. We had one face-to-face meeting in Chicago in January which both Dan Blackman and I attended. Together, we discussed and submitted resolutions for consideration by the Convention delegates. Dan Blackman, Bob Fraser and I were the OCSM delegates for the Convention (and I also served as a voting delegate for Local 180). As always, the sessions were jam-packed with business and information, and the Convention didn't wind up until well into the evening of the third day.

Of paramount importance at the Convention is the election of officers. President Tom Lee, Vice-President Harold Bradley and Secretary/Treasurer Sam Folio were returned to office. You will have read in the International Musician that we have a new Vice-President from Canada: Bill Skolnik, from Toronto Local 149. Bobby Herriot has taken a well-deserved retirement, and we look forward to seeing what Bill can do. We already know that he is full of energy and ideas. Of the remaining five members of the International Executive Board, we have two who were re-elected (Ray Hair and Joe Parente) and three new ones (Bob McGrew, Erwin Price and Billy Linneman). Since we will now be having triennial Conventions, these officers will serve until August, 2010.

The most contentious issue that comes before every Convention is the matter of finances. There were several financial packages presented to the delegates, including one that would have called for an increase in symphonic work dues. I hope that you were all aware of the Call to Action that was spearheaded by ICSOM and joined by the other player conferences, including OCSM, to protest this proposed increase. We thank all of you who responded by writing letters, signing petitions and letting your Local delegates know how you wanted them to vote on this issue. We were told that our collective voice was heard, and the convention voted accordingly.

There will be no increase in symphonic work dues for at least the next three years. The financial package that was finally adopted mandates a \$2.00 dues increase for all members for 2008, plus 2% work-dues on payments from supplemental markets (i.e. the Sound Recordings Special Payment Fund) if said payment is more than \$2500.

There was another matter which caused a great deal of discussion and, in some quarters, a certain amount of consternation. This was the seating of the delegates of La Guilde des musiciens et musiciennes du Québec (Local 406), which represents all of the AFM musicians in the province of Québec. The current administration had inherited a debt from the previous one and had recently discovered a shortfall in the amount of symphonic work dues which were supposed to be sent to the head office of the AFM. There is an AFM bylaw which states that, if your dues are not paid up, you can't be seated at the Convention. The first real order of business on the first day of the Convention was a special resolution to turn the debt owed by Quebec into a loan by the AFM so that they could be seated (the two delegates were already in Las Vegas for the Canadian Conference). The Canadian delegates to the AFM were united in their desire to see the people from Montreal seated for a number of reasons, among which was the desire not to disenfranchise people in the Quebec City Local (whose finances are in order but who are represented at the Convention by the Guilde) and an acknowledgement that the debt was not of the current administration's making and has, in fact, already been paid down somewhat. After much debate and an expressed feeling by a number of delegates that the bylaw itself needs to be changed at a future Convention, the delegates from Montreal were finally seated. Sadly, one of them had to leave the very next day because of a death in the family.

There was much discussion of the high cost of work permits for Canadians who wish to perform in the US, especially the fees for so-called "premium processing." Getting rid of these punitive fees is a work in progress, we were told. A resolution that would have allowed for the AFM to establish a legal-aid fund for small Locals who have the responsibility for maintaining collective bargaining agreements has been referred to the IEB. There will be further exploration into the possibility of merging with another international union. And, in the interests of attracting more people to membership in the AFM, a Local executive board may approve the waiving of initiation fees when all non-AFM members of a self-contained band or musical unit (two or more musicians) make application together to join a Local.

You've heard this before: get involved on your Local boards if you want to try to effect any real change within the AFM. It is not too soon to do that now if you want to have a chance to see for yourself how the next Convention will play out in 2010.

### The Family Portrait – 2007 Conference Attendees



(L to R : Gary Borton (RSO – hidden), Barbara Hankins (2<sup>nd</sup> VP OCSM), Bob Fraser (Secretary OCSM - standing on chair), Edith Stacey (ESO), Humberto Martins (EPW), Simon-Phillipe Allard (SNS observer), Marc Moscovich (OSQ – hidden), Tom Fetherston (President, ROPA), Jim Biros (ED Local 149), Karen Foster (VSO), Ellen Versteeg-Lytwyn (EPW), Penny Clarke (TBSO), Kenji Fuse (Victoria – hidden), Suzanne Lemieux (SNS), Jeff Garrett (Treasurer OCSM), Tom Lee (AFM President), Francine Schutzman (President OCSM), Sam Folio (AFM S-T), Bill Skolnik (AFM V-P from Canada), Mark Tetreault (AFM SSD Canada), Katherine Robertson (K-WS), Greg Sheldon (Windsor), Dan Blackman (1st V-P OCSM), Arlene Dahl (WSO), Dave Pell (OLC), Frank Morphy (TSO), Elspeth Thomson (HPO – in back), Monique Lagacé (OMGM), Linda Bardutz (SSO), Elaine Thompson (COC), Anne Letourneau (Local 406), Richard Sandals (NBO – in back), Bruce Ridge (Chair, ICSOM), Mark Johnson (AFM Canada), Mike Thomson (CPO), Luc Fortin (Local 406)

### In Memoriam – Nicholas Kilburn

By Francine Schutzman, OCSM President

Nicholas Kilburn was elected Chairman of OCSM/OMOSC (as the position of President was then called) in the summer of 1978. He was Principal Bassoon of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. At the time of his election, he stated his intention of serving as Chairman only until August 1980 because of family responsibilities. Nick was a highly principled man who submitted his resignation as Chairman to the OCSM board earlier than planned—in the fall of 1979. His reason was that he had sought election to the players' committee of the Toronto Symphony that fall and had failed to be elected. His resignation was announced in the March 1980 issue of the OCSM newsletter. Here are some of Nick's words:

"It has been a tenet of mine, voiced often, that a member of the OCSM Executive should not only reflect the confidence of the conference delegates, but should seek a further expression of that confidence by standing for election in his home orchestra. While this is not an OCSM bylaw, I believe strongly that it is a responsibility of the individual delegate to sit in office with members of his home committee so that when he attends an OCSM conference he may speak with first-hand knowledge of the work of his orchestra."

Sadly, Nicholas Kilburn died in Cobourg, Ontario, on July 31st, 2007. The following biography by Harvey Chusid and Patricia Wardrop is from The Encyclopedia of Music in Canada:

Nicholas (Weldon) Kilburn, Bassoonist, teacher, b. Toronto 21 June 1932. At the RCMT 1948-51 his teachers were Elver

Wahlberg (bassoon), his father Weldon Kilburn (piano), Samuel Dolin (theory and harmony), and John Weinzweig (orchestration). He also studied bassoon with Raymond Allard (New England Conservatory, 1951) and Sol Schoenbach (Curtis Institute, 1952-55). Kilburn was a member 1955-58 of the National Ballet of Canada orchestra and 1955-59 of the CBC Symphony Orchestra. He joined the Toronto Symphony Orchestra as principal bassoon in 1959, becoming co-principal with Christopher Weait in 1968 and associate principal in 1986. His solo performances include the premiere of Dolin's *Isometric Variables* with the Hart House Orchestra in 1959, the first complete performance of Weinzweig's *Divertimento No. 3* with the CBC Symphony Orchestra in 1961, and appearances with the Toronto Symphony in Mozart's *Bassoon Concerto* in 1965 and Haydn's *Sinfonia Concertante*, Opus 84 in 1978. He performed in concert and on recordings as a member 1955-70 of the Toronto Woodwind Quintet. He taught 1955-78 at the University of Toronto where his pupils included Mitchell Clarke, William Douglas, James McKay, Gordon Slater, and Norman Tobias. His first wife was the soprano Ilona Kombrink (b. St. Louis, MO, 1932), who sang leading roles in the late 1950's and early 1960's with the Canadian Opera Company and the Stratford Festival and in CBC TV productions of *Tosca* (1958, title role), *Elektra* (1961, *Chrysothemis*), and *Otello* (1963, *Desdemona*). She returned to the USA in 1963 and subsequently taught at the University of Wisconsin. Kilburn was awarded a 1981 Canadian Music Council medal to recognize his services to musical life in Canada. He was chairman of the Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians (OCSM) in 1978-79.

## Report from the OCSM Conference

August 8 -12, Sainte-Foy, Québec

By Robert Fraser, Secretary, OCSM

In the Hotel Classique, just outside beautiful, historic Québec City, your OCSM Delegates and Officers, AFM Officers and Staff, and several special guests convened for the annual OCSM Conference. It proved to be four and a half very productive days. Here are just a few of the highlights – if you have any questions, please feel free to address them to either your Delegate or an OCSM Executive Officer.

This year's conference was dedicated to Nicholas Kilburn, who passed away in July (see *In Memoriam Nicholas Kilburn* on p. 2 of this issue).

### Delegate Reports, Negotiating Orchestras Workshop, and Conference Topics

Each year, Delegates give a summary report of the highlights (and sometimes lowlights) of their respective season. These reports are right after the call to order on the first day of the conference, and they take up the majority of the first day's session. It gives us an opportunity to discuss each orchestra's situation *in camera*. The discussion continues into the evening, when those orchestras currently in negotiations or going into negotiations convene for the NOW (Negotiating Orchestras Workshop). Present at the NOW were OCSM's legal counsel, Michael Wright, who has more than ten years of experience working with OCSM orchestras. We were also joined this year by MSO negotiator Claude Melançon. If I may offer my editorial comment, one of the drawbacks of the NOW is that the OCSM Delegate is not necessarily part of his or her orchestra's negotiating committee. Therefore, in some cases, they may not be the best-equipped person to take part in the NOW – if there were some way of including orchestra and negotiating teams in the process it would be much more beneficial. At any rate, this underlines the need for communication between OCSM and your orchestra committees/negotiating committees.

The Executive continue the dialogue with the Delegates throughout the year, through e-mail and mid-season reports. This discussion always generates a number of "Conference Topics," and every year we set aside most of a day's session. Some of the "hot" topics:

**Instrument Insurance Carrier (HED Inc.)** – we did a review of the performance of our broker in handling claims. The number of actual insurance underwriters who will handle musical instruments seems to be limited, so switching to another broker does not seem to make much of a difference in terms of cost to the member. We urge all OCSM members to report any difficulties in claims to their Delegates.

**Representation of "extra" musicians** (i.e. those not necessarily covered by our collective agreements). This was a complex topic that seems to affect each orchestra in a different way. Two attempts were made at a resolution (see Resolution no. 4 below) that was ultimately referred back to the Ethics Committee and legal counsel. The difficulty lay in establishing clear guidelines for when a substitute or extra musician is allowed to vote on a collective agreement. There are situations in the country where this would

result in part-time musicians having more voting power than the full-time musicians. ICSOM dealt with this issue as well (see Dan Blackman's report on the ICSOM conference in this issue).

**Musician Input on Music Director Search Committees** – most orchestras report that they have at least some musician involvement in these committees, even so far as having language in their collective agreements. However, only one orchestra (Edmonton) has musician input into the *renewal* of said contracts. It would seem that although we are allowed to participate in the selection of a Music Director, we have little or no say in the matter if that Music Director does or does not work out.

**What constitutes conductor harassment?** We all know that conductors can and should exercise control over the orchestra, but when does certain conductor behaviour cross the line? There were no clear answers to this question, but we were reminded of the tools we have at our disposal as unionized musicians: steward's reports, grievances, and liaison with managements.

**Education and Outreach Concerts** – we were fortunate to have in attendance Vanessa Goymour, Education and Outreach co-ordinator for the Calgary Philharmonic. She gave an excellent presentation on her orchestra's programmes, which led to some great idea sharing by the delegates.

There were many other topics discussed. Without going into detail, we also talked about improvements to the Wages and Working Conditions comparative chart, encouraging more involvement in the Conductor Evaluation program, retirement clauses and long-term disability programs, and EPW payments on over-scale amounts like doubling, principal fees and seniority pay.

### AFM Officer and Staff Reports

We were privileged to have reports from three members of the AFM's International Executive Board (IEB): President Tom Lee, Secretary-Treasurer Sam Folio (attending his first OCSM conference) and newly-elected Vice-President from Canada Bill Skolnik. The relationship between Player Conferences and the AFM has always contained a degree of controversy, since the Player Conferences were created because full-time musicians felt they needed their own caucus in addition to representation by their locals, and the AFM initially viewed this action with suspicion. However, the presence of all three titled officers, engaging in frank and open dialogue with us about our concerns was a very positive development. We hope this is the beginning of a very productive collaboration between OCSM and the new IEB.

We also heard from AFM staff members Laura Brownell (Director of AFM's Symphonic Services Division), Canadian SSD staffers Mark Tetreault and Eline Brock Sanheim, and electronic media guru Mark Johnson.

### ICSOM and ROPA

Our two sister symphonic player conferences were represented by Tom Fetherston, President of ROPA (the Regional Orchestra Players' Association) and Bruce Ridge, Chair of ICSOM (the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians). Both gave brief addresses and were on hand to lend their expertise to our discussions. In turn, OCSM was represented at ROPA's conference by yours truly and at ICSOM by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President Dan Blackman. The co-operation of our three conferences was never more evident than at the recent AFM Convention in June, where we

collaborated on a number of resolutions (see Convention report in this issue).

### **AFM-EPW Fund**

In addition to Fund Administrator Ellen Versteeg-Lytwyn's annual report, we had the first-ever presentation by one of the Fund's actuaries, Kevin Sorhaitz. At the 2006 Conference we asked the Fund to investigate the possibility of indexing our pensions. Sorhaitz's presentation gave us clear insight into the risks and trade-offs of indexing pensions; he also gave us a layman's overview of the actuarial process (something I've never seen before – I found it quite interesting). Sorhaitz's power-point slides are available from me, and as always, the AFM-EPW staff are ready to assist us with questions about our pension.

### **Guest Speakers Michael Wright & Claude Melançon**

OCSM Conferences are somewhat cyclical – we find it beneficial to revisit key issues every few years. One of these is negotiation preparation, and we were fortunate to have two excellent negotiators on hand this year. Michael gave us a nuts-and-bolts overview of the negotiating process (a sort of "Negotiations 101"), and Claude focused his presentation on his experiences with the Montreal Symphony during their strike in 2005.

### **Katherine Carleton – Executive Director, Orchestras Canada**

Katherine was our lone industry partner in attendance this year. In the past, we have had representatives from the Canada Council, the CBC, and the Department of Canadian Heritage. Unfortunately, this has dwindled: the latter two have not been in attendance for at least two years and the Canada Council recently had a staff turnover when Angela Birdsell left the orchestra/opera program, and the Council did not have time to send a replacement. We hope to rectify this at future conferences – we benefit greatly from the participation of all our industry partners.

In addition to updating us on Orchestra Canada's activities, Katherine also expressed a desire for future collaborations with OCSM. She cited the recent AFM Symphony, Opera or Ballet Live Performance Recording Agreement as an example where the two organizations worked together to mutual benefit. Other areas where OCSM and OC could work together include: establishing best practices in the industry, orchestra personnel exchange programs (Symphony Nova Scotia did a successful musician exchange with an Australian orchestra this season), lobbying for preservation of orchestral music on the CBC, and advocacy for music education. In short, Katherine asked the question: "What can OCSM and OC do together that we cannot do apart?"

### **Guest Speaker Paul Boulian**

Perhaps our most challenging presentation was from Paul Boulian, who worked on the Mellon Foundation's "Elephant Task Force." This gets its name from the popular expression "the elephant in the room," i.e. there's something so big in here that it can't be ignored but we're not talking about it.

The Elephant Task Force did a thorough examination of several American symphony orchestras; financial analysis, audience and subscriber statistics, and examination of the relationships among

all the parties involved (board, management, musicians, audience). As you can guess, the results of all this analysis did not give the symphonic world a glowing report card on all subjects.

Mark Tetreault has based his report in this issue of Una Voce on Paul's presentations at both OCSM and the League of American Orchestras, so I will not duplicate it here, except to say that one message kept coming through over and over to me: that is, that symphony orchestras need to build patrons, not audiences. What is the distinction? Audiences (i.e. "bums in seats") should not be our primary goal; our goal should be to create a situation where households (Boulian spoke of families, not individuals) make long-term commitments to our orchestras, first through repeated subscriptions, and then through more serious financial commitments. He pointed out that all the major benefactors of orchestras are first and foremost subscribers, not persons with only a peripheral involvement with the institution.

I am sometimes arrogant in thinking that I know a lot about my own orchestra (after all, I think I've served on every committee and volunteered for everything I can volunteer for) but some of the exercises Paul put the delegates through made me realize that there are areas of my organization I know little about. For example, how many of you could plot the following on a ten-year graph for your orchestra:

- 1) number of classical series subscribers each season
- 2) average number of tickets in a subscription (change over time)
- 3) subscription ticket price increase vs. inflation
- 4) % expense increase of your orchestra vs. % revenue increase
- 5) number of households contributing and average amount of contribution
- 6) % of your orchestra's revenue covered by government, corporations, foundation and other entities (not ticket sales)

The Mellon Foundation continues to work with the industry, so we will see what the future brings in this area.

### **Committees**

As always, there are committees struck to deal with OCSM business; most of them are standing committees that continue working throughout the year.

**Electronic Media** – the CBC was a hot topic of discussion. The Media Committee asked the Delegates to vote on resolutions (see below) that would allow for conversion of CBC archival material to commercial recordings. The Delegates also voted on a parallel Internet agreement to the Live Recording Agreement.

**Editorial** – deals with internal communication (Una Voce, website, Directory). We felt it important to continue Una Voce as a hard-copy publication, but to only print the Directory on a per request basis. The Directory will be posted in a members-only area of the website. We also hope to track contract settlements more thoroughly, with a "settlement summary" of all 20 OCSM orchestras.

**Government & Communications** – deals with our external lobbying and communication. They came up with a letter urging the CBC to preserve its classical music content. They also feel our energies would be well-spent to lobby particular MP's about the impact of an orchestra in their constituencies.

**Conference** – We will try to hold the 2008 Conference in Victoria (hotel availability pending) and the 2009 Conference in Thunder Bay (a first for OCSM).

**Bylaws** – after last summer's extensive overhaul of the Bylaws, we were relieved to have only two changes from the Bylaws committee (see below).

**Finance** – your Delegates will have the Financial Statements of OCSM for the year ending June 30. Part of your OCSM dues goes into OCSM's Emergency Relief Fund each year; since that fund is very healthy right now the Finance Committee felt we could forego that transfer of funds for the 07-08 fiscal year.

### **New Executive**

We said goodbye to 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President **Barbara Hankins**; although we will miss her presence on the Executive we are delighted that she will continue to represent the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. We welcome in her place **Mike Thomson** of the Calgary Philharmonic. When I joined board in 2003 I was the sole "rooster in the hen house," now Francine is our only female on the board. You can make the appropriate analogies to bees or toy-boys if you like.

### **Resolutions passed at the Conference (unless otherwise stated)**

#### **Resolution No. 1**

**Whereas**, Nicholas Kilburn served as the second Chairman of the Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians with honour, integrity and dignity, and

**Whereas**, Nicholas has recently passed away, therefore be it **Resolved**, that the 2007 OCSM Conference be dedicated to the memory of Nicholas Kilburn.

#### **Resolution no. 2**

Be it resolved, that all acts, contracts, proceedings, appointments, elections and payments taken, made and done by the directors and officers of OCSM since the date of the last Annual General Meeting be hereby approved, ratified and confirmed. *This resolution was withdrawn by the Executive.*

#### **Resolution no. 3**

Resolved, that OCSM/OMOSC appoint Stefan Jungkind of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra as OCSM/OMOSC Conductor Evaluation Data Bank Operator for the 2007-08 year of operations.

#### **Resolution no. 4**

The following resolution was formulated by OCSM's standing Ethics Committee and presented to the conference:

**Whereas**, OCSM recognizes the invaluable contributions of substitute and extra musicians to our Canadian orchestras, and

**Whereas**, a primary objective of OCSM is to protect the interests of Canadian orchestral musicians, and

**Whereas**, fair treatment of all musicians is key to building and maintaining solidarity, and

**Whereas**, less favourable terms and conditions for substitute and extra musicians provide an incentive for managements to try to reduce the number of full-contract musicians, and

**Whereas**, recent events have brought to light inequities in the treatment of substitute and extra musicians,

Be it resolved that,

1. Orchestra Committees and Locals consult and communicate with all musicians, including substitute and extra musicians, in the negotiation and administration of Collective Agreements, and

2. Locals work in conjunction with Orchestra Committees to establish voting privileges for substitute and extra musicians who perform regularly with their orchestras, and

3. All substitute and extra musicians receive parity with full-contract musicians in wages and pension contributions.

This Resolution was withdrawn and the following **Substitute Resolution No. 4** was submitted (with the same "whereas" clauses above)

Be It Resolved That, OCSM recommend the following policy for the fair treatment of substitute and extra musicians:

Locals and Orchestra Committees consult and communicate with substitute and extra musicians in the negotiation and administration of Collective Agreements, and

In recognition of the Duty of Fair Representation, Locals and Orchestra Committees develop a method for substitute and extra musicians to participate in voting procedures where legally applicable, and

Negotiating Committees work to achieve parity for substitute and extra musicians with full-contract musicians in base wages and pension contributions.

Substitute Resolution No. 4 was referred back to committee to consult with counsel and the Canadian Office.

#### **Resolution no. 5**

Be it resolved, that Article 8, Section 3 of the OCSM Bylaws be amended as follows:

**Section 3:** The President shall:

- a) chair all meetings of the organization;
- b) act as spokesperson of the Corporation;
- c) oversee the work of the other Executive Officers; and
- d) serve by virtue of office as a delegate to the International Convention of the American Federation of Musicians; and
- e) serve by virtue of office as OCSM's representative on the AFM Player Conference Council.

#### **Resolution no. 6**

Be it resolved, that a new Section 9 be added to Article 8 of the OCSM Bylaws, and that the former Section 9 and subsequent sections be renumbered accordingly

New Section 9: The Executive Officers shall be empowered to formulate resolutions to be presented on behalf of OCSM to the AFM Convention. Resolutions signed by OCSM shall be made available to all OCSM Delegates no later than two weeks after the deadline for submission of resolutions to the AFM Convention.

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**Resolution no. 7**

Be it resolved, that a new section 2 be added to Article 14 of the OCSM Bylaws, and that the subsequent sections be renumbered accordingly.

New Section 2: Professional members who hold contracts with more than one OCSM/OMOSC orchestra shall only be required to pay OCSM dues to one orchestra.

**Resolution no. 8**

Resolved, to allow the CBC to convert archival material into commercial recordings, using the existing provisions in the AFM-CBC Agreement for conversion of live recordings to commercial product, with each project being subject to musician approval.

**Resolution no. 9**

Resolved, that the AFM Canada promulgate a Symphonic Internet Agreement for Canada only, using the same terms and conditions as the AFM Symphony, Opera or Ballet Live Recording Agreement (SOBLRA). This agreement would allow for the use of product on the Internet in any forum (e.g. streaming or downloading) and, like the SOBLRA, would be subject to musician approval on a project-by-project basis.

**Resolution no. 10**

Whereas, the OCSM Executive has received a request from Barbara Zmich (past President of ROPA) for membership in OCSM, and

Whereas, Barbara has purchased a vacation house in Ontario and plans to join a Canadian AFM Local, and

Whereas, Barbara has demonstrated through her leadership of ROPA and her union activism that her interests and goals are similar to those of OCSM/OMOSC, therefore be it

Resolved, that Barbara Zmich be named an Associate Member of OCSM/OMOSC.

**Resolution no. 11**

Resolved, to lift Resolution no. 11 from the 2006 Conference from the table. Carried.

Resolution no. 11 from 2006 Conference -

*Resolved*, That Article 11, Section 2 of the OCSM Bylaws be moved to Article 6, and be re-numbered Section 3. And, be it further *Resolved*, That Article 6 be re-named as follows:

Article 6-CRITERIA FOR MEMBER ORCHESTRA APPLICATION TO THE CORPORATION

**Section 3 [formerly Article 11, Section 2]:** An orchestra shall become an OCSM/OMOSC Member Orchestra upon approval of a majority vote of the Executive Committee of OCSM/OMOSC following consultation with the representatives of OCSM/OMOSC member orchestras. Thereupon, the new Member Orchestra shall have the right to seat a Delegate.

**Resolution no. 12**

Resolved, That OCSM/OMOSC appoint the firm of Grant Thornton, Toronto, as accountants for the 2007-08 year of operations.

**Report on ICSOM Conference 2007**

**by Daniel Blackman, First V-P, OCSM**

The ICSOM Conference took place in Minneapolis, Minnesota from August 15-18. On arrival in the airport in Minneapolis, the first thing I noticed was classical music playing over the public address system. What a nice touch. Wouldn't it be nice to have the same thing in Canada?

The first session I attended was a focus on marketing our orchestras. A number of key points were raised and discussed: the shrinking of traditional media outlets for classical music, opposing media messages between success stories and the death of the industry, and the role of marketing in controlling the message – who gets it and where it goes. Most of the concerns are similar to those discussed at OCSM Conferences and are present in our daily lives within orchestras.

Marketing has a responsibility to the artistic mission of an orchestra, from handling the relationship of a conductor with the press to promoting feature stories and editorials. An orchestra has to be relevant within its own community, by starting with a great product and extending into the community to serve more people. Perception of how an orchestra is run financially is of concern to the public, and is reflected in ticket sales. Generally, too much attention is paid to transient conductors and soloists. It is more important that marketing present to the community a message of ownership of their orchestra.

The next day saw a presentation from the AFM-Symphonic Services Division under director Laura Brownell, who together with Nathan Kahn, Chris Durham, and Deborah Newmark brought a wealth of knowledge regarding negotiating. Much of the same information has been presented to OCSM, but it is always good to hear the messages being repeated. The most important aspect of the presentation was that through communication and good preparation, many problems can be avoided.

ICSOM counsel Len Leibowitz was in fine form, and presented a thumbnail labour history outline which was very interesting. This was followed by sessions dealing with the AFM-EPF (the US musicians' pension fund). There is much concern in the US about the health and direction of the EPF, and these sessions were of particular interest to the delegates.

The afternoon concluded with reports from player conferences. Dennis Danders reported for ROPA, I reported for OCSM, and Bruce Bouton for the RMA (Recording Musicians Association). Of particular concern is the animosity between the RMA and the AFM. This was addressed passionately by Bruce Bouton, and a resolution was passed at ICSOM calling for unity (see below).

The next day's sessions were centred on electronic media and health care. Florence Nelson (former AFM Secretary-Treasurer and AFM-SSD director), who sends her greetings to all, has been appointed to create a health care database for ICSOM. Some of these issues may be of interest to Canadian orchestras who have LTD (long-term disability) policies and extended health benefits. We learned that it is the musicians' responsibility to keep track of their LTD language. Employers will shop for the best rates, but the rules of benefits can change drastically from one policy to another. There have been problems collecting LTD for musicians who don't have provable medical evidence of a condition which prevents them from working, even though these include well-known medical conditions

such as chest pains, fibromyalgia, irritable bowel syndrome, tinnitus, and Parkinson's disease.

The following resolutions will be of interest to OCSM members:

#### **ICSOM Resolution #5**

WHEREAS, The essence of good trade unionism is the solidarity of all sectors, all officers, and all the members; and

WHEREAS, No union can truly thrive and properly represent the membership when differences of thought, approach or philosophy become so vast and divisive; and

WHEREAS, The AFM has grown and become a major force in the arts and entertainment fields; and

WHEREAS, The current disputes between the AFM administration and the Recording Musicians Association threatens to tear apart this great union; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the delegates and Governing Board of the 2007 ICSOM Conference implore the Recording Musicians Association and the current administration of the AFM to meet together in a spirit of unity, put aside their differences, and achieve the higher goal of reunification and solidarity for the greater good of all of the members of the AFM and their families.

#### **ICSOM Resolution #7**

WHEREAS, Substitute and extra musicians are essential to the ongoing operation of any symphony, opera and ballet orchestra; and

WHEREAS, There exists no good reason for providing those musicians with any different wage than at least the scale wage on a pro rata basis; and

WHEREAS, Some managements of symphony, opera and ballet orchestras have periodically attempted to pay these substitute and extra musicians less than equal pay for equal work; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the delegates to the 2007 ICSOM Conference express their unlimited support for all musicians who try to make their living by performing the invaluable task of filling temporary vacancies and/or adding their talent to certain performances that require a larger ensemble; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the delegates to the 2007 ICSOM Conference join with their brothers and sisters in deploring the practice of exploiting these musicians with lower pay, little or no benefits and no job security; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That all AFM locals and orchestra negotiating committees be urged to refrain from agreeing to such exploitation of substitute and extra musicians.

#### **ICSOM Resolution #12**

WHEREAS, The image of live classical music in our country is an essential component to the public's awareness and interest in the quest to increase revenue by way of ticket sales and contributions; and

WHEREAS, One way of creating such awareness and interest is to have a national "corporate image" type of television campaign similar to those of the dairy industry, i.e., "Got Milk?", and the meat industries, "Pork, the other (underlined for emphasis) white meat", and

WHEREAS, Such a campaign can be funded through the joint efforts of the AFM, the League of American Orchestras, ICSOM, and ROPA; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the delegates to the 2007 ICSOM Conference urge the leadership of the AFM, the League of American Orchestras, ICSOM and ROPA to meet to discuss the feasibility of creating a national television campaign, the purpose of which is to increase the public awareness and interest in classical music.

### **Report from the 2007 Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA) Conference**

**By Robert Fraser, OCSM Secretary**

Downtown San Francisco was the setting for this year's ROPA Conference, and I was privileged to attend on behalf of OCSM. This was not only my first ROPA Conference (other than Unity 2002, when all three symphonic conferences met in Ottawa), it was my first time representing an entire nation at something! I hope all my American friends aren't under the impression that Canadians are goofy bass trombonists who are bitter at the fact that our country hasn't seen the Stanley Cup in fourteen years.

For all you newcomers to the symphonic profession, ROPA is one of two symphonic player conferences in the US. It represents approximately 75 of the smaller-budget orchestras, whereas ICSOM represents about 50 larger ones. As someone who has worked most of his career as a per-service musician in a smaller orchestra (Victoria) I immediately felt at home among the ROPA delegates. I saw many of their stories reflected in the story of my own orchestra over the last 17 years.

The ROPA conference operates in much the same way as ICSOM and OCSM, with some notable differences. Like OCSM, there are a number of conference topics that emerge from the stories of each orchestra's season. However, because ROPA is a much larger body (75 delegates as opposed to OCSM's 20), they have what are called "breakout sessions" where a ROPA Executive Board member and an AFM staff person moderate a session of about a dozen delegates each. They meet in separate rooms, and as each delegate gives a report on their season, the most pertinent and frequently-occurring topics are selected for special sessions later on in the conference. Once these topics are identified, then the delegates choose which breakout sessions they will attend.

Some topics that were dealt with in breakout sessions included: pit orchestra issues, musicians' roles on boards and in volunteer capacities outside of performing, shrinking orchestras (either in number of players or number of services), mobilizing the orchestra's musicians (dealing with apathy).

In addition to this, there are keynote speakers, presentations by legal counsel and AFM Symphonic Services Division staff, and reports. One of the keynote presentations that stood out for me was given by Dr. Miki Kashtan of Bay Area Nonviolent Communication (see them on the web at [www.baynvc.org](http://www.baynvc.org)). It was entitled "Collaborative Communication." Normally Dr. Kashtan spends days with a client; she admitted to the difficulty of summarizing a large topic in 90 minutes. However, she managed, in my view, to get to the heart of communication and negotiation in a short time. At first, I was suspicious, especially of phrases like the following:

"When one party enters an agreement out of fear, shame, guilt, obligation, or the desire for extrinsic reward, it is unlikely that the agreement will ultimately be satisfying to either party...Taking more time before entering the agreement to make sure that each party's needs are clear and both feel free to speak honestly will pay off later in terms of the durability and effectiveness of the agreement...Look for and propose alternate strategies to achieve the other party's goals that will not be as costly to you."

I immediately thought of Interest-Based Bargaining, a model of bargaining that attempts to eliminate the confrontation of traditional bargaining by the use of facilitated sessions (IBB has been discussed at OCSM Conferences in the past, and there is a great resource page on IBB on the AFM website, in the Symphonic Services area for members). I was relieved to find out that Dr. Kashtan had studied IBB and concluded that it would not provide satisfactory agreements between parties where one party had considerable power over another (like employer/employee bargaining).

Dr. Kashtan's model clearly preserved the distinct role of each side of the bargaining table (musicians/management); she also took us through a few exercises to help us understand how a truly collaborative process works, and to help us develop better communications tools.

We were also treated to excellent presentations by ROPA's legal counsel, Trish Polach on Labor Law in the US (which operates very differently from Canada), and workshops on grievances by Polach and SSD negotiator Nathan Kahn. SSD Electronic Media director Debbie Newmark also gave a presentation on the symphonic recording agreements now available within the AFM.

This report barely scratches the surface of what happens at a Player Conference. For me, the most important thing to understand about the Player Conferences is that we exist so that you are not alone as a musician. If there is something wrong in your orchestra, or in your job, there are almost 150 other orchestras under the umbrella of the PCs, and in one of those orchestras there is a musician just like you, or a situation just like yours. Similarly, where there are success stories, we can all learn from them as well. All you have to do is ask - I would start by visiting the websites of the three symphonic player conferences ([www.icsom.org](http://www.icsom.org), [www.ropaweb.org](http://www.ropaweb.org), and [www.ocsm-omosc.org](http://www.ocsm-omosc.org)), subscribing to our e-mail lists, and joining in the discussion.

## VIEWPOINT

### A Vicious Circle

**By Mike Thomson, 2<sup>nd</sup> V-P OCSM (Calgary Philharmonic)**

There is something that has been going on in the orchestral music scene for such a long time now and has become so widespread that, apparently, it no longer warrants a reaction from the musicians. It is the turnover rate in our administrations. It seems as though we hear of another departure upstairs and our reaction is one of indifference, certainly not surprise. Recently, in the Calgary Philharmonic's case, we have had an alarming number of departures. Increasingly, I find myself thinking about the issue. How

can we expect to flourish within a work environment that cannot keep its administrative staff? Can we afford to constantly lose good people? Is this just the way it is?

More than ever we need to retain good people in our administrations. In our industry we are increasingly dependent on good management. It doesn't take much to tip the balance. We need to seek out the best possible individuals and give them an incentive to commit. Reward excellence and quickly eliminate incompetence. The cycle of continuous staff departures is only adding to our own demise. We continue to repeat the same mistakes because new people come into management and make the same mistakes! We seem to be constantly searching for and retraining personnel. Is this any way to be running a business?

I don't know about you but I wouldn't want to work in the administration of a symphony orchestra. It seems to me that it is a stressful, abusive, and thankless job. Sure, more money would help, but I am convinced that it is not just a money issue. How we treat people is paramount. If you do a job, you want to feel appreciated and respected for your contribution. There are many ways of accomplishing this. A great place to start is to improve working conditions: understand that you are understaffed and often ask for extra hours without compensation; acknowledge the relentless workload and stress level; create an atmosphere of open communication so that issues can be resolved effectively and efficiently; recognize the lack of infrastructure and resources available; say 'thank you', or commend when someone has done a great job. Take the staff out for lunch - more than once! All this is just an acknowledgement of the difficult environment we ask our staff to work within.

So, who is responsible for this? It is leadership. Certainly having a leader who is willing to listen and is sensitive to the employees' circumstances is basic. Having a leader who addresses concerns and is intolerant of an abusive atmosphere is essential. A leader who strives to improve the working conditions for all employees is crucial. What about the musicians? Surely saying 'thank you' or 'great job', when appropriate, couldn't hurt.

If we could begin the process of retaining good staff, perhaps then we could begin mentoring them to become our future leaders. Just imagine: we could keep someone who actually understands the industry and can work within the unique parameters in which we operate. In the future we might benefit from having the choice of numerous candidates who would be excellent employees or leaders within our organizations. We must finally break the vicious circle of searching, hiring and retraining. What other choice do we have?

*The editor invites your opinions and experiences on the subject of retaining effective management. Please respond with your stories to Robert Fraser, Editor, Una Voce at [ocsmsec@telus.net](mailto:ocsmsec@telus.net).*