



Central California Upbeat

The Official Newsletter of the Professional Musicians of Central California AFM Local 12

AFM Local 12 General Membership Meeting Monday, March 13th, 7 PM on Zoom

<https://csus.zoom.us/j/3453315981>

New Member Orientation Sunday, March 26th, 7 PM on Zoom

(same Zoom address as above)

**MPTF 100% Funding Available for
Jazz Appreciation Month (April)**
(\$8K in Normal 50% Funding Available as well through May 1st!)
Contact Geoff Roach, Executive Board Member
geoff@geoffroach.com

**Write your Congressional Representatives about
The American Music Fairness Act (AMFA)**
www.musicfirstcoalition.org

Modesto Symphony Orchestra

Announces auditions for the following positions:

Section Violin I, II (multiple positions) Assistant Principal Violin II

Auditions will be held at:
The San Francisco Conservatory of Music
50 Oak Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

Audition Date: June 8, 2023
Application Deadline: May 25, 2023

Additional information and repertoire can be found at:

<https://www.modestosymphony.org/employment-and-auditions>

Send a one-page resume and refundable audition deposit of \$20 to:

Matthew Siek, Director of Operations
Modesto Symphony Orchestra
911 13th Street
Modesto, CA 95354
msiek@modestosymphony.org

checks should be made payable to: Modesto Symphony Orchestra Association

2023-2024 base service pay: \$153
Assistant principal: \$168.30
Paid Pension
Travel Compensation up to \$42 per day
Homestays Housing Available

Respecting Our Colleagues in the Workplace from the AFM Local 12 Executive Board

For our new members along with our longtime AFM Local 12 members, the Executive Board of Local 12 would like to share with you one benefit of union membership.

As we emerge from COVID and get back a new version of working as a professional musicians there are some basic premises that still hold true. We must have mutual respect for our colleagues and not judge them on age, race, religion, sexual preference, vaccination preference or other protected classes. Nepotism and friendship are not qualifications for musician ability.

Below is a 2015 article written for the Local 6 *Musical News* by the former President of that Local, David Schoenbrun. This article was re-printed in the December 2022 Local 6 newsletter. The language quoted from their Bylaws is essentially the same as ours. (You can find a copy of our bylaws on our website.)

The *Music Police* by David Schoenbrun, President Emeritus AFM Local 6

Article 2, Section 3 of our Local 6 Bylaws enumerates the “rights and duties of members” stating, “The following shall constitute good faith and fair dealing among members and adherence to union principles. Failure to comply may subject a member to a charge of breach of good faith and fair dealing.”

Number 4 in that list of rights and duties requires members “To act with propriety in dealings with other members, on engagements, at union meetings...” which is to say, to act with decorum and decency— to conduct oneself with courtesy and professionalism. I am happy to say that the Board rarely is called upon to enforce this bylaw. Breaches, when they occur, are the result of momentary bouts of frustration or anger, not uncommon in a profession where people must work in close proximity to each other and, literally, in harmony with colleagues. Usually a discrete conversation is all that is needed to restore peace in the workplace.

But this bylaw is more than just about controlling one’s temper, or making threats, or making inappropriate language. It is intended to address those members who take it upon themselves to set the musical standards of a particular orchestra or band, and come to see themselves as enforcers of those standards. They have come to be known, quite descriptively, as the *Music Police*.

The drafters of our bylaws understood, as we do now, that this sort of behavior poses a real threat to our members, and to the fabric of union unity. It recognizes that it is the responsibility of the Union to protect members from professional defamation that has potential to severely and adversely affect a member’s employment. This protection extends beyond the workplace, even into the realms of social media.

Who are the *Music Police*? They are members who complain about musician, whose playing they don’t like - who “offend their artistic sensibilities” - to other colleagues, to contractors, personnel managers, conductors, music directors and even administrative supervisors. They justify their actions in the defense of their art or in the best interests of the orchestra or group. They act with complete disregard for their negative effects, both emotionally and professionally, on the colleagues they target.

Often they are seemingly unaware that most Collective Bargaining Agreements have negotiated remedies for artistic deficiencies, or they regard those contractual remedies and the use of proper channels of authority as too slow or cumbersome.

It's a difficult problem, since the *Music Police* are usually fairly entrenched in their attitudes and their "mission." Everyone reading this knows at least one such member, as they tend to quickly become known to their colleagues. And their intention is to become well-known as they believe that their habit of passing-of-judgment about certain members, whether public or whispered, serves to elevate them artistically in the eyes of colleagues or music supervisors.

In addition to the individuals that become the target of their crusades, the damage the *Music Police* pose to the morale of their group can be significant. Employers also come to identify these members, and may exploit their unedited remarks in ways to undermine orchestra solidarity, especially as part of divisive tactics at the bargaining table, in disciplinary hearings and in arbitration.

I should happen to mention that principal players in an orchestra do not possess any special privileges when it comes to conforming to this standard of professional behavior. First and foremost, principals are part of the bargaining unit, NOT supervisors, and as such they may offer their opinions of other musicians in their section ONLY when directly and specifically asked by the Music Director. Principals must find more creative ways to deal with problems that come up in a section - engaging in private conversations, or making temporary seating adjustments if contractually allowable.

The most effective way to neutralize the *Music Police* is to offer personnel resistance to their attempts to recruit allies. Get in the habit of saying "you know, it's really not right for you or anyone to talk about a colleague that way." Hopefully, some of our members just need a little education as to what "propriety" and "decorum" mean in a world of professional music, and a bit of limit-setting by a colleague of Players Committee chair will encourage a re-examination of their ways. If not, the bylaws exist for the protection of our members, and our Board will not hesitate to enforce it.

AFM Western Conference Report by Tom Derthick, AFM Local 12 President

For the first time since February of 2020, Officers of the AFM Western Conference gathered in person February 24-26 in Vancouver, BC. (The past two years, Western Conferences that would have been hosted by Locals in Phoenix, AZ and Portland, OR took place on Zoom due to the pandemic.

The announcements by International President Ray Hair, Vice President Bruce Fife and Secretary/Treasurer Jay Blumenthal that they will not be running for re-election after 13 years of service took place on the first day. Elections for Federation officers will take place at the AFM Convention this June. I have endorsed a Resolution to this summer's Convention that would confer Emeritus status on Ray, Bruce and Jay.

President Hair highlighted that symphonic employment has returned to 100% of pre-pandemic levels, with theatrical touring at 120% of the number of tours on the road, and recording work at 80%, with a full return by years end. Federation staff is fully restored to 2020 levels, and no increase in per capita dues (paid by Locals to fund the Federation) will be requested at the Convention, as has now been the case for the entirety of President Hair's term.

The other significant milestone of his Presidency is restoring the AFM Pension Fund to stability, thanks to the American Rescue Plan act passed by Congress last year and signed by President Biden. On March 11th, the AFM application for pension relief will be officially submitted (pension funds in worse shape than ours got to apply first). After a 120 day review, the AFM EPF will receive a lump sum grant of around \$1 billion. This money must be invested in much more secure funds than typical, and benefits cannot be changed, nor can employer contributions, for 10 years.

Secretary Blumenthal reported that, after running a significant deficit in 2021, the AFM has returned to the black. A \$1 million PPP loan was instrumental in this effort. 2022 auditing has just begun and is expected to again show a balanced budget.

Tracey Whitney and Edmund Velasco headed a two-hour workshop on Racism, with exercises where we all participated. A very powerful and effective session, one they hope to bring to every Local in the AFM.

I was invited to participate on a panel discussing “Building the Local of our dreams” by Local 47 (LA) President Stephanie O’Keefe, along with Alex Navarro from Houston. A lively discussion about what different Locals are doing or would like to try going forward resulted.

Rochelle Skolnick, Director of the Symphonic Services Division, gave a report the first day on the state of current bargaining—the ongoing strike in Ft. Wayne, the ongoing bargaining at Minnesota Opera, and the looming deadline at San Francisco Symphony. She followed up with an internal organizing workshop for Local officers on the last day. As always, each of the Conferences—Recording Musicians, Theater Musicians, ICSOM and ROPA—gave reports to the Conference.

Most AFM members are not aware of the work done behind the scenes by Local officers and the Player Conferences to make your careers better. As valuable as the Zoom meetings of this Conference (and the California Conference) have been, being able to talk in person with our AFM colleagues in informal settings, over a meal or drinks or in a workshop setting, has been missed the past three years, and was immensely rewarding.

TEMPO

Supporting Candidates Who Support Music

Federal law prohibits dues money from being used for most political purposes. That’s why musicians have established TEMPO (Taskforce for Employment of Musicians Promotional Organization). TEMPO is solely comprised of small contributions given by AFM musicians—like you.

Your Pension Fund is strong thanks to the efforts of TEMPO!

<https://www.afm.org/what-we-are-doing/tempo/>

Musicians by Association by Tom Derthick, Local 12 President

You all have read my past articles about the history of our Union, about how wages and opportunities for musicians in the popular music genres—alternative, bluegrass, country, hip hop, jazz, pop and rock music—have not matched those in the unionized music genres such as symphonic, theatrical or recording industries over the past forty-five years.

Prior to 1978, popular music performers made up a majority of AFM membership, and paid much of the dues. Every year since then, since the AFM could only bargain with band leaders and not with venues or actual employers, more and more musicians went their own way, leaving the AFM. Fewer and fewer musicians made a living. Wages stagnated. Work disappeared.

Music was/is the original “gig economy.” Our work was called gigs long before the word became popular. The gig economy of independent contractors and cash on the spot (and not paying payroll taxes), and the internet-based system for enjoying and sharing music (YouTube, Tik Tok, etc.) have isolated musicians from audiences, and more importantly from one another.

That isolation came home to roost during the pandemic, when the work stopped. Those Musicians who had worked as independent contractors (without payroll deductions and contracts) lost out on most of the Federal Unemployment benefits that our symphonic, recording and theatrical musicians gained.

I would like nothing more than to see musicians in the popular, jazz, etc. genres return to our membership, and to better wages and conditions. As that effort continues, there are things we can do together in association, even if many of you are not dues-paying members. (Dues paying members—I’m counting on you all to share this article on social media and in conversation with our musician friends!)

There is a website called Venuology (www.venuology.com) where musicians can post technical information and reviews of music venues all over the country. Venuology depends on musician participation, on musicians sharing pertinent information, such as size of venue, stage, sound system, piano, lighting...even how much venues pay for gigs, or load-in conditions.

Right now, on the website, there are listings for Lake Tahoe, Long Beach, San Diego, and the Bay Area. Not a single one for the Local 12 jurisdiction—Sacramento, Modesto, Fresno or Bakersfield.

How about musicians forming local venue committees? We could have one for each major metro area in the Valley. Musicians in each city, posting detailed info for their colleagues about the places you play, to improve everyone’s gig. Use the info already there to help with your Bay Area gigs, and spread the word about the good venues (and not so good ones) here in the Valley.

And, since most musicians playing these gigs aren’t AFM members, any and all musicians, union or not, would associate with one another in this effort, and benefit from it.

I’m going to start asking folks I know. You’ll hear from me, you know who you are. Tell your friends. Let’s associate and make music work better for musicians.

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The Official Newsletter of the
Professional Musicians of Central California
American Federation of Musicians, Local 12
Established 1896

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Please notify the office of any change
of address or phone.

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Opinions expressed by contributing writers
are their own and not necessarily those of
AFM Local 12.

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Membership Updates

Scheduled Meetings

(Unless announced otherwise)

General Membership

Quarterly online

Executive Board

Monthly online, 10:30 a.m. on the second
Thursday of each month

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SEP

Meetings are open, and members are invited
to attend.

Members wishing to formally
appear on the agenda must
submit a request in writing^[SEP]
at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

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SEP

Any notice appearing herein shall be
considered to be an official notice^[SEP]
to the membership.

Suspension Policy

Any members whose Regular or Life
Membership Dues remain unpaid three months
from the due date shall stand automatically
suspended from membership and shall be
required to pay a reinstatement fee of five
dollars, plus back standing dues in order to
resume membership in good standing.

Members whose dues remain unpaid six
months from the due date shall stand
automatically expelled and be ineligible for
Local 12's benefits or referrals and shall be
required to pay a reinstatement fee of twenty-
five dollars, plus back standing dues in order to
resume membership in good standing.

If off the role book for five years or longer, a
Federal Initiation Fee of sixty-five dollars is also
due.

Member Services

(916) 453-2944

Referral Service

(916) 453-2944

www.afmlocal12.com

Office Hours

By appointment:

Derthick@afmlocal12.com

Simon@afmlocal12.com

Maryll@afmlocal12.com

Membership Dues

<u>Category</u>	<u>Quarterly</u>	<u>Yearly</u>
Regular	50.00	200.00
Life	25.00	100.00
Inactive Life	19.25	77.00

To Resign in Good Standing

If dues are current a member may resign
in good standing by written request
delivered by mail, FAX or e-mail.

A telephone message is not acceptable.

Services and Benefits

- Recording Industries Music Fund
- Pension Fund
- Payroll Service
- Legal Contracts
- Instrument & Equipment Insurance
- Emergency Traveling Assistance
Program: 1(800) ROAD-GIG
- Union Privilege
- Credit Union Info
- Group Health Insurance (Self Pay)
- Dental Insurance (Self Pay)
- Wage Scales
- National Ear Care Plan
- Referral Service
- Petrillo Fund
- Electronic Media Services
- Collective Bargaining
- Legislative Representation
- Recording and Multimedia
Protection

It's a great time to be a member!