



Central California Upbeat

2025 4th Quarter Newsletter

General Membership Meeting

Thursday, December 11, 11:30AM on Zoom

<https://zoom.us/j/9824329324>

(Pass code: 888942)

Agenda to include proposed revision to the Bylaws:

Mission Statement (Article I, Section 2)

The objects and purposes of this Union shall be:

(a) To unite the musicians **living in or working** within its jurisdiction who are eligible for membership without regard to race, religion, creed, color, national origin, age, gender, or sexual orientation.

New Member Orientation Monday, December 8, 7PM

Same Zoom Location as above

Local 12 is on Facebook!

Share Photos, Stories, Activities involving Local 12 CBA's,
MPTF, Members and your Gigs!

simon@afmlocal12.com

Dues Sale 2026!

2026 Full Year Dues Discounted if Paid by January 31!

www.afmlocal12.com

Local 12 Elections

Congratulations to your new Board of Directors!

President: Julian Dixon

Secretary/Treasurer: Simon Holland

**Executive Board: Alejandro Arvizu, Gail Edwards, Laura Porter,
Geoff Roach and Cynthia Stuart**

Trustees: Tom Derthick and Maryll Goldsmith

A Letter from your new President by Julian Dixon, Local 12 President-elect

My dear colleagues and friends, members and non-members working in Local 12,

I am honored and greatly humbled to be elected as your President of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada (AFM), Local 12 of Central and Northern California.

Wow! Every time I say that out loud it hits me.... This new journey I am embarking upon sounds most daunting! I don't have all the answers. I don't have the endless knowledge and foresight. But then, I quickly catch myself and say this is not all about "me". I am not alone on this journey. This journey is actually about you, the members and non-members. It is about all of "us", working together, in unity!

What can you do? Find your role.

Together we are the resources we seek, the know-how and tools we need. Together we are the change makers. Together we have the strength and fortitude to be successful. As we do with our music making, we too have a key part to play that contributes to something greater than our individual selves. As a collective, we're most effective as we organize and work towards causes that contribute to a sustainable living wage and safe working conditions, benefitting all in our profession and beyond.

A win by "Popular" Acclamation?

I am very thankful for all the many nomination signatures I received that placed me on the ballot. Although I was enthusiastically nominated, I was looking forward to

hearing the voices of the broader membership through a vote count. But alas, I and other open seats on the Executive Board ran unopposed and we were seated by “ACCLAMATION”. Now this can be interpreted in a few ways. Either, “No one else wanted to take on the challenge”, or “If the incumbent is doing such a good job, why change?” or “I’m just too strong a candidate to be run against”. I like to think it’s the latter. But seriously, during my tenure I will be encouraging more participation and vibrancy from the membership, with the hopes of members taking on leadership roles, filling vacancies, and to also broaden Local 12’s representation to better reflect the varied voices and musical genres active throughout our far reaching jurisdiction.

My Decision to Run?

Truthfully, I wasn’t seeking out this position. I thought my good friend and colleague, Tom Derthick, was doing a great job. I couldn’t imagine who would “fill his shoes” and I definitely did not see myself doing it...at first! Being of the mindset, “if you want something improved or fixed, don’t just complain about it, try to do something about it yourself”. So I let Tom recruit me to join the executive board. Over my nearly two years on the board, Tom eventually enticed me to consider running as his replacement. But in actuality, I was mainly convinced to run by the persistent encouragement from my many fellow Local 12 colleagues. The final nudge of encouragement was the endless ribbing and arm twisting that came from my brass quintet and bike riding musician buddies. Sensing the great affection, trust and support, I heard your call to run and was compelled to answer it.

So why me? What do I bring to the table?

In hindsight, looking across at all the various elements of my life... I believe the path I have traveled has led me to this new role. All that I have done, in one way or another, has given me great insight and context into our profession. I have many shared perspectives which helps me to communicate and connect with all stakeholders.

Here’s my story.

My musical life as a tuba player began in the public schools of San Francisco starting with James Lick Jr. High and Lowell High. Yes, we had great music programs throughout the SF Unified School District back then. I proceeded to San Francisco State University where I first studied tuba with Floyd Cooley of SF Symphony and then with Zachariah Spellman of the SF Opera. It was around 1981 during my high

school days when my eyes began to open up about the broader possibilities within the music world. I was inspired by getting cash in hand from my first gigs playing in a 5 piece Dixieland Band and awed by becoming the inaugural Principal Tuba of the SF Symphony Youth Orchestra breaking in the new Davies Symphony Hall.

During my early years of college I was frequently gigging with brass quintets, including playing at the Marriott's Great America Amusement Park which soon led to my big breakout gig, performing at the Tokyo Disneyland for 6 months during its inaugural season in 1984. While in Japan, I connected with Sam Pilafian of the world renowned Empire Brass Quintet (EBQ), there on tour. With very little convincing, Sam asked me to transfer out to Boston University in 1985 where I finished my undergraduate studies and did my graduate work.

My 10 ½ years studying and living in the East Coast was a treasure trove of priceless experiences. A few highlights included being mentored by the Empire Brass Quintet and shadowing their many recording sessions. I was a co-founder of the Atlantic Brass Quintet, who taught several summers alongside EBQ up at their brass seminar at the Boston University Tanglewood Institute. The Atlantic Brass Quintet leaped onto the scene as first prize winners of several distinguished international chamber music competitions, which led to a debut tour of over 120 Community Concerts across the United States and Canada with Columbia Artist Management Inc.

I also have had a most profound, life changing personal experience of suddenly losing my ability to play. I did not make any music for over five years before I started relearning how to play again. This was at a time when our profession was much less adept at addressing and open to having conversations about performance injuries and loss. I believe there's more work to be done today about this.

But as they say "every cloud has a silver lining". To survive, I adapted and entered the corporate world of the wireless industry during the era of its most explosive expansion. I endured this period for over seven years, starting on the ground floor of the Boston Communication Group as a customer service roaming operator....#26! I excelled and was quickly promoted to supervisor and a manager position as the company exponentially grew to three location sites. I eventually made my way back home to the SF Bay Area, where I continued at AirTouch Paging/Cellular. There I worked as a National Accounts Representative, a single

point contact for such companies as GM, Procter & Gamble, McClatchy, and also became the department trainer. Before I knew it, I was a part of the initial, multi-company merger that became Verizon Wireless, the mega company we know today. My training and skill sets as a professional musician were instrumental to my success.

Having relocated to Sacramento, CA over 25 years ago, I have been very active, working concurrently in the areas of community engagement, education, and yes...performing again on tuba! I have applied my passion and honed my skill sets by notably doing the following:

- Sr. Director of Community Engagement and Education for the Sacramento Philharmonic and Opera (SP&O) for 10 years & Established SP&O as a longstanding Carnegie Hall Link Up National Partner
- League of American Orchestras Class of 2011 Essentials of Orchestra Management
- California State University, Sacramento - Faculty Member / Lecturer Since 2000
- Principal Tuba: Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera; Sacramento Choral Society & Orchestra
- Freelance Musician with Northern California Regional Orchestras
- Teaching Artist Sacramento Region School Districts & Sacramento County of Education
- City of Sacramento, Office of Arts and Culture - Grant Applicants Mentor during Pandemic; For Arts Sake Participant
- Crocker Art Museum Classical Concerts Committee Member
- 2021 Sacramento Kings Cultural Creator Award
- AFM Local 12, Executive Board Member (2023)
- Melanated Creative, LLC Co-Founder 2023
- 2025 Guest Faculty: Orvieto Musica (ITALY) Chamber Music Festival and Cal Poly Humboldt Brass Chamber Music Workshop

My Values? My Beliefs?

Well, at this point, let me just say my actions and the company I keep will clearly speak to my character and abilities. I have always endeavored to live a life of great integrity, compassion, openness, etc., since childhood. (Perhaps a remnant of my Catholic upbringing?) I will undoubtedly be true to my values as I exercise my duties

as President, primarily to represent and advocate for each member of our local and uphold our Mission Statement:

“Mission Statement (Article I, Section 2)

The objects and purposes of this Union shall be:

(a) To unite the musicians living in or working within its jurisdiction who are eligible for membership without regard to race, religion, creed, color, national origin, age, gender, or sexual orientation.”

“We advocate for fair wages and working conditions, oppose the forces of exploitation through solidarity and collective action, and preserve the dignity and respect all professional workers deserve.”

I am looking forward to future communications with you all (while keeping word count down) as we move forward together.

Thank You

I have already begun meeting regularly with all the executive board members of the numerous AFM locals up and down the California, in the Western Conference, and including some Federation staff. The discussions and exchanges in these meetings are most valuable and forward looking. I greatly appreciate the warm welcomes I have received from everyone along with their generous offers of support as I settle into my new presidency. They are all wonderfully caring, dedicated, knowledgeable, supportive, good-humored, individuals who work endlessly on our behalf. The AFM leadership is in good hands.

Finally, I give great thanks to our whole Executive Board and Trustees, for their hard work and dedication over the years, bringing our Local 12 into good standing. In particular, my thanks go to both our outgoing president Tom Derthick, and our Secretary/Treasurer, Simon Holland, who have given me great support as we transition into our new term of leadership. In unity, I will continue to build upon the great work and efforts of our predecessors and lay fresh footsteps as we forge a path to create more opportunities for our Professional Musicians of AFM Local 12.

In UNITY,

Julian C. Dixon

2025: The Local 12 Year in Review

January

Successful auditions in Fresno and Sacramento Philharmonics
Hunter Buen (Local 99) engaged as first staff organizer in this millennium

February

Broadway Sacramento begins year-round performances at Music Circus with *Footloose*
Executive Board moves to dissolve the Hall Association (saving banking costs)

March

Fresno Philharmonic *Farm to Fiddle* raises record amount
Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera negotiations begin

April

Local 12 successfully completes AFM Operational Compliance Review
Modesto Symphony negotiations begin

May

Department of Labor and AFM EPF pension audits successfully completed
Membership voted to increase Secretary/Treasurer salary to equal that of the President, starting 7/1
National tour of *Parade* hires Local 12 musicians

June

SCSO (2 years) and Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera (4 years) ratify new CBA's
Nominations for Officers and Executive Board positions open
Fresno Philharmonic run-out concert at Shaver Lake

July/August

SCSO ratifies agreement to become a signatory to the Integrated Media Agreement (IMA)
Wage Scale committee meets, recommends new scales including a private lesson scale with pension
Fresno Philharmonic asks for reopener and cancellation of the February 2026 set, citing cash flow
Modesto Symphony ratifies a new 3-year CBA; Local 12 wins grievance gaining tenure for a musician
Executive Board completes Strategic Analysis, drafts amended mission statement for bylaws

September

Election petition deadline: new officers and Board Members elected by acclamation
President Derthick and President-elect Dixon visit Fresno, meet with stakeholders, present convocation for music students at Fresno State

October

Successful auditions for bass and viola in Modesto
Two national tours (*Some Like it Hot*, & *Juliet*) pick up Local 12 musicians

November

Local 12 negotiates a modification agreement with Fresno Philharmonic, with a one-year extension
President Derthick and President-elect Dixon visit Modesto, meet with stakeholders
SP&O begins the process for appointing Ari Pelto as Music Director with musician survey

December

Membership meeting vote on amendment to Mission Statement in our bylaws
Holiday performances by each of our CBA groups: SCSO, Fresno, Modesto, plus two weeks of *Nutcracker* with SP&O, and Broadway Sacramento Music Circus production of *White Christmas* for 12 shows
Local 12 completes fifth consecutive year "in the black" (balanced budget)

Forty-five Years: a Career of Service to Local 12, the Final Chapter by Tom Derthick, President

In the past three newsletters, I've written some of the history of Local 12 and of symphonic music in Sacramento over the course of my career. December 31st is my last day as your President and in elective service to my colleagues. In this final chapter, I present a brief summary of my years as Vice President and President, and what Local 12 has to look forward to as I depart.

I was appointed to serve an unexpired term as Vice President in 2006, and ran successfully for election four times afterward. During this time, the Local continued to see membership and finances dwindle, as in the wake of the Great Recession of 2007-10 we saw the failure of Fresno Grand Opera, regressive CBA's at the Fresno Philharmonic, and the year-long hiatus at the Sacramento Philharmonic and Opera.

In order to appreciate the SP&O hiatus, the true story of the corporate merger between Sac Phil and Sac Opera must be told. Failed leadership at both corporations during the Recession led them to merge in 2013, after each corporation had received \$400K in capacity-building grants from the Irvine Foundation. As it turned out, the Opera had criminally misused their grant on operations and did not inform Sac Phil during the merger talks. Only after the merger did SP&O discover that they would have to repay Irvine if they intended to continue as a reputable non-profit. SP&O would be forced to use every last dollar of their endowment, and a \$500K grant from the Raley family, to retire that debt and reach the end of the 2013-14 season with no executive director and no planned season.

When SP&O announced their intention of 'going dark' for 2014-15, a friend from my childhood spoke up. Helen Mendel and I had performed in a community orchestra in Southern California back when I was in high school. She had relocated to Placerville about 10 years earlier, and had recently moved the University Retirement Village in Davis when her husband had passed. Helen was very upset that her city would not have a professional orchestra, and asked what she could do. A meeting with Helen, Music Director Michael Morgan, Local 12 Treasurer Maryll Goldsmith and I took place, and Helen wrote a check that would pay for the resurrection of SP&O. Michael insisted that Helen earmark half of her donation to paying for a performance of the orchestra, rather than all of it going to pay for consultants who would help reassemble SP&O. (This was Michael's last official act as Music Director. He resigned shortly afterward and passed away a few years ago.)

I spearheaded the negotiations that brought SP&O back to life in June of 2015, and conducted the first "Link Up" concert given with funds from Helen's gift. (Helen continued as a valuable member of the SP&O Board until her passing last year.) Normal operations were resumed in 2015-16, and I continued to assist Local 12 at the table with SP&O as well as with Broadway Sacramento and SCSO.

With Larry Gardner's retirement as Local 12 President at the end of 2019, I was elected President just in time for...the Pandemic! Local 12 faced an immediate cash-flow crisis, with no dues coming in after March 2020 and enough cash on hand to survive until October. I asked the Board to lay off our salaried officers (which lasted until July of 2021 when we received PPP monies), and asked the AFM IEB for relief from paying per-capita dues until normal employer operations resumed. The Local 12 Board received permission from the IEB to vacate our physical office and become a 'virtual' Local. All of these actions taken by Local 12 in response to the Pandemic were necessary and unprecedented. Additionally, the Local 12 Board solicited donations from both members and employers to a COVID relief fund that distributed nearly \$20K in donations to Local 12 members who applied for relief when no one was working.

The results speak for themselves. After a generation of losing members and dues monies, Local 12 has been in the black (and substantially) since fiscal year 2021. The tireless efforts of Secretary/Treasurer Simon Holland have increased membership to levels not seen since before the year 2000, and built a contemporary website and digital presence for our members. The Local 12 Board asked, and members voted, to LOWER dues to levels comparable to Locals 6 and 47 at the time (both have since raised their dues), and further reduced dues costs by finding a credit card vendor to minimize service charges.

Best of all, Local 12 has in non-stop negotiation over the past five years achieved PPP monies for members, safe conditions during COVID, and the most progressive CBA's in Local history. Regressive bargaining in Fresno had been reversed, only to have the Philharmonic request a reopener and temporary reduction in orchestral sets. An extension agreement was reached recently added a year to the current agreement, with a promise to restore the lost week in 2026-27. Broadway Sacramento is now one of the highest paid regional musical theaters in America, with wages comparable to much larger markets. SCSO at age 30 remains the highest paid per-service orchestra in our Local. Both Modesto Symphony and SP&O recently signed significant new agreements to move them forward. For the first time ever, Local 12 has engaged a professional organizer to spearhead efforts for new Union contracts with the North State Symphony, as well as efforts to the south in Bakersfield.

These last forty-five years have not been dull. There have been great triumphs, and heartbreaking losses. Colleagues have praised my efforts and cursed me to my face. I know in my heart of hearts that I have done all I could for our Union, for the members, for the work. Yes, there are regrets, and yes, there are folks out there who still curse me today (the feeling is mutual). In the end, was it all worthwhile? You bet it was.

I proudly leave the Presidency with Local 12 in much better shape than when I took office, with the lives and careers of most musicians working under our agreements much better off than six years ago. I depart with new talents and outlooks waiting to take our Local to the future, to bring new casual musician members and genres into the Local. I will be there to support President Dixon and your new Board of Directors as they take Local 12 to an even better future.

My fond wish on departing is that all of you invest in their success, and your own.

Do the work, it needs doing.

See you all at the gig.

Weingarten Rights

"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working condition, I respectfully request that my union representative or steward be present at the meeting. Without representation, I choose not to answer any questions."

Read this, word-for-word, anytime an employer or their representative requests a meeting with you. Contact Local 12 or your Union Steward if any questions.

Reflections from TMA's 30th Anniversary by NorCal TMA delegate Steve Parker

Theater Musicians Association (TMA) held its 30th anniversary conference on August 18-19 in Cleveland. TMA is an international players' conference of the AFM, organized in the early 90s, inspired by Local 6 theater players. San Francisco theater musicians saw a need to have a national voice within the AFM regarding the touring contracts negotiated with traveling shows that were eroding the work and minimums of local theater players. Historically, shows would employ 18-25 local musicians, now they will hire 2-10 local players or none at all.

TMA now has 19 chapters with the newest chapters being Minneapolis/St. Paul and Toronto. California is presently served by 2 chapters, Northern California (NorCal) & Southern California (SoCal). *(Editor's note: most Musicians at Broadway Sacramento are currently not part of the NorCal chapter.)*

Acknowledging our founders

At the August conference the local founders of TMA were honored followed by a Q&A. The Local 6 founders acknowledged were: Gordon Messick, Melinda Wagner, David Schoenbrun, Larry Souza, Artie Storch and Wayne Allen.

Some of the other speakers at the conference were AFM President Tino Gagliardi, Director of Theatre/Touring/Booking George Fiddler, composers and arrangers Michael Starobin and Charlie Rose.

After attending the conference and listening to various speakers, I came away with a new sense of purpose and solidarity. No matter what city or region of the country we live in, musicians face the same challenges and obstacles and share the same hopes and dreams:

- A living wage while having a chance to express our talent and creatively
- To inspire an appreciation for live music that can transcend economic challenges and musician replacement technology

Continued challenges, regardless of where we live or work, we share the same struggles:

- Virtual Orchestra Technology & Replacement by Pre-Recorded Tracks
- Reduced Instrumentations and Orchestrations
- Inflation outpacing wages
- Remoting and covered orchestra pits rendering our jobs invisible to the ticket buyers
- Old contract language that doesn't reflect current technology or working conditions

Consider joining TMA

If you've ever performed for musical theater or would like to support TMA, come be part of the TMA community of musicians.

If you've played only one theatrical production you are a theater musician, and even if you have not played a show, consider joining to help support our player conference.

Currently TMA has the fewest members of the 5 players' conferences and your membership support will help us advocate for the issues that are important to all musicians.

Membership is only \$40 a year. Visit www.afm-tma.org



Auditions

Bass Trombone
Mon, January 26, 2026
Sacramento, CA

Asst. Principal Cello
Tue, January 27, 2026
Sacramento, CA

To apply for the upcoming Auditions please email your Resume/CV to personnel@sacphilopera.org

Application and resume deadline for all auditions: Friday, January 9, 2026 @ 5:00 pm PST

The SP&O is a per service orchestra that offers 42 services total as part of its Classics season.
Section: \$170.00 | Asst. Principal: \$187.00 per service 2025-2026 Season.



Membership Updates

Central California

Upbeat

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

Mailing Address:

5716 Folsom Blvd. #104
Sacramento, CA 95819

President

Tom Derthick

Secretary/Treasurer

Simon Holland

Board of Directors

Geoff Roach

Gail Edwards

Laura Porter

Cynthia Stuart

Julian Dixon

Trustee

Mark Tulga

Maryll Goldsmith

Co-editors/Central CA Central Upbeat

Simon Holland

Tom Derthick

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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.

Scheduled Meetings

(Unless announced otherwise)

General Membership

Quarterly online

Executive Board

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

•
Meetings are open, and members are invited
to attend.

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

•
Any notice appearing herein shall be
considered to be an official notice
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 fifteen
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

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 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!