

LOCAL¹⁰⁰⁰

welcomes these NEW MEMBERS

Lawrence Soehnel	Dean Dunsford
Greg Greenway	Sarah Hamilton
Christian Ingelevics	Patrick Hamilton
Kerry Clark	Emilyn Stam
Anand Nayak	James Stephens
Andrew Kinsey	Cindy Kallet
Andy Wilkinson	Jimmy Breaux
Jim Page	Mitch Reed
Jay Burr	Dana Whittle
Matt Brown	Claude Methé
Rich Bala	Beatrix Methé
Matt Putnam	Colin Savoie-Levac
Gordon MacKeeman	Denise Levac
Thomas Webb	

REINSTATED

Francisco Herrera
Avril Smith
Ana Egge
Garry Jackson
Lydia Adams Davis



Pension Update continued from p. 3

Joan's total monthly benefit would be \$1,937.50. Or \$23,250 per year.

Your annual Pension Report will tell you what your contribution total in each period is. If you have questions, contact the AFM/EPF at: www.afm-epf.org

The predictable question is, "So is this still a better deal than simply having a 401k or some other kind of retirement plan?"

Keep in mind that when you ask this question you're comparing apples and oranges. A pension works much differently than a retiree savings plan, which is what a 401K or an IRA is. Your income from the AFM pension is much more stable and is meant to work for you as long as you live (and in most cases, as long as your spouse or beneficiary lives.) Having said this, at the current multiplier

of \$2, at full benefits you can expect and income of about 24% per year of your total contributions. Not the 55% per year in the \$4.65 multiplier years. But still 24% is nothing to sneeze at. And as stated above, if you were getting contributions in the 90s, your pension still pays out at that rate for those years.

Most people lost 30-40% of their IRA's and 401k's over the past year. The AFM-EPF, by contrast, as a defined-benefit plan, lost none of its past-expected pay-out to beneficiaries. Checking with a financial planner is the best strategy for pursuing any retirement options. But, for my money...literally, the AFM Pension Plan is the best bet for traveling musicians and their families.

If you want to get started, call the Local 1000 office.



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LOCAL 1000

North American
Traveling Musicians Union



NEW DEAL

SUMMER 2009

Local 1000 Members Shine in Texas

A Report from the Kerrville Folk Festival

By Joe Jencks, *Membership Services Committee*

Local 1000 members were represented well this year at the Kerrville Folk Festival. From the main stage to the New Folk Competition, from the Threadgill Theater to Ballad Tree and the campfires, our members could be heard every night of the week for three weeks. If you have ever been to the Kerrville Festival, you know that it is a unique experience. Rising out of the west Texas hill country, the festival grounds host a month long village of musicians and artisans who gather to celebrate and connect. It is almost like the fabled Brigadoon, a town that comes into and goes out of existence, leaving those who spend time there changed in some fundamental way. And our members have been invested in this festival since it's earliest days.

The New Folk Competition was the idea of Local 1000 member Peter Yarrow and Kerrville founder Rod Kennedy. Peter used to have a good number of young writers wait for him outside the stage door, wanting to share songs with him after performances. He knew that there were other high profile performers all over the country experiencing the same phenom-



Local 1000 Member Tom Nielson won the New Folk award at Kerrville.

enon. So he and Rod discussed creating a place where emerging writers could come share their songs and be heard. The first competition was held in 1972, and it has grown and evolved since then. Now they cut off entry at 800, and 32 finalists are selected from that number. Of those, six are declared winners. Over the years more than a dozen Local 1000 members have won the competition, and dozens more have been finalists.

Tom Neilson is the most recent Local 1000 member to win New Folk. He is a humble man in his early sixties and has

been working as a professional road musician for over 40 years. He has been a songwriter for over 45 years. Through it all he has held true to his beliefs and has devoted himself to the betterment of the lives he touches, and those that touch him. His music is socially conscious and rooted in the traditions of Woody, Pete and Utah. So when Tom won the Kerrville Folk Festival New Folk Competition in May, he said it felt like a victory for all of the musicians who play and write music of conscience. Tom went on to say, "Of course I appreciate being selected as a winner, but I am more grateful that the music itself is being honored and recognized as a legitimate component of folk music. That is the greater honor, to be a part of creating this music for so long, and finally have it acknowledged within this community."

Indeed, many songwriting competitions in North America do cater toward a more commercially viable style of songwriting. And for a political folk songwriter to be honored at this particular festival is significant. Tom says, "I don't write

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LOCAL 1000

Important Announcements:

At the February 21 Membership Meeting, the Bylaws were amended to restructure the Executive Board of Local 1000. Upon expiration of each current At-Large position, the position will be eliminated in order to contract the board.

Resignations: Joe Uehlein and Alice Gerrard resigned their Board positions in February of this year.

President McCutcheon, in consultation with the Executive Board, appointed Debra Cowan to fill the term of the position of U.S. Eastern Executive Board Member, the position that Gerrard held.

Nominations for Officers Open in October

Nominations for Eastern U.S. Executive Board Member and Western U.S. Executive Board Member will be opened in October upon publication of the Fall issue of New Deal. Nomination will close at the November 12 Membership Meeting in Kerhonksen, NY.

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- *Member News* Editor: **Joe Jencks**

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Traveling Musicians Union, Local 1000, AFM

On the Road...

Making the Friendly Skies Friendly to Your Instruments

by John McCutcheon

There has been a lively discussion on the Local 1000 Listserve recently (email membertalk@local1000.com to join) regarding the treatment of instruments by the airlines. Some are complaints about mistreatment of checked baggage, difficulties with carry-ons, damage claims problems, inconsistency of policies, and general information-seeking. Each of us, at one time or other, flies with our instruments. Some, like me, do it regularly, almost weekly. For others, it's an occasional, but still nerve-racking, experience. Knowing what to expect, what your rights and responsibilities are, and how to respond to problems can make the difference between being able to do your job and not.

The Airlines are not a monolithic entity. Each company has different procedures, policies, and, these days, fees. It's important to do advance research to find out which allows musical instruments as carry-ons, what size and weight restrictions might apply to checked baggage, what limitations there are on loss and/or damage. But while each airline is different, let me offer what I've found to be some helpful, general guidelines.

General Strategies for Flying

- If you're able, concentrating your flying on selected airlines will get you more elite frequent flyer status. With this comes early boarding (meaning you can get your instrument in the overhead

before it's filled up), upgrades, and all sorts of little perks that can make your traveling life so much easier.

- Get the AFM's Equipment Insurance (www.local1000.org/benefits/instrument-insurance). It's affordable, comprehensive, and covers any loss, theft, or damage anywhere, anytime. It won't prevent problems or heartache, but it will mean you can replace your loss without worrying about airline liability limits. You're crazy to fly without this.

If you're going to try to carry on your instrument:

- The TSA letter that many musicians have downloaded from the Local 1000 web site applies only to getting instruments through security. It in no way guarantees instruments can be carried on a plane.
- Most of the North American airlines now allow musical instruments as carry-ons, provided they fit in the overhead bins. It is worth going to each airline's www site and printing out the appropriate page to show to any employee that claims different.
- Even the above airlines state that you can bring your instrument on board only if it can fit in the overhead and if there is sufficient space. So if your axe is too big or you're running from a late connecting flight, you might be forced

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MEMBER NEWS

Do you want to announce New Releases, Projects, Events, Births, Deaths, Marriages etc.? Please send information to Joe Jencks via joejencks@hotmail.com. Please specify in the title that the message pertains to: Local 1000 Member News. Thanks.

Local 1000 Members Win at the GRAMMYS!

Local 1000 members were in good form at this year's Grammys. Three of our members were winners, and four more were nominated for awards. As is often the case, our members were present in the Traditional Folk and Children's categories, as well as Zydeco/Cajun. But specifically noteworthy is that four out of the five nominees in the Traditional Folk category were Local 1000 members.

Pete Seeger won the category of Traditional Folk for his release, "At 89." In all the years that Pete has been a leader in folk music

and progressive political movements, it is the first time he has received a Grammy as a solo artist. Also nominated in the Traditional Folk category were, **Tom Paxton** for "Comedians & Angels," **Peggy Seeger** for "Bring Me Home," and **Rosalie Sorrells** for "Strangers In Another Country." All of these artists have been genuinely involved in our union over the years, and Rosalie served a term on our Executive Board.

Another winner this year was **BeauSoleil** and **Michael Doucet**. In the category of Best Zydeco or Cajun Music

Album, they won a Grammy for "Live at the 2008 New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival."

Bill Harley won a Grammy in the category of Best Spoken Word for Children for his release, "Yes To Running! Bill Harley Live." And last but not least, local 1000 members Keith Grimwood & Ezra Idlet a.k.a. **Trout Fishing In America** were nominated for a Grammy in the category of Best Musical Album for Children for their release, "Big Round World." This is their fourth Grammy nomination.

A Report from the Kerrville Folk Festival, continued from p.1

for radio play, for recording contracts, or to impress anyone. I write to help people organize, educate, have fun, raise money and reach out. I did not come here with a competitive sense, just a desire to present the message of who I am, and what I believe." And in an environment that often honors a more commercial style of writing, it was indeed a pleasure to see a writer like Tom Neilson celebrated. Other Local 1000 members who have won include: John Wort Hannam (2007), Dave Stoddard (2005), Annie Gallup (2002), Rachel Bissess (2001), Ray Bonneville (1999), Anne Feeney (1989), David Roth (1986), and James Durst (1981). Well done one and all! The festival runs two weeks and three weekends. Spread across the 18 days, Local 1000 members were on stage almost every night. The opening weekend included

main stage sets by Joe Jencks, John Wort Hannam, Peter Yarrow, Billy Jonas, and SO-NiA & Disappear Fear. The next two weekends featured Local 1000 members Keith Grimwood & Ezra Idlet a.k.a. Trout Fishing In America, as well as David Roth and Ray Bonneville. Present on main stage in the capacity of side players were Local 1000 members Freebo (Bass) and Helena Nash (vocals).

But the heart beat of this festival is not just what happens on the stages, it is also what happens after the stages close, as people gather around campfires to share songs, and connect with their community. Across the Quiet Valley Ranch, we gather nightly to celebrate great songwriting, and a beautiful community of artists. Seen around and about were many Local 1000 sisters and brothers including: Daniel Boling, Chris Chandler, Anne Feeney,

Greg Klyma, Lisa Markley, and Pat Victor. Feeney, Chandler, Freebo, and Victor have all graced Kerrville's stages in previous years, and surely will do so again.

So, if you have a chance one of these years... wind your way down to Texas for the Kerrville Folk Festival. It is truly a one of a kind gathering, and worth the effort. Festival director Dalis Allen works very hard to present a unique and diverse slate of talent every year, and does so to great effect. And she strives to foster a nurturing environment. Friendships that last a lifetime are formed in such places, as well as musical partnerships, and the ties that strengthen us on the journey. Our sisters and brothers in Local 1000 have been a part of this community since it's inception, and will be there for a long time to come. Here's to the journey and the company we keep along the way!



Canadian Contracts and Our Newest Scale

By Ken Whiteley, *Canadian Vice President*

Local 1000 has always tried to make its minimum performance scales serve the needs of its members. For example, we have maintained a relatively low scale for use in “small venues” (currently \$110 for a single musician or leader and half that for each side person). There is our concert scale which is twice that of the coffee house scale. Of course, nothing precludes members from negotiating a higher fee than scale and, to a certain extent, we allow our member to define what a small venue is.

For a number of years our United States members have been able to use the LS-1 contract to reflect a negotiated a fee, and have the pension contribution be based on a percentage of the negotiated fee.

Local 1000 helped to get the LS-1 going and it has been a boon to many of our members in getting vested in the pension and more quickly building up a pension. However in Canada, for single engagements, the pension administrator has been reluctant to follow the U.S. pattern and thus pension contributions presently can only be based on a local’s minimum promulgated scale that is applicable for that particular gig. For Canadian gigs that aren’t covered by an existing collective bargaining agreement, musicians need to use the contract called an LPCC (Live Performance Contract for Canada). The LPCC does allow musicians to negotiate a fee that includes a pension contribution and remit it on the employer’s behalf, but the contribution has to be based on a member’s local promulgated scale and there are limitations on the percentages allowed.

It is was largely in light of this and to better reflect the actual situation of many musicians that Local 1000 passed a new scale at our February general meeting called a “Special Event Scale”. This scale calls for a minimum of \$400 for the leader or single musician and \$175 for each additional side person, with a pension contribution of 10%.

Let’s say that a solo musician is doing a Canadian gig for a negotiated fee of \$500. That amount is entered in the “total

fee agreed upon” space. Applying the special events scale, the musician could then designate that \$40 of that amount was an employer contribution to their A.F. of M. (Canada) pension. This is almost twice the contribution that would have been possible under the concert scale of \$220. When the contract is filed with the Local 1000 office, the musician includes a cheque payable to the A.F. of M./E.P.W. (Canada) for \$40.

Why is this is such a good thing? The Canadian pension at the time of this writing is still paying out a defined benefit of \$3.50 per month for every \$100 of pension contributions on the musicians behalf. That means that in less than 2 and a half years of retirement you will receive in pension income an amount equivalent to the total money contributed on your behalf, after which time you continue to receive the same monthly pension income as long as you live.

Another important thing to keep in mind is that it is necessary to become “vested” in the pension to collect this benefit. Becoming vested in Canada is relatively simple. It requires 2 full years of “uninterrupted” contributions. This means that for 2 years you cannot have a break in service of more than 6 months where your name does not appear on a contract with pension contributions. If you have done a CBC gig in the last 6 months it might be a good time to stop and think about whether you are vested in the pension. All CBC gigs are covered by a collective bargaining agreement that includes pension benefits. If you don’t become vested in the pension, then you are not entitled to collect a pension. However with that CBC gig, you are on your way to being vested. It is important to make sure that you file contracts covering enough gigs so that there is no 6 month break in service for the next two years.

I have found most employers are quite willing to sign an A.F. of M. contract, even festivals or other venues that may also want you to sign their contracts as well. The LPCC is downloadable from the member section of the A.F. of M. web site (www.afm.org) and if you want help filling it out, call the office on Tuesday or Thursday afternoon.



Pension Update

By John McCutcheon, *President*

On May 1st the AFM's Pension Plan (American Federation of Musicians/Employers Pension Fund...AFM/EPF, for short), responding to recent market conditions, adjusted the multiplier in its Pension payout formula. The multiplier was reduced from \$3.25 to \$2.00. The multiplier has changed several times in recent years. Prior to January 2004 the multiplier was \$4.65. That month it was adjusted to \$3.50. In April 2007 it was reduced to \$3.25. May 2009 it was reduced to \$2.00.

However, and this is important to understand, all contributions accumulated under previous multipliers are protected at that rate. In other words, all contributions prior to 1/04

will be paid out at the higher \$4.65 rate. All contributions between 1/04 and 4/07 will be paid out at \$3.50, and so on.

In figuring out your AFM/EPF benefit, the formula is:

Total contributions ÷ 100, x the multiplier = monthly benefit

An example:

Joan Folksinger has \$50,000 in contributions:

- \$25,000 prior to 1/04
- \$10,000 between 1/04 and 4/07
- \$10,000 between 4/07 and 5/09
- \$5000 since 5/09

Her monthly payout, should she retire now at full benefits, would be figured as follows:

For pre-January 2004:

$\$25,000 \div 100 = 250, \times 4.65$
= \$1,162.50/month

For January 2004 – April 2007:

$\$10,000 \div 100 = 100, \times 3.50$
= \$350/month

For April 2007 – May 2009:

$\$10,000 \div 100 = 100, \times 3.25$
= \$325/month

For May 2009:

$\$5,000 \div 100 = 50, \times 2.00$
= \$100/month

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Making the Friendly Skies Friendly to Your Instruments, continued from p.2

to surrender your instrument at the gate. Think about this when you figure out whether to travel with a gig bag or a sturdier case.

- Be nice. Most of us road warriors learned long ago how to sweet-talk our way into solutions. Airline employers today are working with reduced contracts (if they even have one!), pay cuts, loss of job security and all sorts of concessions that have made their jobs and their lives more difficult. Yelling only makes things worse. Be firm, but be reasonable.
- If you run into intransigent gate personnel or flight attendants, know that the final word on whether something can be brought on board is with the captain. They are easier to find on a commuter plane, but it's worth demanding his/her decision if things get desperate.

If you're going to try to gate-check your instrument:

- Use a good flight case, never a gig bag. The instrument is going into the luggage compartment with everything else.

- Understand that there is a definite possibility that the instrument might be mixed up with all the other checked luggage and end up in baggage claim.

If you're going to check your instrument as baggage:

- Get a good flight case. After many years of experimentation and lots of damage experience, I use Calton cases (www.caltoncases.com). Whatever you use, remember protecting the tools of your trade is, above all, your responsibility. Do not skimp on this investment. If you're flying with a valuable instrument you need adequate protection. If you cannot stand to think about your instrument being lost, stolen, or damaged, get a less valuable instrument to travel with.
- When booking your flights, allow plenty of time for connections. I never go with anything less than an hour. You're courting disaster...and arriving at your final destination without your gear...if you go for less.
- Get to the airport early.

No one survives on the road unless they've learned to be flexible. If your gear ain't there, it ain't there. We've all scrambled to make things work, done gigs in less than ideal situations and, as professionals, never let the audience know there was anything amiss. But we've also learned from our experiences. So my best advice is try to minimize the stress involved in flying or, as many musicians have opted, simply don't do it. Sure, it might limit your range of travel, but it will definitely extend your peace of mind.

If you have learned how to make flying work for you, I'd encourage you to join with other musical frequent flyers in lobbying for improved conditions for all musicians. The accommodations we enjoy now were attained because we fought for and won them, not because the airlines acted magnanimously. There is still work to be done. Together, we can accomplish things that we, as individuals, cannot. That's what collective action is about. And that's what a Union is for.

