



# MUSICENTRAL

April 2007      Founded in 1913—Tuned for the 21st Century

## Message from the President



### SHARPS & FLATS Tinnitus: No Place in Our Schools

Past President of AFM-660 John R. Kovalchik wrote a letter to the editor in the Centre Daily Times on February 18, 2007, that is worth mentioning in this month's column. Why? Because it was about potential hearing loss in faculty, staff, and students in high school. Kovalchik stated that it was important to not cause a problem when shortcuts are taken during the renovation or design of a high school, especially in the music department. His letter was written about an affluent school district that has undergone sharp and divisive clashes between the school board and public interest groups over the proposed building programs in the district. Controversy like this often brings changes that sometimes reduce safety in what is seen as a cost-cutting action. Kovalchik, as a teacher and musician who has served on building committees, was sending a message to all concerned—the school board, parents and students, special interest groups, and the public-at-large—that cutting costs should not become a health care issue.

The issue that Kovalchik was referring to was tinnitus. According to the ATA (American Tinnitus Association at [www.ata.org](http://www.ata.org)), "Tinnitus is the medical term for the perception of sound in one or both ears or in the head when no external sound is present. It is often referred to as 'ringing in the ears,' although some people hear hissing, roaring, whistling, chirping, or clicking. Tinnitus can be intermittent or constant with single or multiple tones, and its perceived volume can range from subtle to shattering." The ATA states 50 million Americans experience tinnitus to some degree, and about 12 million have severe problems requiring medical attention. The key in this point is that young people can tolerate more noise and do not report hearing problems in comparison to other age groups. Another interesting point is that tinnitus is caused or triggered by a number of factors, but the most prevalent cause is noise-induced hearing loss. In this case the ATA states, "Exposure to loud noises can damage and even destroy hair cells, called cilia, in the inner ear. Once damaged, these hair cells cannot be renewed or replaced. Hearing loss can also be caused by excessive noise exposure. Coincidentally, up to 90 percent of all tinnitus patients have some level of hearing loss."

This is the 21<sup>st</sup> century, an era of exceptional environmental concern regarding environmental health and public safety. Cost-cutting measures that endanger our children and workers' health should not be happening in Centre County or, for that matter, the world. Bottom line, it certainly should not be happening in a music education environment. AFM-660 thanks Past President John R. Kovalchik for bringing this concern to the public.

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**John Vincenti**

A worthwhile postscript regarding tinnitus that came from one of our members, who had an opportunity to read my comments prior to publication: "I've been wearing earplugs for many years, not just when playing loud music, but also when driving, mowing, using power tools, and often for sleeping. I have developed some tinnitus, but my overall hearing is still above average, according to my audiologist."

## Drum Beats Local making new strides!

Congratulations to the award winners of the Local 660 Olin Butt Scholarships for Music Lessons from the five recipients from Penns Valley, Bellefonte, Bald Eagle, State College, and Philipsburg-Osceola schools. The winners were announced at the program at the Bald Eagle Area High School on March 30 and are highlighted this month in our newsletter.



New Life Membership cards are available to all new Life Members from the Secretary/Treasurer. Many thanks to Debbie Trudeau for updating the Local 660 Directory and Electronic membership list for 2007 which helps track and document all members dues.

The next Executive meeting will be April 30, 2007. We look forward to the upcoming Summer Concerts again for the People's Choice Festival in July 2007, Central Pennsylvania Arts Festival in July 2007, South Hills Business School Concerts June, July, and August 2007 and other events to be announced.

A prophet is sometimes without honor in his own land (Mark:6:4) and to those who are given many talents to share, much is expected in return. Local 660 AFM Officers have volunteered their time and talents for the good of the order some for 30 years, some for 20 years and some for less but all for the good of the Local 660 members. Join us in 2007 to restore the good of the order in the United States and Canada. WWW.AFM.ORG. Email, [axj119@psu.edu](mailto:axj119@psu.edu) **Support Live Music!**

**Dr. Andrew Jackson, Sr., Secretary-Treasurer**

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### This Month

- **Tinnitus: No Place in Our Schools – President's Message**
- **Do you qualify for Life Membership – Read Drum Beats**
- **Meet Tom Connolly**
- **Centre County Band and Choir Festival – First time award at Festival for Youth Pictures and story inside**
- **Student membership is a real value – learn why**
- **AFM Pension Information**

### AFM-660 Newsletter

- **Published Monthly**
- **Broad Readership**
- **Advertising Available Reasonable Rates**
- **A Voice for Musicians**

**"A jazz musician is a juggler who uses harmonies instead of oranges."**

*Benny Green*

# Music Achievement Grants

## For Our Music Future – Investing in Youth



**AFM-660** is proud to celebrate and encourage young musicians. On March 30, 2007, the Centre County Band and Choir Festival took place.

Two hundred of Centre County's best and brightest junior high school youth performed to a packed standing-room-only house of over 800 people. Five young people were provided music achievement grants totaling \$500 toward improving their knowledge and skill in music.

The Olin Butt Scholarship Fund has made it possible for each student to receive a voucher for up to \$100 for music lessons. President John Vincenti presented the awards to the five young people. "It was an impressive program for such young musicians," said Vincenti.

It was the first award of its kind for the Festival. Vincenti said, "Our award could not have happened without John Kovalchik's assistance. He contacted all of the schools and got the music teachers to do the hard job, pick one student from either the band or choir to receive the award."

Photos below are from the event. Another story is on page three about each of the award winners and their music teacher nominators.



### Guest Directors

James Berry, Assistant Professor of Music at Slippery Rock University, native of Mill Hall, PA.

Norene Ferris, Coordinator for the Center for the Study of Music Learning and Teaching and the Partnership for Music Teacher Excellence in the School of Music at Penn State University.



**PRACTICE** was the headline on the poster. However it meant a lot more including Patience, Responsibility, Attitude, Consistency, Tenacity, Imagination, Concentration, and Energy. The Festival's music demonstrated it!

### Music Achievement Grant Winners



First row: Tyler Boone, Penns Valley Area; Lauren Horning, Bellefonte; Toby Anderson, Philipsburg-Osceola.

Second row: John R. Kovalchik, Mount Nittany Band Director and Past President AFM-Local 660; Maggie Mehalko, Bald Eagle Area; Suzie Shoffner, State College Area; and John R. Vincenti, President, AFM-660 – Central Pennsylvania Musicians Association.



## The Music Grant Achievers and Their Teachers

	<p>Bald Eagle Area, Maggie Mehalko, Oboe                  Nominated by Eric Hahn and Emily Homan                  (not pictured)</p> <p>Maggie is a seventh grader and has been playing Oboe for the past three years. She aspires to continue with her music through high school. Maggie would like to become a professional musician in either Oboe or as a vocalist in the future.</p>		<p>Bellefonte Area, Lauren Horning, Soprano                  Nominated by John Zimmerman</p> <p>Lauren is an eighth grader, who also plays piano. Music is very important to Lauren. She believes it will be a key to her career development in the future.</p>
<p>Penns Valley Area, Tyler Boone, Baritone Saxophone                  Nominated by Phillip Stattel and Paul Leskowitz (AFM-660 Member)</p> <p>Tyler says he will use the grant toward voice and saxophone lessons. Tyler is in eighth grade and has been playing for three years.</p>		<p>Philipsburg-Osceola, Toby Anderson, Baritone                  Nominated by Diana Krause                  Not pictured, Valerie Stiner</p> <p>Toby is a freshman in high school. He has been playing trombone for five years, but prefers choir. He plans to use his grant towards bass guitar lessons.</p>	
	<p>State College Area, Suzie Shoffner, Trumpet                  Nominated by: 1<sup>st</sup> row Kim Lenaway, Suzie, Molly McAninch; 2<sup>nd</sup> row John Kovalchik and Jill Tocket. Not pictured: Samuel A. Rocco and Jo Henry</p> <p>Suzie, a student at Park Forest, has been playing trumpet for almost five years. She hopes to continue music throughout high school and has an interest in music as a career.</p>		

### Student Membership – An excellent value in starting a career

Student membership in AFM-660 is available for anyone at any age enrolled in high school or college. It is a real bargain for young musicians who have a goal to be in the business of music performance. AFM-660 waives fees and only requires \$50 annual dues throughout high school and college years. That means no FIF (Federation Initiation Fee) or LIF (Local Initiation Fee). When one leaves school, you pay only the regular dues and no additional fees. THIS IS A GREAT INCENTIVE TO JOIN AFM-660 ESPECIALLY FOR GIGS WHILE IN COLLEGES. Besides being recognized as a professional musician, getting the benefits under AFM International, and being able to network, and find other jobs. it is a great way to start you career and business in music profession.

**Debbie Trudeau, AFM-660 Membership Data Manager**

### AFM Trustees Modify Pension Fund

At their meeting February 22, 2007, the Trustees of the American Federation of Musicians and Employers' Pension Fund ("Fund") adopted a reduction in the benefit multiplier from \$3.50 to \$3.25 for benefits that begin at age 65. (Corresponding reductions will apply to benefits beginning before age 65.) This reduction will not affect the calculation of benefits based on contributions for covered work before April 1, 2007. It will apply only to the calculation of benefits based on contributions for covered work on or after April 1, 2007.

Every participant should have received a detailed notice in the mail from the Fund explaining the conditions that required this action and the effect of the change on benefits. In brief, because of the continued effects of the downturn in the financial markets in 2001-2003, the Trustees concluded that this reduction is necessary to ensure that the Fund will satisfy the minimum

funding rules of federal tax law in the short term. At the same time, the Fund's actuaries have updated their assumptions and project that, with this reduction, the Fund's financial condition will be very sound and steadily improving as far out as their projections go - which is 2041.

There can be no guarantees, but if there are no events similar to the unusually extended and adverse financial conditions of the early 2000s and the actuarial assumptions otherwise hold true, this should be the only reduction necessary.

The Trustees will carefully monitor the funding status of the Fund so that the 25 cents can be restored as soon as the Fund's conditions permit.





**American Federation of Musicians-Local 660**  
Chartered October 29, 1913  
Central Pennsylvania Musicians Association

**John R. Vincenti**  
President

**Andrew Jackson, Sr.**  
Secretary/Treasurer

**AFM International**  
**Thomas F. Lee,**  
President

**Gene Tournour,**  
Field Representative

**Serving Musicians in Central Pennsylvania**

AFM is an advocate for  
**MUSIC**  
**MUSICIANS**  
**JOBS**  
**CAREERS**  
**NETWORKING**  
**ENCOURAGING MUSIC IN OUR COMMUNITIES**

**AFM-660**  
**MARCH 2007**

**660 BOARD MEETING**  
**APRIL 30, 2007**

**ON THE INTERNET**  
<http://www.afm.org>  
**AFM**  
**INTERNATIONAL**

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**AFM-LOCAL**  
**WEBSITE & BLOG**  
<http://myspace.com/afm660>

<http://www.homewebservices.com/660presidentcorner.htm>  
**PRESIDENT'S CORNER**



**AFM-Local 660—2007 Officers**

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Leslie L. Shaw, Vice-President [lls5@psu.edu](mailto:lls5@psu.edu)  
Dr. Andrew Jackson, Sr., Secretary / Treasurer [axj119@psu.edu](mailto:axj119@psu.edu)

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**Committee Chairs**

Membership Committee—Dr. Christopher C. Byrne  
Public Relations—Christopher Lee  
Olin Butt Scholarship Award—John R. Kovalchik  
MPF and Webmaster—John I. Thompson [jtblues@comcast.net](mailto:jtblues@comcast.net)  
Election Committee—Debbie Trudeau  
Engagements and Bookings—Andrew Jackson

AFM Local 660 service territory: All of Centre, Huntingdon, Juniata, Mifflin, Montour, and Snyder Counties. Northumberland County except Snyderstown, Shamokin, Ralpho, Zerbe, Little Mahanoy, Jackson, Herndon, Lower Mahanoy, West Cameron, East Cameron, Mount Carmel, Kulpmont, Marion Heights and Coal, Columbia County except Centralia.

**660 Notes**

- **April 30, 2007 AFM-660 Board Meeting**
- **June 17-20 – International Conference in Las Vegas**
- **We need articles about YOU**
- **Your part in AFM-660 is vital**

## Meet Tom Connolly New Member & Drummer on the Move



Tom Connolly is a relatively new member of AFM-Local 660 who has decided to pursue a career in the music profession. Tom has resided in State College for the past five years. Tom graduated from PSU in May 2005, with a Bachelor's Degree in Marketing, and with serious interest in pursuing a career in music.

Serious is not just a comment, but an action word for Tom Connolly. Since graduation, Tom has been drumming in New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Connecticut, and, of course, State College. He also teaches drumming. Connolly has built up a solid base of students interested in drumming in the State College area. Tom also works part-time at Robert M. Sides Family Music Center selling instruments and musical gear.

Jazz is Tom's primary interest at the moment, but tells us that African and Afro-Cuban drumming are fast becoming a part of his music style.

Tom is currently a member of three bands in the State College area. They include the Jackson Byrne Band, the Stephon Alexander Quartet, and the Afro-fusion band Warref.

You can catch Tom Connolly in action every Friday from 6:30-9PM with the Jackson Byrne Band, Wednesdays and occasional Fridays at Bar Bleu with Stephon Alexander, and various dates with Warref.

When interviewed, Tom was eagerly awaiting nice weather and more opportunities to play music! He said, "I look forward to hearing you play, or even playing with you!"

**Tom Connolly, young musician on the move!**

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