



# MUSICENTRAL

October 2007

Founded in 1913—Tuned for the 21st Century

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**T**his is my last issue as publisher and editor of **MusicCentral**. My resignation letter as your president was accepted at a Board meeting on September 9th. It has been an honor to serve the members of Local 660 of the American Federation of Music for the past 10 months. I am not leaving the Local and will continue to support live music in Central Pennsylvania.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge several members of the Board who have provided me with assistance since I took office in December 2006. Dr. Andrew Jackson, Sr., my friend and fellow Rotarian, "thank you for your support and friendship." I can remember when you recruited and encouraged me to be an officer on the board, I did not realize it would be president or what I would experience. Andrew, your friendship, work in Local 660 and love of live music is enduring. I wish you the best in your next career.

John Kovalchik, thank you for our long-time educational background and your support and assistance in AFM business matters and especially the Olin Butt Scholarship. John Thompson, thank you for your ability to set up an exceptional AFM 660 Website, work as MPF chairmanship, plus accepting the role of Secretary. John Thompson is a good indicator of our Local's capabilities in the future. Debra Trudeau, thank you for your friendship, concern, and desire to make our Local 660 a union that will be "Tuned for the 21 Century." Your acceptance in serving as Data Manager earlier in the year and now Treasurer will also be beneficial to our members. Dr. Don Keat II, your love of Jazz and your part in the State College Jazz Festival made Local 660 shine. Christopher Lee, your work as Local 660's Public Relations chair gave us good coverage in local newspapers. Finally, Marilyn and Hubbie Haugh who have opened their home to AFM 660 officer meetings, shared their knowledge in regard to union business, but most of all have been good friends, It was great to watch our membership grow from 36 to 61 over the past ten months. Thank You All.

John R. Vincenti



## What time is it?

Victor Borge told a friend that he could tell time by his piano. His friend was incredulous, so Borge volunteered to demonstrate. He pounded out a crashing march. Immediately there came a banging on the wall and a shrill voice screamed, "Stop that noise. Don't you know it's 1:30 in the morning?"

Source:  
Oneliners-and-Proverbs.com



**A**s acting treasurer I want to welcome new and returning members who've added their support to Local 660 in recent months. Stacy Tibbetts, Claudia Koide, Jacki Hunt, Michael Bruster, Kevin Munnell, M. R. and Linda Hoover, Ned Corman, Roger Munnell Jr., and Andrew Colwell are now all active members of Local 660.

The executive board met recently and had an excellent discussion towards improving our bylaws and developing a realistic local wage scale. Many of you contacted the board to discuss the proposal we recently put out to the members for comment. We are receptive to your opinions and came to a consensus on a plan for progress. The bylaws are a living document. All members are able to submit proposals for change. As we grow we will want to update the bylaws to grow with us.

Our immediate goal is to develop bylaws that reflect current best practices among our members in their current working conditions. We want to increase our membership by offering services to members. This includes creating a referral list for traveling musicians of clubs, restaurants, music vendors, etc. that are supportive of union players. As we offer support to these employers and vendors, we can reasonably expect support in return.

When many of the best and most active musicians in town are also members, then we can move to the next goal of collective bargaining. Those of you who work with these players can advocate for union membership among your colleagues. The union is about all of us participating.

Debra Trudeau



## Christopher Lee—A Life Full of Music



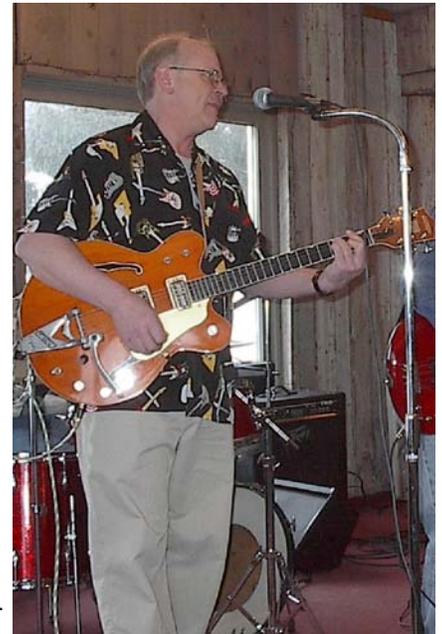
**F**rom basement bands to commercial radio airplay for his original songs, Christopher (Chris) Lee's life has always included a musical soundtrack. "When I was growing up, part of your identity was defined by what music you liked," says Chris. "Kids who liked the Beatles were considered clean-cut and kids who preferred the Rolling Stones were considered rebels. I liked both bands!"

As an undergraduate at Princeton University, he played guitar for the Nassau Brothers Soul Revue, a group of students playing mostly Motown and Memphis soul music. Chris' early bands in central Pennsylvania included Somerset with drummer Corky Carter and bassist Ken Simpson. The band played standards through the latest pop music pleasing diverse audiences. Later band members included bassist Peter Jogo and drummer Kurt Krebs.

Chris first joined AFM 660 in the 1970's, when the late Skip Wareham was president. "It was mostly a social club," says Lee. "You ate, drank and played music and connected with gigs and musicians." Chris has always been generously creative in finding musical outlets. While serving on the AFM 660 board the first time in the 1970s, Lee organized a series of live music concerts to showcase local original music and raise funds to support the young people's music education.

Today's AFM 660 Olin Butt Fund has evolved from those early efforts.

After taking off the 1990s to start a family, Chris returned to the music scene to organize a series of parties which were featured in a 2002 Centre Daily Times



article, "Parents, Kids Share Love of Music at Family Music Party." Lee has fond memories of one party in a suburban basement backing up his daughter Maggie, now a student in vocal performance at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, as she sang "Superman."

Another of his favorite gigs was at the Central Pennsylvania Arts Festival with young virtuoso Dan Collins on guitar and Chris' then fifth-grade daughter Susie on drums, singing "She Loves You" together. Susie later was drum major for the 2006 State High Marching Band and is now an undergraduate in music education at West Chester University. Lee's youngest daughter, Lizzie, plays tuba today in the State College marching band under the watchful eye of AFM 660's John Kovalchik.

Chris' musical reach extends to Europe. At the People's Choice Festival in 2005, Chris was accompanied by his French cousins Paul and Victor de Menthon. The twin teens had backed up Chris at rock concerts in their hometown of Paris and were thrilled to be rocking out in America. Chris has played weekly winter gigs at Tussey Mountain Ski Lodge, first with his cousin "JT" Thompson and a group of Penn State professors in a group called the Cloners, then as Synchronicity and finally in a solo capacity.

"Break-time conversations with those sharp professors were never dull," says Lee. "Once I happened to remark profoundly to our singer, engineer Martin Pietrucha, 'Perception is reality.' Without batting an eye, he shot back, 'That's what you think!'" "Another time," recounts Chris, "our bassist, Tom Mallouk, couldn't attend a practice. When I pressed him for a valid excuse, he replied, 'a group of Nobel laureates at Harvard have asked me to come up and explain my current work to them.'" The nano-scientist's excuse was accepted.

As CEO of the Boal Mansion Museum and president of the Boalsburg Village Conservancy, Lee has booked the performances of thousands of live musicians for Memorial Day and Columbus Day festivals in historic Boalsburg, from the Coburn Brass to Lemonsoul, from bluegrass to the Jackson/Byrne jazz group and performances from ragtime to classical for the annual spring "Music at the Boal Mansion" series.

Today, back on the AFM 660 Executive Board as former Director, now acting Vice-President and still public relations chair, Lee is interested in focusing the local's efforts on organizing local musicians to promote this region as a destination for high quality, sustainable music. "If you help sustain quality musicians in town, you help sustain the clubs' audiences in town," says Lee, "and that's good for everybody – musicians, clubs and audiences."

These days, you'll often find Chris on Wednesdays on piano at the American Ale House, sitting in with the talented Tom Wareham and playing anything from Jackson Browne's soulful "Doctor My Eyes" to Jerry Lee Lewis' blistering "Great Balls of Fire!"

"When I've settled down musically, I'll let you know," says Christopher Lee, a student of chaos theory. "Until then, it's all good, creative fun."



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

John Kovalchik started his semiprofessional career began on Dec. 31, 1965 at the Elks Club in New Kensington, Pa. He thought it was “pretty cool” getting paid to play music. He once thought that he would go into the music field full-time, but that was not the case.



John chose to obtain what he thought would be a more secure job and yet stay in music. Kovalchik went to Penn State University and earned two degrees in Music Education. While student-teaching he was offered a job in the State College Area school district and has been there ever since. At the same time John moved his American Federation of Musicians' affiliation to Tyrone, Pennsylvania. One of the reasons for changing locals was because he was now the tuba player for "The Tarnished 6 Dixieland Band" in State College, Pennsylvania.

Thirty-six years later John is still a member of the "The Tarnished 6 Dixieland Band" and a music teacher in the State College Area school district. In the meantime, Kovalchik has performed part-time with a few other organizations including the State College Municipal Band, the Nittany Valley Symphony, The Little German Band and the Dance Band from State College. He has also done other freelance gigs in the area including recording with a number of local artists. John also notes that he has performed in all eight of "The Tarnished 6 Dixieland Band" recordings.

When the Tyrone local was moved to State College, John Kovalchik became what was then known as the chairperson for the Musicians Performance Trust Fund (MPF). He held that position for quite a few years until he was able to hand it over to Andy Tolins, assisted by Gordon Law, Andrew Jackson and others. Kovalchik said he was able to delegate that position because he was also serving as president of the Local 660. His first tenure, as president, was 16 years long. In 1999, he relinquished the position and accepted a seat on the executive board. Kovalchik did one more year as president to help the local when Andrew Jackson made the transition to Secretary/Treasurer. Now John's back on the executive board.

He has already named quite a few local officers who have helped him tremendously in the performance of his duties in the service of Local 660. John's biggest helper was Hubie Haugh. His helper with the greatest patience and understanding has been John's wife, Joan. Without Joan and Hubbie, John confides that he would not have been able to do the things that he was able to accomplish.

John Kovalchik thanks his fellow members for all of their aid and support.



**John Kovalchik at his day job. Music, of course!**

## Welcome From Your New President, Dr. Christopher Bryne



Fellow Musicians, at our September meeting the Board I assumed the responsibility of Local 660 President and I want to thank John Vincenti for his wonderful work over the past year since he took office. Please join me in welcoming Chris Lee as the new Vice-President. In January there could be another changing of the guard with the member-wide elections. We are in a period of rapid growth and have 3 months for us to discover whether I like being President and whether you like my leadership, so I am not wasting any time. I believe the office of President has certain built in tools, such as publishing in the newsletter and scheduling and presiding over meetings, which provide mechanisms to examine ideas and to grow friendship, trust, and the will to help each other.

This is the way I view the “powers” of the office – they are tools to facilitate the interaction among all of us, they are not intended to make my opinion matter more than that of any other member. I believe very strongly that every musician in the union must start to participate in our discussions. I would like to remind all of us that in Germany, where recent memories of dictatorial rule led the population to truly cherish democracy, voter turnout is typically above 90%, compared to the U.S. average hovering around 30%, and in Australia it is illegal not to vote. As I have said in previous emails, if the full membership is not truly invested in the process of setting our local monetary and behavioral standards for the business of music then how can those standards possibly be enforced? I believe we must all get to know each other personally and discuss the standards that we will ultimately make law, so that violation of union law equals violation of trust in a personal relationship. It is this sense of personal integrity and peer respect which make this union work – not the fact that the rules are written down. The fact that they are written down will solve the problem of people misunderstanding the rules, but will not solve the enforcement problem – that will come from all of us personally believing in the rules because we all had a hand in making them and agreeing on them with other.

When I put out an urgent call for comments on the draft bylaws that the Board circulated in August, only 4 members outside the Board responded. Kudos to those 4 members: Corey Wallace, Rick Hirsch, Mike Lowen, and Stephen Adams. The rest of you need to get involved unless you are willing to personally promise each of us as individuals that you will turn down work and even quit current engagements and refuse to hire or accept work from non-union musicians. Personally, I cannot imagine allowing anyone to impact my business to that extent without having a say in what the rules are.

So please invest your time giving us your ideas and commenting on the ideas of others. As president, I hope to arrange for social functions that will enable us both to informally discuss what local standards should go into our bylaws and also just to get to know each other as friends. I have little faith that strangers will make real sacrifices for each other and 50 years of empirical and theoretical research in social science, biology, economics and business echoes that theme – that trust and reciprocity are the only forces beyond genetic kinship that motivate people to look out for each other (see *The Science of Cooperation* elsewhere in this newsletter). So look for email announcements of social gatherings and don't imagine they are unimportant just because there is no business agenda. Developing our social bonds means developing trust – our only true enforcement mechanism to make collective bargaining a reality. I thank the Board for their faith in me and I look forward to serving all of you in the coming months and helping us bond as friends with a common fate.

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## The Science of Cooperation

Game Theory models situations in which multiple agents (people, companies, countries) make decisions and the outcome to each agent depends not only on their own decision but also on everyone else's. In case any of you ever wonder if game theorists ever think of anything relevant, I'll tell you about a game so famous that many of you may already know about it. It's called the Prisoner's Dilemma and it's based on a story of 2 prisoners put in separate cells who will go free if neither finks on their accomplice but each is offered freedom and a lucrative reward to rat the other out. If they both fink on each other they both suffer a mild sentence compared to being the lone fall guy. This game captures the essential challenge of cooperating in a competitive environment. In this game, the sum of the players payoffs strictly increases with “cooperation”, i.e. loyalty to your partner, but “defection”, i.e. being a ratfink, always pays better whether your partner rats you out or not. The same tradeoff exists in countless areas of human interaction. The Arms Race is one example, whereby the balance of power can be maintained by mutual arms reductions or by mutual increases, but if reductions are not mutual the one who reduced (“cooperated”) is vulnerable to invasion and if they both reduce then a greater portion of government spending goes to increasing quality of life instead of weapons (guns vs. butter). The game can also be played by any number of people, not just two. For example, production teams who are paid for the group output instead of individual output. Each member must choose between “shirk” and “work” because a lazy freeloader will get paid the same as everyone else for less work and thus higher profit. Historians and cultural anthropologists call it “the tragedy of the commons”, referring to the fact citizens typically fail to do their fair share of maintenance on public resources, such as cleaning up after themselves versus littering in parks. Now matter how many players, the key features of the game are that

- 1) the sum of everyone's payoffs, i.e., aggregate social welfare, increases with the number of people cooperating,
- 2) defecting always pays better than cooperating for any particular set of choice by the other players

The Prisoner's Dilemma has been studied by mathematicians, economists, biologists, anthropologists, political scientists, management scientists and governments more than any other “game” and over 3000 academic papers have been devoted to it. The big problem with this game – and with the real world dilemma it models – is that scientific theory indicates that everyone will be selfish and social welfare will be minimized rather than maximized in the process. And when everyone is selfish, no one successfully exploits anyone else so personal welfare is minimized as well. This gloomy forecast has had researchers working overtime for decades in search of a more optimistic prognosis for mankind.

The one ray of hope researchers have kept exploring is the empirical evidence of “altruistic” behavior in humans and animals as well. The only theory that has been able to explain this, outside of altruism limited to kin, is the reputation effect when context requires playing the game an unknown number of future times. Reputation can make present sacrifice a profit maximizing strategy when there is belief in offsetting future gains. Belief in those future gains, in turn, requires trust. Trust and how it is formed and maintained is a huge area of social, biological and economic research. There has even emerged a new theory in evolutionary psychology called “ecological rationality” which hypothesizes that our ability to fall in love survived the Darwinian selection process by enabling us engage in deep trusting relationships and thus cooperate in the plethora of Prisoner's Dilemmas in our lives, and in those of our cave dwelling ancestors. There are less extreme foundations for trust, but they all rely on in-person human relationships. None of us has much ability to trust strangers and for our own good we probably shouldn't have such an ability.

Collective bargaining puts us all in a Prisoner's Dilemma together. “Cooperate” in this context means acting in concert to look out for one another, and defecting means acting selfishly, taking a gig away from your union brother or sister by working for less pay, or playing for a club on the unfair list when your brothers and sisters are refusing to, and so on. If modern science has anything to predict about how we will play this game together in Local 660, it is that our ability to trust one another is our only hope of success and that ability to trust can only be developed through personal relationships. In short, if we are to succeed, we must all become friends and be able see one another's commitment to the union when we look in each other's eyes and shake each other's hands. I look forward to meeting all of you and to all of you meeting each other – and hey – with a goal of becoming friends we can throw some really great parties

(where I'll promise not to talk about math).

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