



# MUSICENTRAL

AFM Local 660 August 2009  
Central Pennsylvania Musicians Association  
Founded in 1913—Tuned for the 21st Century

Local 660



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## President's Message

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### Reflections: Who do we serve and how do we serve them?

Mid-summer serves as a time of reflection – this time on the direction of AFM 660. Who do we serve and how do we serve them? Two of our current offerings are in question -- Listen to the Music events, and Sustainable Music Venues.

When we surveyed musicians, union and not, the top unmet needs were venues where the focus is on listening to live music and venues that pay a decent minimum wage and offer written contracts.

One way we've met those needs by offering "Listen to the Music" get-togethers at **Café 210**, the **Ale House** and **Sozo** and we've had some pretty good sessions where musicians have met each other and played interesting and varied music (see the photos below of the July 19 session at **Café 210**). But I think this "product offering" is getting old. While I really enjoy the music and the fellowship, the attendance has declined, indicating that the event is not a priority for many.

So my question for AFM 660 members is, should we have another "Listen to the Music" party in August or September – or retire the event? Put another way, does this event serve your needs? And if your answer is yes, why don't you attend? Not enough notice? Conflicting needs? Bad time of day or time of the week? Not enough pizza? I'm open to your ideas.

One way we've met the need for a minimum wage and signed contracts is by getting local bars and events to agree to be Sustainable Music Venues (SMV). This has been quite successful as many bars have signed on to pay all musicians – even non-union – the minimum wage and offer all performers written contracts.

My question for musicians performing in the bars is this: has the SMV had an impact? More precisely, are you being paid at least the minimum pay per person by the participating bars (see [afm660.org](http://afm660.org) for the details) and are they offering you written contracts? Let me know at [cgl105@comcast.net](mailto:cgl105@comcast.net) so we can make any adjustments needed.

As always, the fundamental question is, how can AFM 660 make a difference? What needs should AFM 660 fill – both for musicians and for audiences -- and how can we best do that? We took a survey, but that was a while ago, your new and evolving ideas are welcome.

*Photo below: Left—Rockin' Cafe 210 at AFM 660's July 19 "Listen to the Music" party are, left to right, John Thompson, piano; Marshall Biever, guitar; Gina Allaire, vocals; Andrew Jackson (hidden), drums; Chris Lee, guitar; and Pete Caccamo (partially hidden), bass. Right—The French "Revolution" (Lennon-McCartney) at Cafe 210, featuring, left to right, Gina Allaire (partially hidden), vocals; Chris Lee, guitar and lead vocal; Alexandra Morrin of Nantes, France, drums; Bernard de Sagazan of Paris, France, guitar; and Paul Young (Cafe 210's sound man), on bass.*



### AFM 660 Newsletter

John R. Vincenti, Editor  
[johnrvincenti@comcast.net](mailto:johnrvincenti@comcast.net)

### AFM 660 on The Web

John Thompson, Webmaster  
<http://www.afm660.org>

### Music & Color

"Throughout the centuries, many authors had suggested the possibilities of combining music and color in their presentations. Perhaps Louis Bertrand Castel was probably the first to imagine the existence of an independent art of *color-music*. Recognized as one of the most eminent mathematicians of his day, in 1720 he first describes his *La Musique en Couleurs*. Castel's writings cover a wide range of thoughts and he appears to be as much interested in aesthetics and philosophy as he was in mathematics and geometry." *World Research Foundation quote*

For more about his subject start with <http://www.wrf.org/alternative-therapies/color->

### Letter to the Editor

Dear AFM 660 members, *(Letter to the Editor by Debbie Trudeau, 1755 Cambridge Drive, State College, PA 16803)*

Cathy Herrera, flutist, her son, Gabriel, Jennene Lundy, Director of Galaxy Arts in Education, Terry Johnson, tile artist and teaching artist, and I drove to Harrisburg to participate in the Rally for the Arts in the Capital Rotunda. After hearing the speeches from diverse speakers we are all fired up about the impact of the arts in our region and state. The mayor from Chambersburg pointed out that the arts bring tourist dollars to his city. A recent student spoke passionately about the social skills of teamwork, discipline, persistence, and long term goals that music ensembles in school gave him. Without the arts, the economic engine misfires and stalls.

We learned that the PA Arts Council is a model for others in the nation about effective leadership. If it is defunded as the Republican majority Senate proposes, we would be the only state in the nation without an Arts Council. It is not a switch that can be turned on again instantly. It took years to build such a successful program and it will take years to rebuild if it is cut off.

After the rally, we went to the offices of Senator Jake Corman and Representatives Kerry Benninghoff, and Scott Conklin to express the points made at the rally.

- Arts drive the economy. Look at the way businesses in town thrive during our own Arts Fest. Concert goers are frequently restaurant goers. Folks travel to events and spend money. Hotels, restaurants, retailers all benefit. A single dollar invested in the arts generates many more times that amount in the local economy and additional tax revenues. The Arts generated \$1.9 billion in 2005 in Pennsylvania.
- Employers want resources to attract quality employees. State College is rich in cultural offerings and a desirable place to locate as a result. Communities without the arts are struggling. The Arts Council plays a role in spreading the arts to rural and underserved communities. This can drive jobs in Pennsylvania.
- Arts are essential to our Quality of Life: Many of us who are musicians performing with several orchestras will see our ensembles suffer or fold if Arts Council support disappears. That puts our livelihoods at risk. As performers in our communities we are also the private and public school teachers of the next generation of musicians. We spent a lifetime learning our craft and passing it along. Who will fill the void when we're gone?
- Education of creativity is more than passing a PSSA test. The arts allow us to explore outside the multiple choice test box and nurture new ideas. This is engineering, designing, science, research, networking and more. Employers want creative thinkers and problem solvers. Entrepreneurs are also these people.
- Nothing is free. If low taxes are your priority, you get nothing. Speak to legislators that we ARE willing to pay the necessary taxes to fund the Arts Council, currently 5 cents per week per taxpayer. Send a letter to your legislator with a nickel taped inside to fund the arts in PA.

Forward this to your friends and contact your legislators NOW!! They've heard from the folks who think no tax increase is the best and only answer. We need to be fleas on their hides. Although individually small, we need to bite frequently, get noticed and make them itch. [http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/home/findyourlegislator/find\\_zip\\_action.cfm](http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/home/findyourlegislator/find_zip_action.cfm)



## Jazz PA Festival—2009



**B**ellefonte, Centre County, Pennsylvania again hosted the Jazz PA Festival, July 24-25, 2009. Bellefonte is one of the oldest communities in Centre County and 12 miles from State College, PA. Bellefonte is a quaint hilly community with many Victorian homes, a famous natural spring, and the hub of some of the greatest fly fishing in the state. This year's Jazz PA Festival was located in three specific areas in the town. A portion of High Street leading to the courthouse was the location of the main stage. Another musical venue took place at the Gazebo in Tallyrand Park. Finally, evening programs were held at the American Philatelic Society building. Each location offered a variety of music and sounds to jazz enthusiasts or people who were interested in the festival. From big bands to quartets, high school and professional jazz bands, and celebrity performers, Jazz PA provided the opportunity to be part of either free or very low priced tickets to hear some great jazz. Several AFM 660 members took part in the event. Don Keat, long-time AFM 660 member, coordinated the contracts for the once-a-year Friends Big Band program with the Jazz PA organizer and vocalist Catherine Dupuis.



High Street Stage provided music and even the opportunity to dance. During the afternoon program with the Friends Big Band, Don Keat (pictured with the microphone), AFM 660 member, paid special tribute to Joe Alessandro (AFM 660 member) whose idea it was to stage an annual summer jazz festival. The Friends Big Band and Ms. Dupuis sang a special song in honor of Joe. Joe's wife, Helen, was in the audience.



Pictured left to right, Catherine Dupuis, Dennis Mackrel, Russ Kassoff and Greg Johnson's Megalodon.

AFM 660 artists featured at Jazz PA were Arthur Goldstein, and Rick Hirsch & Liquid Jazz. High School Jazz Bands that participated: Bellefonte, Penns Valley, and State College Area. Jazz PA also featured bassist, David Finck and Jerry Dodgion, saxophone.



## Penn State's School of Music receives SMV Certificate



AFM 660 Treasurer Debbie Trudeau presented a Sustainable Music Venue Certificate to Director of the School of Music at Penn State University, Dr. Susan Haug.

Pictured left to right are Music at Penn's Woods performers flutist Eleanor Armstrong, violinist Debbie Trudeau, bassoonist Daryl Durran, Susan Haug, and percussionist Dan Armstrong.

Armstrong, Trudeau, Durran, and Armstrong are AFM Local 660 members.

The **Sustainable Music Venue (SMV)** is a program whereby organization and businesses have agreed as a cooperative effort to work together to make this region a destination for audiences seeking high quality music.

Details at <http://afm660.org>.



## The IBS Convention: International Bassists

Articles and photos, John R. Vincenti



### Gunars Upatnieks A rising classical bassist from Eastern Europe

On the first evening of the 2009 International Society of Bassists (ISB) Convention, Penn State's Recital Hall in the School of Music was the setting for a command performance by 26 year old Gunars Upatnieks, first place soloist at 2007 ISB Double Bass Competition. The ISB holds its convention every two years. Born in the small town of Jelgava in Latvia, Gunars grew up in a family of professional musicians. "I heard a lot of classical music in my childhood, but I wasn't interested in playing any instrument in my early life," said Upatnieks. "I liked many kinds of sports, especially basketball!"

At the age of 13 he decided that he wanted to play bass. There was a reason for his decision; it was his father's influence, who was principal bass in the Latvian National Opera. Gunars began taking lessons from Sergejs Brinums. He studied with Brinums for 8 years. During this period of time, he said, "The bass started to mean more and more to me and now I consider the bass as the biggest part of my life." Upatnieks earned his Bachelor's degree at the Latvian Academy of Music in Riga.

Currently he is finishing his Masters degree at the Leos Janacek Music Academy in Brun, Czech Republic, with Professor Miloslav Jelineck and concentrating on solo performance. Since the 2007 ISB first prize at the ISB competition, Upatnieks has received top awards from the Simandl Solo Competition in the Czech Republic, the International Solo Competition in Wroclaw, Poland, and the 5<sup>th</sup> International J.M. Sperger Competition in Ludwigslust, Germany.

Gunars has appeared with the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra and the orchestra of the Latvian Academy of Music. In 2005, he also served as the Latvian National Orchestra's first solo double bassist. When asked how he prepares for competitions, he responded, "For a competition, I prepare very simply. I practice a lot, but also relax, pausing and reflecting, to keep my mind always fresh." Gunars concluded the interview by saying, "I'd like to thank my parents and my teachers for my education and skills, and love to my instrument." 



### Peruvian Jazz Bassist Jorge Roeder "Music encounters help reduce cultural differences."



Jorge E. Roeder gave his command performance also on the first night of the International Society of Bassists (ISB) convention in State College, Pennsylvania in June 2009. His performance was part of his award as the first prize winner in the jazz division of the ISB Double Bass Competition at the last ISB convention.

Roeder is a native of Lima, Peru with Latino and German parentage. When he was 8 years old, Jorge played guitar. By age 14, he began playing the cello. He also picked up the electric bass and was into rock and even hard rock. During that period, he was invited to pursue his classical studies at the Rimsky Korsakov Conservatory in St. Petersburg, Russia. At 18, his cello teacher left Lima, and as a consequence, Jorge was without an instructor. He then took up the bass and studied with Ricardo Otarola, who was principal bass with the Lima Symphony and Philharmonic. Otarola liked Jorge's work and offered him a position as assistant to the principal in an eight-bass sectional. This lasted for two years prior to his move to Boston, Massachusetts.

In Boston, Roeder received a scholarship from the New England Conservatory of Music, where he honed his skills in jazz performance with John Lockwood, Danilo Perez, and other musicians. Today, Jorge tours, records, and works while living in New York City. He has applied for U.S. citizenship.

Jorge has a diverse musical interest, but now would like to concentrate on jazz. He has played with many jazz greats including Roy Haynes, Alex Acuna, Geoffrey Keezer, Steve Lacy, Maria Schneider, Kenny Wheeler and Matt Wilson. Roeder plays with several groups throughout the country including The Kenny Wener Trio, The Dan Tepfer Trio and The Julian Lage Group. Roeder will return to State College and Penn State on October 13, 2009, at Schwab Auditorium for a concert with Julian Lage, who resides in Santa Rosa, California.

"From folklore in Peru, to Afro-Caribbean, and Cuban music," Jorge says. "Latin America is rich in music not heard in the American mainstream, especially in Columbia." He feels that musical and musician encounters help reduce cultural differentiations.

When it comes to offering advice to young musicians, he has several suggestions. Playing before an audience requires the performer to understand that one's music—its concepts, techniques, and listening quality—is the vehicle of communication, whether as a solo or with the band. "We appreciate music in different ways, we cannot be in accord to whatever is good or bad, but only in part of the abstraction that one agree," says Jorge. "Being a jazz or classical bassist is a matter of priorities for the musician to achieve and share the joy of music with others." 



AFM Dues information at [http://www.afm660.org/](http://www.afm660.org) Debbie Trudeau, Treasurer, 1755 Cambridge Drive, State College, PA 16803 (814) 237-0979 [trumusic@comcast.net](mailto:trumusic@comcast.net) AFM Local 660 includes: All of Huntingdon, Snyder, Union, Centre, Mifflin, Juniata, Union, and Montour Counties. All of Northumberland County except Snydertown, Shamokin, Ralpho, Zerbe, Little Mahony, Jackson, Herndon, Lower Mahanoy, West Cameron, East Cameron, Mount Carmel, Kulpmont, Marion Heights and Coal. Also all of Columbia County with the exception of Centralia, which is in Local 140 Wilkes-Barre area.



Local 660  
Chartered  
October 29, 1913

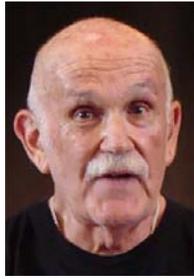
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## Bertram Turetzky- A man for all bassists

*“He has helped take the bass from its traditional supporting role to that of a major solo instrument.” ISB 2009*

The 2009 International Society of Bassists (ISB) convention in State College had almost 1,300 bass students, teachers, performers, and enthusiast parents. One person, however, caught this author's eye and was privileged to spend several hours with him. His name is Bertram Turetzky.

At 75 years young, Bert will soon celebrate his 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary with his wife, Nancy, a flutist, in their home in Del Mar, California. What was he doing at ISB 2009? The answer is, he was actively participating by teaching young double bass students, having engaging discussions with fellow ISB members about music composition and basically enjoying himself. His wit and friendly persona made Bert the perfect person

to not only interview but also follow to one of his classes. On the last day of the convention, he conducted his students at the Young Bassists' grand finale performance in Penn State's Schwab Auditorium.

Bert Turetzky happens to be a member of the American Federation of Musicians (AFM), Local 325, formerly a member of Local 400. "I became a member when I was 16 years old as I grew up in Norwich, Connecticut," he said. "You needed a union card to get a good job in those days." In fact, Bert said that one had to audition to be in the AFM in order to get a card, unlike today in most locals.

Turetzky spent 35 years at the University of California, San Diego's Department of Music. Today, he holds the title of Distinguished Emeritus Professor of Music. He has performed and lectured at leading music centers in the United States, Latin America, Europe, and Australia.

As a recording and performing artist, Bert had over 300 compositions written for him. He has recorded as a soloist, improviser, chamber musician, jazz player, orchestra performer, and Klezmer artist. In addition, Turetzky's recognition has also come from his many reviews, articles, and book entitled, *The Contemporary Contrabass*.

Bert spoke of the start of his career in music and particularly the bass. "You had to go to New York City in those days and perform a recital. You were judged then and there, you were either good or bad. Your future was at stake. It was like running a gauntlet." Obviously, Bertram Turetzky did well. He later went on to be a teacher/player at the Mancini Institute.

Attending one of Bert's classes is both fun and a learning experience. On that day he was instructing nine youth between the ages of 14 through 18. His session included serious conducting and instructing as well as providing a historical perspective to the music composed for their sessions that week. Maestro Turetzky would work with the youth in a manner that gave them the feeling that they were with a working conductor in an orchestra or symphony. His formula for learning was three prong—read the music, know your composer, and play it with feeling. At times, he would become strict, especially if one made a mistake. In the short period of his session, Bert's teaching mannerism and methodology had positive results. One could see his students were not only grasping the music but developing a synergy filled with accomplishment that came with respect and desire to learn from a bass master.

In past conventions, Bert would come with an original composition. At the 2009 ISB Convention, Bert continued his love of teaching. This time he wrote a composition called "Slam's Jam." It was dedicated to Leroy 'Slam' Stewart (1914-1987), a well known jazz player with a Kay Bass which had four strings. Bert said, "Slam sang along with his bass playing. This was unusual in his day. Slam studied at Boston College and had an extraordinary ear for music." On the convention's last day, his nine students performed "Slam's Jam" flawlessly at the Young Bassists' Orchestra Concert.

Bert Turetzky is one bassist who is definitely a classic and someone to know!

Article and photos, John R. Vincenti



## Gigs & Events

Blues Moon Band (9pm-Midnight) at the Auto Port Friday, July 31, 2009 and August 28, 2009  
Tussey Mountain-Blues Moon Band and the Billy Price Band-August 14, 2009  
Free advertising—send email, subject: GIGS by 20th of each month to Newsletter editor.



## Jazz Beat by Rick Hirsch Saxophonist, composer, and bandleader—

**Podcast** (n. an audio file that you can download to your computer from the internet, often free of charge).

There is a wonderful jazz-interview podcast I'd like to tell you about: **The Jazz Session** is hosted by Albany, NY-based jazz writer **Jason Crane**. I've been listening to Jason's interviews for a couple of years. The scope of his interview subjects is broad within the spectrum of jazz music, chatting up international veterans (Gary Burton, John Abercrombie) and emerging musicians we've never heard of.

So, the guests are interesting and varied in their experiences. And, in these interviews, they're given ample room to talk while the interviewer stays out of the way. Much like long-time *Fresh Air* host **Terry Gross**. Good stuff!

Check it out here: [www.thejazzsession.com](http://www.thejazzsession.com)

An interesting side note: Jason Crane tells me that his wife is from State College (though I don't know what her family name is). I understand that they visit State College often.

I personally find these interviews are particularly good to listen to while during household chores in one place. You can contact me through my website: [www.HirschMusic.biz](http://www.HirschMusic.biz).



## DRUM BEATS

By Andrew Jackson, Sr.  
[fatherlighthouse2000@yahoo.com](mailto:fatherlighthouse2000@yahoo.com)

Penn State Marching Blue Band Alumni Musicians must sign up for the 2009 Home Coming Parade. Contact: Helen [Meyer-ham14@psu.edu](mailto:Meyer-ham14@psu.edu) or [Conrad.Steinmann-president@alumniblueband.org](mailto:Conrad.Steinmann-president@alumniblueband.org)

