



Quarter Notes

Musicians of Western Montana

November/December, 2020 Newsletter

At The Top



In this edition, we look some more at the Music Performance Trust Fund, learn about local COVID relief efforts and note the Elections meeting date and time.



Meetings Calendar

NOTE! Elections of all positions will be held **at our next meeting**.

It is scheduled for **Sunday, December 6, 2020, 3 pm, Labor Temple via Zoom meeting services** (An email with the appropriate link to join the meeting will be sent to all members by Saturday, December 5, 2020.) If positions are unchallenged, the candidates are elected by acclamation.

President's Message

Dear union brothers and sisters,

If you have been keeping up with our MOWM newsletters over the last year, you probably realize that our Local 498-642 officers and Executive Board have been meeting nearly every month since the beginning of 2020. We've made a real effort to build our local's "infrastructure" and maintain a visible presence for our members and the working musicians in western Montana.

MPTF news: In the previous month's edition of our newsletter, I told you about a Music Performance Trust Fund (MPTF) event I was working on for a Helena retirement home. I got approval from the AFM's New York office to have four musicians provide music for an Oktoberfest event at the facility. To make a long story short, the concert didn't happen. It was canceled by the sponsor just hours before it was to take place due to a severe spike in Covid-19 infections in the state and in the long term care community. This cancellation was, of course, a big disappointment for the sponsor and the musicians alike who had really been looking forward to playing and earning some much needed income. There is an upside to this story:

The sponsor, feeling bad about the 11th hour cancellation, agreed to pay the musicians the full amount they would have earned. It helped that I had filled out a standard AFM contract for the engagement. An added bonus was that MPTF, when told of the circumstances of the cancellation, agreed to honor their part of the bargain and pay the agreed upon half of the contracted amount. Additionally, all four musicians have agreed to make themselves available to provide music for the sponsor some time in the future when the pandemic has abated.

I see these outcomes as positive examples of why we should do things the "union" aka "professional" way. The union contract assured that the musicians received their due and the sponsor was relieved of shouldering the entire financial burden. MPTF came through and proved that they are and will continue to be a valuable resource

for our members. In these troubled times, we must advocate for ourselves and help to create paying work for musicians. MPTF is an asset that we really should take advantage of!

If you are interested in creating an MPTF event, I strongly suggest you check out their website <https://musicpf.org/>. You can contact Secretary/Treasurer Alex Lee at (406) 916-8800 for information and assistance.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Dave Thomas for his diligence in producing many excellent newsletters. As of January 2021, Dave will be retiring from his many years of serving as a member of the E-board and I hope you will join me in thanking him for his excellent service. Dave has served as a Board member, Secretary Treasurer and as Vice President for the last several years. We encourage other members from our vast region to consider a position on the E-Board and get involved with the running of our Local.

Don Stone
President, Local 498-642 AFM

COVID RELIEF



The Lost & Foundation, a Helena-based nonprofit, has received CARES Act funding for COVID relief. Through the end of 2020, it can provide small grants to individuals and families financially affected by COVID-19.

If you are facing financial stresses due to loss of income, you may qualify for a one-time grant. Common stresses are rent, childcare, utilities, or medical expenses. To apply, go to <https://lostandfoundation.org/> and click on "Apply for Help." This will take you to the online application. After filling in your personal information, go to Part A and explain your situation. Please be specific and detailed. Once you submit the application, the Lost & Foundation Board will consider your request.



Virtual performances

Oh! the new words we're learning: "virtual internet streaming events", "safety protocols", "virtual art", "subscription based Patreon platforms". As musicians search out their own virtual presence, we're looking for your experiences and tips for creating, editing and uploading music. What apps/software are you using? How do you make edits? What microphones work best for you? Do you do it all, or do you have buddies with more recording experience? Anything special about the room you use? What didn't work for you? Let us know!



MPTF's Livestreams Are Happening

by Dan Beck, Music Performance Trust Fund Trustee

The return of the traditional live music business cannot come quickly enough for musicians, music venues, and the people surrounding the entertainment world who derive their livelihood from it. Of course, that also goes for the music lovers who crave great live music experiences. In March, when COVID-19 brought live music to a standstill, the Music Performance Trust Fund's (MPTF) grant initiatives came to a screeching halt. As our staff contended with the explosion of the pandemic in New York City, we began to search for alternative approaches to continuing the live



music experience and the benefits of our grants. We have proactively supported traditional live performances, while working with union locals to ensure that the events we do fund are done as safely as possible for the public and the musicians involved. We also began exploring our ability to support livestreaming performances. Working with Local 77 (Philadelphia, PA), we organized three test events in May as we sorted out the application process, AFM scale issues, and copyright licensing restrictions. Spearheaded by Local 77's vice president, Marjorie Goldberg, these initial concerts featuring just two or three musicians proved that our Facebook platform and the coordination procedures we established could work easily and effectively. Additionally, due to the challenges locals faced in securing co-sponsors during the pandemic, we expanded our grants to cover 100% of the costs. Although the process for implementing these performances and securing the grants is relatively easy, the participation is still developing. As of this writing, only 15 union locals have taken advantage of the grant opportunity. Meanwhile, we have provided tech coordination and support to help the locals implement the simple process of livestreaming. As COVID-19 continues without a clear end in sight, fall and winter weather will further restrict traditional live events. With that in mind, we encourage union locals to explore livestreaming opportunities further. Go to our Facebook page and watch a livestream event. The challenges are small, and we have tech support available to help your local to ramp up quickly to create revenue for your members. The MPTF also launched the Music Family Essay Scholarship program this summer as an alternative means to distribute our resources. Over 180 student applicants have submitted essays highlighting the uniqueness, challenges, advantages, and inspiration that comes from growing up with parents who are professional musicians. Participation has come from a wide range of members in locals across North America.

Scholarship awards totaling \$100,000 will be announced in the coming weeks, as our judging panel completes its work. While the COVID-19 challenges have been large and numerous, we applaud the efforts of those who have pursued the resources we have made available. We look forward to a brighter day, when we can again provide our grants in full, without the threat of illness and social distancing restrictions.

If you believe you received this message in error or wish to no longer receive email from us, please unsubscribe by emailing local498-642@afm.org with "unsubscribe" in the subject line.

Musicians Of Western Montana Local 498-642

PO Box 1523, Helena, Montana 59624

406-916-8800

<http://musicunionwestmt.com/>

local498-642@afm.org

