

Intermezzo

Virtual Member Meeting:
Monday, June 15th @ 6pm

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Member Feature:

At Home with Bobby Lewis



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Cover photo: Megan Elk

Ongoing Effort

The work of the Union is one that grows over time, sometimes in leaps and sometimes in steps, but always ongoing. This is the most interesting work of my life, and the entire CFM team and I are so grateful to you for your continued support.

In this issue is an interview with one of my trumpet heroes, Mr. Bobby Lewis. Bobby was an encouraging voice to me early in my career here in Chicago, and I am so thankful that he invited us into his home for a delightful interview and tour of his artworks. He is a shining example of what a professional life in the arts can be.

In response to member feedback regarding issues with the current website, we will be transitioning to a streamlined and more accessible design. The process has been challenging, and we are coming to the finish line. We worked diligently within the Toucan Tech environment to meet our original specifications, but we found that the platform simply did not meet our needs or expectations of performance. We have updated our database hardware and software, engaged a new consultant to manage that system, and are preparing our digital communications and website environment for the future. An email containing more information will be sent to members soon. Most members will need to create a new login and password.

Coming up is a big stretch of negotiations, including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Grant Park Orchestra, Chicago Sinfonietta, and Rockford Symphony, as well as completing Goodman Theatre negotiations. We promise to continue our efforts in pushing for increases that attempt to catch us up after the Covid years, in which inflation outpaced wage gains. Our industry is not unique in this, and all workers are feeling the pressure of rising costs. We must protect the profession and ensure that a life in music remains a lucrative proposition.



On the organizing front, please be on the lookout for information from us should we need you to be present for any work actions. Organizing remains a primary motivator for this Union. We are firing on all fronts there, trying to create jobs in music with the Scoring Stage project, focusing on storefront theatres, and speaking with independent venues and artists as well as the organizations that represent them such as the Future of Music Coalition, National Independent Venues Association, Society of Composers and Lyricists, and others. We also spent three days

in Springfield recently where we had personal meetings with 15 legislators to discuss the unique challenges that musicians face.

In this issue you will see a proposal for amendments to the CFM Constitution and Bylaws presented by the officers. These are difficult topics that I believe are time to address openly and transparently. We present them with full support and gratitude to our Board of Directors. There are several budgetary and practical reasons why I feel we have reached a moment when this change must be implemented. I am glad to provide details to anyone who would like, and I hope that you will all plan to attend the Annual Meeting in person on September 14, 2026, where these proposals will be discussed and voted upon.

As always, we thank you for your artistry, perseverance, and membership in our historic local. In September of this year, we will begin the celebration of our 125th year. This institution must continue the work of our predecessors, strengthen its bonds within the wider Labor Movement, and advance itself as the primary advocate for the most interesting and vital artists anywhere in the world. Chicago has a look that the whole world loves, but we also have a *sound*.■

Contracting: Getting Your Numbers Right

So—you've been asked to put together a group for an event and provide a quote. Congratulations! That makes you the "leader" or "contractor." Now what?

How do you even come up with a number? Maybe \$350 per musician for a rehearsal and concert?

It's easy to grab a round number and think, "Yeah, that sounds about right." But have you really thought about everything that goes into it? Will the client ask for liability insurance? How much time are you going to spend organizing the group, emailing, coordinating schedules, and handling details?

For starters, I hope you're earning more than just a few hundred dollars. And remember—our wage scales are minimums. They're a baseline, not a goal.

If you want help figuring out those minimums, I'm always happy to crunch the numbers—whether it's a solo gig or a full symphony.

Start with the basics: where is the job, when is it, and how many musicians do you need? Is it a symphonic gig out in the suburbs or a quartet downtown? Is anyone doubling? Will someone be hauling a large instrument? Is parking available?

Then there's payroll. Ideally, you'd use a payroll service to handle tax withholding. If that's not the case, you'll need to add about 15% to cover self-employment taxes and pay that directly to the musicians. On top of that, there are pension contributions, which you'll pay to the pension fund on behalf of the players. Make sure they know this—it's part of their compensation, even if they



don't see it in their paycheck.

At this point, you might be thinking: isn't it easier to just go back to those round numbers?

I get it—but this is where doing it right really matters.

And seriously, I'm here to help. I can run the numbers with you, set up a simple spreadsheet so you know what to pay, and provide a union contract for your client to sign. If they need liability insurance, I can help with that too. I'll also walk you through the LS-1 pension

form and the whole process.

We need more contractors—and more folks who know how to do this the right way.

On a related note, the CFM Wage Scale Committee will be holding meetings during the month of May. The committee will be looking at comparative Locals' wage scales and work rules.

Anyone wishing to speak with the CFM Wage Scale Committee and bring their concerns or thoughts to the committee is most welcome. It is important for the committee to understand your input, and our Union is always stronger with your participation. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me at contact me at: jfloeter@cfm10208.org. ■

Collaboration Is Key

On January 23rd, while reading the news on my train ride to the office, I learned that Governor Pritzker, Mayor Johnson, and the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events announced Chicago as the host of UNESCO's International Jazz Day on April 30th. That day we strategized how to insert ourselves in the planning process and create performance opportunities for our members. It took three weeks of persistence to get us the first of many Zoom meetings with the organizers. By that time, we had obtained additional grants from the Music Performance Trust Fund, which helped us develop a partnership with the Magnificent Mile Association and the Jazz Alliance. Securing the Cultural Center took some political maneuvering, but I am hopeful that the successful MPTF concert at G.A.R. Hall marks the beginning of a collaborative and fruitful relationship with DCASE.

Our constant efforts produced a win, win, win. With the generous grants from the Music Performance Trust Fund, and a lot of work by CFM Officers and staff; 60 Jazz musicians performed and received fair wages (including pension payments), the Magnificent Mile's inaugural launching of *Trumpets and Tulips* was a resounding success, and audiences were able to experience jazz in a variety of settings that were free and open to the public.

April also marked the beginning of CFM outreach to Chicago's indie music scene. Megan Elk, CFM Director of Communications and Organizing, and I provided information tables at an event for musicians and bands hosted by the Lawyers for the Creative Arts, and at Green Expo as part of Chicago's Independent Venue League's two-week CIVL Fest. The CFM is committed to collaborate with Chicago's Independent musicians and venues, legislators and communities to be part of the solution to strengthen the indie music ecosystem.



I am currently working to reframe the consumer protection narrative surrounding the Live Nation/ Ticketmaster monopoly to include its impact on labor, helping shed light on the theft of wages and mistreatment of musicians. I have met with IL legislators to review language and intent of their proposed junk fees ticket bill and, in March, I spoke with Senator Elizabeth Warren at SPACE in Evanston about the impact of the monopoly on musicians and independent venues. By the time this is printed, I will also have appeared on America's Workforce Union Podcast

to discuss the impact of this monopoly, streaming, and radio play on musicians' livelihoods.

In financial news, the LM-2 Report, a federal requirement for all unions, was completed and submitted to the Department of Labor in March and the CFM 2025 audit is printed in this issue, beginning on page 20.

And finally, if you have not done so, please pay your 2026 membership dues. If you are suspended, this is the last *Intermezzo* you will receive until your dues are paid. Please call the office today. Patty in our membership department can take your payment over the phone.

As I have laid out in this letter; the CFM officers and staff are very busy expanding our outreach, representing all of you in Springfield and City Hall, and inserting ourselves in other spaces where your needs have previously not been considered. Tracking down late payments takes a significant amount of time that could be spent fighting for better pay and work conditions for all musicians. If you are experiencing financial difficulties, please send me an email with a request for assistance from the CFM Musicians Relief Fund. Thank you for your membership. ■

At Home with Bobby Lewis

By: Megan Elk

Bobby Lewis greeted us at the door of the Wilmette ranch he has made home for the last 43 years. From the spry enthusiasm with which he answered the door, you might have a hard time believing that Bobby, one of Chicago's most accomplished trumpet players, had just celebrated his 90th birthday.



Bobby shows off a model ship, each piece meticulously handcrafted by him

Entering the living room, it was immediately evident that we were in the home of not just a musician, but an artist in all senses of the word. Dotting the walls and bookshelves are trumpets, of course; cases, horns, mouthpieces, the expected tools of a life long career; but then, there are objects that don't belong to any single category. A pair of sunrise and sunset friezes, fashioned from the discarded chopsticks of a beloved Japanese restaurant, long since closed. Constructions built from found materials like the bells of damaged horns. Several impressive, to-scale models of buildings and boats are displayed alongside a menagerie of polymer clay figurines, all built from scratch by Bobby's industrious hands.

He moves easily among his creations, picking one up, turning it in the light, explaining how it came to be.

"That's the creative brain," he says, almost casually.

Standing there, surrounded by the artifacts of a life not just lived but fully explored, you begin to understand that none of it is coincidental. The music, the art, the creative spirit; everything traces back to a single moment, when a small boy brimming with curiosity picked up a trumpet and found that it spoke back.

It all started at nine and a half years of age in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, when Bobby tagged along with his father to VFW band rehearsals. The group of twenty-some musicians met every week to rehearse the concerts in the park, parades, and county events they played. For a kid, it was a thrilling world of sound and motion. He remembers watching the trumpet players. At some point, he asked if he could try one, and was surprised to find how easy it was to press down the valve.

The ease he felt might have had something to do with the fact that his father was a musician and his uncle was a music teacher. More importantly, there was an understanding of what it meant to be part of something larger than himself. By the time Bobby was 13 or 14, those same VFW musicians were letting him sit in, even though he was just a kid.

"I learned respect," he says. "Right away."

By age twelve, Bobby had made the first of thousands of recordings he would make over the decades that followed. It was a simple wire recording, captured by the euphonium player. He hadn't even been playing three years, and yet there he was, handling a demanding solo with triple tonguing, settling into it after a few tentative bars. Thinking back now, he hears it clearly: "I sounded pretty confident."

It was, in a way, the first confirmation of what his life would become. It wouldn't be long until Bobby joined the Union as a teenager. He remembers the moment of being sworn in and getting a pat on the back vividly, and recalls hearing the oath-issuing officer tell him, "Now you're a musician."



President BJ Levy visiting the home of legendary CFM trumpet player, Bobby Lewis

Not long after, he played a job booked under his name, though it was really his father's band. The gig was at a dance hall, and hardly anyone showed. The venue didn't want to pay them, but luckily, his father had filed a Union contract.

"He said, 'It says right here,'" Bobby recalls, tapping an imaginary document in the air. "And we got paid." Decades later, that lesson would prove to be a lasting one. From then on, as Bobby tells it, "I wanted to have a contract all the time." And he did.

By the time Bobby arrived in Chicago in 1961, he had already built a solid foundation playing in school bands; attending The University of Wisconsin Madison, playing solo cornet in the concert band and obtaining his master's degree in trumpet. But Chicago was something else entirely. He recalls coming to the union office when he first arrived and being asked a simple question: 'Do you think you can make it here?' "I think so," he said.



Bobby with the late, great CSO Principal Trumpet player, Adolph "Bud" Herseth

He shrugs slightly at the memory, as if it could have gone either way; a logical reaction, considering that Chicago in the 1960s was dense with talent. The best players in the country were working here on our stages, in our orchestras, and, most importantly for Bobby, in our recording studios. But for some reason, Bobby didn't have to chase gigs.

"I never asked anyone for work," Bobby says. "They called me."

He quickly developed a reputation for being dependable, showing up on time and playing the parts flawlessly, with little or no rehearsal. He earned the trust of the people around him, musicians who, in many cases, were already legends.

Bobby fondly remembers sitting next to players like Johnny Howell and Bud Herseth, absorbing how they played and how they carried themselves. Early on, he learned something crucial: being a good session player was about fitting into the sound, not being the loudest or the flashiest.

"If you think you're the best," he says, "the only way is down."

Instead, he focused on being part of the band. He takes particular pride in playing the fourth trumpet part. It may not be the lead or get all the spotlight, but it's the inner voice that makes the harmony work. "If I'm playing fourth," he says, leaning forward slightly, "you're going to hear it, and you're going to hear it right."

It was, in all likelihood, this cool competence that got him called in to play on recording sessions time and time again. As his reputation grew, so did the caliber of artists who called him to play.

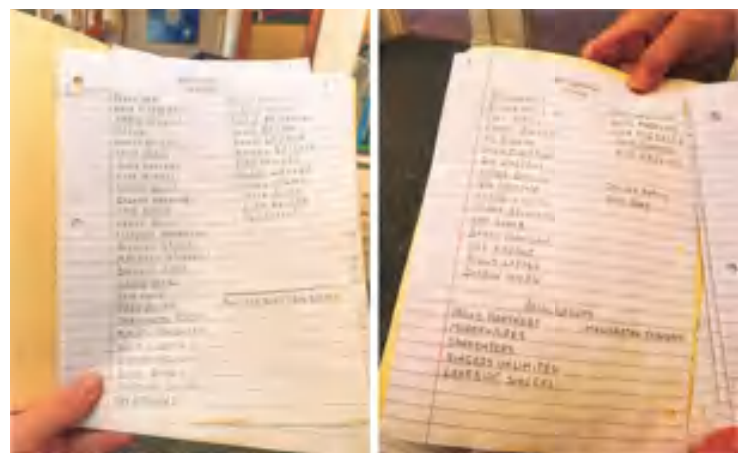
With over 60 years in the business, the list is a long one, and Bobby does hand me a literal, handwritten list that he's compiled over the years. There are pages and pages filled with the names of some of the most recognizable recording artists of the 20th century. It's like opening a time capsule of American music.

Tony Bennett. Lena Horne. Peggy Lee. Mel Tormé. Sarah Vaughan. Frank Sinatra. Ella Fitzgerald. Nancy Wilson. Sammy Davis Jr., Judy Garland and Liza Minnelli. He played for all of them (and many more) as a working musician: onstage, in rehearsals, and in the rooms where the music was actually made.

He tells us a story about a show at Ravinia with Mel Tormé and Sarah Vaughan. Tormé rehearsed the band, shaping every detail. Then, he counted off and they played. Perfect.

"He turned around with this big smile," Bobby says, smiling to himself now, "and said, 'We're going to have some fun.'"

Later, Tormé brought Vaughan onstage in a way Bobby never forgot. He started the tune, introduced her mid-phrase, then stepped aside so she could finish it alone. It was a memorable gesture of respect and musical generosity. "That's how much of a genius he was," Bobby says.



Bobby has maintained definitive, handwritten records, noting all of the musicians he has played with over the years. He emails later to clarify that the fourth entry in the 'Vocalists, Female' list where it says, simply, 'Karen' is supposed to say, of course, Karen Carpenter.

He talks about Peggy Lee too (for whom, on two occasions, he was music director and conductor) and how she had him step out and play a solo during one of her shows, something she didn't normally do. As Lee wrote in the liner notes of Bobby's album, *Here I Go Again*: "A sound like no other... I like him best when he plays in pastels... but every note is beautiful... is loving. Bobby loves life as he loves music... and I love Bobby Lewis."

He was friendly with greats like Tony Bennett, who was always excited to play with Bobby when he came to Chicago. Bobby tells us countless other stories about the names in those lists, too many to publish here. But luckily, we don't have to rely on stories alone. We have an incredible catalog of recordings in which to hear Bobby's collaborations.

Bobby estimates he played around 8,000 recording sessions over the course of his career. At his peak, in the late '70s and early '80s, he was doing 300 to 400 sessions a year, recording jingles, albums, films scores, and industrials. There was rarely a moment's rest for Bobby in that golden era of recording. He was a go-to player for the most important producers of the time, especially Curtis Mayfield.

Bobby describes walking into a 9 a.m. session and looking at a part full of high notes with no warm-up, and no second chances. "Count it off," he says. "We'll play."

Sometimes the task was straightforward, sometimes not. A producer might ask for some abstract quality, or even an impersonation of another famous trumpet player. Bobby excelled at figuring it out and translating it into sound. With trumpet, flugelhorn, and piccolo trumpet at his disposal, sometimes he was even asked to use improvised instruments when the job called for it. He became no stranger to making mundane objects from the hardware store, like a garden hose, sing.

"They counted on you to figure it out," he says.

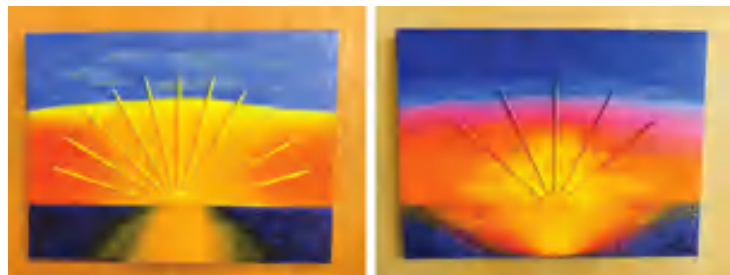
But as much as the creativity mattered, so did something less glamorous: the paperwork. All of those sessions were done on union contracts. Every one of them meant pension contributions, residuals, and protections that extended far beyond that day's work.

"All those contracts were filed," he says. "All that pension money went into our accounts. That's important."

As fate would have it, those pension payments would become incredibly important to him because eventually, the sessions slowed. Bobby remembers clearly the union hall meeting where an AFM representative played a recording that sounded like a full orchestra, asked the room how many musicians they thought played on the recording, and then revealed it had been created by a single person using a synthesizer.

"We don't know what we're going to do," the man said, and the union members in the room instantly understood."

By the early 1990s, much of the work that had defined Bobby's career was disappearing. Technology had changed the landscape, and there was no way to stop it. But Bobby didn't stop. He kept playing and recording. He started producing his own albums and now boasts fifteen in total, with still more on the way. He foists copies of several recently released CDs upon us to take home. As I turn to stash the albums in my tote bag, I catch a glimpse of another artwork on the wall, a piece made from dozens of drumsticks, arranged into a structure that feels both precise and spontaneous.



Two of Bobby's found object art pieces, 'Sunrise' and 'Sunset'

It is then that I realize that these works aren't separate from his music. They are the same impulse, expressed differently. Bobby responds to the creative needs of his environment, whether it's a session where it's being asked to play just like Louis Armstrong, or a pile of discarded materials, begging to be transformed into an object of beauty.

Bobby approaches every aspect of his life with a humble, matter-of-fact curiosity. He never stops moving or creating, and remains dedicated to a physical fitness regimen that he credits for his longevity, while also maintaining a regular practice schedule, saying of his practice: "Sometimes the horn wins, sometimes you win."

For Bobby, each day is an opportunity to learn something new and begin again.

I bring the interview to a close by asking Bobby if he has any advice for younger players who are just starting out, and his message is straightforward, "build your reputation, be dependable, respect the people around you, and always file the contract."

Because one day, decades from now, you might find yourself sitting in a room like this, surrounded by the evidence of a life in music, and realize that those small decisions mattered more than you ever expected. ■

Bobby remains an active performer throughout the Chicagoland area. His 15th studio album, 'Feels Like Spring' has just been released on Cool Horn Records. For more information visit: www.bobbylewis.com

Corky Siegel celebrates 60 years of 'Symphonic Blues'

By: Megan Elk



In 2026, Corky Siegel marks a remarkable milestone: the 60th anniversary of *Symphonic Blues*, the bold, genre-defying work that helped redefine the relationship between blues and classical music. For Corky, the anniversary is both a retrospective and a reaffirmation of an idea that once startled audiences, and continues to resonate today. Central to that original impact, and still electrifying today, is Siegel's virtuosic harmonica playing, which brought an instrument rooted in Chicago blues tradition into the symphonic spotlight with unprecedented authority and expressive range.



Corky Siegel in solo performance

The origins of Symphonic Blues trace back to 1966, when Siegel joined forces with CSO conductor Seiji Ozawa and composer William Russo to explore uncharted musical territory. At a time when strict boundaries separated musical traditions, their collaboration with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra challenged convention head-on. Early reactions captured the tension of the moment, as critics and classical musicians alike grappled with a work that brought the raw expressiveness of blues harmonica and piano, driven in large part by Siegel's masterful harmonica technique, into the symphonic hall.

What made Symphonic Blues revolutionary was a reimagining of coexistence. Rather than blending genres into a single sound, Siegel allowed each to retain its identity, placing blues and classical music side by side in a dynamic, sometimes uneasy, but ultimately compelling dialogue.

His harmonica, often treated as a lead orchestral voice, cut through and conversed with strings and winds alike, expanding perceptions of both the instrument and the genre. That approach would go on to influence decades of cross-genre experimentation, positioning Siegel as a pioneer well ahead of his time.

Sixty years later, that original spark has evolved into a substantial body of work. Siegel has developed nine symphonic blues concertos, seven of them his own compositions, and performed with more than 50 orchestras worldwide. The release of *Symphonic Blues No. 6*, featuring musicians from Chicago's orchestral community and beyond, stands as a capstone to this ongoing journey. It reflects not only Siegel's vision, but also the depth of talent within the ranks of our local, and continues to highlight the harmonica as a commanding and expressive concert instrument.

The anniversary also finds Siegel continuing to bring his ideas to new audiences. His Chamber Blues ensemble will appear this May with special guest, Ernie Watts, extending the same philosophy of musical contrast and conversation into a more intimate setting.



Corky Siegel and Ernie Watts

While distinct from the orchestral scale of *Symphonic Blues*, the project echoes its core principle: that great music can emerge from difference as much as from harmony, with Siegel's harmonica once again serving as a central, unifying voice.



Corky Siegel exuding the joy of his creative process in performance

An important extension of Siegel's global musical dialogue can be found in his collaborations with L. Subramaniam, the internationally celebrated violin virtuoso often referred to as the "God of Indian violin." Their work together, spanning decades and international tours, reflects a shared commitment to expanding musical language across cultures. Siegel's participation in Subramaniam's 2026 Global Fusion project, alongside an extraordinary roster of artists including Herbie Hancock, Stanley Clarke, and Jean-Luc Ponty, places his harmonica voice within yet another richly layered context.

As with Symphonic Blues, these collaborations do not dilute individual traditions but elevate them through thoughtful interplay, reinforcing Siegel's lifelong role as a bridge-builder between genres and cultures.

For Chicago's musical community, the 60th anniversary of *Symphonic Blues* is a moment to recognize a work that not only broke barriers, but built lasting bridges. What began in 1966 as a daring experiment has become a living legacy—one that continues to challenge, inspire, and expand the possibilities of American music—carried forward on the unmistakable sound of Corky Siegel's harmonica. ■

For more information, please visit:
www.corkysiegel.com

Out & About



Secretary-Treasurer Suarez Flint offers a variety of CFM information and swag to attendees at the CIVL Green Community Expo



A panel of managers, producers, and artists from Oak Street Media discuss the opportunities and challenges for Chicago Hip-Hop at the Lawyers for Creative Arts Band Law Clinic



Member Markus Rutz stopped by the Band Law Clinic to chat with CFM officers and staff, and gain valuable legal insight from LCA's expert panelists

CFM Officers have been hard at work, advocating for our members in Springfield at the State House, and locally here in Chicago at a variety of entertainment industry informational events and forums.

Above: Secretary-Treasurer Karen Suarez Flint attends the Chicago Independent Venue League *Green Community Expo* at Color Club on April 18th, as well as *The Lawyers for the Creative Arts Music & Band and Clinic* on Friday March 27th, in an effort to reach prospective new members.

Below: Senior CFM Board Member Rich Daniels and CFM President BJ Levy visit Springfield on April 16th to secure legislative support for Third Coast Music's new sound stage. ■



CFM Senior Board Member Rich Daniels, State Senator Sara Feigenboltz, and CFM President BJ Levy



Rich Daniels, State Senator Bill Cunningham, and BJ Levy



Rich Daniels, Representative Theresa Mab, and BJ Levy

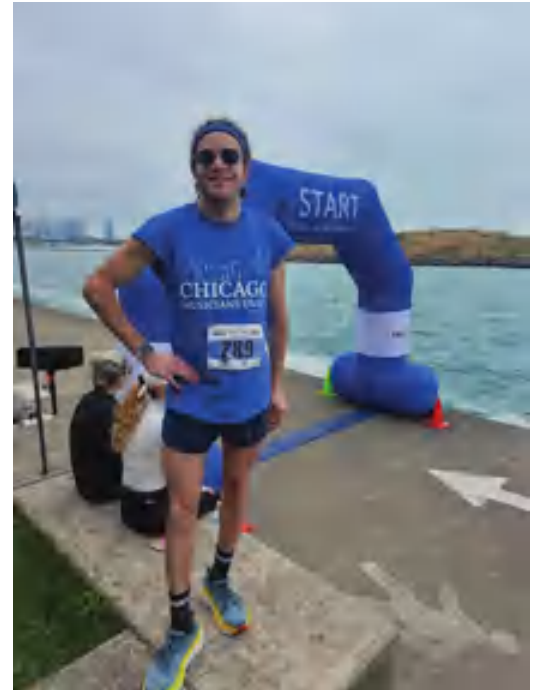
CFL May Day 5k



Jacque Harper, Seth Pae, and Greg Flint



Sunday April 26, 2026



CFL May Day 5k WINNER, Seth Pae

This year's May Day 5k, sponsored by the **Chicago Federation of Labor**, was one for the books! Members gathered together by the Lakefront Trail at McCormick Place, joining in a friendly race with members of other unions from across the Chicagoland area. **Most notably, the winner of the entire race was member, Seth Pae, with a time of 18:39.** Bravo, Seth. Way to represent the musicians of our local! ■



Joe Sonnefeldt, Heather Wittels, and BJ Levy gear up for the race



Greg Flint and Karen Suarez Flint

UNESCO World Jazz Day



Everyone got into the groove as the Jazz for Chicago Big Band played a free concert for the people of Chicago



A large and eager crowd assembled at the Chicago Cultural Center in the Grand Army of the Republic Hall. Can you spot one of our members in the crowd?



In celebration of the City of Chicago serving as host city for this year's celebration of **UNESCO World Jazz Day**, CFM was proud to present a special inaugural performance of the **Jazz For Chicago Big Band**, featuring vocalist **Angel Spiccia**, at the **Chicago Cultural Center** on **Monday, April 27th**. CFM officers and staff were honored to connect our partners from the **Chicago Jazz Alliance** and the **Herbie Hancock Foundation** with resources from the **Music Performance Trust Fund**, in the service of making this concert free and open to the public. ■



Vocalist Angel Spiccia leads the Jazz for Chicago Big Band at the Chicago Cultural Center on April 27



The afternoon was a great opportunity for folks from all across the city to experience the power and beauty of live music

Tulips & Trumpets



The Chris Greene Quartet plays on April 7, 2026



The Jo Ann Daugherby Quartet + Thadens Tukes plays on April 14th, 2026

As an exciting part of the World Jazz Day Festivities, CFM also had the opportunity to partner with **the Magnificent Mile Association** to present a month long series of jazz performances on every Tuesday during the month. Aptly titled *Trumpets and Tulips*, four different combos of CFM Musicians had the opportunity to play in the Nordstrom ebar at the Shops at North Bridge.

Performances were made possible through the hard work of **Vice President John Floeter** especially, who helped secure funding from the MPTF to present not only the World Jazz Day Performances, but over \$300,000 in subsidized musicians' wages in the last year. ■



The Natalie Scharf Quartet plays on April 21, 2026



The Markus Rutz Quartet plays on April 28, 2026

Welcome new & returning members



Monica Benson

Monica Benson is a Chicago-based trumpet player, educator, and arts leader best known for her high-profile performance work with the Chicago Bears and Chicago Blackhawks. A versatile and in-demand musician, she brings technical excellence and a commanding presence to some of the city's largest and most visible stages.

Benson's performance career spans professional sports, festivals, orchestral and commercial music, and musical theater. In addition to her work with the Bears and Blackhawks, she served as the official Bugler for Arlington International Racecourse from 2014–2021 and has appeared alongside national touring acts on festival stages such as Riot Fest. She has also performed with bands and groups including the Brass Band of Battle Creek, The Wonder Years, Gorilla Biscuits, and The Generationals. Benson is a frequent pit musician for musical theater productions throughout the Chicagoland area, including engagements with the Marriott

Theatre, Porchlight Music Theatre, and Metropolis Performing Arts Centre. She is also a substitute trumpet player with the Peoria Symphony Orchestra.

Originally from St. Louis, Missouri, Benson holds bachelor's and master's degrees in music from DePaul University. She also formerly taught private trumpet lessons at the Merit School of Music.

In addition to her performance work, Benson is an accomplished arts administrator, having held positions as Director of Education and Community Engagement at the Chicago Sinfonietta and Executive Director of Fulcrum Point New Music Project. Across all roles, she combines a performer's perspective with strong leadership and organizational expertise, advancing impactful musical experiences for diverse audiences throughout Chicago. ■



Jhoan García

Jhoan García is a Colombian trumpet player based in Chicago. His career includes symphonic, chamber, and solo performance across the Americas and Europe. He has collaborated with renowned ensembles including the Nashville Symphony, Sarasota Symphony, Omaha Symphony, the National Symphony Orchestra of Colombia, and the Youth Orchestra of the Americas.

García served as Principal Trumpet of the Bogotá Symphony Orchestra from 2014 to 2018. His honors include first prize at the Eric Aubier National Trumpet Competition and first prize at the Orchestral Excerpts Competition in Colombia. He is currently serving as Principal Trumpet with the Illinois Philharmonic and second trumpet with the Peoria Symphony Orchestra. ■



Chris Riggs

A native of Edmond, Oklahoma, **Chris Riggs** joined the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra in 2017 as Assistant Principal Timpani and Section Percussion. Prior to starting in Milwaukee, he was a fellow at the New World Symphony from 2012-2015, and began freelancing with various orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, and Chicago Symphony.

Chris is currently an Adjunct Professor of Percussion at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Previously, he was an Adjunct Percussion Professor at Sam Houston State University, where he taught on topics including percussion methods, percussion composition and arranging, music therapy, and percus-

sion's role in the orchestra. He has also worked with various high schools and universities as a drumline instructor and arranger.

Chris earned his master's degree in Percussion Performance and Literature from Northwestern University, a bachelor's degree in Percussion Performance, and a minor in philosophy from the University of Oklahoma. His principal teachers were Lance Drege, Michael Burritt, She-e Wu, and James Ross.

Outside of performing, Chris enjoys spending time with his family, and always looks for an excuse to get to the mountains. ■



James Romain

Active regionally, nationally, and internationally as a soloist, chamber musician, recitalist, clinician, and jazz/commercial performer, **James Romain** embraces diverse genres of music. He actively contributes to the growing body of compositions and pedagogical literature for the instrument through his pursuit of commissions, recording projects, and published articles.

Dr. Romain is active as a jazz performer and educator, appearing weekly at Noce Jazz & Cabaret as lead alto saxophonist with the Des Moines Big Band for

the past 20 years, lead tenor saxophonist with the Turner Center Jazz Orchestra, and with a variety of jazz small groups. Additionally, he is the baritone saxophonist with the New Third Stream Quartet. He has also performed with Clark Terry, Ron Miles, Eric Gunnison, and at the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland. As an in-demand doubler (saxophones, flutes, clarinets), he regularly performs in pit orchestras for touring productions at the Civic Center of Greater Des Moines, and with entertainers such as Johnny Mathis, Idina Menzel, and Ben Folds at venues including Minneapolis's Orchestra Hall.

Dr. Romain has been invited to present premiere performances at nearly every World Saxophone Congress since 2003 (Minneapolis, Ljubljana, Bangkok, Scotland, and Strasbourg). In addition, he regularly performs as invited soloist at regional and national biennial conferences of the North American Saxophone Alliance, and at festivals and symposia throughout the United States and abroad. He has firmly established a national and international reputation as a committed advocate for new music, with 41 commissions, co-commissions, and dedications written, performed, and recorded as a direct result of his efforts. His discography of 18 recordings spans two decades and numerous genres of music.

As an orchestral saxophonist, James Romain performs regularly with the Minnesota Orchestra, including their historic 2015 tour to Havana, Cuba, and a performance of Alban Berg's Violin Concerto in August of 2010 at London's Royal Albert Hall on the BBC Proms series. He toured in 2026 and 2023 with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, directed by Maestro Riccardo Muti, and in 2018 with the St. Louis Symphony. Dr. Romain is the first-call saxophonist of the Des Moines Symphony Orchestra. In addition, he has performed with the Houston Symphony, the Wyoming Symphony, the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, as well as with the Champaign-Urbana and U of I Orchestras.

James Romain serves as Professor of Saxophone and Associate Director of Jazz Studies at Drake University in Des Moines, IA, where he served as chair of the music department from 2018 until 2025. Romain holds a D.M.A. from the University of Illinois, and M.M. and B.M. degrees from the University of North Texas. Dr. Romain is a Conn-Selmer and Selmer Paris Artist and is heard exclusively on Selmer Paris saxophones. As a D'Addario Artist, he also performs on D'Addario reeds and mouthpieces. Dr. Romain served for a decade as national Membership Director for the North American Saxophone Alliance. ■



Brian Sykes

Brian Sykes, also known as 7METRIX, is a Chicago-based artist, producer, and creative educator whose work bridges music, storytelling, and community engagement. As the co-founder of ISPro Academy and founder of Unchained Genius, he has dedicated his career to developing intergenerational creative projects that amplify Black cultural narratives and provide access to music industry education. His recent work, including the Afro-surreal concept project *I Heard The City Breathe*, merges sound, film, and live expe-

riences to honor Chicago’s artistic legacy while pushing contemporary boundaries.

Through performances, exhibitions, and educational programming, Brian uses music as a living archive, connecting history, innovation, and community within Chicago’s cultural ecosystem. ■



Katy Meffert

Katy Meffert is a horn player from Edina, Minnesota. She is currently an associate member of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and most recently performed as a substitute musician with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Katy completed her undergraduate at DePaul University where she studied with Oto Carrillo and Jim Smelser from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, as well as Neil Kimel from the Lyric Opera Orchestra of Chicago. Outside of the horn Katy enjoys biking, running, reading, and cooking for friends and family. ■

while exploring music-related careers.

He earned a Bachelor of Music from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, studying with Stefan Kartman, focusing on technical efficiency and contextual musical interpretation. Ensemble coachings emphasized compositional intent, rhythm, dynamics, and cohesion. In his final year, he studied with Adrien Zitoun of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, focusing on Baroque performance practice in Bach’s Cello Suites, and shadowed Terrell Pierce, Vice President of Orchestra Operations.

Amenechi is a member of the Evanston Symphony Orchestra and collaborates with fellow alumni on compositions and performances in the Milwaukee area. ■



Marcus-Anthony Amenechi

Marcus-Anthony Amenechi is a cellist with nearly 14 years of experience. He began playing after a fourth-grade string showcase, selecting the cello for its C string resonance and size. His orchestra teacher, Jim Janosey, recommended private study with Ronald Chambers, who developed his technical foundation and ensemble experience through cello choirs, and solo repertoire.

In high school, he performed in the symphony orchestra for three years, auditioned for the Illinois Music Education Association (IMEA) Junior and Senior Festivals, and participated in Illinois Grade School Music Association (IGSMA) concerto competitions. He also joined orchestra field trips to New York City and New Orleans, attending symphony, theater, and jazz performances

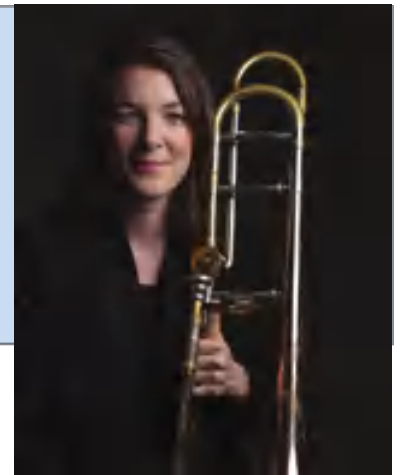
Members of the Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) share their experiences in the Union

The CFM Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) was established by bylaw amendment in 2020, and is made up of at least five rank and file members of the CFM, a board member liaison, and legal counsel for the stated purposes of, " researching education, training policies, and incident reporting platforms and procedures which may be utilized by the CFM in order to align with its goals to keep musicians safe and to reduce instances of bullying, discrimination, sexual harassment, and other workplace misconduct in unionized workplaces."

2026-2027 FEPC Mentorship Program Applications available soon!

from **Catie Hickey:**

"I was laid off from a college teaching job in Southern Illinois during the summer of 2012, so my move to freelance in Chicago was not exactly planned. I'll never forget the kindness of a union member who agreed to take me out to coffee and talk about budgeting. She was frank about what teaching work paid, what rent would cost, and how to navigate my new financial situation. Pay transparency and a friendly face during a stressful time convinced me that moving to Chicago was indeed possible."



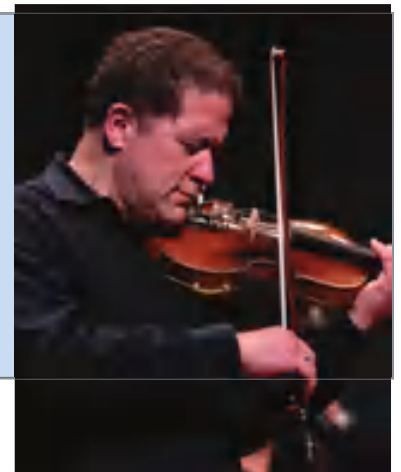
From **Vannia Phillips:**

"As a disgruntled orchestra member in rehearsal, I remember wondering, 'Why do we have to take a full 30-minute break in the middle of rehearsal instead of a shorter 10- or 15-minute break so we can get home earlier?'

That perspective shifted when a colleague—who was also a new mother—explained that management had arranged the schedule to give her a continuous break so she could nurse. Once I understood the reasoning, my frustration gave way to genuine appreciation. It was a clear and meaningful example of FEPC principles being thoughtfully and effectively put into practice."

from **James Sanders:**

"When I finished school in 1989, I moved back home to Chicago and joined the union. I contacted the union office to ask if there was someone they would recommend who could offer advice about starting a career as a classical violinist in Chicago. One of the people they suggested was violinist Peter Labella. I called him, and our conversation lasted more than an hour. He took the time to explain the musical landscape in Chicago and offered thoughtful advice that I have returned to often over the years as I built my career."



From **John Yeh:**

"When I joined the Chicago Symphony in June 1977 I was, by far, the youngest member of the Orchestra. I found it difficult to address some of the legendary older musicians by their first names. Many of them quickly, gently, but very matter-of-factly reminded me, 'We're colleagues now! We're on a first name basis around here'. That expression of respect and collegiality really set a good example for me as I began my career in Chicago."

Howard Sandifer: Building a Legacy on Chicago's West Side

By: Megan Elk

On any given Saturday in West Garfield Park, strains of young musicians hard at work drift from the Chicago West Community Music Center, echoing a decades-long mission. At the center of it all is CFM member and educator Howard Sandifer, a lifelong musician whose work has quietly shaped generations of young artists across the city.



Chicago West Community Music Center's husband and wife leadership team, Executive Director Howard Sandifer and Managing Director Darlene Sandifer

What began nearly 27 years ago as a modest, “music school without walls” has grown into one of Chicago’s most impactful community-based music programs, but the origin of the school is not rooted in ambition alone. Rather, it was born out of necessity.

Before founding the school, Sandifer worked as an education coordinator with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, helping design and implement outreach programs across the city. His role placed him in classrooms and community spaces where arts education was often inconsistent, or disappearing entirely.

“I was going into communities, helping other organizations build programs,” Sandifer recalls. “And my wife and I realized we need to do something for our own community.”

That realization came at a critical moment. Budget cuts in public education had stripped many schools' music

programs, leaving students without access to structured arts learning. For Sandifer, the absence of music education was a call to action.

Together with his wife, Darlene, whose background in corporate administration would prove essential, the two founded what would become the Chicago West Community Music Center. Their first “office” was their kitchen table, where a friend helped them file for nonprofit status. Their first classrooms were anywhere that would open its doors to them.

“We went where the need was,” Sandifer says simply.

From the beginning, the Sandifers’ partnership has been central to the organization’s longevity. Howard leads the active musical work of teaching, conducting, and mentoring; while Darlene manages the operational backbone, from grant writing to administration. Today, nearly 90–95% of students attend on scholarship, thanks largely to Darlene’s tireless efforts securing funding.

“That’s the hard part for us,” Sandifer admits. “But it’s what makes it accessible.”

Accessibility is the school’s defining principle. Students come from neighborhoods across Chicago’s South and West sides; drawn from Garfield Park, Austin, Humboldt Park, and beyond by both the quality of the instruction and the sense of belonging they find under the Sandifers’ auspices. Many arrive through city programs like *After School Matters*, while others come by word of mouth.



Two young soloists take the lead, supported by an intergenerational ensemble from Chicago West Community Music Center

What sets the Chicago West Community Music Center apart is not just its curriculum, but its community model. Over time, the school has evolved into something rare: a multi-generational music ecosystem. Parents who once brought their children to lessons now sit beside them in rehearsals. Community members who hadn't touched an instrument in years return to play. In some cases, there have been three generations of students, parents, and grandparents, all performing together.



Students and faculty from the Chicago West Community Music School visit Symphony Center

“It’s really become a community orchestra,” Sandifer says. “People come because they want to be here.”

The center’s programming spans classical training and beyond. Students study traditional methodologies, like Suzuki, alongside genres that are generally absent from more traditional school programs, like jazz, R&B, funk, and more. They also learn the “business of music,” gaining insight into careers that extend far beyond performance. The result is technical proficiency and musical fluency.

While the school has certainly produced some notable rising talents, like American Idol contestant Deonte Baker, and sought after composer-arranger Jamaal Crowder; Sandifer is quick to redefine what success can look like for his students

“Not everyone wants to be famous,” he says. “A lot of them just love music.”

For Sandifer, success is just as evident in students who earn scholarships, pursue other professions, or return to teach the next generation. Many alumni do exactly

that, reinforcing a cycle of mentorship that sustains the program. Professional musicians also play a key role. Chicago-based performers, many of them members of this union, regularly work with students, offering both inspiration and real-world perspective. “It’s about showing them what’s possible,” Sandifer explains.

This spring, the Chicago West Community Music Center will take part in UNESCO International Jazz Day, joining a worldwide celebration of jazz’s cultural impact. With Chicago serving as host city, Sandifer saw an opportunity he couldn’t pass up. “We had to be part of it,” he says.

The Center’s performance at the Garfield Park Conservatory traces the history of Chicago jazz from Louis Armstrong’s arrival in the 1920s through the innovations of artists like Ramsey Lewis and Herbie Hancock. Featuring student musicians alongside seasoned performers, the concert reflects the very philosophy Sandifer has championed for decades: honoring the past while preparing the future.

From his early days at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra to his current role as educator, mentor, and community builder, his path has remained remarkably consistent: identify the need, meet it with purpose, and bring others along. In a city known for its musical history, Howard Sandifer stands out not just as a participant, but as a cultivator, someone who understands that the future of music depends on those willing to teach it, share it, and believe in it. ■



Chicago West Community Music Center’s littlest string players in rehearsal

WSDD

WSDD CPAs, Ltd.
Certified Public Accountants & Consultants

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

Board of Directors
CHICAGO FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS
LOCAL 10-208 – AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS ("A. F. OF M.")

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Chicago Federation of Musicians, Local 10-208 A.F. of M. (a nonprofit organization), which comprise the statements of financial position as of December 31, 2025 and 2024, and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Chicago Federation of Musicians, Local 10-208 A.F. of M. as of December 31, 2025 and 2024, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of Chicago Federation of Musicians, Local 10-208 A.F. of M. and to meet our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audits. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Chicago Federation of Musicians, Local 10-208 A.F. of M.'s ability to continue as a going concern within one year after the date that the financial statements are available to be issued.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

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Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements (Continued)

The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Chicago Federation of Musicians, Local 10-208 A.F. of M.'s internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Chicago Federation of Musicians, Local 10-208 A.F. of M.'s ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control related matters that we identified during the audit.

Supplementary Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The comparative statements of financial position, comparative statements of activities and comparative expenses on pages 16 - 20, is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

WSDD CPAs, Ltd.
WSDD CPAs, Ltd.

Chicago, Illinois
April 15, 2026

CHICAGO FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS LOCAL 10-208 - A. F. OF M. Statements of Financial Position December 31, 2025 and 2024

ASSETS	2025		2024	
CURRENT ASSETS				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 260,317	\$ 346,001		
Investments at fair value	3,885,177	3,554,315		
Dues receivable	76,781	50,116		
Accrued interest receivable	11,627	10,850		
Prepaid expenses	15,025	9,992		
Total Current Assets	<u>4,248,927</u>	<u>3,971,274</u>		
OTHER ASSETS				
Operating lease right-of-use asset	158,071	209,375		
Security deposit	6,250	6,250		
Total Other Assets	<u>164,321</u>	<u>215,625</u>		
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$ 4,413,248</u>	<u>\$ 4,186,899</u>		
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS				
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Accrued expenses	\$ 8,870	\$ 14,543		
Member advance dues	107,886	115,677		
Economic injury disaster loan	3,868	3,763		
Operating lease liability	49,722	47,095		
Other liabilities	2,178	659		
Total Current Liabilities	<u>172,524</u>	<u>181,737</u>		
LONG-TERM LIABILITIES (net of current portion)				
Economic injury disaster loan	136,918	140,786		
Operating lease liability	114,249	165,748		
Total Long-Term Liabilities	<u>251,167</u>	<u>306,534</u>		
Total Liabilities	<u>423,691</u>	<u>488,271</u>		
NET ASSETS				
Without donor restrictions	3,956,829	3,658,749		
With donor restrictions	32,728	39,879		
Total Net Assets	<u>3,989,557</u>	<u>3,698,628</u>		
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>\$ 4,413,248</u>	<u>\$ 4,186,899</u>		

CHICAGO FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS LOCAL 10-208 - A. F. OF M. Statements of Activities For the Years Ended December 31, 2025 and 2024

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS	2025		2024	
REVENUES				
Initiation fees	\$ 16,600	\$ 17,800		
Regular member dues	354,092	339,856		
Life member dues	42,994	56,775		
Work dues	1,009,650	1,020,487		
Net investment return	359,834	340,518		
Advertising	360	2,250		
CFM/EW Fund	62,148	61,992		
Other	4,666	489		
Total Revenues without donor restrictions	<u>1,850,344</u>	<u>1,840,167</u>		
EXPENSES				
Administrative salaries	687,723	642,498		
Payroll expense	224,303	200,343		
Other direct expense	182,843	205,171		
Indirect expense	74,611	79,323		
General and administrative	273,580	301,402		
Occupancy	116,355	118,375		
Total Expenses	<u>1,559,415</u>	<u>1,547,112</u>		
NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM RESTRICTIONS				
Satisfaction of purpose restrictions	7,151	4,955		
Change in net assets without donor restrictions	<u>298,080</u>	<u>298,010</u>		
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS				
Net assets released from restrictions	(7,151)	(4,955)		
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	<u>290,929</u>	<u>293,055</u>		
NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>3,698,628</u>	<u>3,405,573</u>		
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 3,989,557</u>	<u>\$ 3,698,628</u>		

CHICAGO FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS
LOCAL 10-208 - A. F. OF M.
Statements of Cash Flows
For the Years Ended December 31, 2025 and 2024

	2025	2024
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Change in net assets	\$ 290,929	\$ 293,055
<i>Items not requiring cash outlay:</i>		
(Gain) loss on sale of investments	3,175	(35,256)
Unrealized (gain) on investments	(231,006)	(191,066)
<i>Net effect of changes in:</i>		
Dues receivable	(26,665)	(2,557)
Accounts receivable		5,444
Accrued interest receivable	(777)	2,367
Prepaid expenses	(5,033)	794
Accrued expenses	(5,673)	(6,913)
Member advance dues	(7,791)	1,653
Operating lease asset and liability	2,432	3,201
Other liabilities	1,519	(2,615)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES	<u>21,110</u>	<u>68,107</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Proceeds from sale and maturities of investments	1,258,632	946,253
Purchases of investments	(1,361,663)	(881,214)
NET CASH PROVIDED (USED) BY INVESTING ACTIVITIES	<u>(103,031)</u>	<u>65,039</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Repayment of economic injury disaster loan	(3,763)	(3,714)
NET CHANGE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	(85,684)	129,432
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS - BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>346,001</u>	<u>216,569</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS - END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 260,317</u>	<u>\$ 346,001</u>
SUPPLEMENTAL CASH FLOW DISCLOSURE		
Interest paid	<u>\$ 3,928</u>	<u>\$ 3,978</u>

See independent auditors' report and notes to financial statements.

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CHICAGO FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS
LOCAL 10-208 - A. F. OF M.
Notes to Financial Statements
December 31, 2025 and 2024

NOTE 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Nature of the Organization

The Chicago Federation of Musicians, Local 10-208 A.F. of M. ("CFM", "Local", "Organization") is an organization of almost two thousand professional musicians. For more than 100 years, CFM has been working to achieve dignity and just wages for musicians. CFM members perform in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Lyric Opera Orchestra, The Redwalls, and the orchestras for Chicago's Broadway shows. CFM represents musicians performing all styles of music: alternative rock, soul, classical, jazz, rock, country, pop, reggae, Christian rock, and others. CFM members are active in recording commercials, television and radio programs and CDs, and perform for private and corporate parties locally and throughout North America.

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared using the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles.

Basis of Presentation

In accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for nonprofit organizations, the net assets of the Local are reported according to two classes of net assets: net assets without donor restrictions and net assets with donor restrictions.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, and operations, and the related disclosures at the date of the financial statements and during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Revenue Recognition

Member dues, which are nonrefundable, are comprised of an exchange element based on the benefits received. The exchange portion of member dues is recognized over the membership period. Work dues are recognized during the period in which the performance is held. Member dues received for future dates are deferred until the applicable year and included in member advance dues in the accompanying statements of financial position. Net investment return/(loss) is recognized when earned.

Accounts Receivable

The Local's allowance method is derived from a review of historical losses and adjusted for management's assessment of current conditions, forecasts of future events, and other factors deemed relevant risk factors. As of December 31, 2025 and 2024, management determined that no allowance for credit losses was necessary.

See independent auditors' report.

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NOTE 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand and cash in depository demand accounts. For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, the Local considers highly liquid debt instruments purchased with a maturity of three months or less to be cash equivalents.

Investments

The investments of the Local are held and managed by a financial services firm. Investments are stated at fair value. Net investment return is reported in the statements of activities and consists of interest and dividend income, realized and unrealized capital gains and losses, less investment fees.

Prepaid Expenses

Prepaid expenses are amortized over periods benefited.

Property and Equipment

Depreciation is provided principally on the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of the assets. Capitalized assets consist of furniture, equipment, leasehold improvements, and website with useful lives of five to ten years.

Income Taxes

The Local qualifies for tax exempt status under Section 501(c)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code. Revenue from normal operations of the Local is not subject to federal income taxes. The Local is subject to unrelated business income tax (UBIT) on certain non-exempt revenue. The Local is no longer subject to U.S. Federal and State examinations by tax authorities for the years before December 2022. As of and for the year ended December 31, 2025, management has determined that there are no uncertain tax positions.

Functional Allocation of Expenses

The costs of program and supporting services activities have been summarized on a functional basis in Note 14. This note presents the natural classification detail of expenses by function. Accordingly, certain costs have been allocated among program services and general and administrative expenses.

Leases

CFM determines if an arrangement is a lease at inception. Operating leases are included in right-of-use ("ROU") assets and lease liabilities in the statement of financial position. Right-of-use assets represent the Organization's right to use an underlying asset for the lease term. Lease obligations represent the Organization's liability to make lease payments arising from the lease. Operating lease right-of-use assets and related obligations are recognized at the commencement date based on the present value of lease payments over the lease term discounted using an appropriate incremental borrowing rate at the commencement date. The value of an option to extend or terminate a lease is reflected to the extent it is reasonably certain management will exercise that option. Lease expense for lease payments is recognized on a straight-line basis over the lease term. The Organization does not report ROU assets and lease liabilities for its short-term leases (leases with a term of 12 months or less). Instead, the lease payments of those leases are reported as lease expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

See independent auditors' report.

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NOTE 2 - LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY

Financial assets available to meet general expenditures within one year, that is, without donor or other restrictions limiting their use, within one year of the statement of financial position date, comprise the following:

	2025	2024
Financial assets at year-end		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 260,317	\$ 346,001
Investments at fair value	3,885,177	3,554,315
Dues receivable	76,781	50,116
Accrued interest receivable	11,627	10,850
Total financial assets at year-end	<u>4,233,902</u>	<u>3,961,282</u>
Less:		
Net assets with donor restrictions	<u>(32,728)</u>	<u>(39,879)</u>
Financial assets available to meet general expenditures within one year	<u>\$ 4,201,174</u>	<u>\$ 3,921,403</u>

As part of CFM's liquidity management plan, cash in excess of daily requirements are invested in certificates of deposit and short-term investments.

NOTE 3 - PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Property and equipment as of December 31, 2025 and 2024, is summarized as follows:

	2025	2024
Furniture and equipment	\$ 18,431	\$ 18,431
Website	<u>3,298</u>	<u>3,298</u>
	21,729	21,729
Less:		
Accumulated depreciation	<u>21,729</u>	<u>21,729</u>
Property and equipment, net	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>

Depreciation expense amounted to \$0 for the years ended December 31, 2025 and 2024, annually.

See independent auditors' report.

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NOTE 4 - FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

ASC 820, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures*, establishes a framework for measuring fair value. That framework provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value. The hierarchy gives the highest priority to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (Level 1 measurements) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs (Level 3 measurements). The three levels of the fair value hierarchy under ASC 820 are described below:

Level 1:
Inputs to the valuation methodology are unadjusted quoted prices for identical assets or liabilities in active markets that the Local has the ability to access.

Level 2:
Inputs to the valuation methodology include:

- Quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets;
- Quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in inactive markets;
- Inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability;
- Inputs that are derived principally from or corroborated by observable market data by correlation or other means.

If the asset or liability has a specified (contractual) term, the Level 2 input must be observable for substantially the full term of the asset or liability.

Level 3:
Inputs to the valuation methodology are unobservable and significant to the fair value measurement.

The asset's or liability's fair value measurement level within the fair value hierarchy is based on the lowest level of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement. Valuation techniques used need to maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs.

The following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for assets measured at fair value. There have been no changes in the methodologies used at December 31, 2025 and 2024.

Exchange Traded and Closed End Funds: Valued at fair value of shares held by the Local at year end.

Corporate Bonds: Valued at fair value of bonds held by the Local at year end.

U.S. Government Securities: Valued at fair value of securities held by the Local at year end.

Money Market Fund: Valued at fair value of securities held by the Local at year end.

See independent auditors' report.

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NOTE 4 - FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS (Continued)

The methods described above may produce a fair value calculation that may not be indicative of net realizable value or reflective of future fair values. Furthermore, while the Local believes its valuation methods are appropriate and consistent with other market participants, the use of different methodologies or assumptions to determine the fair value of certain financial instruments could result in a different fair value measurement at the reporting date.

The following table sets forth by level, within the fair value hierarchy, the Local's assets measured at fair value as of December 31, 2025:

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	TOTAL
Money Market Funds	\$ 157,701	\$	\$	\$ 157,701
Exchange Traded and Closed End Funds	2,672,238			2,672,238
U.S. Government Securities		50,428		50,428
Corporate Bonds		1,004,810		1,004,810
	<u>\$ 2,829,939</u>	<u>\$ 1,055,238</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>	<u>\$ 3,885,177</u>

The following table sets forth by level, within the fair value hierarchy, the Local's assets measured at fair value as of December 31, 2024:

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	TOTAL
Money Market Funds	\$ 153,214	\$	\$	\$ 153,214
Exchange Traded and Closed End Funds	2,220,383			2,220,383
Corporate Bonds		1,178,832		1,178,832
U.S. Government Securities		1,886		1,886
	<u>\$ 2,373,597</u>	<u>\$ 1,180,718</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>	<u>\$ 3,554,315</u>

NOTE 5 - INVESTMENTS

The historical cost and market value of investments, all of which are held at one financial institution, were as follows at December 31:

	2025		2024	
	COST	FAIR VALUE	COST	FAIR VALUE
Money Market Funds	\$ 157,701	\$ 157,701	\$ 153,214	\$ 153,214
Exchange Traded and Closed End Funds	2,134,059	2,672,238	1,876,048	2,220,383
U.S. Government Securities	49,957	50,428	1,877	1,886
Corporate Bonds	997,216	1,004,810	1,193,397	1,178,832
	<u>\$ 3,338,933</u>	<u>\$ 3,885,177</u>	<u>\$ 3,224,536</u>	<u>\$ 3,554,315</u>

See independent auditors' report.

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NOTE 5 - INVESTMENTS (Continued)

Net investment return consisted of the following during the years ended December 31:

	2025	2024
Interest	\$ 32,888	\$ 31,312
Dividends	127,671	109,930
Realized gain (loss)	(3,175)	35,256
Unrealized gain	231,006	191,066
Less: Investment fees	(28,556)	(27,046)
	<u>\$ 359,834</u>	<u>\$ 340,518</u>

NOTE 6 - AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS

The Local acts as agent for the American Federation of Musicians ("A. F. of M."). Work dues, initiation and other fees, collected by the Local on behalf of the A. F. of M. are remitted to the A. F. of M.

NOTE 7 - NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets with donor restrictions consisted of the following at December 31:

	2025	2024
Musicians Relief Fund	\$ 32,278	\$ 35,818
Scholarship Fund		4,061
	<u>\$ 32,278</u>	<u>\$ 39,879</u>

The Musicians Relief Fund was established to help disabled musicians as well as musicians in need of temporary assistance. Requests for assistance are sent to the Local where the Executive Board reviews and acts on those requests. In 2020, the Executive Board expanded the Musicians Relief Fund to include the Music Helping All Recover Together program - an initiative to present live music as an integral part of the emotional and economic recovery of both greater Chicago and CFM members.

The Scholarship Fund was established to help the children of members attend college. Eligibility requirements are established by the Local. Funding for the Scholarship Fund comes from many sources, including donations from members of the Local and their families and friends.

See independent auditors' report.

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NOTE 8 - LEASE

CFM entered into an office lease agreement for a period of five years with one additional five-year option. The lease commenced on December 1, 2023, and requires base monthly rental payments ranging from \$4,585 to \$5,200. In addition, CFM is responsible for twenty percent of the building's operating expenses and real estate tax bills as they become due.

At December 31, 2025, the weighted average remaining lease term was 2.92 years, the weighted average discount rate was 4.14%, and the operating lease asset obtained in exchange for the lease obligation was \$158,071.

Maturities of the lease liability under the operating lease as of December 31, 2025 are as follows:

Year Ending December 31	Amount
2026	\$ 55,585
2027	61,850
2028	57,200
Total lease payments	174,635
Less: effects of discounting	(10,664)
Present value of operating lease liability	<u>\$ 163,971</u>

Operating lease expense, which is included in occupancy expense in the accompanying statements of activities, amounted to \$57,852 and \$58,221 for the years ended December 31, 2025 and 2024, respectively. Operating lease cash payments amounted to \$55,020 for the years ended December 31, 2025 and 2024, annually.

NOTE 9 - CONCENTRATIONS OF CREDIT RISK

Financial instruments that potentially subject CFM to concentrations of credit risk consist principally of cash, investments, and dues receivable. CFM maintains cash deposits with major banks which, from time to time, may exceed federally insured limits. CFM periodically assesses the financial condition of the institutions and believes the risk of any loss is minimal. Concentration of credit risk with respect to its investments is reduced as a result of the diversity of the underlying securities. CFM also has concentrations of credit risk with respect to dues receivable. As of and for the years ended December 31, 2025 and 2024, 100%, annually, of dues receivable and 80% and 83%, respectively, of work dues revenue was from musicians performing with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Lyric Opera.

NOTE 10 - RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The Local invests in various investment securities. Investment securities are exposed to various risks such as interest rate, market and credit risks. Due to the level of risk associated with certain investment securities, it is at least, reasonably possible that changes in the values of investment securities will occur in the near term and that such changes could materially affect the amounts reported in the financial statements.

See independent auditors' report.

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NOTE 11 - PENSION

Effective January 1, 2019, the Local contributes 15.59% of a qualifying employee's compensation to the A. F. of M. and Employers' Pension Fund ("Fund"). Qualifying employees include all full-time employees from the date of hire and any part-time employees who exceed 500 hours in a year. Contributions to the Fund were \$108,083 and \$102,066 for the years ended December 31, 2025 and 2024, respectively.

NOTE 12 - REVENUE FROM CONTRACT WITH CUSTOMERS

Revenue disaggregation

In accordance with ASU 2014-09, the Local disaggregates revenue from contracts with customers into major revenue streams and the timing of recognizing revenue. Revenue from contracts with customers disaggregated by category for the years ended December 31, 2025 and 2024, was as follows:

	2025	2024
Revenue recognized at a point in time:		
Initiation fees	\$ 16,600	\$ 17,800
Work dues	1,009,650	1,020,487
Revenue recognized over time:		
Regular member dues	354,092	339,856
Life member dues	42,994	56,775

Contract balances

The timing of revenue recognition, billings and cash collections results in contract assets, receivables and contract liabilities. Contract assets would exist when the Organization has a contract with a customer for which revenue has been recognized but customer payment is contingent on a future event. Local revenue is based on delivered goods and services and is generally limited to amounts that are not contingent on future events, therefore, not resulting in a contract asset being recorded.

The Local records receivables when the right to consideration becomes unconditional and are presented separately in the statements of financial position. Dues receivable related to revenue from contracts with customers was \$76,781, \$50,116 and \$47,559 at December 31, 2025, 2024 and 2023, respectively.

Contract liabilities include member advance dues when the Local receives payment from members before revenue is recognized and are presented separately in the statements of financial position. The following table provides information about significant changes in member advance dues for the years ended December 31:

	2025	2024
Member advance dues, beginning of year	\$ 115,677	\$ 114,024
Member dues recognized	(115,677)	(114,024)
Member dues deferred	107,886	115,677
Member advance dues, end of year	<u>\$ 107,886</u>	<u>\$ 115,677</u>

See independent auditors' report.

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NOTE 12 - REVENUE FROM CONTRACT WITH CUSTOMERS (Continued)

Significant Judgment

Significant judgment is required to be made by management to determine the appropriate approach to applying the revenue recognition criteria. Significant judgment was also required when determining whether revenue from contracts with customers was earned at a point in time or over time.

NOTE 13 - ECONOMIC INJURY DISASTER LOAN

CFM received an economic injury disaster loan provided by the U.S. Small Business Administration in the amount of \$150,000, which is due in 360 monthly payments of \$641, including principal and interest at 2.75%, commencing in June 2023. Each payment will be applied first to interest accrued to the date of receipt of each payment, and the balance, if any, will be applied to principal. The loan is secured by all tangible property owned by CFM.

Maturities of the economic injury disaster loan are as follows:

Year Ending December 31,	Amount
2026	\$ 3,851
2027	3,958
2028	4,058
2029	4,182
2030	4,298
After	<u>120,439</u>
	<u>\$ 140,786</u>

See independent auditors' report.

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NOTE 14 - FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

The following represents a summary of CFM's expenses for the year ended December 31, 2025 on a functional basis, with comparative totals for 2024:

	PROGRAM SERVICES	GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE	TOTAL	
			2025	2024
Administrative salaries	\$ 618,951	\$ 68,772	\$ 687,723	\$ 642,498
Payroll expense	201,873	22,430	224,303	200,343
Other direct expense				
Intermezzo	20,224		20,224	33,562
Per capita - A. F. of M.	112,670		112,670	119,738
Death donations	12,000		12,000	12,000
Other	37,949		37,949	39,871
Indirect expense				
Music promotion	8,514		8,514	19,561
Per capita tax	53,117		53,117	44,377
Other	7,357	5,623	12,980	15,385
General and administrative				
Telephone and internet		10,375	10,375	11,694
Insurance		26,262	26,262	25,605
Professional fees	104,794	53,224	158,018	180,319
Other		78,925	78,925	83,784
Occupancy	104,719	11,636	116,355	118,375
Total Expenses - 2025	<u>\$ 1,282,168</u>	<u>\$ 277,247</u>	<u>\$ 1,559,415</u>	
Total Expenses - 2024	<u>\$ 1,251,389</u>	<u>\$ 295,723</u>		<u>\$ 1,547,112</u>

Certain expenses that benefit both program services and general and administrative were allocated based on the ratio of administrative salaries, while other expense items were specifically determined. Management has interpreted general and administrative expenses under generally accepted accounting principles to include costs not directly associated with providing member services. Management is of the opinion that general and administrative expenses are an important component of providing member services.

NOTE 15 - SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

Management has evaluated subsequent events April 15, 2026, the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

See independent auditors' report.

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CHICAGO FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

CHICAGO FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS LOCAL 10-208 - A. F. OF M. Comparative Statements of Financial Position (Unclassified) December 31, 2025, 2024, 2023 and 2022

	ASSETS			
	2025	2024	2023	2022
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 260,317	\$ 346,001	\$ 216,569	\$ 359,517
Investments at fair value	3,885,177	3,554,315	3,393,032	2,919,587
Dues receivable	76,781	50,116	47,559	23,899
Accounts receivable			5,444	4,444
Property and equipment, net				348
Operating lease right-of-use asset	158,071	209,375	257,765	
Other	<u>32,902</u>	<u>27,092</u>	<u>30,253</u>	<u>29,009</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$ 4,413,248</u>	<u>\$ 4,186,899</u>	<u>\$ 3,950,622</u>	<u>\$ 3,336,804</u>
	LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS			
Accrued expenses	\$ 8,870	\$ 14,543	\$ 21,456	\$ 15,391
Member advance dues	107,886	115,677	114,024	74,147
Other current liabilities	2,178	659	3,274	55,129
Economic injury disaster loan	140,786	144,549	148,263	150,000
Operating lease liability	163,971	212,843	258,032	
Net assets	<u>3,989,557</u>	<u>3,698,628</u>	<u>3,405,573</u>	<u>3,042,137</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>\$ 4,413,248</u>	<u>\$ 4,186,899</u>	<u>\$ 3,950,622</u>	<u>\$ 3,336,804</u>

See independent auditors' report.

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CHICAGO FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS LOCAL 10-208 - A. F.
OF M. Comparative Statements of Activities For the Years
Ended December 31, 2025, 2024, 2023 and 2022

	2025	2024	2023	2022
REVENUE				
Initiation fees	\$ 16,600	\$ 17,800	\$ 23,575	\$ 10,850
Regular member dues	354,092	339,896	303,165	290,550
Life member dues	42,994	56,775	50,197	51,182
Work dues	1,009,650	1,020,487	997,924	970,805
Interest	32,888	31,312	35,691	33,252
Dividends	127,671	109,930	81,145	72,386
Realized gain (loss)	(3,175)	35,256	123,754	22,558
Unrealized gain (loss)	231,006	191,066	110,274	(420,597)
Investment fees	(28,556)	(27,046)	(24,174)	(24,633)
Advertising	360	2,250	3,400	672
CFM/EW Fund	62,148	61,992	62,256	53,328
Government grants			50,000	
Musicians relief and scholarship fund contributions			49,893	
Other	4,666	489	1,522	
Total Revenue	1,850,344	1,840,167	1,868,622	1,060,353
EXPENSES				
Administrative salaries	687,723	642,498	641,651	657,585
Payroll expense	224,303	200,343	195,299	203,639
Other direct expense	182,843	205,171	198,404	206,820
Indirect expense	74,611	79,323	50,553	37,115
General and administrative	273,580	301,402	229,654	178,635
Occupancy	116,355	118,375	189,625	103,336
Total Expenses	1,559,415	1,547,112	1,505,186	1,387,130
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	290,929	293,055	363,436	(326,777)
NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR	3,698,628	3,405,573	3,042,137	3,368,914
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR	\$ 3,989,557	\$ 3,698,628	\$ 3,405,573	\$ 3,042,137

See independent auditors' report.

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CHICAGO FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS LOCAL 10-208 - A. F.
OF M. Comparative Expenses For the Years Ended December
31, 2025, 2024, 2023 and 2022

	2025	2024	2023	2022
ADMINISTRATIVE SALARIES				
President and staff	\$ 263,796	\$ 235,109	\$ 225,005	\$ 219,757
Vice-President and staff	111,010	107,777	104,638	104,638
Secretary-Treasurer and staff	208,041	197,372	205,486	222,639
Employee Welfare Fund	32,426	30,940	29,355	29,688
Directors	70,000	70,250	74,367	77,513
Other committees	2,450	1,050	2,800	2,100
Delegate fees				1,250
	\$ 687,723	\$ 642,498	\$ 641,651	\$ 657,585
SENIOR CITIZENS' ORCHESTRA	\$	\$	\$	\$ 84
PAYROLL EXPENSE				
Payroll taxes	\$ 68,954	\$ 61,743	\$ 66,187	\$ 54,057
Workmen's compensation insurance	5,389	4,923	3,327	4,036
Employee Welfare Fund	41,877	31,611	26,326	43,792
Employee Pension Fund	108,083	102,066	99,459	101,754
	\$ 224,303	\$ 200,343	\$ 195,299	\$ 203,639
OTHER DIRECT EXPENSE				
Automobile and travel	\$ 6,497	\$ 5,669	\$ 6,659	\$ 9,693
Convention	22,490	22,276	15,658	7,071
Negotiation	6,767	11,926	8,288	6,386
Intermezzo	20,224	33,562	34,223	36,794
Member forms	1,917			1,873
Per capita - A. F. of M.	112,670	119,738	114,662	110,302
Death donations	12,000	12,000	17,776	19,776
Election	278			14,925
Other			1,138	
	\$ 182,843	\$ 205,171	\$ 198,404	\$ 206,820

See independent auditors' report.

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CHICAGO FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS LOCAL 10-208 - A. F.
OF M. Comparative Expenses (Continued) For the Years
Ended December 31, 2025, 2024, 2023 and 2022

	2025	2024	2023	2022
INDIRECT EXPENSE				
Advertising and subscriptions	\$ 206	\$ 203	\$ 1,270	\$ 1,513
Music promotion	8,514	19,561	6,729	9,819
Per capita tax - affiliates	25,952	20,583	23,138	22,151
Per capita tax - Midwest Coalition of Labor	27,165	23,794	10,686	
Donations and gifts	5,623	10,227	3,671	3,632
Musicians relief and scholarships	7,151	4,955	5,059	
	\$ 74,611	\$ 79,323	\$ 50,553	\$ 37,115
GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE				
Office equipment	\$ 184	\$ 6,038	\$ 1,249	\$ 900
Depreciation			348	2,772
Office expense	4,393	4,617	3,874	5,213
Stationery and forms	3,654	7,534	3,687	2,005
Postage	6,222	6,986	8,204	8,091
Telephone and internet	10,375	11,694	14,160	12,197
Interest	3,928	3,978	3,290	4,539
Insurance	26,262	25,605	21,960	19,069
Professional fees:				
Accounting	11,000	11,000	11,000	11,900
Computer	42,224	57,291	15,677	16,672
Consulting	82,007	91,075	24,000	4,160
Legal	22,787	20,953	66,050	47,260
Internship program			2,000	7,000
Moving			16,924	
Miscellaneous	60,544	54,631	37,231	36,857
	\$ 273,580	\$ 301,402	\$ 229,654	\$ 178,635

See independent auditors' report.

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CHICAGO FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS LOCAL 10-208 - A. F.
OF M. Comparative Expenses (Continued) For the Years
Ended December 31, 2025, 2024, 2023 and 2022

	2025	2024	2023	2022
OCCUPANCY EXPENSE				
Utilities	\$ 7,054	\$ 7,343	\$ 7,236	\$ 6,620
Professional fees	3,622	5,005	45,000	
Repairs and maintenance	17,216	19,196	27,245	24,615
Lease expense	57,852	58,221	67,572	70,631
Real estate tax	29,661	27,485	42,712	
Maintenance supplies	1,200	1,450	200	1,525
	116,605	118,700	189,965	103,391
Less:				
Rental income	250	325	340	55
	\$ 116,355	\$ 118,375	\$ 189,625	\$ 103,336

See independent auditors' report.

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In Memoriam



James F. Bestman

James F. Bestman passed away on Thursday, April 9th 2026 at the age of 90. He was the only son of Fred Bestman and Lydia Bestman. James is survived by his wife Gerry, daughter Tina, and son William. He was a long time member of the Illinois Teacher's Union, teaching for Des Plaines Elementary Schools for most of his career. He was also a 70 year+ member of the American Federation of Musicians, Joliet Musicians Union, and the Chicago Federation of Musicians.

James was the founder of his Bavarian Style German Band, Jimmy's Bavarians, along with other Jazz and mixed bands. In addition, for his German Band he was nominated 3 times for a Grammy Award. His favorite instruments were clarinet and saxophone. James was also an active member of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. He was buried on Thursday, April 16th, 2026 at the Maine Township Cemetery in Park Ridge, Illinois. He is loved by his wife and family, and will sorely be missed. ■

Robert Hussar (obituary unavailable) was born December 3rd, 1936 and passed away on March 24, 2026. Robert joined our local in 1965 and used the professional name, Bobby Day. ■

Cash receipts

JANUARY CASH RECEIPTS	FEBRUARY CASH RECEIPTS	MARCH CASH RECEIPTS
CFM JOINING FEES: \$2,000.00	CFM JOINING FEES: \$2,600.00	CFM JOINING FEES: \$2,200.00
AFM JOINING FEES 325.00	AFM JOINING FEES 65.00	AFM JOINING FEES 195.00
MEMBERSHIP DUES 121,224.00	MEMBERSHIP DUES 55,303.00	MEMBERSHIP DUES 43,879.00
WORK DUES 130,493.39	WORK DUES 130,493.39	WORK DUES 104,657.44
CFM-EW EXP RECOVERY 5,179.00	CFM-EW EXP RECOVERY 5,107.00	CFM-EW EXP RECOVERY 5,143.00
SCHOLARSHIP FUND 177.00	MUSICIANS RELIEF FUND 87.00	MUSICIANS RELIEF FUND 115.00
MUSICIANS RELIEF FUND 1,986.00	TOTAL CASH RECEIPTS:	TOTAL CASH RECEIPTS:
TOTAL CASH RECEIPTS:	\$195,275.39	\$ 157,809.07
\$ 261,207.39		
Respectfully Submitted, Karen Suarez Flint Secretary-Treasurer	Respectfully Submitted, Karen Suarez Flint Secretary-Treasurer	Respectfully Submitted, Karen Suarez Flint Secretary-Treasurer



Audition Announcement



Klaus Mäkelä, Zell Music Director Designate

Announces auditions for:

Principal Flute

Assistant Principal Viola

The best qualified applicants will be accepted even if not immediately available. Preliminary auditions are held behind a screen.

NOTE: ONLY HIGHLY QUALIFIED APPLICANTS SHOULD APPLY

The Audition Committee of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra reserves the right to dismiss immediately any candidate not meeting the highest professional standards at these auditions.

**Principal Flute Preliminary auditions
scheduled for September/October, 2026
Application materials must be received by July 5, 2026
Final auditions tentatively scheduled for October 5, 2026**

**Assistant Principal Viola Preliminary auditions
scheduled for September/October, 2026
Application materials must be received by July 5, 2026
Final auditions tentatively scheduled for October 3, 2026**

Applicants should send a **brief one-page resume**, including **Name, Address, Phone number, E-mail address, and Instrument to:**

Email: auditions@csso.org

csso.org/cssoauditions

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

PROPOSED CFM CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS CHANGES

**President Levy, Vice-President Floeter,
and Secretary-Treasurer Suarez Flint
propose the following amendments to
the CFM Constitution & Bylaws:**

**President Levy, Vice President Floeter, and Secretary-
Treasurer Suarez Flint propose the following
amendments to the CFM Constitution:**

ARTICLE 3, SEC. 3. The Board of Directors shall consist of 7 members, plus the Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer, with full voice and vote, and the President, who shall be entitled to vote only in order to break a tie vote. Beginning with the term commencing December 11, 2028, the Board of Directors shall consist of 6 members, plus the Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer, with full voice and vote, and the President, who shall be entitled to vote only in order to break a tie vote.

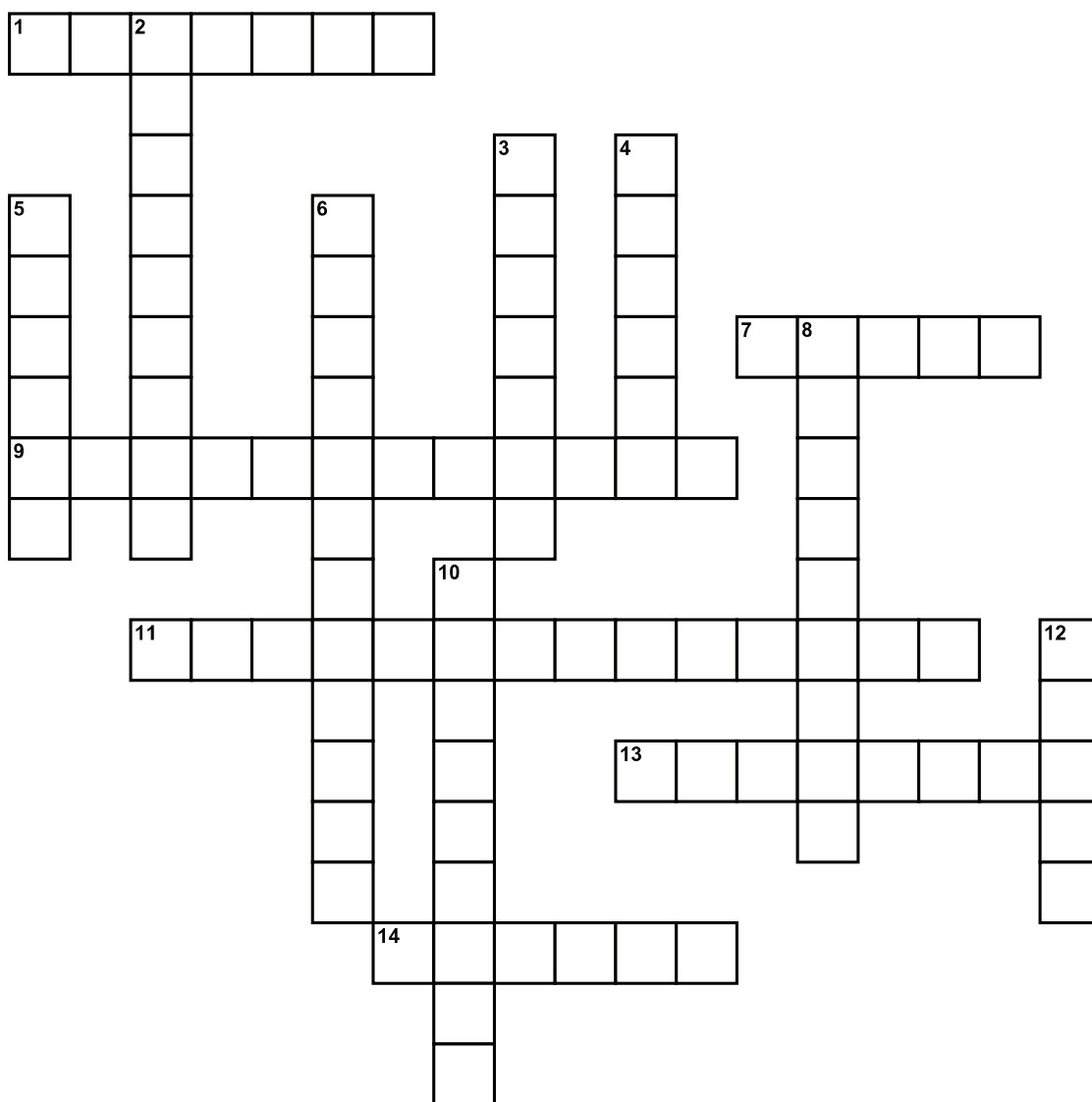
President Levy, Vice President Floeter, and Secretary-Treasurer Suarez Flint propose the following amendments to the CFM Bylaws:

SECTION 4 A.1. The Board shall at its first meeting, after its members have been installed in office as provided by Sub. Sec. (F- 6) of Sec. XVII of the Bylaws, adopt rules for its own government consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws. It shall have a regular meeting on Tuesday of ~~each week~~ every second week, to transact the business of the Local, from 10 a.m. until adjournment.

SECTION 4 G. Each member, except the President, Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer, shall receive the current side musician's Class ~~AA~~ A minimum scale for each Board Meeting that a member attends in person. Scale changes which become effective during term of office shall apply.

CALL FOR INFORMATION: The Intermezzo is our communication between the Local and our members. In addition to the printed version, we also post each issue on the CFM website. Most of the magazine is available to the public. We are always looking for events, accomplishments, and things of interest to other members and the public. Share your announcements, reviews or anything you would like to see printed to: melk@cfm10208.org The Board of Directors reserves the right to determine whether material submitted shall be published. ■

Intermezzo Crossword



Across

- [1] employer refusal to allow workers to enter the workplace
 [7] Instrument that spawned the idiom, "pull out all the stops"
 [9] Place for the serious study of both music and plants
 [11] The IRS imposes hefty penalties for _____ a worker by paying them on a 1099, rather than a W2.
 [13] Bobby Lewis had already mastered triple _____ by 12.
 [14] Illinois' State Song: "By the River, _____ Flowing"

Down

- [2] initial show of support for a union, prior to an election
 [3] A moderate, walking pace
 [4] Historic conflict that occurred at the site of CFM's present day office, The Haymarket _____.
 [5] United Nations agency responsible for World Jazz Day observances
 [6] Mahler's 2nd Symphony, The _____.
 [8] Landmark law which granted us the right to collectively bargain, The National Labor _____ Act.
 [10] Grant Park venue named for past CFM President, the Petrillo _____.
 [12] A contrapuntal composition, or a "state" of dissociation

[1] lockout, [2] card count, [3] andante, [4] affair, [5] UNESCO, [6] Resurrection, [7] organ, [8] relations, [9] conservatory, [10] Band Shell, [11] miscellaneous, [12] fugue, [13] toungeing, [14] Gently

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