



the fort wayne philharmonic players' association

# Our Players' Voice

From the Musicians of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic  
July 2022

**PHILHARMONIC  
PLAYERS' ASSOCIATION  
PRESENTED WITH  
ACTIVISM AWARD**  
by Campbell MacDonald

The Hoosier Heartland Area Labor Federation (HHALF) has awarded the Fort Wayne Philharmonic Players' Association with its Activism Award for 2021.

the concert. "We are profoundly grateful for the guidance, leadership, and collaboration provided by Hoosier Heartland Area Labor Federation," said Eric.

Lloyd Osborne stated, "I was amazed to see musicians lead such an inspiring, grassroots organization effort, from within, which connected with our community partners through the

Allen County Courthouse, and performances in our community. Hoosier Heartland Area Labor Federation stood by us and provided invaluable support as we fought to bring live classical music back to concert halls across Northeast Indiana.

We share this Activism Award with the American Federation of Musicians, Fort Wayne Musicians Association (AFM Local 58), and with you: our patrons, our audience, and our most fervent supporters.

Our activities in 2021 resulted in a one-year agreement that expires this summer. As we approach the Fort Wayne Philharmonic's 2022-23 season, Musicians and Fort Wayne Philharmonic management will once again engage in negotiations for a new Collective Bargaining Agreement. We will be certain to keep our community informed and up-to-date as these negotiations develop. We thank you for your continued support!



FWPPA performing musician benefit concert with Moser Woods on Saturday, May 21 at the Embassy Theatre

HHALF President Lloyd Osborne presented the award to the Fort Wayne Philharmonic Players' Association on May 21, 2022 at our benefit concert with Moser Woods at the Embassy Theatre.

Players' Association Treasurer and Philharmonic Principal Timpanist Eric Schweikert received the Activism Award on stage prior to the second half of

love of music."

This award recognizes our effort to reach our community at a time when our music was silenced. In the face of the pandemic, we were entrenched in a protracted and difficult contract negotiation with Fort Wayne Philharmonic management. Our efforts and organization included leafleting, picketing, a May 1 Rally at the



Rehearsal with Moser Woods

**MUSICIANS VESTED IN OUR COMMUNITY**

by Marcy Trentacosti

Our musicians are an integral part of the fabric of our community. While we perform from October through May and part of June/July Patriotic programs, we all live here and make friendships with the community.

As we live in the community, not only do we perform, we also teach students. Most musicians who perform in orchestras at any level in any city are a part of teaching students. Our musicians are mentors to younger students and who wouldn't want to study with a professional musician given the chance?

All of us have done the same in the communities we grew up in. Personally, growing up in Allentown, Pennsylvania, I was lucky to study with a wonderful musician whom I drove to every week 45 minutes for my lesson, sometimes twice a week, which is not unusual on the East Coast.



Rick Kinney of Moser Woods, Players supporter, drumming with Musicians on May 21.

In addition, my teacher was so gracious with her time. She is a teacher I will never forget, and she really took me under her wing.

However, I know that I am not the only musician with a story such as this. That being said, as I have gone through our musician roster and began checking off names of the musicians who teach, I can honestly say over 95 % of our Players' Association musicians teach locally, online, and out of town. Multiply that by the number of musicians, by years, the number of students, and you will see our musical influence to our young students in our community is huge.

I was never completely sure that I would really teach, but as I grew and got involved with teaching by my mentors, professors, and friends in the community, I came to realize maybe this was really something I should pursue in addition to my playing.

Mentoring our students can be a life-changing event for young students who may be struggling musically, and their involvement in the arts may be their saving grace. Mentoring is the result of "It takes a village."

I recall a young student during her late middle school years and early high school had struggles for which I always had a listening ear and gave her reassurance of her worth. Well, she went on to get her BME, MM, and Doctorate and is a full-



Debby Hicks, Tim Tan, David Ling, and Violetta Todorova performed on May 22 at the Main Library of the ACPL on behalf of the FWPPA.

time professor, who was just awarded tenure last year. She made it through some difficult years in her life but to know that I was a small part of that through music is so rewarding. Music was her constant. Navigating the middle school and high school years can be some of the most difficult times for young students. Whether it is a private studio, youth orchestra, schools, Club O, Suzuki, or summer music festivals, our students need us, and they look up to us.

As performers, we are advocates of our art form, and our musicians are an integral part of our community. As those who teach, mentoring to our youth is the greatest opportunity to guide them on their musical journey and in their life.

**ANDREW HICKS**

Bass Trombone with the Fort Wayne Philharmonic

Interviewed by Gayle Fick

*Do you remember how old you were when you first became aware of classical music, what the occasion was, and what the piece was?*

My mother played in an orchestra, and when she was pregnant, she told me that I kicked a lot when they played something with loud percussion like the Bass Drum part in Verdi's *Requiem*.

*What made you think that you wanted to play the bass trombone (or another instrument if that wasn't your first)?*

The trombones sat farthest from the podium and closest to the exit. Plus, it was the least expensive brass instrument.

*Do you play any other instruments?*

Tuba, euphonium and bass trumpet, marginally.

*What inspired you to choose to make music your livelihood?*

I wish I could tell you. It was most likely college scholarships that pointed me towards that choice.

*Did anyone try to talk you out of becoming a professional musician and if so, who were they and what were their reasons?*

My parents warned me about making music my profession, having experienced many of the challenges themselves.

*What do you do to unwind?*

Listen to music to transcribe for trombone and low brass, look for composers from different eras that I have never heard, and

find music with unusual instrumentations.

*Do you listen to classical music very much during your off time?*

Yes, especially all of the great pieces I hope to play someday. I also love vocal music because I was taught to sing on my instrument.

*Who are your top three favorite composers to listen to? to play?*

*Why are they your favorites?*

Shostakovich, Respighi, and Mahler because they all made music that is able to convey the highs and lows of the human experience to where it can be felt by the listener.



Debby and Andy Hicks

*What are your top three genres of music to listen to, besides classical, and what do you like about them? Have there been times in your life when you were able to play that type of music for work, and if so, when/where?*

Jazz, rock and roll, and funk. I enjoy the improvisational aspect of them and believe that creating something from nothing is truly magical. I rarely get to play any of them but would very much like to.

*What's the best part of performing for you?*

On rare occasions (Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Mahler, Respighi), most parts are sublime. The rest of the time, the best part is the drive home.

*Do you prefer performing with small ensembles, chamber orchestra, or the full orchestra? Full orchestra is my first choice, but when the circumstances are right, a small ensemble can be very enjoyable.*

*Do you have any pets? If so, please, describe them. Do they like sharing the room with you when you play, or do they leave? We have three little dogs. Two are mostly deaf, and the other one is too lazy to move.*

*Do you ever have to wear earplugs in order to protect your hearing while you play? Does that make it difficult to hear the rest of the orchestra? If so, how do you deal with that? Does the Philharmonic do anything to help you protect your hearing in the full orchestral setting?*

For me, it is nearly impossible to play properly with earplugs. Not being able to hear myself or the people around me affects intonation, balance, and ensemble. Unfortunately, the mitigating factors of space and shields are rarely employed properly. The people in charge, who are not affected by the high decibels, are usually not concerned about it or the damage it causes. I look forward to trying the earplugs that we were fitted for during the final week of the season.

*What is the farthest you have traveled in order to play (either a gig, or for a festival, concert series, etc.)?*

Hong Kong.

*How do you stay inspired as a musician? What inspires you?*  
My wife's playing inspires me musically, and the 1st of the month inspires me practically.

*How often do you work on music that YOU want to play as opposed to what is on the next Phil concert program?*  
All of the time. If I don't spend time working on music that I love, there is little reason to play at all.

*During the pandemic year of no Philharmonic, and few live music gigs, how did you stay inspired? Were you able to set aside any frustrations and use the time productively to work on music you might not have had time to work on during the season? Or did the necessity of finding ways to make ends meet use up any time or energy you might have otherwise spent on music?*

Staying inspired musically was not on the list of priorities. Avoiding insolvency was the only priority. It is hard to explain to anyone who hasn't been in that position. Ironically, most of the people in the Philharmonic organization who could afford to keep music in

their lives were the ones who had little interest in doing so.

*Do you have any hobbies, and if so what are they?*

I am a Formula 1 enthusiast. I love motorcycles and watching MotoGP. I enjoy cigars less often than I would like, and I have become a world-class Dachshund wrangler.

*This question is from a non-musician friend of mine: "What is it like to have a musical soul?"*

*How does it feel to have music be what gets you up in the morning or keeps you going?*

The quality of the music of the Phil suggests it's a lot more than just a job for these musicians.

And I say "THESE" poignantly." When a player has a musical soul, you can hear it when they play, beyond just technical proficiency. All of the people that I know who have this in their makeup also possess qualities that draw you to them.

*What advice would you give a student (high school age) who might be contemplating a career playing in an orchestra?*

I would give them the advice that my father gave me. You should only do it if you absolutely love it. The moments

of true inspiration are few and far between, and the lack of security makes it a financial gamble.



Andy with Dewey

*Would you like to share anything else?*

While my father was absolutely right with the advice that he gave me, both he and my mother always encouraged me even while knowing the pitfalls of music as a career. They also saw that music led me to meeting a few wonderful people, the most remarkable being my wife Deborah. I wouldn't trade that for anything.

*Our Players' Voice is published by the Fort Wayne Philharmonic Players' Association. Our writers for this issue are Gayle Fick, wife of Principal Bassoonist Dennis Fick, Campbell MacDonald, Principal Clarinet, and Marcy Trentacosti, Section Violin. For more information, visit our website at [www.fwpmusicians.com](http://www.fwpmusicians.com). Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).*