



Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
10 to 12:30
Phone
(757) 622-8095

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING Monday, May 18th @ 7:30 PM

OFFICIAL BULLETIN
OF LOCAL 125
AMERICAN
FEDERATION OF
MUSICIANS
Affiliated with
A. F. L. - C. I. O.

Join us at the Union Hall or via Zoom

Click to Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89336844446?pwd=TNnVPjru9NGhdlBkYQYgApITGL01V0.1>

Meeting ID: 893 3684 4446
Passcode: 963093

SECOND READING OF RESOLUTION & FINAL VOTE

#1 RESOLUTION FOR SECOND READING ON MAY 18th

WHEREAS racially segregated locals were not uncommon across the AFM for years and
WHEREAS many locals today reflect that history with hyphenated numbers and
WHEREAS Black Local 702 was an important part of the AFM for many years in southeast Virginia and
WHEREAS Local 125 merged voluntarily with Local 702 in 1966

RESOLVED that Local 125 recognize and honor that part of our history by incorporating 702 into our official designation as AFM Local 125-702 upon final approval of the AFM.

#2 RESOLUTION WAS WITHDRAWN

President's message...

Dear Local 125 Members,

Exciting things are happening at the Local this spring!

Our **2026 Arts Supporter of the Year** is **Janet Kriner**. On June 4 we will honor her contributions to the Hampton Roads arts community while also celebrating her **90th birthday**. The event is from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the Fred Huette Center in Norfolk. We will have heavy hors d'oeuvres, beverages, and live music provided by Local 125 member, **Eldon Sully**. You have received the invitation in your email and so many of you have already RSVP'd. You can find the invitation here: <https://forms.gle/v2vcqQtxg8V83JX6A>. It should be a lovely evening in no small part thanks to **Allegra Havens** who has helped lead our event planning committee.



Continued on next page

Another exciting project is one very dear to my heart. The board has also been discussing the creation of a need based scholarship to provide private lessons to a local music student. The project is still in early stages but we hope to get it off the ground in the fall. The goal of the scholarship is to promote the importance of private instruction with the understanding that it is not financially viable for many families. The recipient of the scholarship must pursue the lessons with a member of Local 125. More info to come over the summer.

As a proud member of the Virginia Symphony, I'm thrilled to have our new members join our Local. In this issue we welcome **Caleb Edwards** who is a member of the Virginia Symphony bass section. He comes to us from Local 1 in Cincinnati.

In mid June, I will be attending the 103rd AFM Convention in Ottawa, Ontario. This will be my first convention and I'm looking forward to learning as much as possible and bringing that information back to our members.

Our next General Membership meeting is **May 18 at 7:30 p.m.** Please join us in person at the union hall or on zoom (it's more fun in person).

Joanne

**ADD YOUR NAME
TO THE
TEACHER
DIRECTORY
BY SCANNING
THIS CODE**



The AFM mission statement:

- ♦ **We can live and work in dignity;**
- ♦ **Our work will be fulfilling and compensated fairly;**
- ♦ **We will have a meaningful voice in decisions that affect us;**
- ♦ **We will have the opportunity to develop our talents and skills;**
- ♦ **Our collective voice and power will be realized in a democratic and progressive union;**
- ♦ **We can oppose the forces of exploitation through our union solidarity.**



WHY JOIN THE UNION?

Joining a union means that you believe that **all musicians** and performers should be **treated with the dignity and respect** that the art form deserves, and together, we can have the **strength to uphold the standards** and values we expect.

Janet Kriner named 2026 Arts Supporter of the Year!

**You're Invited: Honoring Janet Kriner — June 4th
at the Fred Huette Center**

Local 125 has named Janet Kriner our **2026 Arts Supporter of the Year**. Please join us as we honor this local legend on **June 4th, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.**, at the **Fred Huette Center in Norfolk**. This award coincides with Janet's **90th birthday**, making it an especially meaningful occasion.

Enjoy **live music** and **heavy hors d'oeuvres**. Space is limited—please **RSVP here: <https://forms.gle/c3Fc4LrwyJyT1M7R9>**

We look forward to seeing you there!



Meet our new member...

Caleb Edwards is an orchestral double bassist from Birmingham, Alabama, whose performances span distinguished ensembles and diverse musical genres. He began studying double bass at age nine through the Music Opportunity Program and later attended the Alabama School of Fine Arts, laying a strong foundation for his career. Caleb has performed with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra as part of its prestigious fellowship program, the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the Columbus–Indiana Philharmonic, and currently serves as a member of the Virginia Symphony Orchestra.

Caleb's formal training includes a Bachelor of Music from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (studying with Rachel Calin), a Master of Music from Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music (studying with Andrew Raciti), and an Artist Diploma through the CCM/Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra Fellowship (studying with Owen Lee). He also studied with jazz legend Frank "Doc" Adams at the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame. Caleb has participated in renowned festivals such as Domaine Forget, the Wabass Institute, Texas Music Festival, Brevard Music Center, and the National Symphony Orchestra's Summer Music Institute, working closely with leading performers and pedagogues. In addition to his orchestral career, he is an avid performer of jazz, R&B, and gospel, bringing versatility and depth to his artistry. 🎵



Tom Reel & TORCH Featured in the *INTERNATIONAL MUSICIAN*

16 April 2026

LOCAL HAPPENINGS

TORCH: Musical Flame of Giving Provides Donations to Local Nonprofits

What began as driveway concerts born of pandemic necessity has evolved into a sustainable philanthropic model that pays professional musicians, members of AFM Local 125 (Norfolk, VA), while supporting the Hampton Roads community.

Like musicians around the world during the pandemic, Virginia Symphony Orchestra (VSO) musicians found themselves out of work and deprived of both the monetary and spiritual sustenance of performing.

"Some of us organized chamber concerts in our driveways and other outdoor public spaces," says TORCH Founder Tom Reel. "Those who were able provided money and gift cards to colleagues in need."

Capturing that sense of purpose, Thanking Our Resident Community Heroes (TORCH) emerged from the grassroots efforts of musicians supporting each other. "When times were better, instead of giving money to each other, we could leverage those dollars and hire musicians for an annual benefit concert, not for ourselves but for a worthy community asset outside of the performing arts," he says.

Reel, a retired VSO double bassist, is the

primary benefactor for launching TORCH and was able to donate money to hire the orchestra for the services and make the idea a reality.

He approached Virginia Arts Festival (VAF) to see if they would like to partner on the project. "We knew that having an idea was one thing, but executing it would be more challenging," says Reel. VAF helped by lending logistic and marketing expertise. Now, an annual TORCH concert is part of the festival's season.

Working within the nonprofit festival also meant affiliation with what was already a trusted arts organization and TORCH did not need to set up its own nonprofit from scratch. VAF maintains a separate account dedicated to TORCH that is able to accept donations.

VSO has been helpful, providing most of the musicians, a music library, and a librarian. Though they've seen nearly 100% participation from VSO musicians, TORCH events are optional and the performers are paid over and above their regular salary.

The goals of TORCH are three-fold. In addition to raising money for a community asset through a benefit concert, TORCH

puts extra money in the pockets of Local 125 musicians and enhances the reputation of the local and its musicians as valued parts of the Hampton Roads community.

"We like the idea of turning the arts business model on its head once a year and giving back to a deserving organization—a gift from the artists!" says Reel. He and the local work with Virginia Arts Festival Executive Director and VSO Principal Percussionist Rob Cross to identify and select "community heroes" to support.

The first TORCH concert, held in December 2023, supported ForKids, a nonprofit dedicated to breaking the cycle of homelessness and poverty for families and children. During 2025, Lynnhaven River Now, a nonprofit dedicated to restoring and protecting Virginia Beach waterways was the beneficiary. For 2026 they've selected The Muse Writer Center in Norfolk. The nonprofit provides writing classes, work-

shops and community events for all ages.

When asked what advice he would have for another local wanting to launch a similar program, Reel was quick to respond that he's no expert but, "I wouldn't overthink it. The recipe calls for funding, willing artists, and a logistical structure for mounting and marketing a concert."



TORCH Founder and Local 125 (Norfolk, VA) member Tom Reel.

**TORCH T-shirts are now available for \$30 (\$25 for Local 125 members)
Claim your *FREE* TORCH sticker today!**

Grants for Gigs...

Did you know that there is a fund to help pay for your live gigs that are free and open to the public? The **Music Performance Trust Fund**, which is a separate entity from the union, has been providing grants for over 70 years.

MPTF gigs can take place in parks, schools, and public halls, as well as in hospitals and at nursing homes and retirement centers.

We can't help you find the gig; you must organize and book the gig yourself. You will need to find a "co-sponsor," which means some entity that agrees to share the cost of the gig. Co-sponsors could include a school, nonprofit organization, state or local government, or any kind of business, large or small. If you, as a musician, have an LLC, then **YOU** can be the co-sponsor.

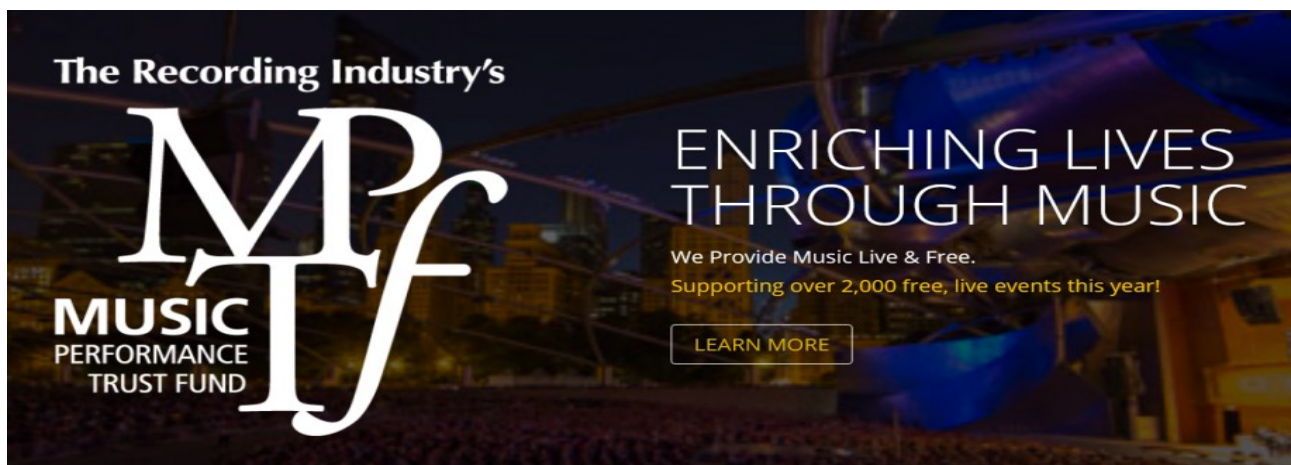
Finally, you must make sure that you pay your group under an AFM union contract, using the Local 125 Wage Scale Book. Other details apply; we can help with all paperwork and questions. MPTF usually pays for 50% of the cost of the gig, however there are some special programs where 100% of the cost is paid.

Email Secretary/Treasurer, Linda Dennis at afmlocal125@verizon.net if you have any questions. **You must apply no less than 30 days prior to your gig.**

Learn all about the Music Performance Trust Fund at <https://musicpf.org>.

The programs listed below are funded at 100% through MPTF.

Program	Dates/details	Application Deadline
Black History Month	Celebrated throughout February 2027	Monday, January 1st
MUSICIAN-FEST/ Senior Events	No separate application required: use standard process, Optional \$200 scale for solo musicians only	N/A
Livestreams	Submit proposals, photos, and bios to Natilyn Hepburn-Beaty for approval	N/A
Music Education	Programs in schools: include "EDU" in project name	N/A
Jazz Appreciation Month (JAM)	Celebrated throughout April 2027	Monday, March 1st
Juneteenth	June 19 (alt dates: June 18, & 20, 2026)	Friday, May 19th
Women's History Month	Celebrated throughout March 2027	Monday, February 1st



Secretary/Treasurer's Notes.....

NEW MEMBERS

Caleb Edwards

REINSTATED

Nate Kinnison

RESIGNED

Eric Krumich

SUSPENDED

Christina Havens Byerly

EXPELLED

Lauren Avery Staples

DIRECTORY CHANGES

Rafael Velez
200 Deauville Circle
Newport News, VA 23606
rafangvelez@gmail.com

Caleb Edwards—Double Bass
4914 E. Princess Anne Road. Apt. C1
Norfolk, VA 23502
(205)203-5955
calebthebassist@gmail.com

Jordan Ponzi
1410 Jamestown Road
Williamsburg, VA 23185
Laura Leisring

Timothy Olbrych: timolbrych@gmail.com

A few members haven't
paid their Annual Dues
that were due on 4/25.
Please, avoid suspension
by paying ASAP. THX!



**Pay Your Dues
With a
Credit Card
at**

www.afm.org

Welcome Musicians Union 15% off

 **PURE LAGOS**



Africa in Norfolk!





Pure Lagos African Art Gallery
251 W Bute Street, Suite A
Norfolk, VA 23510
757-944-8506
purelagos.com

AROUND TOWN WITH LOCAL 125

NO KINGS 3



Linda Dennis & Judy Gutterman



Chris White & Tom Reel



March 12, 2026



Uncle Sam (aka Tom Reel)



Want to share pics of your gigs or events?
Send photos to Linda at
afmlocal125@verizon.net