

June 7, 2010

A Vote For Ray is a Vote to Save the Union

Dear Delegate,

We are warned going into contract negotiations that managements will often employ the tactic of portraying the union as evil, with horns and tails, and that no decent-minded person would ever align themselves with such dark forces.

No one knows more about this than Ray Hair, whose name is dragged through the mud by dead-beat club owners, delinquent employers, and union-busting companies with great regularity. They do their best to try and deflect the issues from themselves and their poor treatment of musicians to the Union, using Ray as their target. They do it because he fights against their injustice and brings their abuses to light.

Ray's response to all this is, simply, "That's my job." He knows it's the union's duty to represent every member to the end. He'll go through hell and back to do it, taking the heat so working musicians don't have to. Their job is to make the music. His job is to protect them so they can. And he works just as hard to protect the dance band members as he does the orchestra members. Or the C&W musician as much as the recording musician.

Insults and negative tactics from outside the union are part of the business. But what isn't or *shouldn't* be part of the union is the same kind of tactic used from within, on each other. Aren't we supposed to be Brothers and Sisters? And aren't we supposed to follow our own bylaws in support of each other? Politics may be politics, but isn't it time to turn our energy to solutions rather than smears? Sure, we disagree. That's healthy. Let's use that dialogue to fix the union.

Here in Local 72-147, we've seen and heard it all before. But we know better. We know Ray, and we know that those who call him names, twist his motives, and misrepresent his efforts *don't* know him. If you've ever been in the room when Ray Hair negotiated a contract, prosecuted a grievance, or talked to a member needing the union's support, you know that he is in this to serve and protect musicians because he cares about them and our union. He is not in this for his own gain.

We, the members of Local 72-147's Executive Board, stand firmly behind Ray Hair as our President, and in his campaign to become *your* President as well. In our local, these are the results of Ray's presidency: Healthy financial footing due to careful and responsible budgeting and spending

- Fully funded benefit plans
- Increased membership with new members joining every month
- Organizing campaigns to protest threats to local standards
- Aggressive representation of *all* segments of the membership
- Open communication and mediation between parties in disagreement
- Solution-based approach to resolving issues and making change
- Personal contact and commitment to any member needing the union's help
- Active website to keep all members informed
- Collective bargaining agreements in dozens of area ensembles
- Progressive contracts even in a difficult economy

Folks, the AFM is in trouble. We can't afford more reckless spending and more divisiveness. With Ray Hair as President of the AFM, the same positive growth will be restored to the Federation that our local experiences. And that positive growth is the path to our survival and renewed strength so that we can again vigorously represent our members and protect their livelihoods.

Please join us in supporting Ray Hair for President of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada. Remember, a vote for Ray is a vote to save this Union!

Fraternally,

Local 72-147 Convention Delegates

Karen Schnackenberg

Ken Krause

Matt Good

Marjorie Crenshaw