

# Scranton and Wilkes-Barre orchestras to combine into one orchestra

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in some business circles though some other businessmen have opposed it.

A single orchestra is being thought of by some board members as a step in the direction of a marketing merger because several important businessmen from both cities are involved in the negotiations, and their influence can be expected to increase over the years because of the fact that an eventual single orchestra board will be an institution heard in both communities. Except for informal talks between the two boards, the situation today is that one board is officially independent of the other.

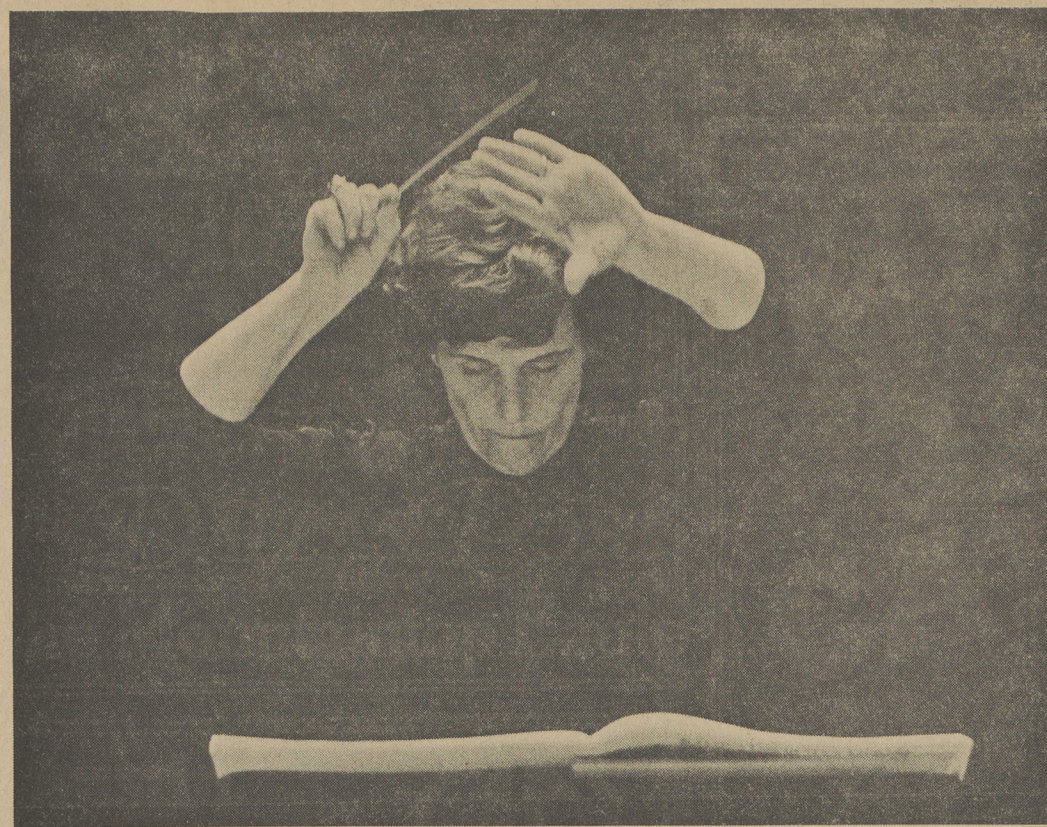
A series of committees will be composed of Lackawanna and Luzerne County board members, so that some from each area will be on the same committee. The committees do much of the administrative work that is needed to plan concerts, hire musicians, deal with the conductor's problems, book soloists and take care of the ticket sales, local press inquiries and the multitude of problems involved in getting music before the public.

The two boards will exist independently for a time; in fact the time that it finally will be reduced to one board is something that board members talk about in terms of "playing it by ear" with two years from now an educated guess as to when the one board-one orchestra will come into existence.

One of the immediate gains the board will make is to cut in half the amount of rehearsal time they pay for. This will be done by identical musical programs in Wilkes-Barre and Scranton. Thus the renting of music scores and the pooling of rehearsal time will accomplish this. Each orchestra is to play eight concerts. Four of these will be in Wilkes-Barre, four in Scranton. Miss Brown will conduct two in Scranton and two in Wilkes-Barre while Mr. Liva conducts two in Wilkes-Barre and two also in Scranton.

Another area the orchestras are to look into is the expansion of the youth concerts into schools outside the two cities. Thus with a single orchestra learning a single program, it was thought the cost of the concert to school districts would be reduced, making it possible for schools in the outlying counties to afford the concert. As of now, youth concerts have been heard by the city schools, whose districts usually have more money for concerts than do rural and suburban schools. Even so, the youth concert in the city schools have been heavily aided financially by local businesses.

It is quite likely that problems developing from the coalition move will involve differences between the Scranton and Wilkes-Barre orchestra's present ways of operating. For instance,



Beatrice Brown, musical director of the Scranton Philharmonic, conducting a concert.



Ferdinand Liva of Dallas, conductor of the Wilkes-Barre Philharmonic, at a rehearsal.

the Wilkes-Barre contract with Mr. Liva provides for reading rehearsals while the Scranton contract with Miss Brown does not have this feature. There are areas where the boards will have to make judgements in such delicate matters as personalities and performance evaluation. They are not unsolvable problems, musicians interviewed believe, but are illustrations of what the future may hold for the two boards once the first days of reorganization are over.

As a generality, musicians contacted are excited about the merger idea, feeling that it is a worthwhile experiment and could become an important cultural addition to the northeastern part of the state.

## ice fishing reported poor

The winter fishing report from the Pennsylvania Fish Commission, reports that ice conditions are very poor throughout the state. Anglers are advised to use extreme caution before venturing on ice on all waters.

For the northeastern portion of the state, Lackawanna County reports that Chapman Lake is good for brook trout on minnows via jigging; ice cover is three to five inches. Heart Lake catchings are bluegills and perch by jigging. Susquehanna County, catching rainbow and brook trout in Quaker Lake on small minnows, nitecrawlers, and corn. In Wyoming County, trout is good in Lake Winola on corn. Walleye is good on large minnows.

Luzerne County reports brook trout in Mountain Springs Lake

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## "SESAME STREET"

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rupted basis at least until the end of the school year.

Channel 44 station manager George Strimel, a resident of Mountaintop, told NNI that he had "no idea" where the needed money might be raised. He explained that Channel 44 has no one who solicits financial support for the station, as such, and that he saw "absolutely no alternative" to remove the financial crisis of the network by Saturday.

In a recent Channel 44 board of director's bulletin, the local station's financial stability appeared to be questioned. "The other smaller sources of revenue have decreased, particularly that of foundation support which decreased from \$62,000 in 1968 to \$50,000 in 1969 and down to less than \$1000 in the current fiscal year." During the 1968-69 fiscal year the station had the assistance of a professional fund raiser, who left his station duties last spring.

William H. Crum, instructional superintendent in the Abington Heights School District, told NNI that in his opinion the reason of state legislature had not funded the network was because of politics involved between a Republican governor and a Democratic controlled House.

Additionally, Mr. Crum explained that the funding of the network is not part of the general appropriations bill, and must be handled by separate legislation.

Mr. Gibson said that the funding was not part of the current financial crisis the state is facing, but is usually handled as a 12th hour appropriation. "There is no reason for the delay," Mr. Gibson continued, "because the state does have the money."

Other appropriations, as with the network, have not been funded either, Mr. Crum explained. These others, according to the school administrator, include mental health, and certain state school subsidies.

The amount of money needed to keep the seven television stations carrying the network programming is \$1.73 million. The coverage area involved would run into the millions of viewers in the state, with station locations in Philadelphia, Hershey, University Park, Erie, Bethlehem, Pittsburgh and Scranton.

Already the local station has raised its head-tax on schools, upping the cost per pupil to school districts from \$1 to \$1.25. This move, according to Channel 44, will bring in an additional \$25,000 for the local station. An additional \$25,000 is hoped for by enrollment of more schools in the program. A television auction is also planned for the spring, station officials said.

In the past, Mr. Strimel explained, emergency funds were available for such crisis from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, also known as Public Broadcast Laboratories, which secures its funds from the Federal Government. Currently, however, he continued, PBL is also short of money with which to meet such needs.

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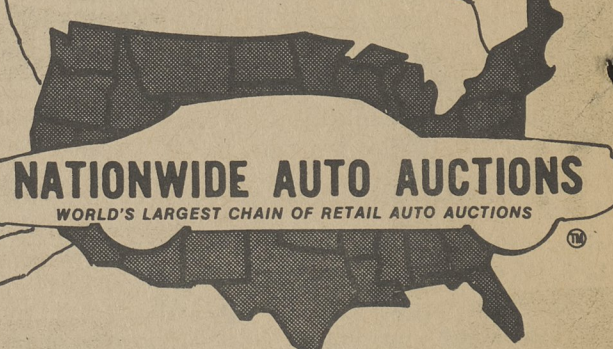
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