



IN CONCERT

Community Music Groups Working Together

A Newsletter of Southwestern Pennsylvania Band Partners

Three Rivers Community Band Festival

Volume 2, Issue 2

Spring 2006

The third annual Three Rivers Community Band Festival will be held April 9th, 2006 at 3pm at the Upper St Clair Theatre. Four bands from the Pittsburgh area will perform: the East Winds Symphonic Band, the West Hills Symphonic Band, Community Band South and the Harmony-Zelienople Community Band. Each band will perform for 20 minutes, then all members (300+ musicians) will join on stage for a combined finale under the baton of Paul Gerlach, conductor of the Carnegie Mellon University Kiltie Band and the music director of the Allegheny Brass Band. WQED-FM's Jim Cunningham will be the MC for the afternoon. Admission is free with contributions appreciated. After the concert there will be refreshments that have been baked by members of the bands.



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In 2002, Roger Schneider, member and co-founder of the East Winds Symphonic Band, was honored as a recipient of the WQED-FM/Dominion Peoples Volunteer In The Arts (VITA) award. The monetary portion of the award was designated by Roger and the East Winds to partially fund a festival at which community bands from the area could come together to share musicianship and camaraderie. Additionally, it was hoped that such a festival would spotlight amateur bands in the Pittsburgh region to the community.

In the fall of 2002, a committee was formed to begin the planning process. It was decided that the inaugural festival would be held in 2004, and it was hoped to have bands from all four of the compass points around Pittsburgh. Over the next year, a larger committee was formed, involving conductors and members of four area bands - the East Winds Symphonic Band, the North Suburban Symphonic Band, the West Hills Symphonic Band, and Community Band South. This geographically diverse group of people, brought together by their love of community bands, worked together to plan to present the first festival.

The first festival was held on April 4, 2004 at the Upper St. Clair Theatre located at Upper St. Clair High School with Jim Cunningham of WQED-FM as Master of Ceremonies. The afternoon began with a trumpet fanfare written by Jim Rosetti of the East Winds Symphonic Band, for the occasion. Then, each of the four bands performed for approximately 20 minutes each. The afternoon performance culminated with a special performance by all four groups taking the stage together (nearly 210 musicians). Max Gonano, Director of Bands at California University of Pennsylvania, conducted this combined band.

In keeping with momentum, shortly after the first festival, plans were underway for the second festival that was held April 10, 2005 at the Upper St. Clair Theatre. The format was the same, with all four bands (about 225 musicians) converging on the stage under the baton of Dr. Edwin P. Arnold Chairman of Music and Fine Arts and Director of Bands at Grove City College for the finale.

For more information, please visit <http://www.ewsb.org/festival>



Armstrong Concert Band

Provided by Dennis F. Cramer, Summer 2005

The Armstrong Concert Band is currently celebrating twenty-one years of music making in Armstrong County. Under the musical direction of Dennis F. Cramer, the band maintains the centuries old tradition of concerts in an outdoor setting. People of all ages tap their feet to the stirring sounds of a Sousa march, sing a long to an old time favorite and feel their heart beat with renewed fervor to patriotic selections as the band plays in the shade of trees that may remember a different time when life moved at a slower pace and friends gathered to socialize as the town band entertained them with the latest hits.

The Armstrong Concert Band was established in the fall of 1984 as the Lenape Concert Band and held their first rehearsal in October of that year in Ford City. Bill McGann and Dave Lindeman, two area musicians were the driving forces to provide central Armstrong County with a concert style performance group. They contacted Mr. Cramer to be musical director, placed a few phone calls and the band was underway. This all-volunteer group performed their first concert on May 26, 1985 in the Ford City Park as part of the Memorial Day Celebration.

The band moved to the Worthington/West Franklin Civic Center during the fall of 1988. At that time, the name was changed to the Armstrong Concert Band to better reflect the area served by the group. The Civic Center has been the home to the band since that time and has been supported by the Worthington/West Franklin Recreation Authority by means of a rent-free rehearsal hall. In return, the band performs their annual Holiday Concert at the Center and has donated over \$3000.00 for improvements to the facility.

The Armstrong Concert Band has grown from 35 members to a roster of double that today. In the past twenty-one years, more than 250 different musicians have performed with the band. The band rehearses for ten weeks in the fall and ten weeks in the spring. They perform a Holiday Concert during the Thanksgiving Holiday weekend and then do anywhere from six to ten outdoor concerts during the summer season. Members come from Armstrong, Indiana, Butler, Allegheny and Westmoreland Counties. The minimum age is ninth grade in high school and our oldest member is in his early eighties. Attorneys, housewives, secretaries, engineers, public school teachers, college music majors and high school band members all give freely of their time and talents.

The band has been a member of the Armstrong County Tourist Bureau in 1993 and has established a two-way relationship in the promotion of the band and the county. Over the past twenty-one years the band has performed over 190 concerts throughout Armstrong County and has also performed at the Saxonburg Arts Fair and the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum in Washington County. The highlight of the summer season is the concert sponsored by the Tourist Bureau at Crooked Creek Lake Park where the quiet solitude is only slightly disturbed by the musical strains of the band.

Musical director for the group is Dennis F. Cramer. Mr. Cramer earned a BS in Music Education and an MA in Music from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He is employed as a music teacher with the Armstrong School District and is a former conductor of the Kittanning Fireman's Band. He has appeared as a guest conductor with the American Wind Symphony, the Venango County Band and the IUP Trombone Choir. He plays principal trombone with the Butler County Symphony Orchestra, performs with the Armstrong Brass Quintet and works as a freelance trombonist throughout western Pennsylvania. Aside from being the music director, Mr. Cramer also donates his time and efforts as the music librarian, manager, public relations person, treasurer and webmaster of the band. He was recognized for his volunteer efforts by WQED Multi Media of Pittsburgh as a Volunteer in the Arts in 2001.

(continued on next page)



Armstrong Concert Band (cont.)

The Armstrong Concert Band has always been an all-volunteer organization and one of the most dedicated members was John Schad. The band incorporated as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization in 2000 to be able to accept a donation from Mr. Schad's estate. The corporation was formed with Mr. Cramer as the President and the other members being David C. Suckling, Elmer Z. Smith, Rosalie Hogg and Paul McNelis all of Kittanning, PA. On September 11, 2002 the corporation donated \$35,000.00 to the Foundation for IUP to create a trombone scholarship. The bulk of the money for the scholarship came from Mr. Schad's estate. In April of 2005 the band performed a joint concert with the IUP Trombone Choir in Grace Presbyterian Church in Kittanning to add to the scholarship fund.

The future of the Armstrong Concert Band lies with the younger members. High school students from around the county are encouraged by their teachers to further their training by rehearsing and performing with the adult members of the band. Music is an activity that can cross generations and our band is a testimony to that. Older members participate for the joy in making music and relaxing while the younger ones add the vitality and quest for more knowledge. It is a wonderful learning experience for all ages.

Persons interested in more information can visit our website, <http://www.geocities.com/armconband> or email us at armconband@alltel.net Our phone number is 724-548-5225.

Southwestern PA Community Bands

Additions since the last newsletter:

Kiski Valley Community Band
<http://welcome.to/kvcb#>
Patti Marco, Director/President
724-845-9419
plmarco@comcast.net

- See the complete list of Southwestern PA Community Bands at: <http://swpabandpartners.pghfree.net/bands.html>
- To be added to the online directory, send email to newsletter@swpabandpartners.pghfree.net

Bands Celebrating Anniversaries in 2006

East Winds Symphonic Band	25 years
Scottdale Concert Band	25 years
The Musicians Concert Band	20 years





Combined Calendar of Events for Spring 2006

As of March 21, 2006

April 2006	Sat, 1	7pm	North Pittsburgh Philharmonic	North Hills Jr. High School Auditorium
	Sun, 2	7pm	Armstrong Concert Band	Kittanning
	Thu, 6	7:30pm	Harmony-Zellenople Community Band	Seneca Valley Intermediate High School
	Sat, 8	7:30pm	Pittsburgh Civic Orchestra	Upper St Clair High School Theatre
	Sun, 9	3pm	Three Rivers Community Band Festival	Upper St Clair High School Theatre
	Sun, 9	11am	Aeolian Winds of Pittsburgh	Church Service, First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh
	Tue, 25	7:30pm	Community Band South	Upper St Clair Theatre
	Sun, 30	3pm	West Hills Symphonic Band	Montour High School
	Sun, 30	6pm	Kiski Valley Community Band	Casino Theater, Vandergrift
May 2006	Mon, 1	7:30pm	South Hills Community Concert Band	Brentwood Presbyterian Church
	Sat, 6	TBA	Aeolian Winds of Pittsburgh	First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh
	Sun, 7	7:30pm	North Suburban Symphonic Band	Ross Elementary School, North Hills
	Sat, 13	8:00pm	Allegheny Brass Band	North Allegheny Intermediate High School
	Sat, 13	7:30pm	Pittsburgh Civic Orchestra	Upper St Clair High School
	Sat, 13	7:30pm	Edgewood Symphony Orchestra	East Allegheny High School
	Sat, 20	7pm	North Pittsburgh Philharmonic	North Hills Jr. High School Auditorium
	Sun, 21		Jeannette Community Band	Jeannette American Legion
	Sun, 28	7pm	Armstrong Concert Band	Glade Run Presbyterian Church
	Wed, 31	7:30pm	Community Band South	Upper St Clair Theatre
June 2006	Sat, 10	7:30pm	Edgewood Symphony Orchestra	Lower Burrell High School
	Sat, 10	7:30	Community Band South	South Hills Assembly of God, Bethel Park
	Sun, 11	7pm	Jeannette Community Band	The Diamond in Ligonier
	Wed, 14		Kiski Valley Community Band	Leechburg Elks
	Wed, 14		Kittanning Firemen's Band	Elk's Lodge, Kittanning
	Fri, 16	8pm	The Musicians Concert Band	Miller Auditorium, Slippery Rock University
	Tue, 20	7pm	Armstrong Concert Band	Ford City Borough Park
	Sun, 25	7pm	South Hills Community Concert Band	Wilmerding Park
	Sun, 25	10:30am	Allegheny Brass Band	Bach, Beethoven, & Brunch, Mellon Park, Pgh
	Sun, 25	7pm	Armstrong Concert Band	Concordia Concert, Cabot
	Mon, 26	7:30pm	South Hills Community Concert Band	Hamilton Presbyterian Church
	Thu, 29	8pm	The Musicians Concert Band	Miller Auditorium, Slippery Rock University
	Thu, 29	7:30pm	West Hills Symphonic Band	Clinton Park (Findlay Twp.)
	Thu, 29	8pm	Allegheny Brass Band	Harmony, PA, Fourth of July Celebration
Fri, 30	7pm	Kiski Valley Community Band	Natrona Presbyterian Church	

Please visit <http://swpabandpartners.pghfree.net/calendar.html>
for updates, more information and future concerts
Email calendar@swpabandpartners.pghfree.net to have concerts added



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Southwestern Pennsylvania Band Partners is dedicated to helping community music groups in the southwestern Pennsylvania Region.

Please visit us online at the address below to learn more or become involved.

<http://swpabandpartners.pghfree.net>

To be on our mailing list send email to swpabandpartners-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
with the subject subscribe

Regional Band Websites

Aeolian Winds

<http://www.aeolianwinds.com/>

Allegheny Brass Band

<http://www.alleghenybrassband.com/>

Armstrong Concert Band

<http://www.geocities.com/armconband>

Blairsville Community Concert Band

<http://www.bccb.com/>

Butler County Symphony

<http://www.butlerarts.org/symphony/>

Community Band South

<http://cbs.pghfree.net/>

East Winds Symphonic Band

<http://www.ewsb.org/>

Edgewood Symphony

<http://www.edgewoodsymphony.org>

Harrisville Community Band

<http://www.harrisvilleband.com/>

Jeannette Community Band

<http://www.jcbweb.com/>

Kiski Valley Community Band

<http://welcome.to/kvcb>

Kittanning Firemen's Band

<http://www.kfband.com/>

Musicians Concert Band

<http://www.tmcband.com/default.htm>

North Pittsburgh Philharmonic

<http://www.northpghphilharmonic.org>

North Suburban Symphonic Band

<http://www.nssband.org/>

Ohio Valley Community Band

<http://www.geocities.com/ovcband>

Pine Creek Community Band

<http://www.pinecreekband.com/>

Pittsburgh Civic Orchestra

<http://www.artsnet.org/pco/>

Resurrection Band

<http://www.boro.zelienople.pa.us/band.htm>

Scottdale Concert Band

<http://www.scottdaleband.com/>

Somerset County Community Band

<http://www.somersetcounty.com/band>

West Hills Symphonic Band

<http://www.whsb.org/>

Westmoreland Symphonic Winds

<http://www.wswinds.org/>

Contributing to the newsletter

Everyone is welcome to contribute an article to the newsletter. The topic is up to you—something you think your fellow musicians would be interested in. Just email your article to:

newsletter@swpabandpartners.pghfree.net

For additions to the website email:

info@swpabandpartners.pghfree.net

In the next newsletter

- History of Tri County Band and information for upcoming event
- Profile of South Hills Community Concert Band

Editors

Sarah McElfresh, East Winds Symphonic Band

Scott McElfresh, East Winds Symphonic Band

Kathy Wikowski, Allegheny Brass Band, North Suburban Symphonic Band