

Person High School Band News

Monday, February 08, 2010

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web: <http://www.phsband.org/index.html>

I would like to share some thoughts and information with you. I am sure you get some information from your band student(s) and this will hopefully clear up any questions you might have.

Band fees are not a pleasant topic but I think it would help for everyone to understand why we collect this fee. Your child's band fee pays for the individual expenses of our band students that include: band shoes, band shirt, and uniform dry cleaning fees. There are additional costs of running the Person High School Band that exceed what the school can and will pay for. The cost of the instructors for band camp and also instructors that we hope to use during concert season are part of the band fee. The band fee also enables the Boosters to provide funds to get the marching band program up and running prior to the beginning of the school year in August. This list also includes funding for bus drivers. Some of the funding derived from the band fee also will support awards for students.

If you come to a Band Booster meeting and read the treasurer's report, you will see the variety of items that this fee covers. The schedule of Band Booster meetings are listed on the band calendar passed out to the students and on the band web site. Our Band Booster Leadership (see below) makes it a priority to keep our band booster meetings to an hour or less. Please plan to attend a booster meeting!

Band Alumni

I feel fortunate to have had the chance to work with many recent PHS band alumni my first year here at Person. These former students have given me so much background and understanding of the history and quality of the band program here at PHS. I believe the band program needs to display their awards and trophies in a trophy case for the school community to see on regular basis. I would like to form a committee of alumni to work with the school, boosters and community to select a suitable location for a trophy case, help develop funding for the trophy case and select which awards and trophies should be displayed. Any band alumni wishing to help with this project should contact me.

Things To Do

We all have busy lives and we have to make choices with our time. The band program here at PHS is dependent on our parental support. Some of this support is as simple as just staying informed. First on the list is making sure your student is enrolled band for both semesters if at all possible. Also, I would encourage you to make your student has returned their band uniform. Last but not least, is to ensure you student's band fee has been paid or you have filed a payment program contract with our boosters.

I also believe it is extremely important for us as adults to model the behaviors we want our children to exhibit. I would encourage you to be visible at events or meetings. Research has shown that parental involvement is key to a student's academic success. Come and watch a rehearsal, attend concerts and events. Take an interest in your student's activities and you will be pleased with the end game. Your student may never thank you for attending or becoming involved but they appreciate it. Attending events will also give me a chance to meet you and get to know you! I would also ask you to attend at least two booster meetings a year, one in the fall and one during concert season. Once you start attending a few meetings, you will see the importance of the Boosters.

If you don't like meetings and I don't know many people who do, we could always use help with...

- Car washes
- Chaperones for away games
- Equipment crew for percussion equipment during football season

Thanks to...

- Mrs. Rhonda Choquette – Band Booster President. She has been guiding me in the history, policies and general knowledge of the Person Band program. She is always looking for parents to help with Band Booster activities.
- Mrs. Judi Akers – Band Booster Treasurer. Like Rhonda, Judi has been instrumental in helping me with the band program.
- Mrs. Andrea Childers – fit our students with their marching band uniform during the summer and will be fitting the new students for 2nd semester in the near future. I am positive Mrs. Childers would appreciate anyone who would like to help with this.
- Mrs. Angela Wells – Angela and her husband have been working extremely hard on developing a website for the band which is up and running now. Angela is also “keying” in our high school band and choir sheet music library into a computer excel spread sheet. This will greatly aid in the efficient management of our program, especially when looking for music or sharing music with other band programs.

Upcoming Events – March Is “Music in Our Schools” Month

On March 4th and 5th, 13 selected students will participate in the Tri-County Honors Band. More details are listed on our website with the concert for this group on March 5th at 7:00 Concert at Northern Granville Middle School Auditorium.

That following Saturday, March 6th, the North Carolina Symphony will be performing Gustav Holst’s “The Planets” in Raleigh. Details of this trip will be available once the trip has been approved by the administration and transportation has been secured. The cost of this voluntary trip will be \$10 per ticket plus the cost of the transportation (bus and driver costs divided among the students). Any interested parents wishing to attend may wish to go as chaperones.

Also in March, the high school concert band, the *Person High School Wind Symphony*, will be participating in the NCBMA MPA (North Carolina Band Masters Association’s Music Performance Adjudication.) This will be held at Cedar Ridge High School on either March 22nd or 23rd (we will not know our performance date and time until closer to the contest date). The “contest” is not like a marching band contest, we are graded on a scale of 1 -5 with 1 being the best. This contest is much like the “Carowinds” festival that students attended in middle school. The judging standards are based on the NCBMA (North Caroline Band Masters Association) rating rubric.

In order to prepare for this event, we will have a pre-contest concert at Southern Middle School on March 11th. In addition to the concert on the 11th, I am also going to try to have a couple of retired or active band directors attend a rehearsal or two to give us more feedback to help us improve and prepare. The key to making this contest help our program and band is in the preparation. The contest is a nice validation of our work but the hard work will not be the contest as such. The preparation for the contest is goal; learning to work together, play together, play in tune, etc.

In addition to performing for the three judges, we will also be sight-reading a piece in front of a sight-reading judge in a separate setting. This will be done without an audience. Our total rating would be based on a averaging of the four judges’ ratings.

I am asking the students to wear all black; black slacks (not jeans), black long-sleeved blouse or shirt, black socks and shoes (no tennis shoes!) for these performances. The concept here is the focus on the music, not the visual aspect of our performance. The students will not be given an area to change into uniforms; what they wear on the bus is what they will be performing in.

Person Jazz Ensemble

This year, the Person Jazz Ensemble is off and running with performances at the Fall Fine Arts Festival and the Roxboro Nursing Care Facility. After the success of those performances and the support of the students attending rehearsals after school, I am currently looking for additional performance opportunities.

Jazz Ensemble students who have not already paid for their Jazz Band shirts need to do so immediately. I will be sending out bills next week. The cost of the Jazz Ensemble shirt is \$15; checks payable to the Person High School Band Boosters.

I do plan for this ensemble to compete/perform in the future at NCBMA events and/or festivals. This group will also be working towards learning how improvise; first with "blues" chord progressions and then expand to other chord progressions. The Person Jazz Ensemble should learn to play traditional big band styles as well as Latin, blues and rock styles.

Winter Drum Line

Some of the students may have mentioned our winter drum classes. The classes at this point are designed for our percussionists grade 6 through high school. We hope the students will pick up more technique and playing skills to prepare them for playing percussion instruments at the middle school and eventually at the high school. Since my background is in percussion, I think we should have a good drum line at the high school and that starts with the development of proper playing techniques at the middle school level.

Music reading skills will be taught as well as marching percussion techniques for tenor drums (quads) and Multi-Bass Drum concepts. The schedule for these sessions is listed on our band calendar (also see the website). Right now, we are meeting on Tuesday nights from 6 to 7 PM at the PHS band room. The classes are open to any current Person County student in grades 6 through high school. If your student is interested or you have questions, please feel free to contact me.

2009-2010 Person High School Band Council and Leadership

Student leadership is key to the development of a superior band program. This starts with students being trained in leadership positions. The students have elected a band council lead by Band President, senior Ryan Wehrenberg. Ryan and junior Devan Ward, Vice President, have been relaying information from the Boosters to the band from a student's perspective. Freshman Nefretiri Bowman is Secretary, sophomore Kris Cates is Librarian and senior Dillon Campbell is the equipment manager. The band council will soon begin the process of developing a band manual.

This month, the band will elect band class representatives (two per class) to add to the band input and leadership. In addition to class representatives, the 2010 PRMB (Person Rocket Marching Band) Drum Major s election process will begin. The exact process and details will be spelled out by me and the student leadership. After we have elected our field commanders for 2010, section leaders will be interviewed and audition with that process ending in May.

I look in the future for this group to help me decide the direction of our program with trips, competitions and band fundraising.

What Can You Do As A Parent To Help

One of the most important issues I face as your director is student schedules. Here at Person High School, we have basically a core of students who take band for the entire year with additional students who come to band for a marching band (1st semester) or concert band experience (2nd semester). Whatever your student decides as far as scheduling, please get them into band for at least one semester each year. Obviously if your student can and wants to schedule band for both semester, I would be thrilled. The more consistent the enrollment of the band, the better I can plan and create a better musical experience for your student. I do not feel one semester is more important than the other. I want a balanced ensemble for both semesters as you want a balanced experience for your student. I have set a personal goal in getting the band to an enrollment of 120 students for each semester. Eighth grade parents, I encourage you to get your student to take band for the first semester. This gives incoming 9th graders a chance to get introduced to the high school experience with other upperclassmen. The first day of school, these new 9th graders already know some of the older students in the school providing them a familiar face in the hallways or in another class. The band class in the first semester also gives the students "a place to call home" right from the

beginning of their high school experience. Being in band for the first semester also gives them a teacher who can help them with any problems they might have in those first few days of school.

Classroom Needs

Like any other classroom we always have items we can use: Kleenex, hand sanitizer, heavy duty extension cords, power strips, pencils, pens, paper clips, sticky notes, clipboards, three ring binders, paper towels, sturdy wooden hangers, and filing cabinets (legal size would be the best). If you have an old band instrument you don't want, we would be glad to take it off of your hands. At the present, the band boosters do not have a tax exempt status but I am sure, I can help you with that through the high school. Of course, we will be happy to take any playable instruments off your hands – we are always looking for clarinets, trumpets, trombones and drums (even drum sets). We are also looking for folding music stands. Old towels, large coolers (with wheels please) and bottled water are needed particularly during marching band season.