

# Rancho Cordova River City Concert Band

May Newsletter – May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016

Hello, friends and band members! This month's newsletter will cover the following topics:

- The News in Brief
- The RCRCB Fireworks Booth
- A Few Words About the Board
- A Personal Message from Brian

## The News in Brief

As Susan covered on Monday evening, the band is incorporated with the state of California as a 501(c)(3) corporation. We are actively working on finishing the application process for our non-profit status. A special thanks goes out to Lydia and Ross for making sure those steps are completed!

Susan also spoke of our loan with the city. We borrowed \$22,000 from the city of Rancho Cordova, to be paid back over the next 5 years. That is, we will pay them \$4,000 each year for the next 4 years, with a final \$6,000 payment on the fifth year. It is a no interest loan, with just a handful of strings attached. One of those strings includes making sure that "Rancho Cordova" is in our name, wherever we are mentioned and wherever we perform.

Susan also mentioned our fireworks fundraiser. I will go into more detail on that subject later in this newsletter.

A few other items that may or may not have been mentioned at practice:

- We are acquiring Liability Insurance. This is insurance that we need for legal reasons. We had some coverage through the SVSBA, but after incorporating, we needed to get our own insurance. A special thanks to Sue for doing all of the work to acquire insurance.
- We have submitted an application for Measure H funds, so that we can purchase our own stands and a bevy of percussion equipment. While quite a few people were involved in putting together the list of equipment, Lydia put together the actual proposal. After receiving initial feedback that our first application was too ambitious, Lydia quickly revised and resubmitted our application. Again, a special thanks to Lydia for her hard work and follow through. While we are not guaranteed to get the requested funds, the latest news is very promising.
- New Shirts! While some of you have done an amazing job of preserving your band shirts so that they still look like new, many of us have shirts that are starting to look a little threadbare. We have begun the process of acquiring new shirts for the band. Elaine is heading up this effort. Hopefully, we'll have more information to share with you on this front in the next few weeks.

There are a couple of other points that we discussed in last month's board meeting. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please feel free to contact me or any of the members of the board.

## The RCRCCB Fireworks Booth

For the first time, the Rancho Cordova River City Concert Band will be managing a fireworks booth! Our booth will be located near the 24 Hour Fitness on Sunrise. The address is 2280 Sunrise Blvd, Gold River, CA 95670.

This is a really exciting opportunity for us. I have managed fireworks booths in the past, and while it can be hot and sweaty work, it can also be fun and profitable. To give an example, I worked at a booth one year that had a truly terrible location. The booth sat in the parking lot of an Ace Hardware, and trees made it difficult to see the booth from the street. We hadn't done much in the way of promoting the booth, and we wound up only making around \$5,000. That constituted a poor year.

Another year, we had an amazing location. We did more work promoting the booth, and we sold out on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. That year, we made around \$17,000.

Going into this fundraiser, we need to keep some realistic expectations. While I would love to see the band make close to \$20,000, we need to remember that this is our first year running a fireworks booth. This type of fundraiser may not be a great fit for the band. We may not have enough volunteers. We might not do enough in the way of promoting the booth.

We do have some things going for us that other organizations do not. For starters, we're musicians! We already have plans of preparing to play patriotic music for the parade on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. There really isn't any reason we can't bring our music to our booth and attract customers.

The 4<sup>th</sup> of July is on a Monday this year, which means that we have Saturday and Sunday to bring our music to that shopping center. We can let people know to come hear the band, and while there, pick up some fireworks.

The booth hours of operation are:

June 28<sup>th</sup>, Noon to 10PM.

June 29<sup>th</sup> through July 4<sup>th</sup>, 9AM to 10PM.

We will need some volunteers a day before for receiving the fireworks. And we'll need some volunteers the day after for turning in whatever is not sold.

As we get closer to the date, we'll provide more details. We'll post hours so that volunteers can select the times that they would like to participate.

## A Few Words About the Board

Susan provided a reintroduction during Monday's rehearsal. The members are:

- Brian Buhl, President
- Sue Coddington, Vice-President
- Susan Boring, Treasurer
- Jeanette Hess, Secretary
- Lydia Bredin, Member
- Melanie Freer, Member
- Elaine Gierak, Member
- Patty Selenski, Member

We are volunteers, bringing our various levels of experience and unique perspectives together to try and make decisions and provide direction for the band. We are not a separate organization, standing apart from the band. There are no extra benefits to being on the board. The band needs an organization like the board, and we do the best we can.

As volunteers, we are available to answer questions and help mediate disputes.

I'm sure Susan spoke at the last practice about band etiquette, and how we should all behave during our rehearsals. In case she didn't mention it, the members of the board are available to help reinforce the rehearsal norms, to make sure that practices go smoothly and remain productive.

I'd like to take expand on those ideas for just a moment. We have a large number of band members. We are all adults, with different personalities and quirks. Not all of us approach rehearsals the same way.

Some members of the band are good at adhering to a strict set of rules. Others may not even know that there are rules. Some come to rehearsals with a different set of priorities. With so many differing approaches and attitudes, there are bound to be conflicts.

While the board is available to help with disputes, all band members are encouraged to do their best to get along with the other band members, and make the rehearsals as productive as possible.

Remember: all band members are valuable. We all are in the band to make the best music we can. When we practice together, let's remember why we're all here, and treat each other with respect and grace.

## A Personal Message from Brian

I want to take a moment to talk to you all about my journey with the band, and how one of the lessons I've learned along the way may help you make the band that much stronger.

I found this band through my daughter, Bryanna. At one point, I decided that driving across town just to drop her off just wasn't as efficient as bringing my own instrument and sitting with the saxes. With Tom's permission, I joined the band, and all was good.

At least, all was good for a while. After some time, I wondered why I was sitting way down in the 5<sup>th</sup> chair. In High School and College, I'd always been 1<sup>st</sup> chair. I'm competitive by nature, and while making beautiful music has always been my highest priority, I also wanted acknowledgement. I played for myself, and I played *to win*.

With this band, I didn't have any way to do more than I was doing. We didn't have try outs. It didn't seem to matter if I practiced or not. I didn't feel particularly connected to the band, and I didn't feel it was a place I could excel. When Bryanna's class schedule came into conflict with rehearsals, I was pretty sure I wouldn't continue with the band, either. I nearly quit.

Then the convention came along, and something strange happened. I had an opportunity to volunteer to do just a little bit more, and I took it. I found the kind of connection I needed all along, and I suddenly felt like I was part of the band. I felt like I mattered.

After that, I volunteered to do even more with the band. I silently groused less about playing second alto. My attitude changed, and I stopped playing for myself as much as for the band.

So there is the lesson: if you are feeling disconnected with the band, volunteer for something. When you commit yourself and take ownership, you connect and become a part a greater part of the whole.

Thank you all of reading, practicing, playing, and volunteering. We really do have a great band, and none of it would be possible without the time and effort you all put in.

- Brian Buhl