

Winter Newsletter '07

Concert Band Updates

Winter Concert Time! The JHS Bands will be in concert on ***Monday, February 5th*** in the JHS gym. This concert ***starts at 7:00 p.m.*** and will feature the ***Jazz II, Jazz I, Concert Band, Symphonic Band, and Wind Ensemble.*** A wide variety of musical selections will be performed on the concert ranging from swing, pop music, rock, marches, orchestral transcriptions, and standard overtures. The students have been working very hard and they are excited to be performing again.

High Five Club: A special congratulations goes out to ***Lizzy Lieffort (flute)*** and ***Anna Gusaas (bass clarinet)*** for being selected to the 9th-10th grade MBDA All- State Honor Band!! After many hours of practicing and making an audition tape, these two musicians were selected state-wide from over 200 students for membership into the 74 member band. Lizzy and Anna will have the opportunity to work with conductor Dr. Mary Schneider, band director and music educator at the University of Minnesota. The band will be in concert on Sunday, February 25th at the Elk River High School Auditorium. Congratulations again Lizzy and Anna!

Practice Tip of the Month: When is the last time you heard your child practice their lesson materials and/or concert music at home?? Finding time is difficult sometimes between homework, jobs, etc. ***Tip:*** If a time is set aside each day at the same time (before dinner, after dinner, before homework, etc.) it is easier to ***remember*** to practice. Developing a routine for consistent practice time is beneficial to ***every*** musician.

Smart Music Software

What is Smart Music?? Over the past 18 months, many students at JHS have benefited from Smart Music. Smart Music is a computer generated musical accompaniment and practice tool for musicians of all ages and ability levels. This educational system contains over 50,000 skill – building exercises, scales, twisters, arpeggios, numerous jazz improv exercises, and over 30,000 solo titles for all musicians. Many colleges have Smart Music labs in their departments to aid students as they practice. Professional musicians such as Wynton Marsalis and James Walker use Smart Music. JHS has two computers to run this system, and finding time for all students to use the system is difficult. Students have the opportunity to purchase a year home subscription for only \$25.00. Please see the sheet included in this newsletter for more information on Smart Music – the website is: www.smartmusic.com
Check it out!

Reeds, Valve Oil, other supplies

It is each student's responsibility to have the appropriate supplies for their particular instrument. Check with the directors for the monthly specials on instrument supplies as January typically has good deals on reeds and other instrumental supplies. Woodwind players should always have at least 3 good working reeds in their cases at all times. Brass players should have valve oil, slide grease and instrument cleaning supplies in their cases. Percussionists should have one pair of snare drum sticks for lessons.

Orlando Wrap up

What a great experience for the students of the Alexandria band program!! The students handled themselves with dignity, class, respect, and with the utmost cooperation on the trip. As parents, you should be proud of your child's accomplishments!! It was neat to hear the chaperones talk about how good the students were and how it was good to get to know them. For the majority of the trip, the weather was outstanding. The first rehearsal in Orlando ended up being somewhat cold, but after that the weather warmed up considerably. Even though it has been somewhat of a warm winter in Alexandria, the sun and 80 degrees was not hard to take!! The hotel accommodations were a great match for larger groups with the pool/spa being a hit with the students from Alexandria!

The ABC television coverage area was in the last two blocks of the 1.4 mile parade, and we were very proud of how strong our students ended the parade. The Citrus Bowl Parade was an hour presentation by ABC and each band was only allotted so much airtime between commercials, etc. Compared to other groups, we have to feel pretty good about the amount of coverage our band received. The new uniforms looked great! It was a real treat to see the entire group in uniform, marching in formation.

We are in the process of making a commemorative DVD of the trip for all students and chaperones. Stay posted on the delivery date of the DVD. A photo of the band was taken before the Citrus parade in Orlando. That photo was given to the students in class on January 17th. Chaperones – your photo was given to your child. Chaperone/parent Chris Boraas took numerous photos on the trip, please check out the band's website for viewing: www.jhsmarchingband.org

What's coming up?

Coming off a great trip, the immediate attention turns to the summer parade season ahead. The marching band staff has already been thinking ahead and we are excited about the future in making the Alexandria marching band bigger and better in 2007! This summer, the JHS Marching Band will be performing music from the highly acclaimed Disney movie "*The Lion King*". No other band has performed this music, so this will be a first for a Minnesota marching band to perform this wonderful music on the street! The arrangement is going to be awesome, with phenomenal percussion parts being written by David Howes. There has been much excitement with the anticipation of a great summer parade season!!

Summer timeline/schedule: The 2007 summer schedule will reflect past summers schedules. The plan is to have 7 – 8 parades, Tuesday and Thursday night practices, a band camp when school is out, and be done with the season on July 4th. The official summer schedule will be set and mailed out sometime in mid - February.