

2010-2011

South Point High School “Pride of the Tribe” Band Band Parent Information

Parent-Student Handbook

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Welcome to the Pride of the Tribe!

The South Point Band Boosters welcome all new and returning band members and their families to the 2010-2011 year with the SPHS Band. We are looking forward to an exciting marching season and another wonderful year for the "Pride of the Tribe" South Point High School Band.

There are many opportunities that are offered through the band program here at SPHS. These include the marching band program, Symphonic/Concert Band, our Jazz Band and more. We believe that music will enhance your child's education as well as his/her success throughout life. The SPHS Band Booster program is here to support and encourage all band members throughout their many musical endeavors. We look forward to your active participation in our booster program as we support the band programs at South Point High School.

The following information will introduce you to "Rookie Basics." We hope this will help explain some of the craziness that goes on in the fall. Please do not hesitate to ask a veteran parent any question you may have. They will do their best to answer or point you in the right direction.

Again, please do not hesitate to ask any question that you may have. Thank you in advance for your support and assistance for a *wonderful* year!

Sincerely,

South Point High School Band Boosters

PS: If any veteran parents remember something that we can pass along, please let us know!

Benefits of Marching Band

There is a unique and exciting aspect to marching band which young people seldom find available to them elsewhere. Each performance is a special opportunity where students experience a sense of community and realize that the sum of who they are is far greater than any one individual.

Marching band is complimentary to the terrific education our kids receive in the classroom. While the classroom affords a great place to build knowledge and try new skills, the extra-curricular activities like marching band afford these students a unique means for developing “life skills” such as commitment to others, precision, leadership, coordination, acceptance of differences and team work. It is in this capacity that students involved in marching band and other extra-curricular activities get a chance to generate and earn civic pride – what an honor and responsibility! These skills are critical to academic and professional success for the rest of their lives.

Marching band is a time-consuming activity, and it happens while they're all trying to get acclimated to the new school year. Marching band requires an enormous amount of mental, musical and physical skill, and that's just when you're practicing. Add to it the pressure of a performance, whether it's a parade, football game or competition, and it gets even tougher.

Marching band provides a “society” and “family” to which all band students can belong. It is a place where they learn values and standards, where they can learn to depend on one another in their pursuit of their excellence. They learn about responsibility, doing their fair share, and sticking to a common goal. They learn to value people, respect their peers, and not make judgments on the superficial. They frequently acquire a stronger base for their adult life than any other avenue open to them. They realize the reward of team effort and the importance each individual plays in making up the team. In some cases it becomes the social arena some youngsters seek but do not find in ordinary circumstances.

Studies have found that band students are more successful in college, have a stronger work ethic, higher standards, and more secure values. Through competitions (if you choose that avenue) they become acquainted with qualities which will serve them well in business and the adult world. They will have the security that they know how to extend their own efforts beyond what the average young adult may set as a limit.

It's more than just the teacher's notes; it's more than just filling up space between touchdowns; it's more than just dealing with kids who just want an easy “A”. THIS IS ABOUT TEACHING LIFE AND LIFE LESSONS. It's learning to function in society; it's about tolerance of others and learning harmony, both musical and personal. It's laughter, it's memories, it's hard work and most of all, it's the discovery of self-worth and self—skills for everyone involved in the process.

Never doubt the worth or the importance of even the most humble marching band experience. QUALITY, not quantity, will measure your success.

Come experience the excitement of the crowd as the band approaches, the precision of our marchers, the pride shown by our students. We look forward to making our community proud for many years to come.

Band Booster Officers

President	Tim Pressley Debra Pressley	timpresley@carolina.rr.com ; dpressley9119@carolina.rr.com
Vice President	Jeff Thompson Blythe Thompson	Blythethompson@aol.com ;
Secretary	Alice Davis	adavis4078@carolina.rr.com
Treasurer	Scott Alexander	ScottDAlexander@gaston.k12.com

Band Staff Officers

Band Director	Tim Hamilton	tmhamilton@gaston.k12.nc.us
Assistant Director	Ricky Collins	ricky_collins@ymail.com
Color Guard Instructor	Shawn Bethnay	shawndeb@yahoo.com
Percussion Instructor	Brent Cates	

Band Student By-Laws

1. Band Student Offices will include: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Librarian, Quartermaster, Historian, and Alumni Communications. Holders of these offices must be in Varsity Band Classes (Marching and Concert) year-round.
2. A Nominee may run for only one elected office. They may also be Marching Band Captain, or a candidate for Marching Band Captain.
3. Regarding the office of Quartermaster, the outgoing Quartermaster will present name(s) of the person(s) they feel should be considered as the next holder of this position to the Band Director. The Band Director will then make the decision and, by appointment, will name the next Quartermaster.
4. Regarding the office of Alumni Communications, the outgoing Alumni Communications Coordinator will present name(s) of the person(s) they feel should be considered as the next holder of this position to the Band Director. The Band Director will then make the decision and, by appointment, will name the next Alumni Communications Coordinator.
5. Only rising seniors may be nominated for the offices of President and Vice President. However, if the rising Senior class chooses by vote of those present, a rising Junior may also be nominated for the offices of President and Vice President.
6. Out-going seniors may make nominations for offices, but will not vote in the pending election.
7. Essay: All nominees accepting nomination must write an essay in 500 words or less explaining why they are qualified to hold the office in question. The Band Director, and possibly a select committee should they choose, will read the essays and decide on the top five nominees to appear on the ballot, or otherwise remove any nominees deemed ill-equipped for the office in question.
8. Nominees will be named on the official ballot, and voting will commence within a reasonable time period following the completion of the afore mentioned process.

Marching Band Leadership Roles

Drum Major

The *Drum Major* is the musical and motivational student leader of the Band, and is *first(1st) in command* following the Band Director and Staff. He/she serves as the Field and Indoor Conductor of music during the marching season, and when appointed by the Band Director or Staff during Concert Season. The Drum Major conducts the Band during performances and rehearsals, and act as a field coordinator during rehearsal. They also help correct group and individual errors and style problems, reviews fundamentals, and assist the Director and Staff in a variety of instructional and organizational responsibilities as needed. The Drum Major will serve the Band as a member of the Band Council and the Awards Council. *This person operates on the philosophy that the orders and instructions of the Band Director and Staff are Gospel, and are determined to be best for the entire Band. This person is a leader both on and off the field.*

Band Captain

The *Band Captain* is *second (2nd) in command* following the Band Director, Staff and Drum Major. This person is responsible for assisting the Drum Major, Staff and Band Director motivation, marching instruction and field coordination during rehearsals, as well as the consistency and cohesion of instruction of band members in basic skills and their continual refinement. The Band Captain is the person to whom the Section Captains report for help in repairing fundamental inconsistencies. He/she is responsible for keeping all section captains on the same page concerning everything from consistent marching fundamentals to organizing fun and motivational activities for the Band. The Band Captain performs all these tasks *while marching and playing on the field*. In the absence of the Drum Major, the Band Captain may be called upon by the Director or Staff to assume those responsibilities. The Band Captain will serve the Band as a member of the Band Council and the Awards Council. *This person operates on the philosophy that the orders and instructions of the Band Director and Staff are Gospel, and are determined to be best for the entire Band. This person is a leader both on and off the field.*

Section Captain

There is one (1) *Section Captain* for the following sections: *Woodwinds, Brass, Battery Percussion, Pit Percussion and Colorguard*. The *Section Captain* is in charge of the musical and marching performance of their overall section, while also managing the operations and effective communications on a daily basis. The Section Captain is responsible for the consistency and maintenance of the skills and talents of their section members necessary for successful performance of the Band. As a body(unit) the Section Captains are *third(3rd) in command* following the Band Director, Staff, Drum Major and Band Captain. The Section Captain will be in charge of Sectional Rehearsals during Band Camp, as well as periodically during the marching season. Their responsibilities during this time will include:

1. Good full Tone and Sound Production,
2. Good Intonation
3. Accuracy of Rhythm and Technique,
4. Proper Interpretation of all Musical Markings,
i.e. Dynamics, Sticking, Articulations, etc.,
5. Improvement of Marching Skills and Drill Performance.

These same elements are also to be monitored by the section captains daily *while marching on the field* during rehearsals, or inside for indoor rehearsals. They are responsible for the overall success of the entire Woodwind Section, or the Entire Brass Section, or the entire Battery/Pit Percussion Sections, or the entire Colorguard Section. Section Captains will serve as members of the Awards Council. *These persons operate on the philosophy that the orders and instructions of the Band Director and Staff are Gospel, and are determined to be best for the entire Band. These persons are leaders both on and off the field.*

Section Leaders

There may be a small number of *Section Leaders* appointed each major section as described above as determined by the Band Director and/or Staff based on successful audition, section size and need. The Section Leader may be appointed by the Section Captain to conduct more isolated rehearsals during portions of the Sectional rehearsals as described above, to provide more individualized attention in the areas of music performance and marching performance. The Section Leader will also assist the Section Captain in the successful and effective communication of their members by acquiring all the necessary and accurate contact information of all the section members. In the absence of the Section Captain, one of the Section Leaders may be appointed by the Band Captain, Drum Major, Staff or Band Director to perform the duties of the Section Captain During that time. *These persons operate on the philosophy that the orders and instructions of the Band Director and Staff are Gospel, and are determined to be best for the entire Band. These persons are leaders both on and off the field.*

Band Council

The main goal of the Band Council is to provide the best marching band experience for all those involved in The Pride of the Tribe Marching Band. This group will be comprised of persons in the following positions: President, Vice President, Drum Major, Band Captain, and one At-Large member. The At-Large Member will be a Band member selected by the Band Director.

These officers and the at-large member will work closely together to create activities, or develop conditions that will greatly motivate the entire marching band to perform at its absolute best. The work will be very hard, so there needs to be elements of fun incorporated so the camaraderie of the band will stay positive, and the members will feel like family.

The Band Council may also be charged with being the “first line of defense” for the Staff and Band Director when issues or problems develop among members, within sections, or within leadership. In such situations, Section Captains, Section Leaders, or Band Members can bring their issues to a member of the council, who will then bring it to the entire council to see if it is something they can solve, or if it needs to be taken to the Staff and Band Director.

This council must be truly committed to the success and well being of this band, and it must *operate on the philosophy that the orders and instructions of the Band Director and Staff are Gospel, and are determined to be best for the entire Band. These persons are leaders both on and off the field.*

Awards Council

The *Awards Council* will be the group of student leaders who will go on the field for the Awards Ceremony at each competition. They will determine general protocol for accepting awards, i.e how to salute, etc., according to the guidelines set forth by the host school of the competition. The members of this council will be the following: Drum Major, President, Vice President, Band Captain, Quartermaster, Woodwind Captain, Brass Captain, Battery Percussion Captain, Pit Percussion Captain, and Colorguard Captain.

Their actions on the field during this important time, regardless of the results or outcome, will reflect the grace, dignity and professionalism of The 'Pride of the Tribe'. For the *final competition* of the season, *all Seniors* not already in the Awards Council will join the council on the field for the Awards Ceremony. This council must *operate on the philosophy that the orders and instructions of the Band Director and Staff are Gospel, and are determined to be best for the entire Band. These persons are leaders both on and off the field.*

Grading Policy

Marching Band/Varsity Band

Class Work – 50%

Daily student attendance and full participation with all mandated materials:

Absences: (1 point) Will be deducted from your 6-week grade for every 30 minutes of absence (excused and unexcused) from class/rehearsal. As Marching Band is a team event which requires the presence of all members to achieve the highest possibility of success in rehearsal, opportunities for earning points back (for those with excused absences) are extremely limited. This is especially true for the field rehearsals which must take place outdoors and make up approximately 80% to 90% of the band's class/rehearsal time. Due to scheduling and availability constraints of facilities, the band's time on the field is strictly limited. Make-up time for the outdoor portions is virtually impossible. The Band Director, however, will review each situation carefully and fairly to determine if there is a feasible opportunity for make-up. History has shown that in most cases, there aren't opportunities for make-up, and students have to accept the loss of points. Perpetual loss of points due to absences will result in the student's removal from the performance ensemble for the remainder of the season.

Playing Grades:

- There will be memorization test for marching band show music and warm-ups, and non-memorized playing test for concert band and other program music. There are also Scale/arpeggio and/or Rudiment performance test. Successful completion of these test is mandatory for performance participation.
- Any written quizzes, test and assignments.

After-School/Evening Obligations – 50%

- All Marching Band rehearsals, Band Camp, Football Games, Parades and Contests.
- Evening Concert rehearsals and performance with all mandated materials.
- After-School/Evening Contest Sectionals and Pre-Contest Performance.
- The Concert Band Contest Performance.
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Performance Attire: Uniforms are to be complete and correct. Each incident of failure will result in the loss of 5-20 points of the grade average, as it may disqualify you from the performance. Arrive time for your call time as given by the Band Director.

Service Performance(s): On certain rare occasion, the band may be called upon to perform for special school/community events or functions. As we are the instrumental performance ensemble for our school and community, it is only fitting that we do all we can to answer the call when given reasonable notice. Please know that I am fully aware of the great value of your time, so in such event, I will do all I can to give you reasonable notice so you may adjust your schedules. Based upon the magnitude of the event, if I don't receive reasonable notice, the matter may or may not be brought before you. **PLEASE NOTE:** *Each unexcused absences will results in the loss of 20 points from the 6-Week grade average. Subsequent absences from performances could result in the loss of your Raider Band Membership.*

Rookie Basics

A survival guide for your first year in the SPHS Band Program - useful for veteran parents too...The following web page is the product of former "new band parents" who spent a good bit of time in our "freshman" year in various stages of confusion. In the many hours we spent watching practices, picking up our kids, and going to competitions we have all felt confused, lost and totally bewildered at one time or another.

We hope this document will help ease you through the transition from "freshman" band parent to "veteran" band parent. (Many thanks to all those parents who came before us; and to the other bands who have produced similar information!)

For most of us (parents and students alike), the transition from middle school band programs to high school band programs is huge, especially in marching band. The increased expectations come with greater rewards, in terms of your student's accomplishments and the pride you will have in watching his/her accomplishments.

This document is our attempt to share with you some of the finer points of making the most of your "freshman" year as a band parent. The South Point High School Band is supported by the SPHS Band Booster program. The Boosters consist solely of volunteer parents in order to help provide your students with an enjoyable and rewarding band experience. Please join us in meeting this challenge by volunteering your time and talents. Your student will reap the benefits. We welcome all of our new parents and look forward to getting to know you and your students!

Marching Fundamentals and Performance Training-a.k.a. BAND CAMP

Marching fundamentals and performance training usually begins in July during the weeks prior to the start of school. The staff and students work very hard for about eight hours a day, five days a week. During training, they learn the music and marching routine for their fall show. Generally, the first week consists of 5 full days for various sections of the band to learn marching fundamentals. Guard & Percussion usually have scheduled times during this time to begin learning their fall show as well. Full band camp is for 1-2 weeks from 8-5, Monday-Friday. The schedules can also be found on the web site, www.sphsband.info. The kids get quite a workout. Be prepared to hear about running, calisthenics, and plenty of sweating. It's an experience the kids "love to hate," and will talk about for years to come.

If time allows and the students are ready, band camp culminates with Meet-the-Band Night, a performance for the band families. It's great fun to come out and see how far the kids have come in just three weeks.

Another major benefit of band camp is that when your freshman student arrives for the first day of high school, he or she will already be a part of a well-respected group and will have a whole new group of friends (across all grades) to help with the transition into high school.

Marching Band Season

The Marching Band season starts with band camp. Practice continues after school during the week, usually Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Please check with your child and/or the website for schedule changes.

Football Games

The band performs their show at half-time of all varsity football games (Friday evenings), as well as playing in the stands during the game. The band has a roped off section in the stands and many of the band parents sit together near the band -- a great opportunity to get to know other parents.

Competitions

The marching band competes against other high school bands on many Saturdays in the fall. Most of the competitions are "local" (within an hour or so of Belmont) and one or two could be out of town. It is a great opportunity to watch all the bands compete and cheer our kids on. So, please come on out and support our SPHS Band students!

Every competition will be listed on the Calendar of Events page on the web site. Your student will be told the call time for each event and an approximate time for our return. We leave from the school and travel to competitions in a convoy. You are welcome to join the "convoy" but, Please DO NOT get in line between the buses or the support vehicles with the trailers. The band buses & support vehicles park separate from general parking. Be aware that some competition sites charge for parking, and there is usually a general admission fee of up to \$10 per person. Don't forget to send a few dollars with your band student so they can buy food and drinks from the competition concessions. Please read Marching Competition Etiquette.

Uniforms

Your student will be issued a marching band uniform consisting of a jacket, pants, gauntlets and a hat. You will need to purchase a garment bag, gloves, black socks and marching shoes (all are ordered during band camp except for the socks). The shoes & gloves belong to the student, so keep track of them. There is a charge for gloves that need to be replaced. The uniform guidelines are on the web site.

Color Guard members are issued a separate uniform. There may be other pieces that individual color guard members are required to purchase as part of their uniform. The color guard instructor will advise the color guard member of any additional items that are needed.

Weather

Bands do perform (and rehearse) in the sun, wind, and rain. The experienced parents go to the competitions prepared to sit through unpleasant weather and cheer for all the bands. Rain gear and ponchos are better than umbrellas (which tend to block the view of the shows and cause rivers of rain to run on the laps of people behind you). If it rains during a competition, the bands may need to march in the mud. If the field conditions are poor, the band may do a standstill performance on the track. Most bands want to avoid standstills because no points are given for marching in a standstill performance; the higher the points the better the score. (The band directors may choose not to attend a performance if there is a high probability for rain.)

HELP NEEDED! WE ARE ALL VOLUNTEERS!

During marching season, the band needs many hands behind the scenes to make the show successful. As your student enters high school, this is one of the few opportunities you may have to stay involved with their activities. They realize very quickly that Marching Band doesn't happen without a lot of parental support. The Band Boosters will be looking for parents to help with the following *PLUS MORE*:

Chaperones

These are the parents that stay with the band for all performances and trips, ensuring each band member's safety and well-being. Our chaperones also help the band students get prepared for competitions by passing out uniforms and hats, adding plumes, etc., and checking in the uniforms when done. Chaperones help prepare and organize snacks and drinks when the band students are at competitions or performing at games.

Pit Crew and Equipment

These are the work horses of our show every year. They assist in getting equipment on and off the field as well as loading and unloading the equipment from trailers and trucks. Our chaperones also help with the pit as needed.

Uniforms

We need volunteers to help with the uniforms as needed. We need anyone who can help with minor repairs, help with other uniform maintenance and helping with the distribution/storage for each event. *Many hands make short work*. From time to time other basic assistance may be needed. Let the *Uniform Mom* know if you are able to help.

Fundraisers

We will have several fundraisers during the 2010-2011 school year. Jeff and Blythe Thompson are the Chairman of Fundraising, and they will be looking for help with the fundraisers. Remember, we always need volunteers when it is time to collect money and distribute items.

The Cost of Marching Band

There is a band fee required for each student participating in the band program. Fees are laid out in the SPHS Band Boosters. If there is an issue with paying the band fee, please contact Mr. Hamilton. We don't want to exclude any student. Band fees are used to help offset the expenses of running the band program here at SPHS, including band camp, uniforms, travel, instructors, food & drinks, etc.

Fundraisers

In years past, we have had carwashes, car magnet sales, fruit sale, All District band auditions, Gaston County Fanfare, etc... The 2010-2011 School year will see some changes in the band fundraising programs as we endeavor to compete with the school activities that are also participating in various fund raisers. We want to stay creative and effective with our ideas. We will encourage everyone to participate in the fundraising opportunities, as this is one way we can help offset the cost to each student.

Helpful hints to save you time, gas & grief

Mr. Hamilton, the instructors, and the Boosters want this to be a positive experience for all the students and their families. Here are some helpful hints (learned from our own and many other band parents' experiences):

- Hold your child responsible for being prepared. Before they leave the house for rehearsal or a performance make sure they ask themselves, "Do I have EVERYTHING I need?" **
- If you have seen the movie *Drumline* you heard the following, "If you are early, you are on time. If you are on time, you are late." This is a good phrase to live by. This means that students are expected to arrive for scheduled practice about 15 minutes early so they are in position and ready to rehearse at the scheduled start time. If start time is 5:00 p.m., plan to arrive around 4:45 p.m.
- When you pick your child up from practice, try to be there a little early:
First, you'll get to see the amount of work that your student puts in to this program. Second, you can listen to "circle-up." This is usually a great way to find out about any changes or new information. Also, it's a great way to meet other band parents.
- Mr. Hamilton and the instructors try very hard to end practice at the scheduled time. Occasionally practice may run over. Please be patient ... if this happens it is for a very good reason.
- Ask your student for any schedule changes each week.
- Always be prepared for changes.
- Check the web site often - www.sphsband.info
- Network - Take the opportunity to meet other parents (at Booster meetings, after practice, at games & competitions, fundraising activities, etc.). This is how we all met each other. It is also the best way to get helpful hints on band parenting from others.

**Keep at least one (1) extra pair of black socks in the car during marching season. That way you won't have to make an extra trip to Wal-Mart before a performance.

Don't hesitate to ask any of the veteran band parents or Booster Board members. We've all been there and are happy to help. We hope this has been helpful.

Introduction to Marching Band Competitions

Hopefully this document will help answer most of the questions you may have about marching band competitions. This document only talks about “the band.” What about the color guard? In marching band competitions the color guard (or “auxiliary”) is considered to be an integral part of the band just like any other section (trumpets, flutes, etc.) For purposes of this document “the band” refers to students playing marching instruments, “pit” instruments, or participating in color guard.

A Typical Marching Band Competition Day

Typically the band will rehearse in the morning at school. Sometimes, rehearsal will start as early as 8:00am (as usual). Sometimes, rehearsal will start late, or the band will have an extended lunch period before boarding the bus to travel to the competition. The exact schedule depends on what parts of the program the band needs to work on, travel time to the event, and even when the band is scheduled to perform during the event. The final schedule for each competition day will be distributed a few days before the competition. It will also be posted on our website – usually along with a map to the competition site. For planning purposes, students should expect a marching band competition to be an all-day commitment which will last until late in the evening. Parents who just want to attend the competition do not need to follow the student schedule. They should plan to arrive at the competition site **at least** an hour before the band is scheduled to ensure adequate time to find parking, walk to the stadium, pay admission, and find their seat before the band competes. Spectators are asked not to enter the stadium during a band performance. If you arrive while a band is performing you should wait until a break before finding your seat. At many competitions there will be ushers who will indicate when to wait, and when you may enter the stands. We strongly recommend that parents plan their time at the competition so they can observe as many bands as possible – not just our band.

What does the band do during all that time?

Over 100 South Point students, parents, and staff are involved when we participate in a marching band competition. Travel time varies. After arrival at the competition site it typically takes about two hours to set up, assemble instruments, get in uniform, and warm up. Warm up activities occur away from the stadium, to minimize interference with bands that are performing at the same time. A typical marching band competition involves more than a dozen bands. The events are typically spread out over a large site. A lot of people and equipment must be moved over fairly large distances through crowded areas.

Transportation

Students always travel **TO** marching band competitions as a group. Exceptions to this rule, if any, would be extremely rare. Preparation and transport to these events is already hectic enough, and dealing with even one late or lost student could completely devastate the event for the rest of the band. Sometimes there are last minute changes which are discussed during the ride to the show. Sometimes the order or scheduled performance times change. This makes it essential for the students to travel and arrive at the event together. Students are allowed to return home with parents (and only parents) if they have a signed "Leaving with Parents" form and they sign out with the Band Director before leaving. Parents are encouraged to carpool to these events. This provides a natural way to meet other band parents, and many lasting friendships between parents have resulted from carpooling or volunteering at band events.

Finding Your Student

Finding and visiting your student at a marching band competition can be very challenging. Cell phones can help, but there is no guarantee your phone will work in some locations, and often it's too noisy for you (or your student) to hear the phone anyway. Having an advance plan can help. Parents are allowed in the band staging area, which can be almost as amazing as the competition itself. Finding the staging area for our band may be a challenge. At some competitions it may be more than a half mile from the stadium. It is probably easier to locate your student after they have competed.

Where to sit

At most competitions, parents and spectators (paying customers) will sit on the "front" side of the stadium. This is the side with the press box where the "home" crowd would sit. Performers (our students) are usually required to sit on the "back" side of the stadium, where the "visitor" crowd would sit. Parents are allowed to sit with band members on the back side of the stadium. Occasionally, the front side of the stadium is so crowded that the back side is also used for overflow customer seating.

Weather

Inclement weather does not automatically cancel a marching band competition. In most cases the competition will continue even if it is raining. We strongly recommend you bring additional clothing to deal with both cold and wet conditions. Competitions are at night. It gets cold, and sometimes it gets very wet. Most stadiums have metal seating which will suck every trace of heat from your body if you don't also bring something soft and insulated to sit on. Please do not use an umbrella in the stands during the competition. It blocks the views of other spectators who are sitting in the rain with you.

What To Bring With You

1. Money for admission to the competition, and for purchasing food or beverages. (Admission is typically \$10-\$15 for adults, sometimes less for children. Performers do not pay, but support staff and volunteers usually do have to pay.)
2. Warm clothes.
3. Wet weather gear (chant in unison "Gore-Tex is my friend, Gore-Tex is my friend,...")
4. More warm clothes.
5. Warm blanket to put over you.
6. Another warm blanket to sit on.
7. Water to drink .
8. A chair to sit on if you plan to hang around in the parking lot before/after the competition. Please do not plan to bring chairs into the stadium – space in the stands is usually at a premium. "Stadium seats" are usually OK, but each venue sets its own policy.

Competition Schedule

There are usually around 10-16 bands at a competition. The bands are assigned to classes based on the size of the band. Most (but not all) of our competitions are in a circuit run by the North Carolina State Band Directors Association. There are 6 classes of bands in field competition. Classification of each band is based on TOTAL number of horn/wind players(instrumentalists) and can vary based on the competition. The schedule at a given competition usually starts with the smallest class and moves up toward the largest class. After the final band performs there is a break for score calculation. Then the awards ceremony begins. Our band is in class 4A, which

means that we will tend to compete later in the evening. We will usually know our approximate performance time (sometimes called “step off time”) in advance, but schedules can and do change during the competition. Planning to arrive “just in time” to hear our band play is a very risky strategy. The starting time varies for each competition.

What Is The “PIT” Crew?

Most of the band plays their instruments while marching. The portion of the band playing stationary instruments (tympani, marimba, gong, chimes, cymbals, keyboard, etc.) at the front of the band is called the “pit”. The “pit crew” is a team of parents responsible for helping the pit musicians move this equipment on and off the field within a strict time limit.

Heading Home

After the awards ceremony students return to the staging area to load the buses for the return trip home. Any remaining items (instruments, equipment, and food service items) need to be loaded onto the truck before we leave. Once the buses and truck return to the school a number of items must be unloaded and put away. Sometimes, the crush of students attempting to retrieve their instruments from the truck interferes with unloading the truck, causing an unnecessary delay for everyone. If your student is waiting for something to come off the truck please be patient, and encourage them to help unload and put things away. By the end of a long marching band competition day we are all very tired and anxious to go home. Some of our school neighbors are very sensitive to noise coming from the school. Please remember that “reasonable” noise in the afternoon or early evening hours maybe quite unreasonable at midnight. Please remind your students to keep noise to a minimum if we arrive back at the school late. Students will have the opportunity to call home when we arrive at the school (usually before we arrive at the school). At least one adult will remain at the school until all students have been picked up. Students should not plan to walk home.

Auxiliary - see Guard.

Battery - Marching Band percussion section that carries drums and marches; is comprised of snare drums, bass drums, and quads (see Quads).

BOA - Bands of America - Bands of America is a program of Music for All. More than 1 million people are alumni of Bands of America marching band events, the first of which were held in 1976. Bands of America was created in 1976 as "Marching Bands of America" (MBA), renamed Bands of America (BOA) in 1984 and merged with the Music for All Foundation in 2006 to create Music for All. MFA's marching band events continue to carry the name of "Bands of America." (www.musicforall.org)

Cadence - The beat played by percussion during a parade to indicate the marching pace. Also played as the band marches off the field after a field show or rehearsal.

Caption awards - various awards a marching band can win at competitions, can include: Drum Major, Drumline, Auxiliary, Music, Marching, General Effect, Percussion Class Grand Champion, Pit Crew and Audience Spirit Awards, Overall Class Champion (based on highest points across all classes.) Points can total up to 100 for each adjudicated category.

Clinicians - personnel hired to help out with various sections of the band, as in brass instructor or drumline instructor.

Color guard - see Guard.

Drill - the steps and positions that make up the Marching Band show. (see Sets)

Drill book - the notebook that holds each individual student's drill for the Marching Band show.

Drill down - A marching skills contest conducted along the lines of "Simon Says." Contest is one of the highlights of the parent show at the end of band camp.

Drum major(s) - Student conductor(s) who direct the marching band as it plays.

Drumline - the entire percussion section of the Marching Band; includes both the PIT and the Battery.

Flags - flags/silks used by the Guard during a Marching Band show.

Front Ensemble - Formerly known as PIT. See PIT.

Gauntlets - wrist and lower-arm covering; part of Marching Band/Guard uniform.

Guard - a group of students who add color and style to marching-band performances with flags and other props. Also known as Auxiliary, the term originally used for the flag/rifle carriers who stood at the front of marching show. It has evolved into modern color guard when dance and decorative flags were added.

PIT - Marching Band percussion section (percussion instrument team) that does not march (plays on the sidelines), comprised of instruments such as tympani, xylophones, gongs, etc.

PIT crew - parents and volunteers who help assemble the pit instruments, push them onto the field and set them up for competition, A.K.A. "Pit Parents."

Plumes - the feathered portion of the Marching Band hats (very fragile); provided by band.

Podium - see Tower.

Quads - set of 4 connected drums carried by member of the battery.

Rifles - imitation rifles the Guard use in a Marching Band show. (They're heavy!)

Run-through - practicing the Marching Band show.

Sabers - fake swords the Guard use in a Marching Band show.

Scoring - See section in BOA Adjudicators Handbook, starting on page 24 for a description of scoring for BOA. Scoring rules are not universal across judging organizations, but this is a nice insight into the whole process from a judge's point of view.

Section - students who play the same instruments, i.e. the trumpet section.

Section leader – a band student who is in charge of a Marching Band instrument section such as "alto sax section leader."

Sectional -a practice or rehearsal by a section of instruments.

Sets - sub-set of the shows.

Step Off - the precise moment when a Marching Band parade performance starts.

Tower - raised platform upon which conductors stand.

Winds - the non-percussion part of the band; any instrument that is played by blowing air.

Winter Guard - a competitive auxiliary group that performs after Marching Band season is completed.