

Your Band
NEWSLETTER

September 2020 Edition

The Vienna Community Band



By Isaac Betancourt and Contributors

The Vienna Community Band was established in 1975, with the support of the Parks and Recreation Department of the Town of Vienna. The Band's first assignment was to assist in the celebration of the U.S. Bicentennial.

Thanks to the musicians that volunteer to be part of the band and the financial support and rehearsal space provided by the Town of Vienna, the Band continues its everlasting mission of providing free music to the community.

Every year, the Band performs several concerts at several Town of Vienna venues such as the Community Center, the Town Green, Viva Vienna, Flint Hill Cemetery, and many more.

For the scheduling of these events, the Band's Manager, Tom Cooper (Trumpet Player), coordinates with staff at the Town's Department of Parks & Recreation, the Town of Vienna Historical Society, the American Legion Post 180, the Rotary Club of Vienna and many other events needing musical performances throughout the year.



Conductor's Corner



Letter to the Band from Cornelius

Greetings Everyone!

2020! What can I say? It's been a heck of a year so far. We still have a few more months left, so hang in there. My four year old remarked in mid-April that described my sentiments accurately. He said, "I want to go to Virginia to see daddy's band play!" To hear that melted my heart as

music has become an essential part of his life, and seeing 'daddy's band' is something that he has come to expect.

I can say that during this absence, I certainly have missed making music with the band, but I've missed the 'community' portion more. I've missed the anticipation of rehearsing with people ready to make music. I miss talking to you before and after rehearsals, being part of your Sunday evening, as you have certainly been a part of mine since the fall of 2014. The coronavirus has certainly disrupted this part of our lives.

I consider us fortunate in regards to the timing of things. When we last saw each other, we'd just completed a successful concert and celebrated my 40th birthday. (Thank you all for the wishes and the cake. It was delicious) We'd also just started on new music but hadn't dug too deep into it just yet. However, with the way things happened across the world, suddenly, we had our lives changed instantly before our very eyes.

I like to try to see the bright side of things. For me, some of the fantastic things have been spending time with my family, especially my son, and seeing him more often than I have in the past. Another is having time to reflect on my time and memories as a musician, a teacher, a conductor, a husband, a father, and just a person in general. As Reena and I refer to COVID-19 in our home, the 'virus' has caused us to slow down and take a moment to do an inventory of what's essential. I suspect that you've probably had time to do this as well. It's certainly been a blessing among this plague.

As we prepare to continue to deal with the effects of COVID-19, I hope that you have taken the time to connect and reconnect with loved ones but also rediscover some pastimes that maybe you haven't explored in a while. I'm sure there's been some music that you've dusted off. Perhaps an old chess set or a pack of cards. If you've been dying to play some music, I want to give you some suggestions.

1) Purchase some literature.

One of the ways that you can keep your chops up is to buy some music. There are so many options you can choose from. Solo literature for your instrument, but maybe you aren't a contemporary-classical solo player. There is plenty of play-along that you can purchase by Jamey Aebersold (jazz) or Hal Leonard (jazz and popular music). You can buy a duet, trio, or other chamber works and learn all the parts and maybe get together some friends to play. Another place to buy music is [musicnotes.com](https://www.musicnotes.com) for popular and Broadway music.

2) Look for PDFs online

If you type in sheet music and the name of the piece you are hoping to find and then go to 'images,' you will find a variety of sheet music available. It is a great way to get sight-reading. You'll find that the more you sight-read different literature in different keys, the better you become. It will help to continue that small segment of your musicianship

3) Pick out simple tunes by ear.

This isn't the easiest thing to do, but what you find is that you start developing your ear. Start with simple tunes like nursery rhymes, then move on to simple songs from the radio, tv, or even your album collection. You'll be surprised how this opens your ear. Warning it can be frustrating at times, but it is a great way to develop your musicianship and learn your way around your instrument.

4) Study privately

There are tons of music teachers who have now switched to teaching lessons in a zoom format. They will be able to address many issues with you in the privacy of your home. It is a great way to stay connected to playing and will give you a musical goal.

5) Record yourself playing a song and share

On occasion, I do this on Facebook. Usually, I'm playing something on the piano, and it's fun to share something that makes you proud. Its beauty is that it can feel like a performance, especially when you are vulnerable and put yourself out there.

None of these suggestions will replace playing together as a band, but I have faith that we all will be along sooner than later. I ask that you all take care of yourselves and make efforts to stay physically and mentally healthy during this time. Friends, I will see you soon.

Take Care, and God bless.

Vice-Conductor's Message

Letter from Barbara

Stayin' Alive"

"Windows opened, doors unlocked, and balconies filled. Thousands of men, women, and children finally began making music together." This was Milan in the summer of 1576 during the plague of Saint Charles.

As musicians, we know that music heals and music unites.

When the 2020 pandemic is all over, we will have a concert and celebrate. For now, we can practice social distancing, wear masks, and some can begin playing small ensemble performances in the open air.

We'll practice social distancing, and if you want to play, here is a plan:

- 1. We each have a personal file of a duet, trio, or quartet music.*
- 2. Using that music, those comfortable doing so can organize your small group to fit the parts.*
- 3. Contact the players you need and have an outdoor backyard rehearsal.*
- 4. After 1-3 rehearsals, give your performance at an outdoor location in the Vienna area (example - Vienna Green Park, a church parking lot, metro, or the end of your street).*

Take your chair and stand.

The performance could be 15-30 minutes, depending on your ensemble.

People may stop and listen, or they may keep on walking.

Make sure you keep social distance and wear a mask when not playing.

I will come to your performance and take a picture of your group for the website. The more locations and the more instruments represented, the better for all of us.

Music has the power to encourage, to soothe, and to unite. If you want, this is an opportunity to do our part.

President's Message

Message by Mike,

During this time, when measures for the coronavirus's prevention have suspended rehearsals and performances of the Vienna Band, the Board of Directors is exploring ways to keep the Band active. We may not rehearse in the Community Center. Even for small groups, members are reluctant to blow their horns in a room filled with other players. The Town of Vienna has canceled events where the Band performs typically. In response to these extraordinary restrictions, the Board created a select committee headed by Cornelius to find ways to keep the Band functioning as an association of musicians.

One idea I have heard mentioned is for members of the Band to play a simple piece at home and then have their recorded contributions combined to make a single band performance. The Board is looking for someone who has the expertise and equipment to do audio and video mixing. Please refer him to me. The Board is interested in having a Band Photographer. If you know of an amateur photographer, invite him to inquire with me about the position.

I welcome suggestions and comments.

Mike Fleming, President

charles.fleming@bhox.com

Who's Playing Next to You?

In this edition, we are featuring Stanley (Stan), Stewart.



-Trumpet Player-

Stan is a very busy guy nowadays who spends his retired days in Vienna, as a Physical Fitness Trainer.

I spent a few minutes speaking with my dear friend Stan, who kindly shared his passion for music with me,

How did you start in music?

"My family growing up was musical. We all sang in church. My older brother started playing the trumpet first. When he switched to saxophone soon after that, I inherited the horn, which I

endearingly refer to as the “old Chevy.” I’ve had it since I was in 4th grade. It is over 50 years old!”

What has been your favorite concert ever? Why?

“It has to be the Parliament-Funkadelic concert with the main funkmaster George Clinton. It was in 1979 at the Capitol Centre in Landover, MD.”

“I love funk, and this band was the best at it!”

What’s your favorite instrument that you play now?

“I enjoy playing my Bach (Stradivarius 37) trumpet.”

Judy's Corner

By Judy, Secretary, VCB Board

Dear Band Members!

I miss being with you and playing all that great music that Cornelius and Barbara select. For every new concert, it seems like the music gets more complicated (or maybe I should say challenging)! It’s tough to keep up with our great Music Director and Assistant Music Director.

So the critical thing to do in this time of the pandemic is to practice, practice, PRACTICE. And keep working on those scales! They are the building blocks of ethical music-making, and we can each do this on our own, so when it’s time for us to have that great concert, we will be ready. Keep on PLAYING!

Band Notes

PLEASE TURN IN YOUR MUSIC FOLDER

On Sunday, September 13, 2020, from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm, the librarian and members of the Board of the Vienna Community Band will be on hand to collect music folders from current band members **OUTSIDE in the parking lot at the Vienna Community**

Center (120 Cherry Street SE, Vienna, VA 22180). If you cannot return your music folder on the date provided, please contact Carrie Smith (call or text her at 571-214-3898) to make other arrangements.

You May Think We Are Asking for Too Much?

The Vienna Community Band is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization which makes all donations tax-deductible.

Your tax-deductible donation will help your band maintain financial sustainability and will aid us in keeping our music alive in the Town of Vienna for many generations to come...

We highly encourage every Band member and Supporters to help us in this endeavor.

Every dollar counts.

Kindly send your checks to,

Vienna Community Band

P.O. Box 149

Vienna, Virginia 22183



The Band Would Like to Thank for Their Support,

Vienna's Town Mayor - Linda Colbert

Vienna's Town Manager - Mercury Payton

Director of Parks and Recreation - Leslie Herman

**American Legion Post 180 by the Leadership of Post
Commander Guillermo Guillem**

The Vienna Community

And last but not least

You, our Band Members.