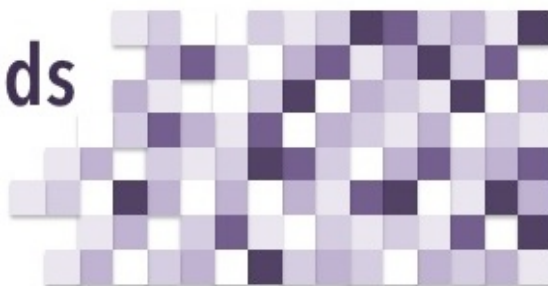


Pioneer High School Bands

Ann Arbor, Michigan

March, 2014 Newsletter

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Editors Prelude



Yeah, it's cold out. I get that. But, honestly, does this really come as any surprise? We live in Michigan. Many of us have been doing that for a long, long time, and so we really should know by now that Michigan has about 10 months of winter, a month of slush and then, just in time for Band Camp, a month of sauna. So, yeah, we're now in that 10-month part, so what's a person to do? Hey - I know! Let's bask in the warm diversion that is our kid's wonderful music while slurping broth from our purple Pioneer Band mugs! Never you mind that we could also do that while living in Florida, but, see, then our mugs would probably have some dumb picture of an alligator and plus, they have cockroaches the size of fruit bats down there. That's no way to live.

So, put on an extra sweater and pay attention. The business end of Pioneer's Band season is upon us - tons of performances, fund raisers and parties are scheduled to occur between mid February and the end of April, and all of them are great, not-to-be-missed events. Also, they're all held indoors. The Polar Bear Band Bonanza we tried out in the parking lot a few years back didn't work very well. The sax players were complaining that the mittens made it hard to play, and both parents that attended had to be carried back into the building to thaw. Anyway, read on for a preview of some of what's to come:



MSBOA Band Festival



First up, we have the MSBOA Band Festival. This is like the MSBOA Solo and Ensemble Festival which most of your kids took part in last January, except that it involves adjudicated performances of the entire band, not just onesies and twosies. Held on Saturday 2/28/15 this year, at Pioneer, it really is something worth attending - ESPECIALLY the sight-reading part which follows the main performance part. This is where the bands and the Director are presented with a score they've never seen before, and between the lot of them, they turn it into something that sounds absolutely fantastic. Me, I have a hard time sight-reading Harry Potter. I also don't think I could get 50 of my friends to even clap in unison without sounding like a typing pool. But these kids, under the direction of Mr. Leach, can cold-start a full-on performance piece in near-perfect sync with nary a missed beat. Practice makes perfect, yeah, but to make music you've never seen before work on the fly takes talent, and it becomes clear during these sight-reading events that the Pioneer Bands have an abundance of talent. This is astonishing stuff. Don't miss it. I'm serious. Of course, if my intimidating pitch isn't enough, tons more information (including performance schedules for all the bands) along with crucial volunteer opportunities can be found in the link on the right.



[MSBOA Band Festival
Information
http://www.aapioneerbands.org/p
ba/band_festival.html](http://www.aapioneerbands.org/pba/band_festival.html)

Band Gala



Next, the Band Gala, 3/11/2015, Zingerman's Roadhouse, 6:30 – 8:30 pm. This is the premier band support event of the year. It's a wonderful, glamorous night out, chock-full of Pioneer Band Superstars; Mr. Leach and Ms. Waring will both be there, so instead of stalking them from a distance, you can walk right up and talk to them. They're both lovely people so don't be afraid. Additionally, there will be numerous informal performances by members of the Jazz, Varsity, Concert and Symphony bands, so you can mix and mingle with other band parents, sip a fine wine, AND be entertained by the excellent musicianship of our kids all at the same time. This year, there will be a silent auction as well as something called a "wine pull raffle" which, I've been assured, is an activity you can do without spraining anything. Unless you want to sprain something, in which case there are some forms you'll need to fill out first. For reservations and more information can be found in the link on the right.



Commercial Break



Speaking of fundraisers, here's one that my wife helped to organize, and as such she's gently reminding me to add copy to the newsletter about it. So. Have y'all heard about goodsearch? No? Well, here's the deal: goodsearch is a Yahoo! Powered internet search engine that donates a penny to your cause (read: OUR cause) every time you use it to look for "best cat video 2015". Go to www.goodsearch.com and check it out. You'll need to create an account (takes about 8 seconds), find your cause (Pioneer Band Association in ANN ARBOR – there's another one in Kentucky or something – insider tip: that's not us), and then just use their search engine like you normally would use Google. Or Bing. Or whatever. Each time you do, Pioneer Bands gets a penny. It doesn't sound like a lot, but I only started using it this morning and already I'm up to a quarter just finding this little gem: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNWjZcbv2ul>.

Pennies not enough, big spender? Well, then go for the big money: associated with goodsearch is "goodshop" with deals and coupons for any number of retailers, Amazon, Target and Starbucks among them (see links on the goodsearch home page). Use the coupons and various percentages of the coupon value get donated to Pioneer Bands as well. In some cases, you don't even need to use a coupon, just launch to the shopping site of your choice from the links on the goodsearch homepage, and Pioneer Bands will get a percentage of anything you purchase. There. 'Nuff said on that. Stop punching me.



[Pioneer Band Gala
http://www.aapioneerbands.org/calendar/gala.html](http://www.aapioneerbands.org/calendar/gala.html)

[Goodsearch & Goodshop
http://www.goodsearch.com/](http://www.goodsearch.com/)

Band Ball



Organized by the kids and held for the kids, the annual Band Ball will again be rocking out at the historic Cobblestone Farm on Packard on March 14th, from 7:00 to 10:00 pm. You know, in the event that “rocking out” is still a thing. Whatever the current term may be, there will be music, dancing, refreshments and merriment. The ball will again be hosted by Mr. Leach and Ms. Waring, and has proven to be a wonderful team-building event which promotes the band culture, allows the kids from all of the Pioneer bands to hang with each other and just generally to let their hair down and have a good time. You know, sigh, assuming that “letting their hair down” is still a thing. Tickets are \$10/individual, \$20/couple – tickets will be sold ahead of time in school so that the number of attendees will be known – no tickets will be sold at the door!



Band Quet



Okay, so what have we had so far – Band Festival, Band Gala, Band Ball, and now the Band Quet. I do believe I’m sensing a motif. With luck, we’ll not devolve to Band Danna, Band Width or Contra Band by the end of this newsletter. We shall see. Regardless –

The Bandquet: Scheduled for Monday, April 27th at 6:00 pm, the Bandquet is the annual end of the season celebration to recognize each and every band member for their hard work and contributions to their respective bands over the year. The Bandquet includes fun stuff like awards, slideshows, and the much-anticipated skit put on by the seniors during which no animals will be harmed. Or, this being Ann Arbor, consumed. Most parents are welcome to attend. Unfortunately, I’m not. Not since I made the mistake of wearing my “I’m with Pookie” T-shirt to the last one, causing my son to ban me from all future events. I look forward to somebody telling me how it went.



Bands in Review

Finally, there’s the Bands in Review, Saturday March 21, 2015, starting at 7:00 pm at Pioneer. Ticket packages will be sent home with band members – each packet will have a family ticket (\$10) and two individual tickets (\$5) that the kids can sell to family, friends, vague online acquaintances, whomever. Note that only the advance ticket sale proceeds go to the Pioneer Bands. You can get tickets at the door, too, but that money goes to AAPS in general, and might be used for stuff like roofing tar or football helmets, so for us, it would be best to purchase tickets ahead of time. Anyway, Bands in Review features performances from Ann Arbor’s middle school and high school bands, and really showcases the depth of our town’s music programs. Yeah, it snows a lot, and yeah, it’s cold and yeah, fur trapping is a hard way to earn a living, but man, our kids can really play some serious music. The thing that’s cool about Bands in Review is seeing not so much the increase in talent as you go through the various band levels, since all of these kids are talented, but how that talent is increasingly harnessed and refined as the kids go along their musical paths through the AAPS system. Esoterica like that notwithstanding, it’s also a great evening of great music, and definitely the best entertainment anywhere that you’ll be able to find for the money. Plus, you can probably buy Pioneer Band mugs in the hallway. For the broth.

