

Lex-Ham Community Band



Member Information

History

The Lex-Ham Community Band was formed in 1992 by residents of the Lexington-Hamline neighborhood in Saint Paul along with Richard Norris, who was then the band director at Concordia College. Since then the band has played 12 months a year and has performed at concerts throughout the Twin Cities. Many of the concerts are at nursing homes, neighborhood festivals such as the Lexington-Hamline Ice Cream Social and the Mac-Grove Fest, parks, and at the annual BandWidth Music Festival. The band has performed at Grand Old Day, Highland Fest, and the Selby Avenue Jazz Festival.

After Richard Norris' death in 1995, Keith Esala, Doug Jacox, Jeremy Carvell, Anthony Parrish, and Austin Viracy-Ertelt have directed the group. Bill Teeple became the director of the ensemble in 2023.

Membership

The Lex-Ham Community Band is open to anyone of any age who can perform high-school level band music. There are no fees to perform with the band. However, members are asked to make a donation to the band to cover the band's expenses, such as purchasing new music and paying the director's stipend. The band members are all volunteers.

Repertoire

The band plays a wide range of music, from marches, show tunes, film scores, pieces from the classic band literature, classical music, swing, jazz, and Dixieland. Most concert band music is rated on a 1 to 6 scale with 1 being very easy and 6 being very difficult. Most of the music the band performs would be rated 3 to 4.

Rehearsals

For the most part, the band will either rehearse or perform a concert each weekend. The band publishes its upcoming events on-line at <http://www.lexhamarts.org/band/calendar>. While it is most desirable for band members to come to all rehearsals, it is understandable that conflicts arise.

Rehearsals are from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. on Sunday evenings, normally in the band room at Concordia University-St. Paul (see <http://www.lexhamarts.org/band/MapToCSP> for directions and parking locations)

E-mail announcements for each rehearsal and concert are sent to all band members who have an e-mail account.

Music Folders

The band maintains music folders with the music for the upcoming rehearsals and concerts. These folders are brought to every rehearsal and concert. The folders are assigned to a part, such as French Horn 2, Tenor Sax Folder 2, or Clarinet 3 Folder 2.

Band members are encouraged to practice the music between rehearsals. It is important, however, that all the music is in the folders for every rehearsal and concert so that a band member using a folder is not missing a part.

To facilitate members to practice the music between rehearsals, but to keep track of all the parts, the band allows members to check out parts provided that the members have the parts available at the next rehearsal or concert.

Thus, there are two important rules regarding taking the music home to practice:

- 1) Complete the sign-out form located in the music bin whenever you take music home to practice; and
- 2) If you check out any music and are unable to attend the next rehearsal or concert, you must make arrangements to have the music available at that event.

Concerts

Upcoming concerts will be announced to the band members along with directions as to the location for the concert. Some of the concerts are indoors and others are outdoors at parks. Band members are almost always required to bring their own music stands for concerts.

The band wears a red Lex-Ham Community Band shirt at most of its concerts. The shirts cost \$15 and are available in many sizes. See the band administrative contact or the director to obtain a shirt. Once in a while, the band director may request that the members wear all black for a specific concert.

Besides the red shirt, band members wear black pants and shoes at concerts. If the temperature is cool, you can wear something underneath the red shirt. If the temperature is warm, band members can wear black shorts or skirts.

Member Advisory Committee

Part of the leadership for the Lex-Ham Community Band is the Member Advisory Committee (MAC).

The committee is composed of

- three members from the group including the flutes, clarinets, saxophones, oboe, and bassoon sections of the band (Group A);
- three members from the group including the trumpets, French horns, lower brass, and percussion sections of the band (Group B);
- the band's musical director – ex officio; and
- the band's administrative director – ex officio

The MAC discusses issues that come up that affect and impact the ensemble.

The members of the MAC serve a three-year term with one member from Group A and Group B being elected each year.

Any member of the band can send a question or comment to the MAC via an on-line form located at: <https://www.lexhamarts.org/limesurvey/index.php/387522?lang=en>

The comments can be sent anonymously if that is desired.

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Lex-Ham Community Band Bad Weather Policy

Living in the Upper Midwest, there occasionally are days when the weather makes travel difficult or unsafe. Frigid temperatures also put musical instruments at risk: cracking for woodwinds and slides stiffening or freezing for brass instruments. In the summer, thunderstorms and hail storms as well as excessive heat and smoke can make being outdoors and travel unsafe.

Because of these real risks for instruments and band members, the Lex-Ham Community Band follows weather forecasts closely on days when inclement weather is likely. Factors that go into a decision about whether or not to cancel a rehearsal or concert include, but are not limited to:

- Air temperature below -150 F
- Windchill below -250 F
- The City of Saint Paul declares a snow emergency
- Ice-covered streets
- Unsafe summer weather conditions

On days when inclement weather is a strong possibility, the band's management will try to make a "go/no go" decision as early as possible during the day and send a notice by e-mail and by text message to the band members if the event is happening or is cancelled. All band members, of course, can decide based on their own situation if it is safer to stay at home.