

*November 2011 Newsletter*



*Oswego Bands*

[www.oswegobands.org](http://www.oswegobands.org)

*Oswego High School Band Parents' Association*

Oswego High School  
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Oswego, NY 13126  
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# DIRECTORS NOTES

The Oswego High School Bands \* Concert Band \* Symphonic Band \* Wind Ensemble \* Jazz Ensembles \* Marching Buccaneers

## Keep it Coming!

There are many wonderful things happening in the high school band program right now. This time of year we are putting the finishing touches on the music we have been preparing for Holiday Concerts. The Concert Band, Symphonic Band, and Wind Ensemble have made some tremendous improvements from the beginning of September and we are excited to share what we have learned with our audience on Friday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 7:30pm. The jazz ensembles have been swinging away and are eagerly anticipating their Holiday in Swing concert on Wednesday night December 21<sup>st</sup>, at 7:30pm.

This time of year also marks the beginning of our honor band season. The NYSSMA zone 4 Area All-State festival was held last weekend, November 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> in Ilion, NY. (This is the furthest away this festival is hosted) Students are selected for this event from their spring solo festival scores. Coming up we have auditions for All-County band on Saturday December 10<sup>th</sup>, at Central Square High School. There is a five dollar fee to audition. Students should already have signed up for this, but we can probably squeeze in any late comers. OHS plays host to the All-County Band festival this year. We are excited to welcome Dr. Adam Brennan from Mansfield University, a long time friend of the OHS bands, as conductor of the High School All-County Band. Please consider volunteering during this weekend. The Band Parents will be selling lunch, dinner and snacks throughout the festival. We also will host the OCMEA scholarship auditions on December 10<sup>th</sup>. This opportunity is open to all Oswego county music students who have participated in at least two All-County festivals.



With the generosity of Onondaga Community College and Syracuse Jazz Fest, we were given tickets to attend an educational clinic and performance by possibly the most talented group of musicians on the planet. Bela Fleck and the Original Flecktones consist of four incredible musicians. Bela Fleck is a multi-multi GRAMMY award winning banjo player. The Flecktones include the insurmountable Victor Wooten on bass, the insanely inventive Roy "Futureman" Wooten on percussion and the gigantically talented Harmonica player and pianist Howard Levy. The evening began with a 70 minute clinic by Futureman. This innovator has created an instrument known as the drumitar. It is made up of many mini electronic drum pads that allow Futureman to let his fingers be his drum sticks. His workshop also included a lecture on his research into the influence of American jazz on European classical music. During this workshop, he encouraged the young musicians in the audience to have the courage to create the own music. The main event of the evening was an hour and a half long concert with the band. The musicianship displayed on stage was magical and I know all of our students who attended were blown away by the experience. It was a truly magical night.

## Congratulations

The following students were selected to NYSSMA zone IV Area- All State festivals this fall. These ensembles consist of the best students from Oswego, Oneida and Herkimer Counties. The selection of these festivals is based on their past NYSSMA solo festival participation. Interested? Set the goal of working on and performing a NYSSMA solo this spring. Give it a shot!

### *Orchestra*

**Michael Gill- trombone**  
**Jeff Murray- percussion**



### *Band*

**Nina Alcasid- oboe**  
**Lisette DuFore- clarinet**  
**Emilea Reiner- French horn**  
**Stephen Hook- tuba**  
**Katie Schermerhorn- percussion**

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## Band Events 2011-2012

December 2nd	Holiday Concert	7:30 pm	OHS
December 10 <sup>th</sup>	All-County Auditions	Times TBA	C. Square
December 21 <sup>st</sup>	Holiday Jazz Concert	7:30pm	OHS
January 10 <sup>th</sup>	OCMEA Scholarship Auditions	TBA	OHS
January 13-14 <sup>th</sup>	All-County Band Festival		OHS
March 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Festival of Winds	8-12 & 7:30	OHS
March 9 <sup>th</sup>	Oneida Jazz Festival: A and B Bands	Evening	Oneida
March 23-24 <sup>th</sup>	All-County Orchestra		Fulton
April 28 <sup>th</sup>	Wind Ensemble Sounds of Spring	7:30	OHS
May 6-7 <sup>th</sup>	NYSSMA Solo Festival		Fulton
May 27 <sup>th</sup>	Evening of Big Band Jazz	7:00	OHS
June 1 <sup>st</sup>	Seniors Concert	7:00	OHS
June 14 <sup>th</sup>	Farmers Market		W. 1 <sup>st</sup> St.
June TBA	Syracuse Jazz Fest A band only (if funding available)		
July 1 <sup>st</sup>	Fourth of July Parade		

## Marching Band Notes from Mr. Ciesla



To be completely straightforward and honest I think that the Marching Bucs had a great season, but I wasn't happy with our final placement. We really challenged the students to work on the fundamentals of performance, and they more than rose to the challenge. The easiest thing to do is to focus on where we finished in the NYSFBC Championships, but that isn't the final judgment of a season. The Marching Bucs finished in 8<sup>th</sup> place with a score of an 86.40. It is a higher score than we have had in years and we also out-performed several of our competitors in some of the scoring captions. Two bands also moved out of the National Class this year because they didn't feel they could compete at that level and that it was the best decision for their programs. It speaks volumes that we are now competitive with the other bands and will be for many years to come. There is definitely progress and positive things happened this year which we can grow and expand upon in the coming years. The Marching Bucs took a trip to The Ohio State University and competed in the Buckeye Invitational. It was an outstanding venue and we took 2<sup>nd</sup> place in our class and best in percussion and color guard. The Bucs also ranked 5<sup>th</sup> overall against some really outstanding band programs. It was a wonderful trip and it really helped us to grow as performers. What the future brings for the Marching Band is that it is crucial that the current students come back next year and we add **many** more new students and on my end designing a show that will get the students rewarded for their hard work and talents. Congratulations to all of the seniors for their hard work and dedication. You truly personify the phrase Pride in Excellence. Great job to all of you!

On a different topic, I have fielded several questions about the new uniforms and where that process is overall. We have picked a design that I think all of you are going to like. It definitely has some unique aspects in it that are directly linked to Oswego and the school district. It is a contemporary design that will last the test of time. The uniform is currently being made and companies are in the bid process to determine some of the final costs. We are working to unveil the uniforms at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade this upcoming year. I can't wait to show you what we have come up with! Thank you for all of your support this year. I have truly enjoyed my first year as Marching Band Director and I am looking forward to building on the outstanding tradition of excellence that we have here in the Oswego City School District! Have a wonderful holiday season and be safe!



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## The OHS Band Parents

The Oswego High School Band Parents Association is a 501(c)3, Not for Profit Organization whose purpose is to support all of the bands at Oswego High School. While the Marching Buccaneers demand a larger portion of the organizations time, there are many things that we do for our curricular bands as well.

### Membership

As a parent of a student in the band program you are automatically a member of the OHSBPA. There are no membership fees or dues. When your youngest child graduates, so do you. ☺ This is to ensure that parents of current members take an active role in their child's musical endeavors.

### Fundraising

One role of OHSBPA is to act as a booster organization for the band program. The funds raised are used to supplement needs and opportunities that the school district is unable to fully provide. There are two types of fundraisers: assessment and general fund. The assessment fundraisers are specifically for student travel. When the marching band or winterguard travel to performances beyond the scope of our normal competitive circuits, the band parents organize the funding for this. When the marching band went to Ohio this fall, all the money for that trip including buses, hotels, meals, trucks, insurances, field usage fees, etc, were paid by Band Parent sanctioned fundraising and parent contributions.

General fund fundraisers help us pay for many other activities throughout the school year. Refreshments after concerts are provided by the general fund. In years past, dinners that we held for senior citizens the night of the April Wind Ensemble concert have come from the general fund. The general fund helps pay the expenses for our spring jazz guest artist as well. At times, we bring in a guest conductor for the Festival of Winds. The general fund helps pay for their visit. Two years ago we commissioned a new piece of music to be written by Mr. Baratta. Part of the funding for this commission came from the OHSBPA.

### Volunteerism

The greatest contribution of the organization is the individuals who volunteer their time to help the band program. The amount of volunteer hours to help the marching band alone is amazing. Band Parents build props, sew flags and costumes, maintain equipment, handle and care for uniforms, work magic with hair and chaperone our many events. All you need to do is observe a Pageant of Champions event to see the true magnitude of our volunteerism.

We use many volunteers throughout the rest of the year as well. We use chaperones when our jazz ensembles perform at festivals. We have parents help assign, maintain and distribute the clothes for our concerts. The senior citizen dinner I spoke of requires several people to pull off. When we host the All-County Band festival this year we will be providing meals for students to purchase. We have incredible amounts of equipment in our program and we are always having helpers move, fix and maintain that equipment. Without YOUR volunteerism, many of the opportunities we provide for our students would not be possible. We thank those who have already helped and encourage everyone to get involved.

The greatest way that you can support the bands is to be involved. Continue to attend our concerts. Watch all of the bands that perform that evening and applaud all of our students. Consider giving some of your time to help in a general fund fundraiser. Communication is so important to what we do. If you have a question or concern, please contact Mr. Ciesla or Mr. Defren. We want to have as many students involved in the program as possible. You are some of our best recruiters and publicists. We need your help, get involved.



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## All American Marching Band



During an 8:30 p.m. ceremony immediately following practice for the Marching Buccaneers, the U.S. Army officially announced the selection of mellophone player Gina Bartholomew and drummer Jeffrey Murray to the U.S. Army All-American Marching Band. OHS musicians Gina Bartholomew and Jeffrey Murray were selected to the U.S. Army All-American Marching Band. The pair was honored before their band members, classmates, fans and family during the post-rehearsal presentation. Army representatives were on hand to conduct the official Bowl Jacket Presentation

Oswego High School Principal Brian Hartwell congratulated Gina and Jeffrey on being selected to the U.S. Army All-American Marching Band. Their band mates, family and friends seated in the bleachers cheered long and loud. “What a tribute to music education in the city school district this is,” Mr. Harwell said. Gina and Jeff are two of the 125 high school musicians to will perform during halftime of the 2012 U.S. Army All-American Bowl, to will be televised live on NBC, from the Alamodome, San Antonio, Texas, on Jan. 7, 2012.

The five U.S. Army All-American Bowl Selection Tour teams travel across the country from late-September to mid-December to announce all 90 players and 125 marching musicians to the U.S. Army All-American Bowl and log a combined 30,000 miles. “Thank you, it’s a real pleasure to be here tonight. And I’ve got to say I am a little jealous – getting to go to San Antonio in January, that sounds pretty good,” Assemblyman Will Barclay quipped. “Once in a while, you get a few special students who step up and do a great job,” he continued. “To have two members of the 125-member band be selected from Oswego really says a lot about these two and the talent that they have.” Assemblyman Barclay then presented Gina and Jeff with certificates of merit from the NYS Assembly.



Posing with this year’s representatives, Gina Bartholomew and Jeffrey Murray (center), and past All-American Band members Heather Buske, left, and Chelsea Bartlett.

Oswego has the distinction of having at least one All-American Band selection for the past five years straight; sometimes two and three per year. US Army Capt. Spears officially invited the OHS pair to the band. Marching band, like the Army, “provides young Americans with training, discipline and experiences that make them mentally, emotionally and physically strong,” he said. “It takes a special person to be a soldier just as it takes a special musician to be selected the Army All-American Band.” He presented them with their official jackets and shako hat, adding, “Believe it or not, the United States Army wore this as its infantry headgear up through the war of 1812.”

Jeffrey said he went to the (Army Band) website and there were three certain types of videos that had to be submitted. “I play the drum set; I had to submit videos of me doing certain situations and one was an interview and one was a performance of the music they want you to play,” he explained. He found out that he’d been accepted in the middle of July. “My first reaction was shock. I was completely shocked. I didn’t realize it was going to happen,” he told Oswego County Today. “I was just very shocked. I had to re-read the whole thing.” Gina Bartholomew said “it feels awesome” to be selected. She said she also had to go through the video process.

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Assemblyman Will Barclay was on hand to congratulate Gina and Jeff. Assemblyman Barclay presented honorees with certificates of merit from the NYS Assembly. Gina was out of state and her brother called her and said, “Hi, All-American!” she recalls. “I was really mad because I thought he was joking. So I was like, “you had better not be joking!” I was shocked because I really wasn’t expecting it. But, I was really happy. I’m really excited to be able to go and represent my community and my school,” she said. “Jeff and I have been talking about this non-stop for a while.

It’s just a really cool feeling to be able to represent our community in such a big deal.” The musicians said they are looking forward to traveling, meeting new people and performing. “I just wish I could go right now,” she added. “I am that excited. Now, I’m going to have this whole couple of months of really nothing (until it’s time to go) so I’m excited now and I want to go now!” Jeffrey thanked everyone for turning out and for supporting him (especially mom and dad) and the Army for giving young musicians “an opportunity of a lifetime.” “I’ll cherish this; I’m excited, I really am,” he said. Gina echoed his sentiments. She also thanked the district for supporting music in the schools, her three band teachers, and the marching band staff over the course of her five-year tenure, and her family. “I’m really excited to go to San Antonio and represent this community and school and I hope I will do you guys proud,” she said.

“This community has really supported music in our schools. It’s really been unbelievable,” proclaimed Mr. Hartwell. “It helps, and it’s part of the family that we have here.” He also offered thanks to all soldiers, past and present, “...who continually fight for our freedom, safety and our country.” “Jeff and Gina; congratulations. This community is so proud of you,” he concluded.

By becoming an Army All-American band member, Gina and Jeffrey join an elite group; only 125 high school band members are selected each year from among the millions in the United States. Band members are chosen not just because they excel in music, but because they embody the same values of our Army Strong Soldiers – values like loyalty, integrity and respect, according to the Army. For more than 11 years, the U.S. Army All-American Bowl has been the nation’s premier high school football game.



OHS Principal Brian Hartwell congratulates Gina Bartholomew and Jeffrey Murray on their being selected to the Army’s All-American Band. At right is Scott Ciesla, this year’s director the Marching Buccaneers.

## 2011-2012 Board Of Directors and Committee Chairs

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**Scott Ciesla, Band Director**  
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# 2011/2012 OSWEGO WINTER GUARD

The 2011/2012 winter guard season will kick off with the first rehearsal of the year on Tuesday, November 29 at 6:00 p.m. in the old gym at OHS. This year will surely be one of the most exciting years the guard has experienced since the winter program began in 2007.



The 2012 show, *The Chain*, features the music of Fleetwood Mac - "The Chain" and "Silver Springs." The show concept is based on the band's belief that it is more rewarding to be a member of a band than a solo artist.



The Oswego Visual Ensemble will be competing in the Scholastic A-2 class for the 2012 competitive season after winning the silver medal in the Regional A class at the Mid-York Color Guard Circuit's Championships last season. The decision to move to a more competitive class

was made after several discussions with the winter guard staff, Mr. Ciesla, and having a clear understanding of where I think we belong as a program on a competitive level. Although competition is not, and never will be the most important aspect to this winter guard program, there also has to be a willingness and determination to want to compete and perform with the best.



One of the more exciting bits of news for the winter guard program is that on Saturday, February 18, we will be hosting a Mid-York Color Guard Circuit show. Yes, the guard will be hosting a HOME SHOW! The start time for the show is 5:00 p.m. In order to make this show as successful as *The Pageant* is, we will need help from many different people. I hope everyone is as excited as I am to host a show this season and I will keep everyone posted on the

details as they become available.



One last bit of exciting news for the 2012 competitive season is that the guard will be traveling to Rochester, NY on February 25th to compete in the Winter Guard International Regional Competition (pending school board approval.) WGI is a national circuit much like Bands of America is.



All updates concerning the winter program can be found on the winter guard link on the [oswegobands.org](http://oswegobands.org) webpage.



I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season with their family and friends!

- Mr. Tierney



# OSWEGO HIGH SCHOOL BAND PARENTS ASSOCIATION

## Board & Finance

Minutes November 10, 2011

In attendance: Deb Bartholomew, Cathy McSweeney, Scott Ciesla, Steve Defren, Dorothy Bonney, Sandi Attwood, Sandy King, Denise Knight, Sue Bertonneau

The meeting was called to order at 6:30. A motion was made to dispense with the reading of the minutes by Dorothy Bonney, seconded by Scott Ciesla.

### Treasurer's Report

No Report.

### Band Directors Reports

Both directors thanked parents for their help during the 2011 Marching Band season.

Some changes to the practice schedule are being contemplated for the 2012 season. One goal would be to free the month of July for family vacations. The Band Camp days might be lengthened, to give a little extra time to lessons, and to allow for picture-taking, uniform fittings, picnic, etc. The weeknight practices when school starts might shift to Wednesday and Thursday. These are just ideas at this point.

Scott Ciesla:

- ⤴ Next week is Area All-State in Ilion, NY.
- ⤴ All-County auditions will be December 10 in Central Square.
- ⤴ Concerts: The Band concert will be December 2; Jazz Band concert will be December 21; Orchestra concert will be December 9.
- ⤴ Final selection of the new Marching Band uniforms has been made. It is hoped that presentation to the School Board will be made in December.

Steve Defren:

- ⤴ Jazz Ensemble A attended a clinic and concert by Bela Fleck and the Flecktones at OCC, November 4.
- ⤴ "Blast" is coming to Rochester on January 26. The possibility of obtaining a group rate for attending is being looked into.
- ⤴ Winter Guard will be hosting a show in Oswego on February 18. Both OHS and Leighton might be needed, and the logistics of going between the buildings in winter weather will have to be worked out.
- ⤴ Oswego will host the All-County students on January 13 and 14. Marching Band Parents will help.
- ⤴ It would be nice to find funds to purchase shirts for the Jazz Bands.

### Committee Reports

Finance:

- ⤴ It was decided to donate to Human Concerns the 5 pies that were left.
- ⤴ Gertrude Hawk: The profit on the 1.00 bars will be lowered (by the Company) from 45% to 40%. There are larger bars (selling for 2.00) whose profit would be 50%. The consensus of the Board is that the 1.00 bars are more likely to be popular and that 40% profit is still good.
- ⤴ A chairperson for the candy bar fund-raiser will be needed next year.

Band Parent Coordinator:

- ⤴ Band concert attire will be labeled on Monday, November 14 after school at 3:30.
- ⤴ The boys' suits will be dry-cleaned.
- ⤴ The dresses will be washed.
- ⤴ The fittings for new students will take place Monday, November 28 2:30-4 and Tuesday, November 29, 5-6:30.

Hall of Fame:

Tabled indefinitely.

### New Business

Fundraisers: Several general fundraiser events are being considered:

- ⤴ Pizza: Super Bowl Saturday (February 4)
- ⤴ Chicken Barbecue in the Spring?
- ⤴ Spaghetti Dinner?
- ⤴ Pancake Breakfast?
- ⤴ It was suggested that in the future there might be a fund-raiser in which students work to earn/raise money.

**Next meetings:           General meeting, Thursday, January 19 6:30.  
                                  Board meeting, Tuesday, January 3, 6:30**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50, with a motion by Dorothy Bonney, seconded by Scott Ciesla.