



# Ringgold Band News

www.ringgoldband.com

Fall, 2007

## Who Are These Musicians?

By Jim Seidel, Musical Director

During my tenure as musical director of the Ringgold Band, we as a membership have had many discussions about who is our audience and why do they support the Ringgold Band? Without these concerns the band cannot move forward, and I am sure our predecessors had very similar concerns or the band would not have celebrated 155 years of continual existence. My question is, do you, the listening audience, ever ask just who are these people who make up the Ringgold Band?

In another section of this newsletter, we point out to you stories about the young people who participate in the band, and about our "Banding Together" program, but now it is your turn.

As you sit at an outdoor concert or our Anniversary concert enjoying your favorite march or "old chestnut", didn't you ever wonder who these people are? Do they make their living playing in the

Ringgold Band, or are they just freelance musicians? Sure, everyone knows Debbie, because she is up front singing those wonderful songs of which many have grown so fond. Or, maybe you enjoy Mark Brumbach rendering one of his dazzling euphonium performances. But, what about those folks playing the third clarinet part in the challenging finale of the William Tell Overture. Who are they?

After years of guest soloists I felt it was time to introduce you to the ladies and gentlemen who are the Ringgold Band. What better way then to feature music that features them! Since I picked on the clarinets, how about a rousing version of Clarinet Polka, where you get introduced to Tom Hahn and friends. Did you know Tom teaches classes for Albright College? Or, an alto sax solo played by Neal Lutz, who is one of the upcoming fine music educators in Berks County. Many of you comment on your love of the marches played by the Ringgold Band. Did you know that the



James S. Seidel

percussion section really makes those marches tick? Most everyone knows Brian Holt, the world's finest bass drummer, because he plays with every major musical group in Berks. But, did you know music is not his vocation, he is an accountant! Can you imagine turning Brian and his friends loose on a percussion feature? Only great things can happen there.

These are just some of the people that permeate the entire core of Ringgold Band musicians, and there are so many more that will be featured. This is not to say we are going to give you a biographical sketch of each member and quiz you at the end of the evening. We are going to feature music that highlights each section of the band, include some soloists, and of course play that liberal sprinkling of the marches you dearly enjoy. So, gather your friends and enjoy an evening of fellowship and fine music, and who knows, that person sitting at the next table may be one of next year's trombonists!



## President's Corner

by Cindy Miller-Aungst, Band President

It is hard to believe that the 155<sup>th</sup> season of the Ringgold Band is coming to a close. What an exciting year it has been!

- Notable performances this year included a spectacular Sousa memorial concert at the Abe Lincoln, as well as ground breaking ceremonies for both the new Sun Fresh Foods Corp. and IMAX Theater in Reading. We will also be performing at the public opening for the new Miller Center for the Arts on the RACC campus on September 11, 2007.

- The Reading Musical Foundation has continued to support our mission so that we might bring quality concert band music to our audiences throughout the year.

- We continue to reach out to talented young musicians in Berks County by inviting them to rehearsals and to play jobs with us during the summer. This year we have accepted three high school students into our regular membership.

- We now house the music library of the Music Educators of Berks County, which allows our music librarian, Gene Umbenhouer, to prepare all of the music folders for both the Jr. and Sr. County Band Festivals.

- Due to the extent and historical value of our music library, we applied for and received a substantial grant from The Commonwealth of PA to install a fire suppression and security system in our rehearsal hall. We want to thank our state senator, Mike O'Pake for helping make this happen.

Eighteen years ago I joined the band to continue to play in a concert band that performed a great variety of concert band music. As a bonus, I also became part of a musical family nurtured by a director who cares not only about creating music, but the people that make the music. I would regularly attend rehearsals at our band hall, enjoying the music making and the camaraderie of the band. Since serving on the board, I have become more aware of the amount of time and work that many members voluntarily contribute to the maintenance of the band and our band hall. New music is put in folders, needed repairs are made to the building, the lawn is mowed, bills are paid, jobs are secured, arrangements are made to plow snow from our parking lot, the hall is cleaned ---- all these things just seem to magically happen. The continued existence and growth of the Ringgold Band is due to dedicated members who give countless hours of their time to serve the band. As you read through this newsletter please take the time to notice the names of the members who serve on the board and give of their time to ensure that the true business of the Ringgold Band can continue - the making of music!



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Fall Dinner Concert  
Ticket Order Form/  
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## Ringgold Band

### Fall Dinner Concert

Sunday, Oct. 21 2007, 6 pm

Sheraton Reading Hotel  
Wyomissing, PA

\$28 per person

For tickets, use the order form enclosed, or call Wendy at 610-779-8858 7:30-9 pm only.

# ANATOMY OF AN ARRANGEMENT

by Tom Shade, Assistant Conductor, Staff Arranger

I believe that it was early January 2005 at the end of one of our Monday night rehearsals. Jim Seidel approached me with, "I was speaking to Loras (Schissel) and he thinks that great music for Debbie to sing would be a Peggy Lee medley." Thus began the saga that resulted in *Miss Peggy Lee*, which had its debut at the 2005 Spring Concert.

I began with a simple question that I asked countless friends and colleagues, "Name a Peggy Lee song, other than *Fever*." Since I received very little help along those lines, I went online to the Peggy Lee Fan website. At this website, I was reminded that Peggy Lee was not only a wonderful singer, but also a prolific songwriter and lyricist. I decided that I wanted to include selections in my medley that she either wrote or made popular.

The first "big" hit that brought her to everyone's attention was *Why Don't You Do Right* in 1943, so that was my first choice. As I scanned the list of her compositions, several jumped out at me: *Manana*, *It's A Good Day* and, of course, *Fever* had to be included.

Many people don't know that Peggy composed all of the music for Walt's Disney's 1955 movie, *Lady and the Tramp*. She performed several of the tunes, as well... so, let's add *The Siamese Cat Song* and *He's a Tramp*.



Miss Peggy Lee

some logical order and make sure that they are in Debbie's range and have a logical transition between tunes and make sure that the band parts are in the playing range, etc.

Well, after 120 hours (spread over 2 months), 927 lyrics, 222 measures, 1287 dynamic marks and 17,352 notes and rests, the conductor's score was finished... then each individual part (from the piccolo down to the gong) had to be extracted from the score (thank goodness for computers and music notation software). A few mouse clicks copied the music and slight adjustments provided individual parts for all of the players.

Being a non-piano player, the computer has certainly been a great tool for me. I can put everything into the score by point-and-click, play it back (in the approximate sound of each instrument), cut and paste, transpose, change note values, etc. With one click, I can transpose all of the parts into the appropriate key for each instrument. I can't imagine Bach or Mozart or Sousa writing and editing everything by hand.... with paper and pen, no less!

Well... it's off to another project with a couple thousand notes, etc.

Great, now I have the tunes and all I have to do is put them in



Tom Shade

## "FUND DRIVE GOES OVER THE TOP"

By Ed Treat, for the Keystone & Rotary Club

Last November the Ringgold Band performed a seasonal concert for the kick off of a fund drive by the Myerstown- ELCO Rotary Club for the Benefit of the Keystone Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1 of Myerstown, PA.

The dinner concert was held in the convention center of the Lantern Lodge. Maestro Jim Seidel conducted the band in typical Sousa marches and performed a cornet solo, "Willow Echoes". The band also performed autumn and holiday selections.

The dinner concert was the start of a campaign to raise \$300,000 to pay off the indebtedness remaining on the Keystone's refurbished 1992 Pierce Arrow aerial truck. The fund also was designed to have seed monies to purchase the next needed apparatus, a new supply truck. The campaign was a huge success, and at the final count cash and pledges totaled \$323,000.

The Keystone is a 100% volunteer fire company and has more than thirty-five Chiefs, Engineers and Firefighters. The company additionally has many senior members

that no longer participate in the fire prevention, fire suppression and rescue services, but instead perform administrative and fund-raising functions.

The Keystone's fleet consists of an Engine, Supply, Medium Rescue, Aerial and Reserve Engine. The fleet is maintained by a volunteer board of Engineers.

The Keystone and The Myerstown - ELCO Rotary Club extends thanks to the Ringgold Band for the part it played in the fund campaign.



Photo by Ed Treat



## JAMES D. PLOYHAR REMEMBERED

by Maria C. Reichenbach, Ringgold Band  
Historian

**N**oted American composer and conductor James D. Ployhar died on January 2, 2007 in Fargo, North Dakota. He was 80 years of age. Ployhar was born September 22, 1926 in Valley City, North Dakota and was considered one of the most prolific writers in the music education field. He composed and arranged approximately 800 pieces for band including some that have aired on American television. One popular arrangement that has been a staple in the Ringgold Band repertory for years is Ployhar's arrangement of *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. This piece has been performed often at our summer concerts.



James Ployhar graduated from Valley City High School, served in the army in the Philippines then went on to earn a B.S. degree from Valley City State University and a M.A. degree from the University of Northern Colorado. He also took part in doctoral studies at UCLA.

In a January 1984 interview with *The Instrumentalist* he called his becoming a band composer "a fluke." While studying composition at the University of Northern Colorado he decided to write a piece for band. It was later played and one of the band members suggested he send it to a publisher. The second publisher he sent it to accepted his work and thus began his career as a band composer.

Ployhar taught in the public schools for 19 years including 17 years at Agassiz Junior High School in Fargo. He was also active in community organizations including forming and directing the Fargo Theater Big Band All Stars and the Fargo Theater Singers. He also co-produced the Disney film, *Iron Will*. His background in orchestration led to his collaboration with the Danish Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and he traveled extensively throughout the United States and in several foreign countries as conductor and clinician. He was

the author of numerous music education series including the *Contemporary Band Course*, published by Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation of New York.

In 1975 Ployhar's *Spirit of the Land* became the official state march of North Dakota. When the march was sent to a publisher, the publisher felt that the march title was too similar to another march and asked him to change the name. The official march of North Dakota was now renamed *The Flickertail March*. In 1989 Ployhar also wrote *Centennial Overture* for that state's celebration.

Ployhar received many awards throughout his lifetime including the Citation of Excellence by the National Band Association, the Governor's Award for the Arts, and the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Valley City State University. He also became the first enrollee of the VCSU Music Hall of Fame in November 2006.

Upon his death, the North Dakota Senate introduced and adopted Senate Concurrent Resolution 4010 to officially honor Ployhar: "whereas, we now pause to mourn the passing of James D. Ployhar and honor his memory for his outstanding service to the people of this state and those around the world who have had the pleasure of hearing his music performed; now, therefore, be it resolved by the Senate of North Dakota, the House of Representatives concurring therein: that we express our sorrow on the passing of James D. Ployhar and show our appreciation, on behalf of the people of North Dakota, for his service and his gift of music."

Ployhar is survived by his wife Ruth and 5 children, 11 grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. At his funeral, music was played by a ninth-grade band. The local newspaper reported that "it was a grand celebration of Jim Ployhar's musical life." And how appropriate that a group of 14-year-old musicians pay tribute to a man who spent his life teaching and composing for today's youth and tomorrow's future.



## Heard Around the Band Hall...

**John Bailey**, Tuba, recently purchased a Cerveny 6-valve F tuba which he hopes to use during the Fall Dinner Concert. John also became a dealer for the entire line of Amati winds and percussion (fine student and professional instruments from the Czech Republic), Strunal strings (European-made quality), and Cerveny rotary valve instruments. In addition to the fine Amati, Strunal and Cerveny instruments, John will handle Mike Finn mouthpieces and Soundwear bags.

**Donnasue Thompson's** daughter, **Rebecca**, a junior at Wilson High School, was chosen to participate in the Network for New Music Composition Camp at West Chester University from July 23-27. She was required to submit two original compositions which were judged by the music faculty.



Rebecca Thompson

Rebecca was one of ten students selected (from 25 applicants) to participate in the workshop. Dr. Robert Maggio was the organizer of the event along with four other colleagues from West Chester University. The students were also required to write a new composition for 3-5 instruments, including flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano. Rebecca wrote her piece for all five instruments and called her work "Wizard's Lament."

During the week, the students met with composers and faculty members to learn more about writing music so they could improve upon their composition. This process was very exciting for Rebecca and she very much enjoyed the friendships she made during the week. On Friday, each young composer's piece was performed and recorded by Network for New Music - Philadelphia's premiere contemporary music ensemble, including members of the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra. This was truly an honor for Rebecca and she already has new ideas for future compositions.

**Neal** and **Tara Lutz** brought the newest Ringgold "groupie", Emma Lutz, into the world on January 23, 2007. Emma has already been seen attending concerts throughout the season.



Neal and Emma Lutz

As the band director at Conrad Weiser High School, Neal is preparing for the 4th annual Sound Spectacular marching band competition, to be held at Conrad Weiser High School on Saturday, October 13, starting at 6:00 p.m. This year features several local bands including Boyertown, Governor Mifflin, Exeter, Reading, and Conrad Weiser.



## Ringgold Band to Premiere Composition Commissioned to Celebrate RMF's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

by C. Thomas Work,  
former board chair of the Reading Musical Foundation

At its spring concert next April, The Ringgold Band will help the Reading Musical Foundation ("RMF") celebrate its 80<sup>th</sup> year of funding music education, performance and advocacy in Berks County by performing a new work for concert band. Written by nationally known composer Paul W. Whear, the composition was commissioned by C. Thomas Work, RMF's former board chair, as a gift to RMF's staff, trustees and honorary trustees, to commend them for courageously innovating new programs that benefit underserved children, while at the same time increasing RMF's support of excellence in music performance.

The recipient of a Ph.D. in music composition from Case Western Reserve University, Dr. Whear received the second of only two honorary Doctorates in Fine Arts for music composition ever awarded by Marquette University, Wisconsin's largest privately-owned university, in its 126-year history. The first was awarded in 1923 to John Philip Sousa, who died in Reading on the eve of The Ringgold Band's spring concert, for which he was to serve as guest conductor. Dr. Whear received his undergraduate degree from Marquette. He has taught composition at several colleges and universities and at Interlochen Summer Music Camp.

Dr. Whear's compositions, which include major works for concert band, chorus and orchestra, have been performed throughout the United States, Canada, Japan and Europe. He is an honorary member of the U.S. Navy Band, an Honorary Conductor of the U.S. Naval Academy Band at Annapolis, and a Navy veteran of World War II. Dr. Whear will conduct the premiere of his work by The Ringgold Band.

This is The Ringgold Band's second premiere of an RMF-related commission. On April 9, 2006, the Band premiered "*Music in the Wings*," a one-movement trumpet solo with band accompaniment commissioned by RMF to honor the Band's conductor of 25 years, James S. Seidel, who also chairs the Exeter Township School District's music department. Written by Dr. Robert Maggio of West Chester University, "*Music in the Wings*" is a series of variations on the *alma mater* tune of Exeter High School, from which Mr. Seidel graduated. The trumpet solo was performed by Ken Lauder-milch, Mr. Seidel's trumpet teacher in graduate school at West Chester University. "*Music in the Wings*" was professionally recorded by The Ringgold Band in early June of this year.

The Reading Musical Foundation is an umbrella funding resource for music in Berks County. From music education programs in the county's public and parochial schools and an extensive program of scholarships on merit and financial need, to community outreach in music for the underserved and youth at risk, RMF supports the lifelong benefits of music education for all ages. To learn more about the Reading Musical Foundation, visit – [www.readingmusicalfoundation.org](http://www.readingmusicalfoundation.org), or call 610-376-3395.



Dr. Paul W. Whear

## AN EVENING OF JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

by Maria C. Reichenbach, Ringgold Band Historian

An Evening of John Philip Sousa was held on Tuesday, March 6, 2007 at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel in downtown Reading. This event marked the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Sousa in Reading. The sold-out dinner and concert, a reenactment of the 1932 event, was a fundraiser for the Historical Society of Berks County's Henry Janssen Library.

In conjunction with the concert, the Historical Society created a display of historical artifacts in the storefront window of the Greater Reading Convention and Visitors Bureau at 352 Penn Street in Reading. Among the items on display was a Ringgold Band uniform worn by clarinetist John Conrad who was a member of the band in the 1930s and 1940s. Also on display were various photographs.

Prior to the anniversary dinner at the Abe Lincoln, guests were able to view various Sousa and Ringgold Band artifacts courtesy of the New Holland Band, Ringgold Band, and the Historical Society. Of interesting historic note were the two batons on display, each claiming to be the last baton used by Sousa at the last rehearsal he ever conducted with the Ringgold Band. One of the batons is made of a darker colored wood and was procured by Clyde Hall. Hall was a member of the Marine Band and Sousa Band and was a guest of the Ringgold Band in 1932. As the Ringgold Band was at its rehearsal hall getting ready for Sousa's funeral procession he took the baton off the conductor's stand. Later, as a member of the New Holland Band, he gave the baton to the director and asked that it be placed in a band museum. Today it is permanently housed in the New Holland Band Museum.

A lighter colored wooden baton was also on display at the 2007 concert and lays claim to also being the last baton used in rehearsal with the Ringgold Band on March 5, 1932. This one was picked up after that rehearsal by a Ringgold Band member and preserved over the years. There have been additional reports of other "last batons of Sousa" surfacing over the years and only a thorough study of these will put to rest the question of which baton is truly the last Sousa baton.

Another display of note at the concert was the first Sousaphone ever made. Constructed by the J.W. Pepper Company in 1893 according to Sousa's specifications, this instrument features a bell that could turn upwards and be adjustable for concert purposes. J.W. Pepper no longer makes instruments but is today the world's largest sheet music retailer.

Seventy-five years have passed since the death of John Philip Sousa in Reading yet his music and legacy continue to live. As the Ringgold Band and the Historical Society celebrated his great life, Sousa's spirit and that of an era gone by could be felt in the Abe Lincoln.



Photo by Dave Lauter Photography





An Original Sousaphone



Plaque in the Abraham Lincoln Hotel Commemorating Sousa



Poster announcing the 1932 Ringgold Band Concert



Last photo taken of Sousa with Ringgold conductor, Eugene Weidner



Sousa's Last Baton?

# Ringgold Band . . . In Tune With Youth!

**T**hree of Ringgold Band's high school musicians, Rebecca Thompson, Suzanne Yoder, and Isabel Cylinder, traveled abroad this summer to Italy with the RSYO, Reading Symphony Youth Orchestra.

Rebecca plays the viola while Isabel and Suzie play the clarinet in the ensemble. The orchestra performed four concerts while visiting cities in the northern parts of Italy. Some of the trip's highlights included visiting Verona, Venice, Pisa, Florence, and Rome. The girls enjoyed gelato, Italy's frozen delight and lots of

pasta!! Seeing the beautiful paintings in the Vatican and the ruins of the Coliseum were also breath-taking moments of their trip. Because the return flight transferred in Heathrow, their biggest challenge of the trip was getting home. Some of the students spent an extra night in London, which enabled them to take a walking tour of the city before returning to the airport that afternoon. Overall, the trip was a fun and musical adventure that they will never forget.



Suzanne Yoder and Rebecca Thompson



Suzanne Yoder and Rebecca Thompson



Isabel Cylinder and Suzanne Yoder

## Banding Together

by Jim Seidel

**O**ne of the futuristic missions of the Ringgold Band is to encourage and foster the development and love of band music among the youth of Berks County. A number of years ago we began a program at Schuylkill Valley Middle School which has become known as "Banding Together". Since that time the band has visited Exeter, Conrad Weiser, Reading and, this past winter, Oley Valley Middle School.

The program puts the musicians of Ringgold with budding middle school students in a rehearsal setting. We chose middle schools because that is where the students are most impressionable and the age where the drop-out rate is the greatest. The Ringgold members sit among the middle school students, and I rehearse the group on music chosen by the school director. The school director requests certain musical concepts to concentrate on with the students, and he or she uses the Ringgold contingent to demonstrate those concepts to the students. Then members of each section conduct a small master class on each instrument while I field questions from the band parents on topics ranging from practicing, private lessons and just being a music parent. Everyone then gathers for a mini concert for the band families followed by a reception sponsored by a special grant from RMF for refreshments.



Brian Holt with Oley student



Oley Middle School students and Ringgold Band rehearsing.

Without a doubt, the students gain such positive insight about playing band music and the Ringgold musicians gain insight to what is going on in public school music education.

The biggest and most valuable factor for the students is to find out that music is a lifetime activity regardless of profession. Many of the Ringgold membership make a living as a banker, nurse, teacher, engineer, and financial advisor just to name a few. The seed of continuation in music is planted, and with the support of family, teachers and groups like the Ringgold Band, the young musician is on his or her way to a lifetime of music making.



# Member Spotlight

## Donnasue Thompson

*Instruments: Flute, Piccolo*

*Member Since: 1986*

Donnasue is a native of Shillington, Pa., where she lived with her parents JeanAnn and Donald Burger and her three sisters, Carolann, Janemarie, and Lorijean. All four girls played the piano, which made practicing a challenge with only one piano in the household. Donnasue began studying piano with Alma Dundore and eventually advanced to the studio of Miriam Heisler. She studied piano for eight years and participated annually in studio recitals and several of the National Guild of Piano Auditions. The Guild program required memorizing ten pieces which were graded by a judge from the association.

While living in Shillington, Donnasue attended Shillington Elementary School, where she began playing the flute in the fourth grade under the direction of Donald Rentchler. By the end of fifth grade, Donnasue was sure that the flute would be a big part of her life forever. She began taking private lessons with Ann Cusano in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade and then continued with Jeanne Scheneman in 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. During her private studies, Donnasue became very competitive in school and the Berks County Band programs. She was selected for the County Band concerts from 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. During her senior year, Donnasue participated in District Band, District Orchestra, Regional Band and Regional Orchestra. In 1980, she was a winner in the concerto competition for the Reading Symphony Orchestra League and she was honored to perform the Concerto in G by Quantz as a soloist with the Reading Symphony Orchestra. Donnasue was also awarded the Charlotte B. Wicklein Scholarship through the Reading Music Foundation when she was a senior.

Additionally, vocal studies were an important part of Donnasue's life. She began singing with the junior choir at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Shillington, when she was in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Under the direction of Corinne Eckert, there were many years of part-singing training with her sisters and friends in the church. Donnasue also participated in the Berks County Chorus Auditions each year in junior high and senior high. She was fortunate to participate in the District, Regional and State Choruses during her high school years. During these years she studied voice with William Maier of Wyomissing.

At Governor Mifflin, Donnasue was involved in as many musical ensembles as her schedule would allow. She has many wonderful memories of her talented instrumental and vocal directors including Paul Cusano, Pricilla Hilbert, Nick Geracimos, Robert Cooper, and Arthur Himmelberger. She feels extremely fortunate to have had the opportunity to study with these talented musicians.

Her teachers were an inspiration to her and they also influenced her decision to study music in college. When she was a senior, Donnasue was awarded the John Philip Sousa award for her musical accomplishments.

Upon graduation from Governor Mifflin High School in 1981, Donnasue continued her music education at Indiana University of Pa. During college, she studied flute with Dr. Carl Adams, voice with Joan Luchsinger, and piano with Dr. Dominic Intilli. Highlights of college included being principal flutist in the wind ensemble, orchestra, and marching band. Donnasue also participated in the IUP Chorale, Chamber Singers, and joined the professional music fraternity, Delta Omicron. In 1985, she became a cum laude graduate of IUP, earning a Bachelor of Science in Music Education.

After graduating from IUP, Donnasue taught elementary general music and chorus in the Hamburg Area School District for two years. Shortly after she accepted the job at Hamburg, Donnasue met Jim Thompson, a mechanical engineer at Arrow International, Inc. at that time. She married Jim in July of 1986 and they raised three wonderful children. When their first child was born, Donnasue decided to take a break from public school teaching to raise her family. During the ten years at home, she continued teaching flute privately along with playing with Ringgold Band. She also continued her graduate studies by earning her Masters Degree in Elementary Education at Kutztown University. During her time at home, Donnasue was also very active in her church as the director of the Vacation Bible School program for many years as the children were growing up. She also took a semester of private lessons with Robin Kani, principal flutist with the Bach Choir Orchestra, Bethlehem.

Donnasue and Jim's son, Christopher, now 19, is a sophomore at IUP studying music education with a concentration on trumpet. He also studied the piano and cello from elementary into his high school years. Their daughter, Rebecca, 16 and a junior at Wilson High School, plans on becoming a music teacher also. Her

talents include viola, French horn, piano, and voice. Both Christopher and Rebecca have been members of the Reading Symphony Youth Orchestra and Berks Classical Children's Chorus during high school. Their third child, Rachel, 13, an eighth grade student, plays the flute, piano, sings, and plays field hockey at Wilson. Donnasue's husband, Jim, is currently Director of Quality Management Systems at Arrow International, Inc. and is the newly elected president of the Wilson Music Boosters.

Presently, Donnasue teaches elementary instrumental music in the Wilson School District. She started at Wilson in 1998 as a part-time music teacher and has been full-time at Cornwall

Terrace and Lincoln Park Elementary Schools since 2000. As a teacher, Donnasue enjoys nurturing students from the beginning few notes on their instruments to advanced beginners by the time they leave her in the sixth grade. She is looking forward to teaching in a brand new band room at Cornwall Terrace this year.

Besides playing with the Ringgold Band, Donnasue substitutes with the Reading Pops Orchestra, Berks Chamber Orchestra, performs at her church, weddings, various chamber en-

sembles, and local high school musicals. Last year, Donnasue performed with Honolulu Symphony Harpist, Constance Harding Uejio, when she was a guest recital artist at Grace Lutheran Church, Shillington. Vocally, Donnasue sings with the Fall Festival of the Arts Chorus, through Trinity Lutheran and Christ Episcopal Church in Reading. She has also served as an adjudicator for the Lancaster County Music Teachers Association as well as for the Music Educators of Berks County's band auditions. Besides her musical endeavors, Donnasue is a chairperson for the Wilson Music Boosters Craft Fair and she sews the large flags for the Wilson High School Marching Band in the fall.

The years have flown since Donnasue joined the Ringgold Band in 1986! She looks forward to Monday night rehearsals to enjoy music together, share stories with friends, and especially continue the tradition of concert band music in Berks County. The Ringgold Band is truly history in the making each time Jim's baton strikes a beat. Donnasue is proud to say that she is part of this special organization and she looks forward to many years to come.



Donnasue Thompson



Ringgold Band News is published twice a year for members and supporters of the Ringgold Band, Inc.

Send comments and story ideas to [ringgoldband@aol.com](mailto:ringgoldband@aol.com) or mail to:

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Fall, 2007

[www.ringgoldband.com](http://www.ringgoldband.com)

## Ringgold Band Officers

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Cindy Miller-Aungst, President  
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The Ringgold Band is a professional concert band performing throughout southeastern Pennsylvania and beyond. The objectives of this organization are to nurture band music as an important art form; to provide an opportunity for professional musicians as well as gifted younger musicians to develop their musical skills in an artistic environment; to educate the members of the organization and the general public of the need to preserve the heritage, cultivate the contemporary, and promote the future of band music; to encourage the members of the organization to accept responsibility for the improvement of the American way of life and the fellowship of humankind through music.

The band is funded by private and corporate donations; The Reading Musical Foundation, of which the Ringgold Band is an affiliate; and the Music Performance Trust Fund administered through the American Federation of Musicians, Local 135-211.

The band encourages the cultivation of music among community youth. High school and college-age musicians are invited to rehearse with the band Monday evenings at 8 p.m. For more information about the band, visit our webpage at [www.ringgoldband.com](http://www.ringgoldband.com), or contact [dmyers92@ptd.net](mailto:dmyers92@ptd.net).



## Ringgold Band News

Ringgold Band, Inc.  
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Laureldale, PA 19605

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