



# THE FORTISSIMO NOTES

The Official Newsletter of Covina Concert Band, Covina, California

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July 2012

## NEWSLETTER HAS NEW COLUMN. DID YOU KNOW?



You may know that John Philip Sousa first thought of the tune for his patriotic march "The Stars and Stripes Forever" in 1896 while he was on board a ship called the *Teutonic*, traveling back to America from a family vacation in Europe.

You may also know that Sousa finished writing down the music that he had been hearing in his head just two days after he left the ship, on Christmas Day, in the form of a piano score, and then over the next few months he worked on arranging the march so that it could be played by his band.



You may even know that "The Stars and Stripes Forever" was the final piece Mr. Sousa conducted (during a rehearsal) before he died at age 77 on March 6, 1932, and that it was named The

Official March of the United States of America (by Congress in 1988).

But **DID YOU KNOW** that a year after the first publication of the music, Sousa himself penned a set of lyrics to the tune, as well? (No, I'm not talking about the "Be kind to your web-footed friends" version – so you can stop singing that right now. Please.) Although not as familiar as the music itself, the lyrics Sousa wrote for "The Stars and Stripes Forever" are as follows:

\*\* (Note: I personally find it easier to play the famous piccolo obbligato in the second strain of the Trio than to sing these lyrics, but maybe you'll have better luck if you give them a try...)

\* \* \* The Stars and Stripes Forever \* \* \*  
~ by John Philip Sousa ~

( First Strain)

**Verse 1:** Let martial note in triumph float  
And liberty extend its mighty hand  
A flag appears 'mid thunderous cheers,  
The banner of the Western land.

The emblem of the brave and true  
Its folds protect no tyrant crew;  
The red and white and starry blue  
Is freedom's shield and hope.  
(First Strain, repeated)

**Verse 2:** Let eagle shriek from lofty peak  
The never-ending watchword of our land;  
Let summer breeze waft through the trees  
The echo of the chorus grand.  
Sing out for liberty and light,  
Sing out for freedom and the right.  
Sing out for Union and its might,  
O patriotic sons.

(Second Strain)

### First Chorus:

Other nations may deem their flags the best  
And cheer them with fervid elation  
But the flag of the North and South and West  
Is the flag of flags, the flag of Freedom's nation.  
(Second Strain, repeated)

(First Strain of the TRIO)

### CHORUS

Hurrah for the flag of the free!  
May it wave as our standard forever,  
The gem of the land and the sea,  
The banner of the right.  
Let despots remember the day  
When our fathers with mighty endeavor  
Proclaimed as they marched to the fray  
That by their might and by their right  
It waves forever.

("Dogfight")

Repeat **CHORUS** (Second Strain of the TRIO – including piccolo obbligato)

("Dogfight", second time)

Repeat **CHORUS** (Third Strain of the TRIO – with low brass countermelody, and ending with the final punctuating Stinger!)

\* \* \* \* \*

Now, you may think that this is the end (of this article).  
Well, it is!

~ Contributed by Darlene Sanger

Information for this article was obtained from the following websites: [musicedmagic.com](http://musicedmagic.com); [musick8.com](http://musick8.com); [musiced.about.com](http://musiced.about.com), [byzantiumshores.blogspot.com](http://byzantiumshores.blogspot.com), and of course, [wikipedia.com](http://wikipedia.com).

The first article in The Fortissimo Notes new column called "Did You Know..." was contributed by Darlene Sanger. Darlene is a valued member of the Covina Concert Band saxophone section and has been with the band since August of 2003. There are many talented people within the band and elsewhere that may want to see their work in TFN (The Fortissimo Notes). Send a copy of your photos or articles to [bobpraeger@yahoo.com](mailto:bobpraeger@yahoo.com)

## TWIST OF ORANGE PLAYS JUNE 19

The Swing Band of Covina Concert, lead by Pete Mittelstadt, has become a popular part of Covina Concert Band. The members of the group enjoy playing as often as possible. Each member invests many hours



of rehearsal time with new music being introduced. Twist of Orange will perform during the second half of Covina Concert Band's regular Thursday evening concert on June 19 at 7:30. Jim Rawles on keyboard (not pictured) will be featured vocalist with the group.

## A LOW BRASS EMERGENCY

One reason some members of the band choose to be a part of the group is because the activity of the band provides a great stress release. However, near the end of the Covina Concert Band rehearsal on June 16 something happened in the tuba section and grumbling could be heard. I was the one grumbling because I was experiencing something that no brass player ever wants to experience just a few short days before a performance: stress producing catastrophic valve failure.

The tuba with the valve failure was introduced to America by Yamaha when I, Bob Praeger, the grumbling tuba player, was still in High School in 1961. After many years things wore out. Usually valves can be fixed in a few minutes with a little cleaning and loving care. Not this time. The guide at the top of the number two valve



(see picture) had worn short. It became so short that it easily slipped out of the groove it uses to keep the piston in line with the many tubes that are switched while playing. Fingering the valves quickly changes the total tube length between the mouthpiece and the bell where the sound comes out. The total tube length determines the pitch of the note being played. The valve jammed, limiting the tones that could be played, and it was beyond a quick fix.

Stress began rising. Oh! What to do? Can it be fixed? Are there replacement parts? Where do I go? Maybe it is time for a new tuba purchase in only two days before the performance. Can I borrow a tuba from somewhere? Never having this kind of problem before, I was not ready for this stress.

At the end of the rehearsal I turned around to see Elaine Vanek in the percussion section. She knows everyone and everything (tongue in cheek); I'll see if she knows someone to call. She immediately opened her

magic notebook and gave me a phone number and address of a guy in San Dimas. Stress went down a little. It being too late Monday evening, the call would have to wait until Tuesday. But, I work all day Tuesday. Stress went back up.

Fortunately, I was able to take the afternoon off work (my supervisor likes Covina Concert Band). To save time, my wife Karen and I packed up the tuba in the back of the car and off to San Dimas we went. I saw the name that Elaine gave me on the door to the small shop. I opened the door, and walked in carrying a clear sandwich bag with the "dead" valve inside.

Someone inside heard the opening of the door and asked another "who is it?" "Some guy with a tuba valve in a plastic bag" he responded. I knew I was in the right place as from a distance they immediately knew what I was holding, and probably knew what to do. I suddenly became very calm.

I carefully removed the valve piston from the bag and handed it to him. He looked at it and said "I think I have a new valve guide here", as he reached into a small drawer. He took out the part, looked at it, and then uttered "Oh, this is for a baritone, not a tuba". Stress went up again! Can he get the part? How many days will it take to get the part? What am I going to do for Thursday? All of those thoughts vanished when he said in a quiet, calm voice: (paraphrasing) "I'll just make one. Leave the tuba, come back in an hour, and it will be ready to go".

We returned in about forty-five minutes. My tuba was there on the table, all new springs and felts were installed along with the valve guide repairs. Stress went way down. The tuba plays better than I can remember and the concert went well on Thursday.

Who was that man that can make things work when needed the most? His name is James (Jim) Mettler and he owns a repair shop called JMIR (**Jim's Musical Instrument Repair**).

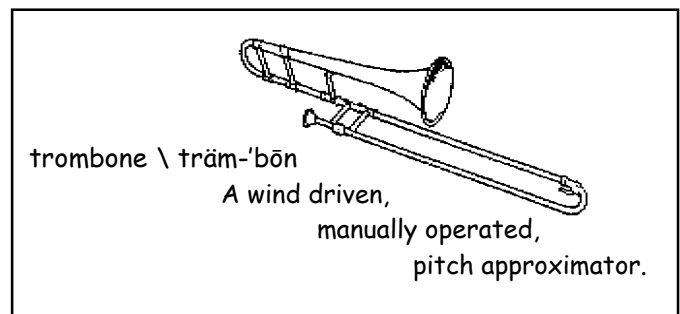


**Jim can fix it!**

## JMIR

137 East Arrow Highway  
San Dimas, CA 91773  
Phone: 909-599-2599 or 818-389-5864  
Email: jim@jmir-inc.com

When stressed over any musical instrument, give Jim a call.



## BAND PLAYS AT COMMENCEMENT

The 2012 graduating class of TRI-COMMUNITY ADULT EDUCATION and those honoring them will always remember this once in a life-time event. The Commencement was held at 8:00 pm in the South Hills High School gymnasium on Thursday, June 14, 2012.

Why is this event of interest to the friends of Covina Concert Band? The band has been providing live music for the Adult-Ed Commencements for many decades. The band performs a half-hour prelude of well chosen music before the mandatory Pomp and Circumstance is played as the graduates “walk” during the ceremony. At appropriate times during the ceremony, the band also played God Bless America by Irving Berlin, Americans We by Henry Fillmore, and Proud Heritage by William Latham for the recessional.

The gym comes alive with applause and other ear stimulating sounds as the ceremony continues. Much of the audible appreciation is directed to the Covina Concert Band — long will the band be remembered.

The band looks forward to the 2013 Tri-Community Adult Education Commencement.

## INDEPENDENCE DAY PANCAKE BREAKFAST

The annual fundraiser for the band was a resounding success this year, with more than 250 people being served a delicious breakfast. It is important to note that the success of this event is possible only by many people donating their time on Independence Day. Thanks are due to Bob Orso,



Jen Dana, and Kathryn Ennis from The Cultural Arts Advisory Commission, all of whom provided invaluable help all the way from set-up (6:30 am!!!) to clean-up. We are fortunate, especially, in having had Mr. Chuck Kemp and Mr. Win Patterson from the Covina Breakfast Lions Club. In addition to preparing almost each and every pancake and sausage, they also brought along the right equipment, right down to the utensils and the implements for preparing the pancake batter (but most especially the grills on their own special transportation trailer). Without the donation of this equipment and their expertise, our expenses would have been much higher (and the efficiency and quality of our breakfast would not have been so good).



So, thank you, Chuck and Win, for helping us out on this event that has become such a tradition for the band and for the community.

And to our Audience and Patrons: make sure to thank the Covina Breakfast Lions Club, and these special people, and make an effort to support and help them out in any of their worthy endeavors.

Covina Concert Band is proud to dedicate the concert on July 19 to The Covina Breakfast Lions Club.

## MAKE SENSE OF THIS

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 OSARMUSCIANSCMPLAY  
 OARMUSICIANS  
 LOMUSICIANS

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## Covina Concert Band Snack Bar

The Covina Concert Band Snack Bar in Covina Park is a much appreciated and popular enterprise. About eight thousand patrons use the snack bar services each summer season. Proceeds from the sale of a variety of foods and drinks provide a very important part of Covina Concert Band fund raising efforts.

The all-volunteer snack bar staff is greatly rewarded. The more experienced snack bar staff members provide the younger members with the knowledge that their time spent working the snack bar provides opportunities to develop good work ethics, self confidence with the public, leadership skills, and a sense of worth and self esteem. The Covina Concert Band formally recognizes each volunteer as a value to the band and the community, which may provide a good addition to anyone’s resume. The Covina Concert Band Snack Bar staff is indeed a very valuable group.

## DEDICATED TO FRIENDS OF CCB

The upcoming July 26 Concert is dedicated to all of those ordinary people doing extraordinary things and investing their time and talent to help Covina Concert Band continue to “Deliver The Joy of Music”.

Hay Bea. See the musicians? Uh-uh, Jay, them are no musicians. Oh yes they are musicians, see them play? Oh! they are musicians. Hello musicians.

[The Fortissimo Notes](#) is the official newsletter of Covina Concert Band, Covina, California. Anyone associated with CCB that would like to contribute to the content of this letter or if there are questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact the editor Bob Praeger at 626.332.0020 or [bobpraeger@yahoo.com](mailto:bobpraeger@yahoo.com). Visit our website [CovinaConcertBand.org](http://CovinaConcertBand.org)