

# THE WEST CHESTER BAND

## MEMBER HANDBOOK



ARTISTRY. EDUCATION. ENTERTAINMENT.

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to membership in the West Chester Band. We are so glad you are here.

In this handbook you will find important information to guide you through the season in our organization.

## Mission Statement and Values

The West Chester Band (WCB) is an open membership community ensemble with a friendly, welcoming spirit promoting the personal rewards of making music with friends while encouraging excitement for music education and continued learning.

The West Chester Band fulfills the following elements of our organizational mission to:

- A. contribute positively to the musical environment of the area which it serves.
- B. promote and perpetuate the community band tradition and repertoire. In so doing, the West Chester Band will create a better understanding and appreciation of instrumental music for the public, as well as offering an opportunity for individual musical expression and growth among its members.
- C. provide an opportunity for contact between and among musicians of advanced proficiency.
- D. encourage high school and college alumni musicians to continue their participation in music.
- E. maintain a working relationship with Immaculata University.
- F. provide a performance outlet for serious adult musicians and exceptional students of the Greater West Chester Area.
- G. Provide opportunities for specialized groups to form and function under the sponsorship of the West Chester Band.

## Get Connected

Visit and “like” WCB’s Facebook page to receive updates about upcoming events and news:

[www.facebook.com/westchestercommunityband](http://www.facebook.com/westchestercommunityband)

Find additional information about the organization, rehearsal and concert schedule, and more on WCB’s website: [www.wcband.org](http://www.wcband.org)

Follow the band’s YouTube page for video recordings of our past concerts:

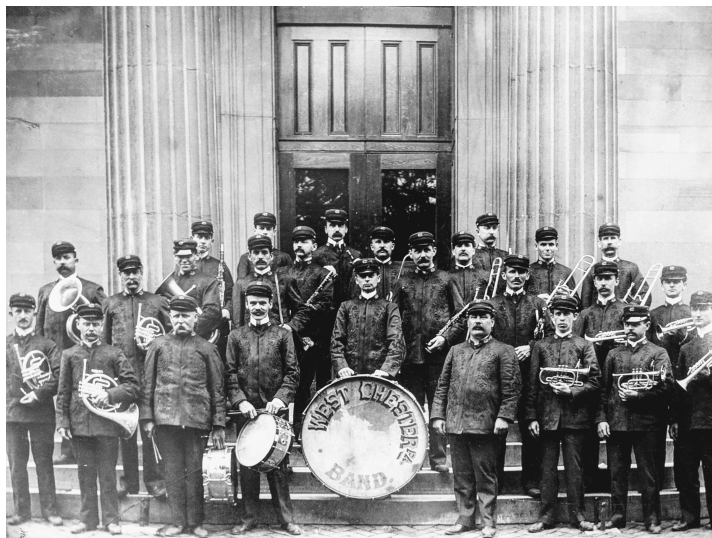
[youtube.com/@WestChesterCommunityBand](http://youtube.com/@WestChesterCommunityBand)



## History of the Band

The West Chester Band is an all-volunteer Community Concert Band that performs in and around West Chester, Pennsylvania. The original West Chester Band hails from the early part of the 1900s, was reinstated by the late Joseph E. Magno on January 3, 1986, and the band has been performing ever since. Magno realized a dream when the first rehearsal of the new West Chester Band was held with 35 musicians in attendance. Magno was a retired band director of West Chester's Henderson High School and wanted to create an ensemble for alumni of the West Chester Area School District and West Chester University, which then grew to include musicians from all parts of the county and beyond. The band has earned a fine reputation for performing a variety of audience pleasing music. Classics, jazz, marches, and contemporary arrangements are all part of the band's repertoire.

In 2003, Joseph Gehring was appointed music director and has helped grow the band into the exceptional ensemble it is today. Gehring is the head of the Music Department at Immaculata University where he also conducts the Concert Band and the Immaculata Symphony. He is also the conductor of the ChesCo Pops Orchestra.



## West Chester Band and Immaculata University

In 2009, the West Chester Band performed their first joint concert with Immaculata University Concert Band at the request of Dr. Victor Vallo, who was then Music Department Chair and Band Director at the university. Soon after, Joe Gehring became the Band Director at Immaculata, continuing this joint performance opportunity for both ensembles. In 2020 when Gehring was appointed Music Department Chair, he combined both ensembles, providing an opportunity for IU students to rehearse alongside WCB members on a regular basis while also providing a consistent rehearsal space for the WCB who previously was rehearsing in the West Chester Area School District. This arrangement is similar to the Immaculata Symphony, which has had a long tradition of being a university-community ensemble, but only functions within the academic calendar. Both the IU Concert Band and the WCB operate independently as two organizations but perform jointly at Fall and Spring concerts. WCB continues to perform additional concerts throughout the summer and the December holiday season.

## LEADERSHIP OF WEST CHESTER BAND

### Music Director, Joseph Gehring

Joseph Gehring is Music Department Chair, Assistant Professor, and Director of Ensembles at Immaculata University. Maestro Gehring has worked with the Immaculata Symphony since 2004 and was appointed Music Director in 2011.

His dynamic leadership has brought innovative programs to Immaculata, including interactive youth programs with a focus on music education for all ages. With an interest in promoting new music as well as cherishing the music of the past, his unique programs represent outstanding music that cover many different genres. In addition to conducting the Symphony Orchestra, he also conducts the Concert Band and teaches courses in Music Theory, Music History, Basic and Advanced Conducting, and Orchestration.



Currently Gehring is also the Music Director of the West Chester Band, a position he has held since 2003. He has been a part of the Chesco Pops Orchestra, a semi-professional ensemble since its inception in 2005 and became Music Director in 2013. Previously, he held the position of Band Director at the Renaissance Academy in Phoenixville, PA for sixteen years where he directed the elementary, middle, and high school bands. These ensembles help to complete the full spectrum of musicians that he has the pleasure of working with, from every age and ability level. He is also a frequent guest conductor of various honor/festival bands and orchestras throughout Pennsylvania and Delaware, including the Southern Chester County Honors Band, Philadelphia Archdiocesan Honors String Orchestra, Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) District 12 Chesco Elementary Honors Band Fest, District 12 Delco Elementary Honors Band Fest, Kent County Junior High Honors Band, the American String Teachers Association (ASTA) Junior High String Festival Orchestra, and the Berks County Senior High Festival Orchestra.

As a pianist, he has been Director of Music Ministries at the Exton United Methodist Church since 2004, was the accompanist for the Brandywine Singers in West Chester from 2009-2015 and maintained a piano studio for beginning to advanced students of all ages for almost 20 years.

Gehring completed his undergraduate degree in Music Education at West Chester University, studying both piano and tuba. He continued his postgraduate work at Boston University and returned to WCU to study conducting with Dr. Ovidiu Marinescu, earning a Master of Music Performance degree in Orchestral Conducting. He is currently completing Immaculata University's doctoral program in higher education with dissertation research focused on music performance anxiety.

## Board of Directors

President: Jenny White

Vice President: Chelsea Lenz

Secretary: Sandy Reynolds

Treasurer: Sandy Mergen

Librarian: Dale Krauchick

Member-at-Large: Holly Beckenstose & Brian House-Kelly

## Section Leaders

For more information on the duties of Section Leaders, please see Positions and Sections

Section	Principle/Leader
Flute/Piccolo	Dale Krauchick
Clarinet	Fred Spaziani
Saxophone & Double Reeds	Ken Burkhardt
French Horn	Kathleen Boyer
Trumpet	Jim Morrison
Trombone	Jim Beach
Euphonium/Tuba	John Rapp
Percussion	Dennis Tate

## Committees and Volunteer Positions

The West Chester Band is a volunteer driven organization and as such maintains a strong history of reliance upon volunteers for its administrative operation. We rely on your participation to assist with general operations, production, development and fundraising, publicity and marketing, program advertising, etc. All members are asked to help with rehearsal and concert set-up/tear down. In addition, the WCB maintains several volunteer positions. We value your time and trust that you will consider WCB worth the gift of your time and energy.

The WCB maintains a volunteer Band Manager Committee for the purposes of securing performance opportunities throughout the year. The Band Managers work in conjunction with the Musical Director to schedule community performances and engagements throughout the area.

The following are WCB volunteer positions:

**Webmaster:** The Webmaster is responsible for accurate and timely updates and maintenance of the WCB webpage. The current webmaster is Tim Sugrue. If you have suggestions for updates to the webpage, Tim can be contacted via email at [webmaster@wcband.org](mailto:webmaster@wcband.org).

**Equipment Manager:** The Equipment Manager is responsible for maintaining an accurate record of the location and condition of all WCB property. Along with the music director, they are responsible for overseeing set up and tear down at concerts and



events to ensure the proper care and return of all band property. Our current Equipment Manager is Fred Spaziani.

Historian: The Historian is responsible for maintaining timely documentation of WCB activities and events in a form available for display, including but not limited to photographs, videos, media clippings, programs, and personnel records. *The role of Historian is currently an open position. If you are interested, please reach out to Joe Gehring or any of the board members.*

## SECTION INFORMATION

### Band Size

The Musical Director and Board will review the current and returning member lists to determine the maximum number of members for each section. This may vary by concert and year depending on rehearsal and concert stage availability. If a section is at capacity, the individual will be placed on a waiting list until there is an opening in the section.

### Positions with Sections

The Sections Leaders report to the Musical Director. They are first and foremost a full-time member of the WCB and are responsible for upholding and following all Bylaws, Policies, and Codes of Conduct. The Musical Director may at any time remove the person in the position and appoint someone for an open interim position.

The Section Leaders determine the seating of existing, new, and visiting members in a section to ensure proper musical balance. Additional Section Leader duties include by are not limited to:

- Encouraging growth in the section by moving members to different parts and providing solo opportunities to other members, as requested by the Music Director.
- Perform solos, unless otherwise requested by the Music Director.
- Assist with other parts of the section, as requested by the Music Director.
- Manage sectionals, either during designated sectional rehearsal time or by organizing additional sectionals.
- Liaise between the section, the Music Director, and the Board.
- Track attendance per the Attendance Policy.

## MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION

Membership in the WCB is open to all wind and percussion adult instrumentalists with a wide range of musical background and training, from those renewing musical skills to those of moderate to advanced ability, provided a vacancy exists and the applicant qualifies to the satisfaction of the Director. No audition is required for members; however, musicians may be required to audition for section seating. By maintaining active membership in the West Chester Band, all members agree to allow their name and photo/video likeness to appear on the band's website, social media accounts, marketing materials, programs, and other documents unless a request to specifically opt out is made in writing to the Music Director.





## Maintaining Active Membership

Membership shall continue as long as the musician shows musical competence and agrees to the conditions of membership as stated in the By-Laws and maintains regular attendance at rehearsals and scheduled performances unless extenuating circumstances prohibit such attendance and are excused prior by the Music Director. Failure to maintain an acceptable rehearsal and performance record may be considered as grounds for dismissal.

## Rehearsal and Concert Schedule

The ensemble rehearses once per week on Wednesday evenings from 7:00pm – 9:00pm at Immaculata University, Alumni Hall. A minimum of three public concerts are planned per year with opportunities for additional civic and community performances throughout the year. Members are expected to perform in all the season's regularly scheduled concerts. A regularly updated planning calendar is posted on the band website.

## Membership Dues and Other Expenses

**Membership Dues:** Annual dues are collected in September. Dues structure is currently \$30/per year for an individual and \$15 for any additional family member. Dues are applied to general operating expenses. Actively enrolled students are exempt for dues. New members beginning in January pay \$15 for the period of September through August.

## Concert Attire:

**Formal Concert Attire (unless otherwise specified):** Each member must wear concert black attire including black shirt, black pants/skirt/dress (to the floor; shorts/short skirts/dresses are not permitted), black socks and black shoes. Bare shoulders are not allowed. All tops should have short, three-quarter, or long sleeves.

**Summer Concert Attire (unless otherwise specified):** The uniform for all members consists of black pants/skirt, black socks, black shoes, and a WCB polo shirt. Black sandals are allowed however rubber "flip flop" styles are not. Hats or visors without political, social, or religious commentary are allowed when playing outside and there is a concern about excessive heat or sun glare. Cost of the WCB polo shirt is based on current market price. Please see the Board Secretary or the Music Director for details.

## Attendance Policy

Although the program is relaxed in nature, attendance is required at the majority of weekly rehearsals.

In the event that you miss a rehearsal, please inform your Section Leader and the Director. Failure to contact your Section Leader and the Director prior to a missed rehearsal will result in the absence being unexcused.

Members who miss more than half of rehearsals will be ineligible to perform. Attendance at the rehearsal immediately prior to a concert is mandatory and only those who have informed the Music Director of their inability to attend because of an acceptable reason will be excused. Failure to attend a pre-concert rehearsal could result in the refusal to allow that member to perform in the concert. Extenuating circumstances resulting in absences from rehearsal will be taken into consideration. The Music Director, in consultation with the section leaders, will make the final decision.





If a member is unable to play a concert, they will need to arrange for their music to be returned to the Section Leader, Librarian or Music Director as soon as possible.

## Code of Conduct

All members of the West Chester Band have a right to expect a safe environment which allows and encourages open and honest dialogue on all issues without fear of sanctions or retaliation. Most issues can be resolved quickly and satisfactorily without need for formal action if a respectful atmosphere exists. It is the responsibility of all members to support, encourage, assist, and cooperate with one another in the pursuit of band excellence and harmony.

If you believe there has been a violation of this policy, please report the violation to a member of the Board or the Members-at-Large, who will report the incident to the Board of Directors. Your complaint will be kept confidential. In the event the complaint is against a member of the Board, that member shall be excused from service for the duration of the complaint proceedings.

If the Board determines that a member's behavior is in violation of the Code of Conduct, disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including termination of membership.

This Code applies to all WCB participants and/or members, Board members, Musical Director, Assistant Conductor, volunteers, and guests.

## OFFICIAL BAND COMMUNICATIONS

### Emails

Members should expect to receive regular email communication with information such as weekly rehearsal notes, general band news, requests for information, weather closures, or changes in rehearsal venues from the Music Director.

### Cancellation Announcements

The Music Director may choose to cancel rehearsal or a performance in the event poor weather impacts safe travel or performance. Other rehearsals and events may be canceled due to other unforeseen factors. Members will be given sufficient warning of the cancellation via email, text, or other communication methods. If a rehearsal is canceled, the Music Director may choose to make up a lost practice.

