

# MRP QUARTER NOTES

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MUSIC REVITALIZATION PROJECT, INC. APR/MAY/JUN 2001 VOL 2-ISSUE 2

## NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

After what seemed like a winter that would never end, there is strong evidence that Spring is here. In addition to the tulips and daffodils pushing up, there's the sweet sounds of middle school and high school concert bands tuning up and rehearsing for that all important perennial event - Spring Concert Season. Our daughter is certainly caught up in it - practicing diligently (well, most of the time) and praying that the notes will ring out flawlessly at the appointed time when her section does their soli.

You can see it in these young musicians' eyes - the desire to get it right, and when it's over, reap the reward of resounding applause. So, check out the Concert Calendar in this issue of QuarterNotes. Attend one of the many concerts that our youngsters will be giving this Spring. Show them the support and appreciation that these kids and the school music programs in our community deserve, by giving them a round of applause.



*Dave Rolince*

Dave Rolince, President  
Music Revitalization Project

## SCHOLARSHIP TIME....

Believe it or not the snow will melt, the flowers will come up and high school graduations will be here before you know it.

If you are a graduating senior pursuing a music degree in the fall, you are eligible to apply for the Music Revitalization Project's Scholarship award.

Application forms should be available at your school's guidance department by the first of April. You can also obtain an application by calling 508-222-3804 and one will be mailed out to you.

## MUSICIANS THROUGH THE CENTURIES:

### DAVID WALLIS REEVES (1838-1900)

Hardly known today, but at his funeral there were floral remembrances and tributes that were larger than any previous such events in the city of Providence. Among the floral arrangements was a basket of two hundred roses sent from an admiring John Philip Sousa. Outside the full-to-capacity church there were over 2000 folks from local businesses, professional organizations, social and benevolent clubs, and various musical organizations. Who was this man?

John Philip Sousa called him the "Father of Band Music in America." He was one of America's premier band directors in his time. The band he made famous was the American Band of Providence, RI. A band that is still active today (see American Band article).

Born in Owego, NY, David joined a municipal band at a young age, playing the cornet. He became an apprentice to his teacher, Thomas Conlon, and moved to Elmira where he learned about music theory. On his return to Owego in 1857 he was made leader of the Owego band. His next move was to the famed Dodworth Orchestra in New York City where he became a renowned cornetist. He went to England for a time where he learned double- and triple-tonguing techniques. He introduced these techniques to musicians in the U.S. upon his return.

In 1866 he was hired to lead the American Band, which was an all-brass group at that time. He added the woodwinds and the band was then called "Reeves' American Band." He continued to lead the band until 1892. In 1893 he lead the Gilmore Band, then returned

to Providence to lead the American Band once again until his death.

Under his direction, the American Band became known as one of the finest in the United States. They went on several national tours. He also gained fame as a composer. He wrote over 100 marches. The distinctive style of his marches, now called the "American March Style," influenced and laid foundations for march composers that followed, some who became legendary, like John Philip Sousa and Henry Fillmore. Among his other compositions was a spectacular showpiece called "Yankee Doodle: Fantasie Humoresque,"



written for concert band, a piece still available today from MMB Music.

## LOCAL BAND SPOTLIGHT: The American Band (1837 - Present)

If you have never been to one of their concerts, you are missing out on one of the Concert Band treasures of our local area. The American Band homebase is currently on the campus of Rhode Island College in Providence, RI. A few of us MRP folks have been to many of these concerts at the campus. Invariably we walk away with big smiles and feeling fulfilled by the experience.

The American Band is made up of over 50 adult musicians of mixed backgrounds from professional musicians to advanced amateurs who come from different walks in life. Their concert repertoire includes traditional concert band music, classical themes, marches, overtures, descriptive and contemplative pieces, light opera, Broadway tunes, you name it. You never know what to expect. They like to keep the concerts in the tradition of the times of D.W. Reeves (see related article), John Philip Sousa and Patrick Gilmore. That is, they like to entertain as well as fill your ears with wonderful sounds.

You will find that many of their concerts are based on a theme, like "A Tribute to John Philip Sousa," "A Tribute to Firefighters," "Pops Concert," and period-related historical concerts. Bring along the youngsters to one of their continuing series of "Young People's Concerts." Sometimes you will find featured soloists of both local and national prominence. Sometimes the feature might be a smaller ensemble. Variety is the key.

This is a band with a tradition and a rich history. The American Band was founded in 1837, and is one of the oldest civilian concert bands. Joseph Green was the first leader of the original all-brass band. Under his baton, they became known as one of the finest brass bands in New England. They played a variety of engagements from concerts to fancy balls to military musters.

In 1861 the band actually saw action at the battle of Bull Run. Their only loss was a bass drum during the Union retreat. In 1865 the band volunteered their services with the Second Brigade for the funeral services of Abraham Lincoln.

In 1866, under the leadership of David Wallis Reeves, woodwinds and other instruments were added to the brass and percussion. The band became famous throughout the United States as they made several National tours. It became known as one of the best bands in the U.S. After the death of David Wallis Reeves, there were many others who lead the band. The most recognizable of them would be Herbert L. Clark. Eventually, as happened to many such organizations, the American Band waned in popularity.

In 1978 the late Dr. Francis M. Marciniak, Director of Bands at Rhode Island College, reorganized the American Band. This is the

band I have come to know and love. They have played over 130 concerts since 1978, continuing in the proud tradition begun in 1837. Since Dr. Marciniak's death in 1966, the band has continued to prosper with Dr. Gene Pollart at the helm.

Their schedule of concerts takes them to locations around Rhode Island, Connecticut and Massachusetts, indoors and outdoors. Coming concerts are:

April 27 - Spring Concert, R.I. College  
June 2 - Festival of Bands, Faneuil Hall, Boston  
July 14 - Tabernacle, Oak Bluffs, Martha's Vinyard

For more information on The American Band and their concert schedule:

The American Band, C/O Music Department  
Rhode Island College, Providence, RI 02908  
(401) 456-8244, [www.ric.edu/am\\_band](http://www.ric.edu/am_band)

-John Zawislak

## CON BRIO APPLAUSE

The Con Brio Quintet delighted a crowd of eight-five area kids and adults at the Attleboro Public Library on February 17. Highlights of the concert, funded by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, were the performance of Peter and the Wolf complete with narration, and fascinating demonstrations of each instrument in the quintet by the performers. Did you know that you could make a French horn equivalent from a mouthpiece and 12 feet of polyethylene tubing and a funnel? And like the pied piper, several children made oboe straws and buzzed their way home. The MRP extends a special thanks



to Frank Nolan and the Library for collaborating with us on this fun-filled event.

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR:

Help support your local music organizations by attending these live concerts:

- 4/5 Brockton Spring Concert - 7:30pm
- 5/31 Brockton Pops Concert - 7 pm  
Brockton HS Auditorium
- 4/25 Attleboro Jazz Festival / 55
- 5/17 Attleboro Spring Concert / 53  
Robert Bray Auditorium - 7pm
- 4/27 S.E. Mass Wind Symphony / 55  
Wheaton College - 8 pm
- 4/28 Metropolitan Wind Symphony  
Natick H.S. Auditorium - 8pm-Free
- 5/24 Norton H.Yelle Band Concert - 6:45
- 5/29 Norton M.S. Bands Concert -7pm
- 6/2 MWS Festival of Bands / 11-6pm  
Faneuil Hall, Boston - FREE
- 6/7 Wamsutta M.S. Band Concert  
Cafetorium - time tba

## MRP WISH LIST:

- Resources for Website Creation
- Donations of Band Music for the Music Lending Library
- Woodwind, Brass or Percussion Instruments
- Volunteers

If you would like to serve on the Board or volunteer for a committee, meetings are held the 2nd Friday of every month. Call 508-226-6897 for details.

The MRP QUARTER NOTES Newsletter is a quarterly publication. Contributions are welcome by writing to the Music Revitalization Project, Inc. P.O. Box 789, Norton, MA. 02766. All articles included are at the discretion of the editor as space allows.

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