

2019 Concert Season Annual Report

Marquette City Band, Inc.

**300 W. Baraga Avenue
Marquette, Michigan**

President's Report – Lantz Whitfield

We are pleased to look back at another outstanding season of performances by the Marquette City Band. We began by continuing the very successful winter and spring concerts that typically have five rehearsals making it possible for us to perform a greater repertoire of concert music than is possible during the summer season. The Winter Concert was held in Reynolds Recital Hall where an audience of approximately 275 (near capacity) attended. The Spring Concert was held in the Kaufman Auditorium with an audience of approximately 400. Both concerts were enjoyed by performers and audience alike.

Our summer concerts remain the City Band's first priority. The band presented five park concerts, about every other week, plus the 4th of July concert at Marquette's Lower Harbor (in conjunction with the International Food Festival) as well as a Sunday afternoon performance for the children at the Bay Cliff Health Camp. The City of Marquette has funded these concerts for generations and we are highly appreciative of that. The summer concerts often have 500+ people in attendance. In July, the band also held an outreach performance at the Erickson Center in Curtis, Michigan, which was possible through funding received by the Michigan Council of Arts and Cultural Affairs. We hope to do more of these outreach performances in future years.

The band has seen a noticeable increase in donations this year, with patrons covering the expense of the Spring Concert in Kaufman Auditorium, as well as higher than usual audience donations per performance. Generous gifts/grants from the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs, The Ray and Peg Hirvonen Foundation, operational funds from the City of Marquette and a significant contribution from a single anonymous donor, have allowed these concerts to continue in nice venues with our musicians receiving very modest pay per rehearsal/concert.

The increased funding over the past few years has also allowed the City Band to purchase a baritone saxophone, a bass clarinet, a euphonium, a number of smaller percussion instruments, 20 new music stands for the band shell and two file cabinets for our expanding music library. We have recently purchased two new tubas, a euphonium and an additional bass clarinet and we are looking into purchasing other additional instruments. While the cost of purchasing music continues to increase, we have been able to continue building our music library with additional pieces from contemporary composers.

This was an off year for the "Upper Peninsula Community Band Festival" which we have been hosting every other summer for the past four summers. This coming summer will be the fourth summer that we will host the Festival. Performers from all over the Midwest have attended the first three festivals and we expect the same for this summer. It's a special weekend of rehearsals and performances in support of community bands everywhere. [NOTE: The 2020 festival has been canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic,

and is tentatively re-scheduled for 2021.]

Rehearsal and storage space is essential to our organization. We are grateful and would like to recognize the in-kind contributions of the Music Department of Northern Michigan University and of the City of Marquette.

We are very excited about the possibility of a new, larger band shell being built on the site of the old shell at Presque Isle Park. There have been discussions regarding this with the City of Marquette Arts and Culture Center, Park and Recreation Department, and the Presque Isle Park Committee. Should it happen, it would likely be designed in the same style as the old shell (built circa 1935) but larger, with more storage, and handicap accessibility.

Concert Season Highlights – Stephen Grugin, Director

Winter Concert - February 10 Forest Roberts Theatre "**Winter Scenes**" – Featured our saxophone section playing on "A Night in Tunisia." The concert included significant works from the concert band repertoire by composers such as Henry Fillmore, Leonard Bernstein, Eric Whitacre and John Williams.

Spring Concert - April 25 Kaufman Auditorium "**Dramatic Inspirations**" – Michael Christianson from Michigan Technological University was the guest conductor on "American Salute" and evaluated the band's performance. The music varied in style from opera to marches, and included original music by film score composer Rossano Galante. The concert ended with a dramatic band arrangement of "Bohemian Rhapsody" done by Philip Sparke, a well-known British band composer.

Summer Concerts:

June 13 - Presque Isle Band Shell "**From Faraway Lands**" – This concert, as the title implies, featured music from various countries and representing many cultures. Betsy Grugin played an alto saxophone solo in memory of Kenneth Coon, who was a member of the internationally renowned Rascher Saxophone Quartet based in Germany.

June 27 - Messiah Lutheran Church (rain location) "**Tunes and Tubas!**" – Presented "familiar tunes" of different genres, including waltzes, jazz, rock and popular music. The local tuba and euphonium ensemble "Octatuba" was featured on "Tuba Tiger Rag" and "Sleeping Tuba Waltz." A fun concert!

July 4 - Mattson Lower Harbor Park "**Happy Birthday, America**" – Featured patriotic music and "Strike Up the Band" played in memory of Robert Moore who was a WWII Veteran and 80-year member of the Marquette City Band. This concert precedes the fireworks celebration and as usual there was a huge crowd in attendance.

July 6 - **Erickson Center for the Arts in Curtis, MI** – Featured patriotic music and MCB favorites. This was our first "outreach" concert in recent years and was performed to a very appreciative audience. Program cover art was provided by woodcut artist Ben Bohnsack, a member of the MCB who has been an artist-in-residence at the Seney National Wildlife Refuge.

July 11 - Presque Isle Band Shell "**Adventures in Music**" (Children's Concert) – Featuring kid-friendly music from cartoons to video games to film music such as Star Wars and

Pirates of the Caribbean. A highlight of the concert was Karen Ludwig, a vocal performance major from the University of Michigan, singing "Let It Go" from the movie Frozen.

July 14 - Bay Cliff Health Camp in Big Bay, MI – This is a concert played by musicians from the Marquette City Band who donate their time to travel to Big Bay and play for the children with special needs who are attending this summer-long camp. The concert was mostly a repeat performance of the Children's Concert held on the previous Thursday night in Marquette. Significant/memorable moments included watching practically every kid in attendance sing along on "Let It Go," and having one of the campers "guest conduct" the band on the "Stars and Stripes Forever."

July 25 - Presque Isle Band Shell "Brass Extravaganza" – Featured brass players including members of the Marquette Symphony Orchestra Brass Quintet and Eric Banitt from the University of Michigan, along with select musicians from the MCB. Guest Conductors were Dr. Matt Ludwig from Marquette Senior High School, Jacob Schmeltzer from Negaunee High School, and Keith Lawson, former conductor of the MCB and the Negaunee City Band. This was our largest crowd of the season.

August 8 - Presque Isle Band Shell "One More Time!" – Featured encore performances of music from previous concerts, including popular music, show/movie tunes, marches, and music by international composers. The concert began with a piece composed by Steven Reineke, who is the Music Director for the New York Pops in Carnegie Hall and Principal Pops Conductor for the National Pops Orchestra at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC.

2019 Board of Directors

As President of the Marquette City Band Board, I feel the need to acknowledge what a strong board we have and highlight the individual members and some of their contributions. I would like to acknowledge the grant writing accomplishments of our Treasurer and grant writer, Tom Bronken. Thanks to Tom, the MCB has received grants from the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs for the past 5 years! Our board Secretary, Beth Wilson has done an outstanding job recording and distributing minutes at our board meetings and keeping board members on their toes. Her efforts are very much appreciated. A special thank you goes to Patty Roti who is our Music Librarian. Patti has done an outstanding job with music distribution, and collection. She puts in more time than almost anyone realizes. Thank you to Kris Bray, who is the recently retired band director from Superior Central is our Personnel Manager. She is in charge of attendance which can be a complicated task! A special thanks to our Vice-President Gordon Erickson who took over for me when I was out of town. We also appreciate Eric Berg who is now in charge of cataloguing all MCB instruments and checking them in and out to our various musicians, and finally, Oskar Martinez for representing our younger members and his overall musical contributions to the MCB.

I would be hugely remiss if didn't recognize our director and artistic leader Steve Grugin whose leadership has provided a vision for the MCB. He is responsible for the ensemble's growth musically, in numbers, and creative ways to grow. He is not allowed to leave! 😊

Respectfully submitted,

Lantz Whitfield
Marquette City Band President