From the Prez.....
Dana Sales, President, Board of Directors

Here's something you CAN do during the pandemic. Within a week of getting this newsletter, county elections officials will be mailing ballots to voters all over the state. If you're not a vote by mail voter, it doesn't matter. Call or email your local candidates for a) School Board, b) Assembly, and c) State Senate and ask them what they are going to do to support and promote the Visual and Performing Arts in our schools. They want your vote, and this is the season when you are most likely to get a positive answer. Tell them you are a member of the Watsonville Community Band and this is an issue that matters to you and your friends. Then, save that email or make a note of what they said. Thank them for their time and let them know that you look forward to seeing the results. This is especially effective in the local School Board races. School Boards are also called Governing Boards and most have the power to hire their local school Superintendents. So the concerns of school board members cannot be ignored. Remember the part where I told you to save that note. Sometimes it doesn’t hurt to remind people who get elected to public office what they promised during the campaign. This is that short window of time when a short conversation can really make a difference in the future of music in our schools.

Now, a little bit about what we cannot do. At this time the local schools are still closed due to COVID as are all of our performance venues. Another annual event that we love to do, the Veterans Day at the Watsonville Vet's Hall cannot happen as usual. The Vet's Hall has become a shelter in the fight against the Pandemic. Plus, our need to rehearse to attain a level of performance that is worthy of the reputation of the Watsonville Community Band. PLEASE participate in the virtual performance of Gippsland so that we can send something out to our fans and patrons to keep us in mind and so that we can get that sense of putting something together that is greater than the sum of our individual parts. Take Care!

Follow us on Facebook (Watsonville Community Band) for the latest updates.

From the Podium of Conductor Brad Gronroos

Firstly, I would like to thank all of our Family members who have made a contribution to the Watsonville Community Band. In the last 2 months we have received nearly $3,000.00 to help us though this time when we haven't been able to get out and play for our support. When all this is over and we are able to again make music, we will dedicate ourselves in performance to all of you, who with your continued support have enabled the Watsonville Band to keep marching along.

To our musicians, the time of procrastination is over. We need to get your contribution to the Gippsland virtual band project recorded. The recording sounds good, but there needs to be more faces in the group playing. If you have technical issues, not sure how to make an mp4, etc., let us know. WE can help, but you have to let us know. Everyone take care, we'll be back together soon.

Kirsten Swanson shared a quote.
September 21 at 10:04 AM - GoFundMe - A
Please view this video from Uganda!

GoFundMe.com
Shipping Instruments to Uganda
Organized by Kirsten Swanson
In July 1967 the band was honored to represent California and Nevada Lions Clubs at the International Lions Convention in Chicago, and the California State Fair and the United States at Expo 67, the World’s Fair in Montreal, Canada. We marched on Michigan Avenue to a very large crowd and earned the highest score of any marching band in the parade. There were 32 bands from around the world and a Marine Band as well as two University bands, Michigan State and Oklahoma. We also performed at the convention auditorium to over 35,000 Lions members. Following four days in Chicago, we traveled to Montreal, Canada for four days and performed a concert at Expo 67, as an official representative of the US.

Sam Vestal, long-time photographer and reporter for the Watsonville Register-Pajaronian, accompanied us on this trip, keeping the folks at home informed on events. Following the Big Parade on Saturday, the R-P featured stories and photos daily of the band’s progress - on the front page!

In the days and nights following the parade, the band made its own parade - down the sidewalks of Michigan Avenue into the lobbies of Convention hotels such as the Conrad Hilton and the Palmer House.

Great fun!

Performing at Expo 67 in Montreal was exciting as we marched through the grounds, ending up at the U.S. Pavilion to play a concert before thousands. Playing for the kids and staff at the Montreal Children’s Hospital was not only fun but heartwarming.

It was a spectacular trip, capped by another parade of our own - down Main Street in Watsonville, from the Reseter Hotel to WHS, at one o’clock in the morning!
Weary bandmen fly to Montreal

BY SAM VESTAL

MONTREAL — Weary after four days of parading, performing and carousing in Chicago, 86 members of the Watsonville Band flew into this Expo '67 city today.

In the air over the Great Lakes the band members lounged on ham-and-beer sandwiches with mustard, beer sauce, asparagus and tomato salad, with cheese and for dessert.

There were no cocktails on this flight. Someone in Chicago thought the band was composed of teenagers so no liquor was put aboard the jet, the stewardesses explained.

The lack of cocktails was a bit of a disappointment to some members of the band.

Last night in Chicago the band again paraded around the convention hotels.

In the lobby of the Comer Hilton Hotel they stood inside an elegant staircase and played their marches. Then a small group from the band played Dixieland jazz.

Then the majorettes sang "Hello, Dolly" as the band played the tune.

A large crowd of Lionel delegates stood in the lobby and listened to the band play.

The band finished its short concert with "God Bless America" and Lions, their wives and some children joined in singing the song.

Yesterday the band toured Canada. Two of the teenage band members had comments on the trip.

Debbie Allen, 16, an alto sax player, a senior at Watsonville High School, and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. R. Allen of 111 Buna Vista Road, said: "I enjoyed the fun of being together with my friends." Gordon Spencer, 18, a trumpet player from Morgan Hill, said:

"This trip is like being with a big family. Everybody is like a brother and sister to you."

There were no jam sessions on the trip. The band is scheduled to leave on June 20 for Montre
c and return to Watsonville on July 1.

The band is just too tired. Many powered most of the way. At 6 p.m. it left from Chicago.

Then, tomorrow, refreshed they will blast off at Expo 67.

Exhaustion slows but does not halt band's rapid pace

BY SAM VESTAL

MONTREAL — Canada — The Watsonville Band, housing back after exhaustion left its members Saturday, was still in high spirits yesterday at Air Canada Station where the band members were greeted by adoring fans.

Then the band members were bused to the airport and board the plane for the flight to Canada where they were scheduled to perform in Montreal at the pavilion.

The band arrived in Montreal Saturday at noon and were greeted at the airport by Mrs. and Mrs. A. L. Macfarlane of Watsonville and by Secretary Treasurer Bob Berube. That night, the band was driven to two shows in 19 miles from the city to perform at a Latin American show and then at a Latin American show.

One of their scheduled daytime concerts yesterday was delayed but the band members were able to arrive in time for the evening concert.

Tonight, after their second performance in front of the U.S. Pavilion, the band will perform in a French restaurant in Montreal.

Tomorrow they plan to be in the pavilion for both a French and a British concert, according to the schedule.

The band members are scheduled to return to Watsonville on July 1.

Band flying home tonight

BY SAM VESTAL

MONTREAL — The Watsonville Band arrived back at the airport today after completing their trip to Expo '67.

The band was greeted by adoring fans and were driven to their hotel for the night.

Mayor to welcome band at San Francisco airport

No formal welcoming ceremony has been set for the Watsonville Band when it arrives in San Francisco, city officials said today. The band will arrive at the airport where the mayor will welcome them and address the crowd of spectators.

The band will then proceed to their hotel for the night.

The weather

Yesterday's showers did not interfere with the band's activities. It was a warm day with temperatures in the mid-80s.

The forecast for today is similar with a high of 85 degrees.

Watsonville Community Band • P.O. Box 1708 • Watsonville, CA 95077
City treated to parade—at 1 a.m.

Band comes home

By SAM VESTAL

The Watsonville Band came home at 1 a.m. this morning and, with one last burst of energy to climax their prodigious eighteen-day coast-country journey, paraded on Main St. to the applause of cheering and applauding crowds that had spread Watsonville's name across the continent.

The band was greeted at San Francisco International Airport, where its chartered jet landed last night, by Mayor W. I. I. Warfield, City Manager Thomas A. Norris, Finance Director John Radin and others, at the end of a four-hour flight from Montreal, where the band had appeared at Expo 67.

"You're the greatest," said Murphy as he greeted the band, "and Ed Pio at the airport."

Tired as they were after their triumphant tour, the band members were still game when Pio suggested they have an after-parade—this one in Watsonville after the chartered bus had deposited them downtown.

Band members raised their approval and Murphy said, "I think there's a city ordinance against it, but I'm sure we can stretch things a bit for the band."

They did.

The band got off the buses at Main St. and West Lake Ave., then marched down Main St. and Third St. to the high school, blaring forth with "California, Here I Come" and other sprightly songs.

Hotel windows flew open and sleepy-eyed residents stood on the curbs in their pajamas to applaud the band.

"This is crazy, a parade at midnight," said a member of the band, "but I'll never forget it."

Nor will they ever forget their dazzling trip.

They had won first prize as the best marching band in the Lions Club International Convention parade in Chicago last week, which included a $200 cash award and a huge engraved gold trophy.

In Montreal, the band's first appearance before the crowd in front of the U.S. Pavilion was such a success that it was invited back a second time.

The long hours, the steady performances, the frequent traveling by air and bus, took their toll. Nearly everyone was affected by allergies ranging from hoarseness to "mitten sickness" to just plain exhaustion.

But they were happy and proud when it was all over this morning.

"When I think about it," said drum major John Ucovich, "all the work, the traveling, how I tired I was the other night in Chicago, my poor sore feet. I wonder if I would do it all over again."

But he knew what the answer was.

"Yes, I would."
Long-time band member Gil Grady would have been 100 years old on October 14. We'd planned a feature on Gil to celebrate the occasion. We recently learned that, unfortunately, Gil passed away on April 30. So instead of her birthday we'll celebrate the quiet, unassuming, ever-smiling and friendly person and musician - fine musician - that she was. Gil retired from the band several years ago. We missed her then, as now. Quotes are from the Watsonville Register-Pajaronian, October 16, 2010, article and photo by Todd Guild.

TAKING NOTE OF THE WCB

By Eugene Smith

Gil Grady, the oldest member of the Watsonville Community Band, celebrated her 90th birthday Thursday. Eight decades have passed since she began playing the saxophone. When she was 10, she heard a neighbor play the saxophone and was immediately captivated by the melodies.

That moment marked a turning point in her life, and served as an inspiration for a lifetime of playing the alto sax.

Gil went on to graduate from Illinois Wesleyan School of Music, and during World War II spent four years in the Marine Corps Women’s Reserve Band, based in North Carolina. It was the largest of all the women’s military bands, and was formed by members of and the director of the U.S. Marine Band, “The President’s Own.” After the war Gil earned a master’s degree in social work administration from Ohio State University.

She spent her career working for the Girl Scouts, which included training volunteer administrators and staff. She later worked with the National League for Nursing and the Campfire Girls, now called Campfire USA. Music always played a role in her busy life. She occasionally taught music and played in several bands.

After hearing one of our concerts at Sherwood Hall in Salinas, Gil joined right up, and played well past her 90th birthday.

“We’re a special group,” she said.

She celebrated her birthday with a simple lunch with her wife Dottie Fuller, whom she married two years ago after being together for 43 years. “I’m amazed that I’ve lived this long,” she said. “I don’t think people are supposed to live this long.”

We’re glad that you did, Gil. Happy Birthday, and Rest in Peace.