



GOLD COUNTRY BAND

Members Handbook

Adopted June 29, 2020 by the Board; last revision 1.17.24

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I. GENERAL

A. Mission The Gold Country Band ("GCB") rehearses and performs for convalescent and retirement facilities, to bring the joy of music to its residents.

B. Affiliations The Gold Country Band is a full member of the Sacramento Valley Symphonic Band Association (SVSBA), which provides the GCB with an insurance liability umbrella and other benefits.

SVSBA also acts as the fiduciary agent for GCB funds and provides tax-exempt IRC § 501(c)(3) status.

The GCB band will use the same fiscal year as the SVSBA: September 1 to August 31.

To maintain SVSBA membership, the GCB is responsible to pay an annual Ensemble Membership fee, which is based on (1) the number of the band's active roster members; and (2) a share of the premium for SVSBA's general liability insurance policy. SVSBA has no individual memberships or dues.

C. Band Members: To Know

- All members of the Band, including the Conductor, are unpaid volunteers.
- In the future, Band members may be asked to pay dues to help support the GCB.
- The Band meets at 10:00 Monday mornings for performances and one rehearsal each month.
- A player is expected to:
 - (1) produce a good tone on his/her instrument and to play a range of dynamics;
 - (2) read music notation; and (3) follow the road maps.
- Potential new players may be asked to demonstrate basic musical skills (see FAQ).
- Piano players need to know how to sightread and/or play from a fake sheet easily.

D. **Responsibilities**

Absences: ♪ Let your Section Leader and the Conductor know if you will be absent.

Rehearsals:

- ♪ Be prepared by organizing, practicing, and marking the music prior to rehearsal.
- ♪ Arrive early to set up and be ready to rehearse/perform at the designated time.
- ♪ Appropriate rehearsal manners are expected, including stopping when the conductor stops and not talking when the conductor is talking, even if he is not talking to you.

Performances: ♪ During performances, appropriate concert behavior is expected, including a pleasant demeanor and no non-essential conversation.

And . . . ♪ Band members are expected to help the organization run by volunteering for a Staff Position and the Board of Directors, and to be current in paying any dues.

E. **Singers**

- ♪ Learn your songs well **before** rehearsal.
- ♪ Must attend rehearsals to perform designated songs.
- ♪ New singers will be auditioned before being put on the schedule.

F. **The Music**

The music selections are focused on our senior audience.

- ♪ Most songs pre-date the 1970s. These are the songs that resonate best with our audience.
- ♪ We choose happy, optimistic tunes. We are trying to bring some joy into the life of residents in convalescent and retirement facilities.
- ♪ We choose popular tunes, for the benefit of our band members and the audience.
- ♪ The current library contains over 400 tunes. We are always open to suggestions for new music and for a tune or solo to add. Please contact the Conductor/Arranger.
- ♪ We have different themes for each month or two-month period:
January: Rain, Cold, Winter July/August: Travel
February: Valentine’s Day, Love September: Back-to-School, College, Football, Autumn
March: St. Patrick’s Day, Easter October: Oktoberfest, Halloween
April: Easter, Spring November: Veterans Day, Thanksgiving
May: Mothers Day, Memorial Day December: Christmas
June: Love and Marriage, Summer

II. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. **Business and Financial Operations**

GCB is not a corporation and therefore GCB acting on its own cannot undertake legal or financial obligations. Members should be aware that -

- GCB coordinates with SVSBA to maintain “Gold Country Band” registered with Sacramento County as a Fictitious Business Name of the Sacramento Valley Symphonic Band Association, so that GCB suppliers can do business with a legal entity.
- GCB’s banking (checks and deposits) is done through SVSBA.
- Disbursements are requested of the SVSBA Treasurer by an authorized GCB official.
- Directors, Officers and Members conduct GCB business in a manner consistent with SVSBA’s nonprofit tax-exempt status. GCB reports its operations and finances to the SVSBA Board of Directors as required.

- The books and records of both the GCB and the SVSBA are open to inspection by any member.
- A full set of books showing the financial condition of GCB is maintained by the SVSBA.
- SVSBA Tax I.D. #68-0046106
- GCB's fiscal year is in line with the SVSBA's: September 1 - August 31
- Per the GCB's Application for Ensemble Membership in SVSBA:
 - Only the Board President is authorized to obligate the band.
 - The President and the Treasurer have the authority to request disbursements from GCB's funds in the SVSBA's checking account.
- All purchases must be approved in advance by the Board.

B. Board of Directors/Officers

The number of Directors is at least five persons. The term of office is two years, with no limit to the number of consecutive terms.

To stagger the terms, the President, Treasurer and Director-at-Large/Membership Coordinator will be elected in even-numbered years, and the Vice-President and Secretary will be elected in odd-numbered years.

The Directors are elected at an annual meeting in August (first rehearsal), by majority vote of Band members. Mid-year vacancies are filled by Board appointment.

At least 30 days prior to an election of a Director whose term is expiring, the Board will nominate at least one candidate for each position to be filled.

Any Director may resign by communicating to any member of the Board.

The Board of Directors has a fiduciary responsibility to ensure that the Band's funds are handled with integrity, and the Board is committed to transparency and vigilance in its financial and other operations.

C. Board of Directors Duties:

- | | |
|---|--|
| - establish rules governing the operation of the Band | - prepare Budget |
| - approve all expenditures | - appoint such committees as necessary |
| - appoint and/or remove a Director | - fill any vacancies on the Board |

President - sets the agenda for and presides at Board meetings

Vice President - acts in place of the President in the President's absence

Treasurer - maintains a GCB banking account with SVSBA; - receives and deposits all GCB revenues
 - pays all obligations by arranging with SVSBA; - maintains account books on Quicken (or similar program)
 - reports GCB financial condition to the Board monthly

Secretary - records Board meeting actions and substantive discussions, and prepares minutes of each meeting for distribution to the Members after first sending a draft to the Board for review and approval.

Director-at-Large/Membership Coordinator - attends Board meetings and assists as requested; signs up new members, briefs new members on Band protocol, issues music binders, shirts and Members Handbook.

D. Staff Positions / Duties - (See Attachment "A" for current roster)

Section Leaders - along with the Conductor, will decide who will play/sing solos; communicate with players as needed; tune the sections at rehearsals and performances.

Conductor/Arranger - selects and arranges music as approved by the Board and issues the music electronically to all Band members; and rehearses and directs the Band

Facility Coordinator - prepares an annual facility performance calendar

Facility Billing - bills facilities for Band performances and communicates with facilities to ensure they are prepared to receive the Band.

Other Positions: Sunshine Roster Music Printer Unity of Auburn Key Unity Contact Person

E. Board Meetings The regular meeting place is at the rehearsal facility after a scheduled rehearsal. Board meetings are open to all members of the Band. All decisions by the Board must be by majority vote.

F. Amendments This Handbook may be amended or repealed by majority vote of the Board.

ATTACHMENT "A"

A. Board of Directors and Officers 2023 - 2024

President: Sandy Strautman (exp. 8.31.24)

Secretary: Jeanie Thurston (exp. 8.31.25)

Vice President: Mark Meeker (exp. 8.31.25)

Director-at-Large/Membership Coordinator:

Treasurer: Mary Rose Preston (exp. 8.31.24)

Linda Snyder(exp. 8.31.24)

B. Staff Positions 2023 - 2024

Conductors/Arrangers: TBA

Sunshine: Patti Baumert/Julia Souza

TBA

Roster: Jeanie Thurston

Facility Coordinator: Julia Souza

Music Printer: Mark Meeker

and Corene Bennett

Key to Unity of Auburn: Mark Meeker

Facility Billing: Mary Rose Preston

Pianist Emeritus: Diane Dixon-Johnson

Unity of Auburn Contact: Mary Rose Preston

C. Section Leaders

Woodwinds - Jeanie Thurston Jeaniet924@gmail.com 916-626-9121

Brass - Mark Meeker rjbtubaguy@yahoo.com 530-906-0631

Singers/Rhythm - Julia Souza souza.julialynn@gmail.com 209-992-6823

Attachment "B" - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

updated 1.17.24

Q: Do I need to be COVID-vaccinated and boosted?

A: Effective now, COVID and flu vaccinations are not required for participation in Gold Country Band. However, members are strongly encouraged to stay fully vaxxed/boosted out of consideration for the residents and staff of the senior care homes we visit and your fellow band members (who are mostly seniors also!). Vaccinations are not just about protecting yourself; they're also about protecting others from the spread of infection. Also, please do not come to rehearsal or a performance if you have symptoms of any illness including common cold, flu, etc. Help preserve the GCB culture of watching out for each other!

Q: What kind of instrumentalists or singers do you need?

A: Check with the Conductor or Membership Coordinator to find out the Band's current needs (see page 4).

Q: How do I get started?

A: (1) Attend a rehearsal or performance to observe. The Membership Coordinator will ask about your experience and abilities.

(2) If you would like to return, ask to have the music sent to you.

(3) The second time may involve a casual audition. Since every person's background and skills are different, the actual auditions will vary, and may involve asking the new person to play a scale or a short piece, or sightread one of the songs, or the audition may involve just observing how the person plays in a rehearsal. The Audition Committee has the authority to decide how to handle each applicant's audition on a case-by-case basis.

(4) If you are invited to join, the Membership Coordinator will ask you for further information.

Q: What are your standards for playing? A: Players are expected to: (1) produce a good tone and play a range of dynamics; (2) read the music easily; and (3) follow the road maps.

Q: What are you looking for in a piano player?

A: Piano players need to sightread well and to play from a simple fake sheet easily (melody is given, with chord names written above the staff). There are no fully written-out accompaniments.

Q: What are the requirements for singers? A: Learn your songs well before rehearsal and memorize the lyrics. Must attend rehearsals to perform designated songs. New singers will be auditioned before being put on the schedule.

Q: Once I become a member, then what? A: You will be issued a

1) Blue polo shirt (band uniform; wear black pants when performing); 2) Blue binder

3) Members Handbook; 4) Band Roster

The Conductor will e-mail the music to you. Please put it in order in the blue binder ahead of the rehearsal.

Q: When do you rehearse and perform, and where?

A: Rehearsals are normally the first Monday mornings at 10:00 at Unity of Auburn, 1212 High Street.

Performances are at 10:00 on the other Mondays, at retirement and convalescent homes from Roseville to Auburn.

Q: What should I bring (in addition to music and instrument)?

A: Music stand. Also, stand lights are recommended because many places have dim lighting, including the rehearsal hall.

Q: Am I required to pay dues? A: No, not at this time.

Q: Do you have a website? ... an e-mail I can write to with questions? maryrose@wavecable.com

A: We have a page on the SVSBA website: svsba.net/gold-country-band



GOLD COUNTRY BAND

Attachment "C"

Background / History (updated 1.30.24)

The Gold Country Senior Band originated in 1985 as a class for senior adults through the Adult Education program of the Placer School District. Wanda Manning was the leader of a 12- to 14-person group that played kazoos, rhythm and various noise-making instruments. The group was called Wanda's Kitchen Band. Donna Schwab joined on piano and her mom on clarinet. Donna chose most of the tunes and made copies of the music for the members. When Jim Smith (the first trumpet player) joined the band, he had to transpose the music, since the only music provided was for "C" instruments (which a trumpet is not).

In June 1998 Donna became the Music Director, Leader, Contact Person and Scheduler for all performances; almost everything except arranging the music. Jim Smith acquired a computer program, allowing the music to be transposed five different ways to accommodate the various instruments. This flexibility in arranging the music opened the door to new voicing and style for all pieces performed. The number of tunes was reduced to approximately 12 each month, creating a 45- to 55-minute performance.

The Band rehearsed at the DeWitt Center for many years, until most of the area was condemned for a Costco, which was never built. The Band has been rehearsing at the Unity of Auburn for several years.

Donna and Ron Schwab retired from the band in November 2005. Mary Preston then took over as pianist, and Diane Dixon-Johnson joined as the second pianist in 2010. Dave Machado took over as the Music Arranger and Conductor.

In 2021, the Band's relationship with the Placer School for Adults ended after 35-plus years. The GCB is now partnered with the Sacramento Valley Symphonic Band Association (SVSBA).

With the pandemic preventing the Band from performing since March 2020, the members met several times outside at Bill Borba's. After vaccines were available, the members were once again able to meet at Unity for rehearsals every other week, with the requirement that all attending must be vaccinated. In October 2021 the Band had its first performance in a long time at Auburn Ravine Terrace. It was enjoyed by all.

In 2022 the Band resumed performances at several facilities, following its strict vax-to-play policy. In addition to finalizing a Members Handbook, the Board established a protocol for bringing new people into the Band.

In July 2023, Harriet White, who sang with the Band for 25 years, announced her retirement. Harriet raised the bar by memorizing the words to her songs so she could smile and make eye contact with her audience, which brought them such joy. Harriet left big shoes to fill as she was also the Singer Coordinator and Facilities Scheduler.

Linda Snyder joined the Band in early 2023 as a second pianist, and in late 2023 our wonderful long-time pianist Diane Dixon-Johnson moved with her husband to Washington state. Diane did so much for the Band, serving in numerous roles over the years and keeping the Band running.

The end of December 2023 brought Dave Machado's retirement from the Band. Dave was the long-time Conductor of the Band, and did all the arranging, scheduling with the facilities, and so much more. He was also a fine trombonist, and now takes his talents to his new home with family in Missouri.