**ONHB Annual General Meeting, November 29, 2020**

**Band Leader Rep**

Good afternoon to you all, and thank you for attending! As the Band Leader Rep, I am pleased to begin by recognizing our band leaders (the heart of our program) and to thank them for being a part of our leadership team, whether they are waiting for in-person rehearsals to begin or whether they are part of our virtual programming, which is a placeholder until we meet again in person.

– Felicia Persaud, has been with ONHB as a dedicated volunteer and clinician since ONHB’s inception at Dominion-Chalmers UC in 2008, and is now a band leader, most recently of our virtual beginner-intermediate band. Felicia graduated this spring, and has been working this fall at Musicare on top of five days a week as an Occasional Teacher for the OCDSB. In spite of her very demanding schedule, she successfully ran a virtual band for people with 1 or more years of experience, with music ranging from a 1 to 2 in difficulty. We are very fortunate that she has agreed to continue for the Winter Session, running a band on Wednesday evenings for musicians who wish to play music at the 1 to 2 level of difficulty. An example of music at this level is Celtic Air and Dance, Twist and Shout, and a Canadian Vince Gassi’s “Stay Cool”. Felicia is so positive and efficient, and she makes it fun by rehearsing at a manageable tempo, and giving tips to help musicians to refine the technical skills of playing an instrument.

-Adrian Cosstick is a long-time ONHB band leader, and is currently teaching. You are missed at ONHB, and we wish you well as you face all the challenges of teaching under the current safety protocols!

-Laurie Hamilton is retired from teaching at Canterbury HS, but continues to be very active in our community music scene. Our more advanced musicians hope to be back under her baton soon.

-Colin Williamson, a highly experienced band leader who has been a favourite trombone clinician, and was a regular guest conductor for three ONHB different bands over the 2019 -2020 season, has brought his technical expertise and enthusiasm to our ONHB virtual program. Colin will be sharing his love of music with two band – intermediate and advanced intermediate - in our upcoming winter session. He really enjoyed leading his band of over 50 musicians this fall, and now ONHB musicians may work with Collin at the pace and level of music which they prefer.

-Sheila White, a long-time and much-loved band leader with ONHB, lead two virtual bands this fall, and will be taking a break to focus on her private studio this winter.

- - Rocco Romeo and JP Lafleur lead the 2019-2020 Intermediate and Advanced Jazz Band respectively, with passion and expertise. When in-person rehearsing resumes, we hope that our jazz program will bounce back, as lively as ever.

- Last winter, I lead Jumpin’ Jazz Band, the “jump in” level, with 40 musicians and this fall I lead the Jazz Sonic Tonic virtual session, which welcomed 58 musicians at all levels of playing, with 1 to many years of playing experience. I am happy to be continuing Jazz Sonic Tonic on Thursday\* evenings. [\*Changed to accommodate band leader conflict, to Mondays evenings)

On behalf of all us band leaders, I want to thank our AWESOME BAND REPS for their ongoing support in meeting at our three Advisory Committee Meetings, and some of them are continuing to support a virtual band, as we wait for in-person rehearsals to be possible. We are also **so fortunate** to have Jacqueline Poullet heading up the music library and helping us organize our music for each session. Thanks to Sarah Meyer, who is now taking on the important role of searching for qualified people in our ONHB family to fill roles, as well as back up people, for all the volunteer positions that keep this organization running so smoothly - from our extremely capable and dedicated chairperson, – Brian Carr, and co-chair, Jackie Scheffel, who can put her formidable talents to any number of tasks, to our incredibly knowledgeable treasurer, Leslie Scott- our outgoing unflappable and gifted Secretary, Gail Taillon, our incoming eagle-eyed secretary, Sue Christian, our wonderful new communications officer – Leslie Carlin, our super webmaster, Michel Marinier, and consultants Shaun Ferrier and Jody Gomber, to our reliable, organized and helpful librarians and band reps.

As Brian said, this summer was very busy, making preparations for a virtual fall session. The fall virtual sessions were more popular than anticipated, with an enrolment of 133 musicians, some of whom joined more than one band. The recent membership survey gave a very positive review of the fall session, and we have over 120 planning to register in the Winter Session.

While there are certainly disadvantages to rehearsing virtually, our members are ever positive, and here are some positive things I have heard about “virtual” over the past few weeks in our social “break” rooms following rehearsal –

1. NO MORE MISSED REHEARSALS because of weather!
2. NO MORE HEATING UP A COLD CAR and DRIVING IN WINTER WEATHER TRAFFIC to rehearsal.
3. IN PYJAMAS 10 minutes after rehearsal – (in fact, you can attend rehearsal with your video off and wear your PJs to practice.
4. IF LATE – you simply sneak in, video off, and nobody is bothered.
5. WE CAN ATTEND FROM TORONTO, or ALBERTA or wherever we are on rehearsal night.
6. IF YOU PLAY A FEW WRONG NOTES, OR TOO LOUDLY, NOBODY CARES BUT YOU - and possibly your family or close neighbours.
7. SEVEN PERCUSSIONISTS AND THREE PIANO PLAYERS PLAYED IN THE SAME JAZZ BAND – when registering for virtual band, there is no fear that big numbers on one instrument will cause you to have to move from the band of your choice!
8. THE SOCIAL TIME BEVERAGES ARE GEARED TO INDIVIDUAL PREFERENCE - in the comfort of our homes!

If you were signed in at 2:30, you were inspired no doubt by hearing and meeting Karen Donnelly, first trumpet at NACO. I attended the NACO livestream concert last evening, and would encourage you to consider attending livestream concerts for the many benefits: We are supporting performing artists, learning by listening, lifting our spirits, and participating in the broader music community. And, I would suggest that taking a few private or group virtual lessons will not only give **you** great technical support and impetus to practice, but will help our music teachers in the community to maintain their teaching practice.

The Winter Session is in the final planning stages, and here is what we know so far:

4 bands will be offered during the winter session. Rehearsals will be one hour in length, with some flexibility for extra help and social time.

3 concert bands and 1 jazz band with a limit of 100 participants per band due to Zoom

- one beginner-intermediate concert band on Wednesdays 7-8

- one intermediate concert band

- one intermediate-advanced concert band

- one beginner-intermediate jazz band on ~~Thursdays~~\* from 7-8 [later changed to Mondays]

As mentioned earlier, each band leader has the flexibility to offer some extra support, at their discretion and to fit with their schedule.

Registration for the Winter session is planned for Dec. 18 to early January.

There will be 9 weeks of rehearsals over a 10-week period (with NO rehearsals during the week of February 15 (Family Day).)

Rehearsals will begin during the week of **January 18.**

Rehearsals will end during the week of March 22. (plus a Spring Session is planned to begin two weeks later)

The cost for 1 band will be $60. The cost for each additional band will be $30 per band.

We have an amazing resource in the highly-skilled, energetic people in our ONHB family – you

the members–You have joined us on a Sunday afternoon to participate

in the important work of running the Ottawa New Horizons Band, and I thank each and every one of you

for giving of your time and interest in being fully-informed by attending the AGM.