

Candidate: Joe Frank

Interview: September 16, 2014 @ 5:00 PM

1. What drew you to the Plano Community Band?

Joe misses conducting the Athens Community Band in Georgia. His first retirement was in Georgia where he taught music appreciation, led a bell choir, and did handyman work. Now he is back in Texas and his wife is now also retired. He is looking for things to do. He misses conducting. He was also friends with Tommy and had talked with Tommy about the PCB in the past.

He likes working with adults. He likes the level of musical maturity you can communicate. He feels we would be wonderful to conduct and that we have an aligned philosophy with him. He feels he knows the PCB pretty well.

2. Have you heard us perform recently?

Yes, especially since his daughter Jessica plays clarinet in the band. He heard us at TBA and at Tommy's memorial service.

3. What do you enjoy about conducting?

Conducting is his biggest thrill in life. He likes the relationships you develop with people in the band. He likes making music and making an emotional connection. He likes that the conductor gets to "do it all" in the band; he brings all of the sections and the musical lines together.

4. What to you is the ideal community band?

The Plano Community Band is pretty close to his ideal ensemble. Philosophically, he likes the direction in which we are going. He likes that we have enough people to play good music. We have people who want to play and want to make music. Community band is a creative outlet. He wants to meet the needs of the members. He wants to be surrounded by players who want to make music.

5. How does the Plano Community Band fit into your life as far as time commitment?

This would be an experiment, but one that he wants to work. He had to sell the idea to his wife. Now that they are both retired, they are footloose and fancy-free. They pick and choose their activities. He feels

that PCB is worth the commitment.

6. What do you expect from the executive board?
The Athens band did not have a board. He expects the board to facilitate the band's vision. The conductor will make sure the vision happens, with board support. He wants to empower people to do things.
7. What do you expect from the band members?
PRACTICE!!! ☺ He would be disappointed if band members did not match his enthusiasm for making music. He wants band members to be open minded and willing to work on our goals together.
8. How will you handle program selections for our established concert? For ad-hoc concerts?
Programming for community band is not much different from teaching. He looks for variety. He likes themed shows, like "Marches in March." He picks one or two cornerstone pieces as the foundation of the concert, and then balance out the rest of the show. He has a strong knowledge of the literature. When he conducted the second band at Berkner High School (Richardson), they played 5A literature even though it was not required. He did the same at Sherman High School, even though they were not 5A. He likes Gershwin medleys, Manheim Steamroller, patriotic music. Programming is a very enjoyable part of the job.
9. How will you prepare the band for concerts considering the amount of rehearsal time and the volunteer status of band members?
He is good at this because of the Athens band. He realizes there is a difference between working with people once a week versus daily. The conductor must be really prepared, and willing to put in the time for prep work. He fixes the big, bad things first and saves the easy stuff for later. He is organized at rehearsal. Sometimes quantity of music can get in the way. The older he gets, the more he wants to prepare outside of rehearsals, and the more important it is.
10. What are your plans for the band for the next 5 years?
 - a. PCB has performed at national [ACB] conventions in the past
 - b. PCB performed at TBA this summerState and national level performances are not a strength in his knowledge base. These were goals when he was at Athens, but they were not capable of performing at that level yet. Whatever the PCB

goals are, Joe will help us figure them out and how to make them happen. He enjoys having something to work toward.

11. What was your greatest challenge when you conducted a community band in the past?

The Athens band was only able to play level 2 music. His challenge was making them better without destroying the band. There are two cultures you can have in community band:

- a. Simply rehearse and then socialize
- b. Push the band and raise the level of performance

Joe prefers to challenge the good players. He wants to create an atmosphere that yields a musical experience.

12. How do you feel about guest artists?

They provide great variety and he has lots of interest in them. He's worked with opera singers in the past with his band.

Other notes:

- Played French horn
- His daughter Jessica plays clarinet in the PCB
- The Athens band had a jazz ensemble that made money for them as a fundraiser. This idea could be used with the PCB ensembles.
- He wants to explore other grant opportunities with us, beyond the Plano and Richardson grants.
- He is looking forward to conducting us in October, and already got a score to Holst.