

CHARLOTTESVILLE



COMMUNITY BAND FESTIVAL



Saturday, June 30, 2012

9:15 am - 10:00 pm
On the Downtown Mall
Charlottesville, Virginia

Community Bands - An American Institution



The community band in America has evolved from the seventeenth through the nineteenth century producing prolific and influential musical ensembles. European traditions were at the root of the American community band, while professional and military band models have served as its inspiration throughout the nineteenth century.

As documented in The New Grove Dictionary of American Music: Toward the end of the nineteenth century, there were thousands of amateur ensembles, and the town band even became a measure of its social rank and civic pride. W. H. Dana wrote, "The spirit of a place is recognized in its band." The community band continued to define American culture, and by "the early twentieth century hardly an American hamlet was without its village band; hardly a public occasion passed without the sound of the brasses, woodwinds, drums, and cymbals of a band."

Today community bands not only serve civic functions and provide popular entertainment, they also serve other roles in American cultural life. Community bands provide an opportunity for senior citizens and amateur musicians to be involved in music, a place for professional musicians to sharpen their skills and stay in shape, and an accessible medium for aspiring composers, while continuing to provide civic-oriented entertainment on special occasions and holidays.

With over 2000 community bands across the country, and more than 30 groups in the Commonwealth of Virginia, we have the opportunity to be entertained today by eleven community bands from the central Virginia area along with the 29th Infantry Division Band of the Virginia National Guard.

