

## COVID-19 Impact Update, May 4, 2020

Dear Patriots Band Members,

We hope that each of you and your families are doing well during this difficult period. The year 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic will certainly be a memorable year for all of us.

The COVID-19 guidance from our State health officials is especially difficult for organizations like the Patriots Band, not only because we ARE a large group of people, but we also PERFORM for large groups of people. As you know, playing an instrument while wearing a mask is difficult, and separating each of us by six feet would create an impossible performing situation. At the present time, we are not even permitted to rehearse together because of our group size.

So here is the sad news: Due to inability to rehearse as a group and to perform to an audience, we are being forced to cancel ALL of our currently-planned concert events for the Summer season, May 24 through July 22. Some concert clients have already cancelled their events because of group gathering restrictions, while other concerts occur so soon that we would not have time to rehearse (even if allowed to rehearse). Both the Band and the clients are disappointed; we simply have no choice. Safety is paramount, and we do not want to risk the health of any of our band members. Yes, many of us are in that “high risk” age category, and spending hours together in rehearsal is not currently viewed as a safe situation. Even if we were permitted to hold a large concert gathering, the current social distancing and health uncertainties would likely reduce our audience attendance numbers, which is likely a consideration of our concert hosts.

Some performing organizations have already suspended operations through the end of 2020. We truly believe that State of Ohio restrictions will relax prior to that, which will allow the Patriots to “get the band back together” much sooner. Many band members have expressed how much they missed seeing friends and performing music together. We have an excellent group, and we owe it to ourselves and the community to get back on stage as soon as possible.

We will continue to monitor the virus situation carefully and will inform band members when we are permitted to resume our rehearsal schedule. We are hoping that we can resume in the Fall, then prepare for a blowout Christmas concert event (wouldn't that be great?!). A lot will happen between now and then, so we should stay optimistic and hope for the best.

We currently have no plans for Patriots rehearsals or performances before August 1, 2020. If that does change, we will certainly let you know. Please monitor this website for updates and news on our rehearsal and concert schedules.

The Patriots Band was in great shape before the COVID virus hit: we had worked hard and mastered a very difficult Gershwin concert program, and we were ready to then roll into a fun Summer concert season. We are the same, talented musicians we were in March, so we can perform great music together again when this COVID mess is all over!

During this dormant period please safeguard ALL of your Patriots music. The Gershwin concert will be rescheduled in the future, so please, please keep everything safe. As always, our music librarian (Maureen Wightman 440-336-2666) can address all music issues.

Be safe, be healthy, and we hope to see you all SOON!

- Kurt Shalkhauser