

Lincoln High School Instrumental Music Department

Terry R Rush - Instrumental Music Director (trush@lps.org)

Dan Ehly - Assistant Director / Director of Music Technology (dehly@lps.org)

2229 J Street

Lincoln, Ne 68510

Phone: (402) 436-1301

FAX: (402) 436-1540

To parents of students enrolled in instrumental music at Lincoln High School,

As many of you know, next school year the *entire* instrumental department has been invited to participate in the 2008 London New Years Day Parade and Music Festival. This is the first of many informational letters you will be receiving. We still have many details to work out at this time, but I will try to keep you informed. The London New Years Day Parade is attended by invitation only. The invited ensemble must either be recommended by college directors or have successfully participated in a previous London Parade; we've met these conditions.

This event, now celebrating it's 21st year, has grown to be the largest parade in the world. Also included is the opportunity for concert ensembles to perform in a beautiful hall located just off Parliament Square. The last time we were there the Symphonic Band and Varsity Jazz Band performed in this marvelous hall to a crowd of nearly 2,500 enthusiastic attendees.

This will be the Marching Band's third participation in this international event. The parade itself is a walking history tour taking the group from Westminster Square (where Westminster Abbey, Parliament and Big Ben are) through Trafalgar Square and Picadilly Circus ending at Barkley Square (where the Nightingale sang!!)

The parade route is packed with a million plus cheering, well wishing, wanting to shake your hand Londoners who are thrilled that you are there. It is televised all over Europe and in the States.

Included in the trip are: air and ground transportation, first class hotel, sightseeing trips to Stone Henge, the Roman Baths, Windsor Castle, The "Eye" ferris wheel, The Tower of London as well as a guided tour of London, shopping opportunities (Harrod's-Covent Gardens, etc.), evening and breakfast meals, a Broadway musical, London Parade t-shirts and group photo among other amenities.

The big question of course is the cost. There is a variable right now. The U.S. government has tagged on a \$200 "surcharge" (go figure) that is being contested in court as we speak. This charge seems to come and go on a whim. It is totally out of Youth Music of the World's hands.

IF this stays in place, the cost will be in the \$2400-2500 range. If not, you do the math. The last trip we took in 2002-2003 cost \$2000 without many of the now options available.

Students may pay for the trip in many ways including fund raising the entire amount, fund raising and out of pocket money, or completely out of pocket money. The last time we went, most students paid for the trip from their part time jobs, as my own children did. Birthday's and Christmas are also great opportunities to receive financial assistance from relatives and friends. Past students have even, on their own, contacted businesses for sponsorship. One student had her trip paid for in a little over an hour. That was initiative!!!

The trip will be chaperoned by Lincoln High School staff and administrators as well as an administrator from the Lincoln Public Schools Office. No parents will be used as chaperones.

Tentative dates for the trip are December 27 2007- January 3 2008.

You can find more parade/festival information from the London Parade web site which is:

<http://www.londonparade.co.uk/>

The last London trip we had a hundred guests go along with us as the “entourage”. Each person receives the same opportunities that the students do. As a member of the entourage you do reserve the right to deviate from the printed schedule if you so desire. The only change in cost would be for special rooming needs. i.e. one to a room, two to a room, etc. Standard trip price is based on 3-4 to a room depending on the configuration of the hotel rooms. This opportunity to travel as a member of the entourage is available to family and friends alike.

Youth Music of the World is over 25 years old. They are one of the most respected youth travel agencies in the world. They have safely provided musical, cultural and historical opportunities to hundreds of thousands of students. Their primary concern is your son/daughter. Aside from the two previous times that Lincoln High has traveled with Youth Music, I have taken a multi school band to Paris in 2001 and a string ensemble to London in 2002. I also had the wonderful experience of judging for them in Maastricht, Holland in 1999.

You will find a letter of intent enclosed along with this letter. Please fill this form out for your student and copy as needed for those also wanting to participate in this life time experience. You will find a payment schedule that is set by Youth Music that we need to follow. It is important that each family adhere to this schedule. Should your initial decision be to not participate, you can still change your mind up to a certain date. However, do understand that if you do sign up to go and then withdraw, **your deposit CAN/WILL be held**. Refunds, if any, will vary upon the date and timing of the withdrawal. You can add on to the trip well into most deadline periods. Don't let those stop you or your student from going.

There will be many informational meetings prior to the trip. The first booster meeting is September 19 (check your newsletter) and *some* information may be available at that time.

When we participate in the London New Years Day Parade and Music Festival it will be the parade's 22nd year. As I said it has grown to be the largest parade in the world with over 40 countries around the world participating. America, South America, Central America, Europe and Asia. It is an international cultural event that will give each trip participant the experience of a life time.

Assuming that your student, or you(!), are going along, you should obtain a passport. If your student already has one, make sure you check the expiration date. Student passports are only good for 5 years while adult passports are good for 10 years. It can take a period of time to receive your passport and certain times of the year take longer than others. If you wait until the last minute, you may have to pay a \$100 “hurry up” fee to expedite the passport.

Should you have any questions concerning the trip feel free to contact via e-mail, trush@lps.org or at Lincoln High School during school hours at 436-1301.

Terry R. Rush
Instrumental Music Director
Lincoln High School