

PTO Newsletter

Governor Livingston High School
(908) 464-3100 www.bhpsnj.org

THE HIGHLANDER BAND

A tradition of excellence for more than 50 years

It's not yet 7:00 AM on a crisp October morning, and already GL is a hive of activity. GL Parents are opening up the Snack Shack by the Frey Field, erecting barricades, attaching flags to poles, unloading supplies, and thinking of coffee. Custodians are setting out tables and chairs and placing yard markers. So begins the 39th annual Highlander Band Pageant – the day when GL is host to 12 other High Schools in a judged competition for championship of the Tournament Of Bands. So why are so many GL parents and alumni so committed?

It's a matter of Highlander Pride, but not just pride in the Band's record of championships in a league that includes over 400 schools across 9 states. Not just a matter of pride in the band's high standard of musicianship and crisp, complex marching, or the color guard's elegance and synchronization. Neither is it just the pride in the Highlander tradition that stretches back for 51 years at GL and further, past the origins of New Jersey, to Scotland as the ancestral home of Governor Livingston.

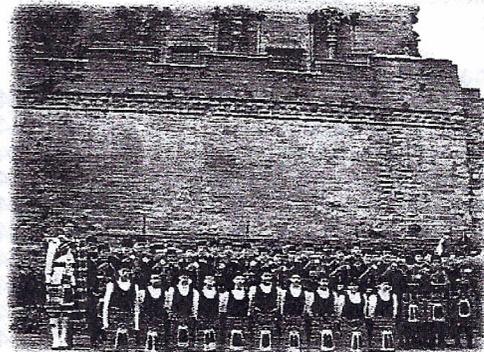
It's more than that. GL is on show to 12 other High Schools – including students, faculty and parents - from across New Jersey, Pennsylvania and West New York. So it's about representing GL and showing Highlander Pride for the whole school. That's why members of the Student Auxiliary and GL Cheerleaders supported the band on this important day. And that's why the same dedicated parents and alumni were still at the school clearing up 13 hours later.

By the time this is in print, the ACCs (the championship tournament involving bands from 9 states held at Hershey Stadium) will be over. Will GL's musicians and color guard know again the thrill of being judged the best of the best? At the time of writing, GL is ranked 2nd in the whole league so they are in with a good chance, but it all depends on that group of teenagers and what they can summon from within to be the best for 14 minutes on Halloween. For the freshmen this steep learning

curve started just a few weeks ago. Already they are judged as performing at a standard unmatched by most of their peers.

These are life lessons. The Highlander Band learns in a vivid way the equation that links hard work to excellence. Every individual's performance matters in the final result – nobody sits it out on the bench. The musicians and color guard learn time-management to balance practice with the homework, and most parents find their kids' grades are higher during band season.

But it's not all serious stuff. Band members enjoy a camaraderie and sense of fun which keeps most kids committed throughout High School. Aside from winning the ACCs, the highlight of any band member's career is the quadrennial visit to Scotland. This summer they performed in the world-famous Edinburgh Cavalcade with an audience of more than 100,000! They also performed in Stirling Castle, and visited the village of Ancrum, the ancestral home of William Livingston, near the English border. William Livingston was the first post-revolutionary



Governor of New Jersey from 1776-1790 for whom the school was named. A fine tradition indeed.

Editor's Note: The Highlander Band took 3rd place (with a score 96.2 out of 100) at the ACC Championships. The color guard was judged as the best overall!

