

# Musicians bring passion to Town Band

**Amherst** | With 45 members and a busy concert slate, group bands together.

By LYNN TRYBA

Telegraph Staff

AMHERST – Far from being a scolding mother figure who needs to nag her kids to practice their instruments, Pat Anderson leads a band of musicians who couldn't be more eager.

The Amherst Town Band conductor still can't get over how it feels to receive

e-mails from 40-somethings asking her what the play list will be for their weekly get-togethers. These people practice to get ready for their practices.

"They're all so focused and passionate," said Anderson, who is also Souhegan High School's choral director.

The town band's 45 members come from all walks of life and diverse professional fields, including law, medicine, computer technology and education. Their ages range from 12 to older than 70.

Their love of music unites them.

## TOWN BAND CONCERT

The Amherst Town Band will perform at Emerson Park in Milford on Wednesday, at 7 p.m., and on the Amherst Town Green on Tuesday, Aug. 24, at 7 p.m. The concerts are sponsored by the Milford Rotary and the Amherst Lions Club, respectively.

Those interested in joining the band should contact conductor Pat Anderson at [conductor@amherstownband.org](mailto:conductor@amherstownband.org). Membership is open to those living in the Amherst area. There is no audition process for adults. Rehearsals resume Sept. 14.

# Band

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That same love bonds the Amherst Town Band with the Milford Haven Town Band of Wales in the United Kingdom.

The bands struck up a relationship a decade ago and have been flying back and forth to visit and perform together ever since.

Letters, calls, cards and e-mails have helped cement the friendships since then, said Tad Thompson, last year's band president.

"We're all bandies. We love music. We hit it off," he said.

"To get over there and play

with them is the cherry on top of the sundae."

The Amherst Town Band traveled across the pond for the second time July 23 to spend a week performing with the Milford Haven band. As always, band members pay their own fare and are then taken in by host families.

The bands performed in five concerts and two parades. Playing together is not without its challenges.

The Milford Haven band is an all brass band (no woodwinds), and the Amherst band is a standard American concert band with woodwinds. As a result, the musicians don't all read the same kind of music.

Anderson and Milford Haven conductor collaborated before

the trip to ensure that the bands would be able to play together with no hitches.

The Amherst Town Band has been a tradition since it formed as part of a PTA play in 1986. Former resident Jean Butler and her husband, Irv, shepherded the band for the first decade or so of its life, Thompson said.

When the couple moved to Florida, "the band said 'Mom

and Dad are gone now,' " Thompson said.

A volunteer board of directors now carries out the workings of the band, including deciding which promising young band members should be awarded scholarships to continue with their musical education in college.

The band, a nonprofit organization, gives about a dozen free concerts a year. It mixes things up, with Broadway tunes, marches, jazz, classical and pop. Amherst's large Independence Day celebration began as an Amherst Town Band concert years ago.

The band still performs July 3

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