

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Vintage Band Music Festival will entertain with historical flair**

From July 27-30, the town of Northfield will resound to the music of vintage bands from Europe and the U.S. in a rare event for the Midwest, the Vintage Band Music Festival. Organizer Dr. Paul Niemisto, St. Olaf College, Northfield, has coordinated the Festival. The Thursday-through-Sunday event will feature more than 15 vintage bands, many in 19<sup>th</sup> century dress, performing more than 40 free concerts, mostly outdoors in parks and neighborhoods throughout the community. The Festival is coupled with an academic conference held at the historic Archer House hotel, for vintage band scholars and enthusiasts. With an eye and an ear to the 1800s, when brass bands played the parks of the world, the Vintage Band Festival will provide days of concerts and special events. While most are free, some special evening events will sell tickets at the door.

Bands in vintage costume, playing vintage instruments, will highlight the Festival. Niemisto provided an answer to the question, "What is a vintage band?" He said, "I ask you to move yourself back in time and imagine a concert in the park in the 1880s, or the sound of a band leading troops in the Civil War, or the lovely melodies of a 19<sup>th</sup> century European ballroom. The Vintage Band Festival will present not only this traditional music but also the original instruments, some more than 150 years old. It is music that is sweet, melodic, and very civilized."

The Festival opens Thursday, July 27, with a 7 p.m. concert on Bridge Square performed by Brassworks Band, San Francisco, which re-creates authentic dance tunes and steps from the Civil War era and early California. An example of just one musical event during the weekend is the mid-day "battle of the bands" on Saturday. This will feature the 26<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Regiment Band in grey uniforms on the east bank of the Cannon River, and the 1st Wisconsin Band in blue uniforms on the west bank. Following a full schedule of concerts and events, the Festival will conclude on Sunday with a 7:30 p.m. concert on Bridge Square featuring the Dodworth Saxhorn Band from Michigan.

A Festival Afterglow will be held at the Grand Event Center on Monday, July 31, at 7 p.m., when the Festival's academic conference concludes. The North Star Cinema Orchestra will perform music to accompany silent movies and vaudeville entertainment.

Bands that will perform during the Festival are Passion des Cuivres, Berlin, Germany; 26<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Regimental Band (re-created), Maryland/Virginia; Ameriikan pojjat, Finnish-tradition band, Minnesota; Bandshell Brass, Faribault, MN; Brassworks, San Francisco; Carlisle Town Band, Minnesota; Chatfield Brass Band, Chatfield, MN; Chestnut Brass Company, Philadelphia, PA; Dodworth Saxhorn Band, Ann Arbor, MI; Dolce Wind Quintet, Minneapolis, MN; DyVersaCo Polka Band, Minnesota; 1st Brigade Band of Wisconsin, DeForest, WI; Lake Wobegon@Brass Band, St. Cloud, MN; Newberry's Victorian Cornet Band, Maryland/Pennsylvania; Original German Band of New Ulm, MN; Rocky Mountain Alphorn Trio, Minneapolis; Sheldon Theatre Brass Band, Red Wing, MN; and WindWorks quintet, Northfield, MN.

Audiences are invited to come in vintage costume if they wish. Along with the concerts, guests can take in a vintage baseball game--with a band, naturally. Adding flavor to the weekend will be costumed members of Minnesota Living History Society and the Minnesota Victorian Society. Dance instruction will be available prior to Friday and Saturday night's "cotillion" dances at the Armory. The DyVersaCo Polka Band will play for a street dance on Division (Main Street). Weather permitting, hot air balloons from the Southeastern Minnesota Balloon Club will make an appearance over town during the Festival.

Special exhibits will include a display of the Schubert Club of St. Paul's Kugler Collection of historical instruments, at the Northfield Arts Guild. On display at the ArtOrg gallery will be the historic band photography and poster collection of Mark Chalabala. The Northfield Historical Society will highlight Northfield's music and band history, including memorabilia of the St. Olaf Band's historic trip to Norway in 1906, history about Northfield band leaders James Gillette and Miles Johnson, and artifacts from local private collections. Institutions collaborating to produce the Festival include ArtOrg, Carleton College, the City of Northfield and its citizens, Northfield Arts Guild, Northfield Convention and Visitors Bureau, Northfield Historical Society, and St. Olaf College.

Major financial support has come from Carleton College, Collegeville Homes-Village on the Cannon, First National Bank-Northfield, Malt-o-Meal Corp., Mendota Homes-the Crossing, the Miles Johnson Endowment, the Minnesota Community Foundation, the Northfield Area Foundation, St. Olaf College, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and WINGS. Local restaurants, taverns, hotels and retailers have also contributed significantly to the event.

Contact the Northfield Convention and Visitors Bureau for more information at 1-(800)-658-2548.

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