



# Riverwatch Middle School

## *Symphonic Band*

Forsyth County Public Schools  
Suwanee, Georgia

Matt Koperniak, Director

14<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Southeastern United States  
Middle School Honor Band and Clinic

John M. Long School of Music  
Troy University  
Troy, Alabama

Friday, December 7, 2012  
1:45 p.m.

The goal of Forsyth County Schools is to provide a challenging curriculum that prepares every student for a productive life. We believe that, as partners with parents and the community as a whole, our schools can foster in every student an appreciation for the arts. It is because of this partnership that Forsyth County was named one of the "Best 100 Communities for Music Education in America". We are proud of this honor and the wide variety of quality fine arts programs that are available at all of our schools.

As one of Forsyth County's finest middle schools and a Georgia School of Excellence, Riverwatch Middle School has a well established reputation for providing its students outstanding programs in academics, arts, and athletics. We are proud of Riverwatch MS's success in all these areas and wish them support at the **Southeastern United States Band Clinic** at Troy University under the guidance of Band Director Matt Koperniak.

Enjoy the Experience!



Dr. L.C. (Buster) Evans  
Superintendent



**RIVERWATCH MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
*Home of the Golden Panthers*

**Robin Castleberry**  
Assistant Principal

**Kathy Carpenter**  
Principal

**Drew Hayes**  
Assistant Principal

December 7, 2012

Dear Parents, Family, and Friends,

The Riverwatch Middle School Band, under the direction of Mr. Matt Koperniak, exemplifies the purpose statement of our school: "Together we LEAD – Learn, Exceed, Achieve, and Dream." Over the course of five years, Mr. Koperniak has grown and developed the Riverwatch Band Program into one of the leading groups within the state of Georgia. Each year the students who participate in our band program have the opportunity to play in many competitions and select performances ranging from the University of Georgia Annual Middle School Festival to the Georgia Music Educators Association In-Service Conference. The efforts of the students and Mr. Koperniak are outstanding. We are honored to have the opportunity to show their hard work at the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Southeastern United States Middle School Band Clinic at Troy University.

This performance is a culminating activity that showcases hard work, sacrifices, and efforts of not only the students, but also their parents. Being a member of the Riverwatch Middle School Band is quite a commitment. These students spend time in class for rehearsals, as well as practices before and after school. This group continues to compete at high levels, and their work continues to demonstrate excellence!

It is with great pride that I present to you the Riverwatch Middle School Band students. Because of the rigor from their music making experiences, they will lead, they will achieve, and they will make dreams reality. These students will make our world a better place as they perform for you today.

Sincerely,



Katherine Carpenter  
Principal, Riverwatch Middle School

# Riverwatch Middle School

## *The Band*

Riverwatch Middle School is located in the southeastern corner of Forsyth County along the Chattahoochee River, just a few miles from both Gwinnett and Fulton Counties. Home to approximately 1,350 students, Riverwatch Middle School opened in 2004. Since that time, Riverwatch Middle School has been named a state report card Platinum Award Winner and a Georgia School of Excellence.

The band program at Riverwatch is comprised of over 400 students involved in Sixth Grade Band, Seventh Grade Concert Band, Eighth Grade Concert Band, and Symphonic Band, as well as Jazz Band and Pep Band. Each year, students perform in several concerts on campus, as well as at the Forsyth County Band Festival and GMEA Large Group Performance Evaluations. Selected students are members of GMEA All-State and District IX Honor Bands, and alumni are members of the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra and Atlanta Youth Wind Symphony. Students regularly participate in summer music programs, including the University of Georgia Summer Music Camp and Encore Music Camp.

Members of the Riverwatch Band Program are consistently represented in all sports at Riverwatch Middle School, including football, boys and girls basketball, track, and golf. Riverwatch band students also participate in cheerleading, FLAG academic tournament, Art Club, Builder's Club, Beta Club, Engineering Team, Student Council, and the school musical.

The Riverwatch Middle School Band Program was selected by the Georgia Music Educators Association as a 2010 recipient of the GMEA Exemplary Performance

Award. The Exemplary

Performance Award was established by GMEA to recognize middle school bands that achieve outstanding results in all areas of performance, including Large Group Performance Evaluation, Solo and Ensemble, All-State Band, and District Honor Band.



The Riverwatch Symphonic Band was a featured performing ensemble at the 20th annual University of Georgia Middle School Festival in 2010 and the Southern Division National Band Association & College Band Directors National Association Conference in 2012. The Riverwatch Symphonic Band will perform at the 75th Annual Georgia Music Educators Association In-Service Conference in 2013. The Riverwatch Symphonic Band was awarded State Honors by the Foundation for Music Education in 2011 and 2012.

The Riverwatch Band Program actively supports the commissioning of new music for middle school band. Recent commissioning projects include *Tribute* (2010) by Richard A. Crosby (listed as a Grade II selection on the GMEA music list) and, as a consortium member, *Baron Piquant on Pointe* (2011) by Donald Grantham (listed as a Grade IV selection on the GMEA music list). Currently, the Riverwatch Band Program is a member of consortiums for future works for middle school band by Timothy Loest and Frank Ticheli. The Riverwatch Band Program is a proud member of the GMEA Ninth District which undertakes a commissioning project on a regular basis every two years, alternating middle and high school levels. Recent composers commissioned by the GMEA Ninth District include Scott Boerma and Bill Locklear.

Alumni of the Riverwatch Band Program participate in the Lambert High School Band under the direction of Scott McCloy. Lambert High School opened in 2009, and in that short time, the Lambert “Stampede” Marching Band has amassed straight superior ratings at every festival and competitive performance and, in 2011, was named Georgia Regional Champion and Southern States Runner-Up in the United States Scholastic Band Association.

The Forsyth County School System serves over 38,000 students and is the largest employer in the county with over 4,200 full-time employees. As the ninth largest school system in Georgia, the Forsyth County School System is home to twenty elementary schools, nine middle schools, and five high schools.



# The Director

**Matt Koperniak** has been the band director at Riverwatch Middle School in Suwanee, GA since 2008. During the past five years, the Riverwatch Band Program has grown from 135 students to over 400 students. Mr. Koperniak served Riverwatch Middle School on the 2010-2012 School Leadership Team and was named the 2012 Riverwatch Teacher of the Year.



Prior to his arrival at Riverwatch, Mr. Koperniak taught at Norcross High School and Jefferson High School and also served as director of the Classic City Community Band in Athens, GA. During his nine-year teaching career as a band director, Mr. Koperniak has also taught IB Music, chorus, general music, business essentials, and physical education. Mr. Koperniak is a regular staff member with the University of Georgia Summer Music Camp, UGA Marching Band Camp, and Encore Music Camp. He received the "Citation of Excellence" from the National Band Association on two occasions in 2010 and 2012.

Mr. Koperniak is a Magna Cum Laude graduate of the University of Georgia where he served as Drum Major and Band Captain of the Redcoat Band, studied trombone with Dr. Philip Jameson, and studied conducting with Dr. John Culvahouse. Mr. Koperniak has received additional conducting instruction through workshop participation with Frank Battisti, Richard Blatti, Paula Crider, Jack Delaney, Richard Floyd, Donald Hunsberger, James Jordan, Jerry Junkin, Tom Lee, John P. Lynch, Allan McMurray, Stephen Pratt, Robert Rumbelow, and Mark Davis Scatterday.

Professional affiliations include the Georgia Music Educators Association, National Band Association, International Trombone Association, Pi Kappa Lambda, Phi Kappa Phi, and Blue Key. Mr. Koperniak has served Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia as a Province Governor since 2005, administering and mentoring nine collegiate chapters and two alumni associations in Northern and Central Georgia. He also serves as secretary to the Governors' Council and was recently appointed to the 2012-2015 Commission on Standards. As a member of the GMEA Ninth District, Mr. Koperniak currently serves as Treasurer and also as the organizer for the Instrumental Solo & Ensemble Festival. Mr. Koperniak has been published in the Music Educators Journal, International Trombone Association Journal, Georgia Music News, Tempo! (the official magazine of the New Jersey Music Educators Association), and The Sinfonian magazine. He has presented peer-reviewed research in music education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Current research interests include Critical Discourse Analysis in application to music curricular decisions at the local school level as well as the use of qualitative methodology to examine the multiplicity of identities and perspectives in music education.

Mr. Koperniak is an avid runner and his favorite race is the half-marathon. As an alumnus of J.C. Booth Middle School and McIntosh High School in Peachtree City, GA, Mr. Koperniak's musical education was shaped by the many positive experiences available to students in the state of Georgia, including All-State Band & Orchestra, All-State Jazz Band, The Governor's Honors Program, and the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra.

# *The Students*

## **Flute**

Alisa Barr  
Samantha Hardy  
Hannah Kim  
Minyoung Kim  
Amanda Lang  
Jung Yun Oh  
Jenny Suh  
Christina Sun  
Stephanie Tian  
Pravin Vikram  
Sophia Williams  
Shannon Xayaraj

## **Oboe**

Nick Cho  
Christopher Rhee

## **Bassoon**

Akshay Bhatia  
Emily Gibson  
Sven Mesihovic

## **Clarinet**

Justin Ahn  
Aditya Bhave  
David Dennard  
Sadhana Durbha  
Kian Hosseini  
Michael Im  
Sreekar Kanaparti  
Swapnil Lad  
Daniel Lee  
Stephanie Lopez  
P.J. McBrayer  
Milan Patel  
Catherine Pertuit  
Tristan Pickering  
Josephine Raurell  
Landon Wang  
Ethan Widjaja

## **Bass Clarinet**

Joowon Kim  
Joseph Sweeney  
Kevin Tao

## **Alto Saxophone**

Wyatt Dalton  
Prem Kurumpanai  
Joon Young Lee  
Brady Lyons  
Pranav Narnur  
Jacob Schindler  
Chandan Yendamuri

## **Tenor Saxophone**

Mary Egan  
Elijah Kim  
Clay Wells

## **Baritone Saxophone**

Nikolas Propes  
Ritwik Sathe

## **Trumpet**

Brian Conroy  
Kevin Duer  
Miles Griffin  
Andrew Hama  
Brightt Hou  
Zachary Keenan  
Aaron Kim  
Aidan McAllister  
Griffin Paquette  
Brandon Romeo  
Gaurav Shah  
Kevin Stine  
Connor Sykora  
Robin Yang

## **Horn**

Hunter Becker  
Sofia Cenciarelli  
Jack McGraw  
Tyler Radtke  
Jeshua Rodriguez  
Sean Turner  
Cole Vandiver

## **Trombone**

Max Benedict  
Jarrad Dickey  
Sloane Hardin  
Erica Hertzberg  
Noah Johnson  
Nathan Lim  
Patrick Reyman  
Faizan Shaik

## **Euphonium**

Geet Bhargava  
Shaun McManus

## **Tuba**

Sarth Diskalkar  
Sai Kilaru  
Alexander Ray  
Mason VanderWeele  
Reuben Varghese

## **Percussion**

Avery Brown  
Joseph Flynn  
Cameron Gonzalez  
Hayden Harrington  
Daniel Jung  
Frankie Kim  
Mitchell Taylor  
Mathew Yi

# *The Program*

**Vertigo (2012)** ..... *Chris M. Bernotas*

**Sheltering Sky (2012)** ..... *John Mackey*

**Themes from “Green Bushes” (1921/1987)**..... *Percy Aldridge Grainger*  
*arr. Larry Daehn*

**Andalucía (2011)** ..... *Victor López*

*Scott McCloy, guest conductor*  
*Director of Bands, Lambert High School*

**Grandfather’s Clock (1966/2010)**..... *George Doughty*  
*arr. Geoff Kingston*

*Alvin Ashlaw, tuba soloist*  
*Lambert High School Senior and Drum Major*

**Grand Galop (2012)** ..... *Johnnie Vinson*



# Program Notes

**Vertigo** (2012) is fast and furious with its aggressive rhythmic drive and spiraling melodies. The calm, contrasting section lasts briefly before a whirling finish. Although the composer did not specify any additional programmatic elements, the recent space jump of Felix Baumgartner has provided vivid imagery for the musicians on stage. On October 14 2012, the daredevil skydiver shattered the sound barrier in a 24-mile jump from the edge of space. During the first portion of the jump, Baumgartner spun head over heels uncontrollably before activating his parachute and landing safely in the New Mexico desert.

The music of composer Chris M. Bernotas has been performed at the Midwest Clinic and has appeared on the J. W. Pepper Editor's Choice lists. He is an active composer who is published with Alfred Music, Daehn Publications, TRN Music, Northeastern Music, and Bandworks Publications. Mr. Bernotas is currently an instrumental music teacher at Mountain Lakes High School in New Jersey.

**Sheltering Sky** (2012) has a folksong-like quality in which an immediate sense of familiarity emerges. Certainly the repertoire has a long and proud tradition of weaving folk songs into its identity, from the days of Holst and Vaughan Williams to modern treatments by such figures as Donald Grantham and Frank Ticheli. Whereas these composers incorporated existing melodies into their works, however, John Mackey takes a play from Percy Grainger. Grainger's *Colonial Song* seemingly sets a beautiful folksong melody in an enchanting way. In reality, however, Grainger's melody was entirely original--his own concoction to express how he felt about his native Australia. Likewise, although the melodies of *Sheltering Sky* have a recognizable quality (hints of the contours and colors of *Danny Boy* and *Shenandoah* are perceptible), the tunes themselves are original to the work, imparting a sense of hazy distance as though they were from a half-remembered dream. Mackey avoids traditional triadic sonorities almost exclusively, instead choosing more indistinct chords with diatonic extensions that facilitate the hazy sonic world that the piece inhabits. Near cadences and chromatic dissonances fill the narrow spaces in these harmonies, creating an even greater pull toward wistful nostalgia. (Program note by Jake Wallace)

John Mackey (b. 1973) holds degrees from The Juilliard School and the Cleveland Institute of Music. His music has been performed in venues such as the Sydney Opera House, Carnegie Hall, and the Kennedy Center. Recent commissions include works for the American Bandmasters Association, the Dallas Wind Symphony, and a concerto for New York Philharmonic Principal Trombonist Joseph Alessi.

**Themes from "Green Bushes"** (1921/1987) is subtitled a *Passacaglia on an English Folksong*. Originally written between 1905 and 1906, Percy A. Grainger wrote "Among country-side folksongs in England, Green Bushes was one of the best known of folksongs -- and well it deserved to be, with its raciness, its fresh grace, its manly clear-cut lines. *Green Bushes* strikes me as being a typical dance, a type of song come down to us from the time when sung melodies, rather than instrumental music, held countryside dancers together. It seems to breathe that lovely passion for the dance that swept like a fire over Europe in the middle ages--seems brimful of all the youthful joy and tender romance that so naturally seek an outlet in dancing."

Larry D. Daehn used excerpts from Grainger's 1921 score to create this setting. Grainger's original sources for this composition were 1) a folksong collected by Cecil Sharp, from the singing of Mrs. Louie Hooper of Hambridge, Somerset and 2) the singing of Mr. Joseph Leaning at Brigg, Lincolnshire, collected by Grainger on August 7, 1906. Grainger collected ten different versions of *Green Bushes* (or *Lost Lady Found* or *The Three Gipsies*) during his folksong collecting career, and used one of them as the final movement of his *Lincolnshire Posy* in 1937.

**Andalucía** (2011) is the most southerly region in Spain and the true home of typically Spanish experiences. Bullfighting, tapas, flamenco, the guitar itself--all began in Andalucía and remain deeply embedded there. For hundreds of years, writers from all corners of the world have told of the gypsies and their colorful lively music and dance, and of the spirit that seems to accompany it. Andalucía is a place that burns with life, color, and romance. It is a place of music and dancing, plucked guitar strings, the snapping of fingers, clicking castanets, and the stamping of feet, all of which mould together to create this wonderful culture we know as flamenco.

We are honored to have composer Victor López with us this afternoon. Dr. López has worked as an educator/administrator with the Miami-Dade County Public School System for 35 years. Among his many accomplishments, Dr. López was named the “1978 Miami-Dade County Teacher of the Year” and the “1979 State of Florida Teacher of the Year.” Major publishing companies have published his compositions and he currently serves as an exclusive composer, arranger, and clinician for Alfred Music Publishing Company with over 450 publications to his credit.

**Grandfather’s Clock** (1966/2010) is a theme and variations based on a song written in 1876 by Henry Clay Work, the author of “Marching Through Georgia.” It is a standard of British brass bands and also popular in bluegrass music. The Oxford English Dictionary states that the song is responsible for the common name “grandfather clock” being applied to the longcase clock. The song is told from the standpoint of the grandson, who tells the story of a longcase clock that his grandfather owned. The clock was purchased on the morning of his grandfather’s birth and worked perfectly for ninety years. In the dead of one night, however, the clock sounded an alarm, which the family knew meant that the grandfather would soon die. The clock, though, continued to keep the time until the grandfather’s death, after which the clock suddenly stopped, never to work again.

*Grandfather’s Clock* by George Doughty has long been a staple of solo euphonium players with brass band accompaniment. It follows the format of an air and three variations with an exhilarating final flourish. By popular request, this great showcase has been arranged by Geoff Kingston for concert band. The popular (yet wistful) melody and set of exciting variations will feature Lambert High School senior Alvin Ashlaw as the tuba soloist as we present this popular solo from the brass band fraternity.

**Grand Galop** (2012) is a concert march in the traditional circus march style. The circus march, also called “circus gallop” and sometimes “screamer,” is an American musical genre. Most circus marches were composed in a 60-year period (1895-1955). Circuses were in need of music that would stir the audience into a frenzy, as four-footed animals galloped across the ring. Because march music was a prominent part of American music at that time, and because it carried such a quick tempo, it was this type of music that ringleaders demanded. Prominent composers of circus marches included Henry Fillmore (1881-1956) and Karl L. King (1891-1971). *Grand Galop* is the fifth in a series of “international marches” including *St. Petersburg March* (Russian), *New Forest March* (British), *The Crown of Castille* (Spanish), and *The Brandenburg Gate* (German).

Composer Johnnie Vinson is Emeritus Director of Bands and Professor of Music at Auburn University and has over 400 published works as a composer and arranger.

*Scott McCloy* is the Director of Bands, Orchestra, and is the

Performing Arts Department Chair at Lambert High School in Suwanee, GA. He began his career in 2002 as the Director of Choral Activities and Associate Director of Bands at Warner Robins High School. In 2005 he became Director of Bands at Liberty Middle School until his appointment to Lambert in 2009. Under his direction, the bands at Lambert have earned numerous awards and accolades. On the US Bands national circuit, the “Stampede” won the music caption and placed second overall at the Mid-Atlantic Regional this year. Last year, Lambert won the Georgia Regional Championship and placed 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Southern States Championship, also winning the Award of Excellence given by the Cadets Drum and Bugle Corps. The Drumline has won 2<sup>nd</sup> place in Class A for two consecutive years at the Southern Association for Performance Arts (SAPA) Championships, and the Winterguard was named class SRA Champion in the school’s inaugural year. The Concert Band, Symphonic Band, and Wind Ensemble have received overall superior ratings at all large group performance evaluations since the school opened. The bands of Lambert will be performing onboard Norwegian Cruise Line’s “NCL Sky” this spring, competing at the US Bands National Championships in New York next fall, and were recently invited by the Royal Mayor of London to participate in the 2015 New Year’s Day Celebration, including performing in the parade and having a concert at Cadogan Hall, the home of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

A clinician and adjudicator throughout the southeast, Mr. McCloy is a veteran of Carolina Crown Drum and Bugle Corps and the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Band. He received his undergraduate degree in music education from Western Carolina University and his masters degree in education from Lesley University, with a focus in music technology. He lives in Dawsonville with his wife Anna, where they co-direct the music ministry program at Christ the Redeemer Church.



*Alvin Ashlaw* is a senior at Lambert High

School in Suwanee, Georgia where he is a drum major in the marching band. A Riverwatch Alumni, he received the Director’s Award in 2009. Alvin discovered his passion for music and playing the tuba at an early age; his dedication to music has led to many accomplishments. He has been the principal tuba player for District 9 alongside being principal of the 2010 all-state orchestra and the 2012 all-state band. In addition, he was the principal tuba player of the Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestra and was a member of the Metropolitan Atlanta Youth Wind Ensemble. Alvin is currently the principal tuba player with the Emory Youth Symphony Orchestra and is a member of the Atlanta Youth Wind Symphony and the Peachtree Symphonic Winds. He was selected to participate in the Governor’s Honors Program in the summer of 2011, along with being chosen to participate in the Brevard Music Festival/Institute this past summer.

Alvin currently studies with Chase Garner and Scott Tarabour. He plans to attend a college or conservatory pursuing a degree in music performance to further his passion for music.

# *Acknowledgements*

## *Administration*

Dr. L.C. (Buster) Evans, Superintendent, Forsyth County Schools  
Dr. Genise Tworek, Fine Arts Administrator, Forsyth County Schools  
Kathy Carpenter, Principal, Riverwatch Middle School  
Robin Castleberry, Assistant Principal, Riverwatch Middle School  
Drew Hayes, Assistant Principal, Riverwatch Middle School  
Shari Endo, Counselor, Riverwatch Middle School  
Randolph Thrower, Counselor, Riverwatch Middle School  
Cathy Geren, Administrative Assistant, Riverwatch Middle School  
Marlise McCurley, Administrative Assistant, Riverwatch Middle School  
Theresa Collum, Administrative Assistant, Riverwatch Middle School  
Melissa Roth, Bookkeeper, Riverwatch Middle School

## *Forsyth County Band Directors*

Forsyth Central High School - Tom Tucker & Dan Grass  
Lakeside Middle School - Stephen Fields  
Lambert High School - Scott McCloy & Tonya Mashburn  
Liberty Middle School - Josh Tyree  
Little Mill Middle School - Christine Davis  
North Forsyth High School - Raymond Thomas  
North Forsyth Middle School - Eddie Anthony  
Otwell Middle School - Catherine Keyser  
Piney Grove Middle School - Fred Chang  
Riverwatch Middle School - Matt Koperniak  
South Forsyth High School - Paul Clark & Ross Amend  
South Forsyth Middle School - Helen Saile  
Vickery Creek Middle School - Patrick Doyle  
West Forsyth High School - Pat Gallagher & Jeff Keegan

## *Riverwatch Band Program Student Teachers, 2011-2013*

Jay Still, Band Director, St. Lucie West K-8 School (Florida)  
Ryan Moore, Assistant Band Director, Lopez High School (Texas)  
Bret Ward, Music Teacher, Sardis Enrichment School (Hall County, GA)  
Allison Carroll, Band Director, Social Circle City Schools (GA)  
Abbigayle Williams, current student teacher

# *Acknowledgements*

*The Riverwatch Symphonic Band and Mr. Koperniak would like to offer sincerest thanks to:*

2011-2012 Riverwatch Middle School Symphonic Band 8th graders  
The Riverwatch Middle School Connections Team  
Riverwatch Middle School PTSA  
Miriam Reynolds, Riverwatch Middle School Chorus  
Scott McCloy & Tonya Mashburn, Lambert High School Band  
Dr. John Culvahouse, Kennesaw State University  
Mary Land, Young Harris College  
Helen Saile, South Forsyth Middle School Band  
William Owens, Mountain View High School Band  
Jill Barnocki, Mabry Middle School Band  
Jonathan Cotton, Oconee Middle School Band  
Tonya Millsap, Jones Middle School Band  
Michael Oubre, Pickens County High School Band  
Laura Moates Stanley, Brookwood High School Band  
Catherine Keyser, Otwell Middle School Band  
Josh Tyree, Liberty Middle School Band  
Stephen Fields, Lakeside Middle School Band  
Rudy Gilbert, North Gwinnett High School Band  
Roland Ventura, Pinckneyville Middle School Band  
Doug Maloney & Lee Newman, Norcross High School Band  
Paul Clark & Ross Amend, South Forsyth High School Band  
Chad Chatham, Ron Hart, & Graham Nix, Music & Arts  
Harry Bergwell, Ken Stanton Music

Thank you to Dr. Mark Walker and the Troy University Band Program for the invitation to perform.

The cover of this program was inspired by the student's choice words to describe their experience in the Riverwatch Middle School Band Program.