

COBB WIND SYMPHONY SELECTED FOR PRESTIGIOUS BAND AWARD

North America's most prestigious award for community concert bands, the Sudler Silver Scroll, has been awarded to the Cobb Wind Symphony (CWS) of Marietta, Georgia. The purpose of this award is to identify, recognize and honor those community bands that have demonstrated particularly high standards of excellence in concert activities over a period of several years, and which have played a significant and leading role in the cultural and musical environment in their respective communities. The Sudler Award is sponsored by the John Philip Sousa Foundation, which seeks to uphold the standards and ideals of the American icon, John Philip Sousa. The announcement of the prize was made at the John Philip Sousa Foundation's Annual Awards Ceremony on Friday, December 18, 2009 at the Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago, Illinois before an invitation-only audience, including some of the most distinguished and influential members of the band world.

The Cobb Wind Symphony, an all-adult community concert band of Marietta, Georgia, was selected from a long list of community bands making application from throughout the world. In this highly competitive selection process, past Silver Scroll laureate conductors, who have experienced a number of successful years as band conductors, formed the selection committee. Nominated bands are required to present audiotapes of past performances, newspaper clippings of past events, and letters of recommendation from both noted wind band conductors and community leaders documenting the band's contribution to the community. The current conductor of the group must be in place for five years.

The CWS is under the leadership of conductor Alfred L. Watkins, Director of Bands at Lassiter HS in Marietta. Dr. Andrea Strauss, Director of Bands at Shorter College and Robert J. Cowles, former Director of Bands at Walton HS in Marietta assists Mr. Watkins. Conductor Alfred L. Watkins accepted the award on behalf of the members of the Cobb Wind Symphony. The CWS is among only 38 other community bands worldwide to receive the award since 1978. Many American community bands have been together for over 100 years, making the selection of CWS even more significant. Alfred Watkins has the distinction of having received the Sudler Flag (1988) for outstanding high school concert band contribution, the Sudler Shield (1999) for outstanding marching band contribution and the Legion of Honor

(2002) for an outstanding career of high school band leadership. Robert Cowles is also a recipient of the Sousa Legion of Honor (1997). The other recipient of this year's Silver Scroll Award is the Minnesota Symphonic Winds, of the Twin Cities area.

The Cobb Wind Symphony was formed in the fall of 1999 and has grown in stature and size since its inception. Deemed as one of the nation's finest all-adult community band, the Cobb Wind Symphony strives to provide music making opportunities for a variety of musicians in the Cobb County community. The band rehearses twice a month and generally performs five concerts annually. The award is especially significant to the 100-member Cobb Wind Symphony members. The band consists of all volunteers from a variety of professional backgrounds with a significant number of Cobb County band directors, private music teachers found on its roll. Years of experience of its membership performing on their instrument range from 10 years to over 50 years. The band has performed at numerous regional and national events including: The Georgia Music Educators Association Annual In-Service Conference, the College Band Directors Association Southern Division Conference, the National Band Association Convention and the prestigious Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago, Illinois. On January 21, 2010, CWS will perform at the University of Georgia at their January High School Music Festival.

The presentation of the Silver Scroll will occur at a CWS concert in the near future with a member of the John Philip Sousa Foundation present. The Sudler Silver Scroll Award consists of a handsome walnut plaque on which is mounted a silver scroll engraved with the name of the band and the director. Certificates for each member of the band will be included along with the Diploma of the Sudler Order of Merit for the director.