



THE UNITED STATES  
COAST GUARD BAND  
Commander Kenneth W. Megan, Director



SPRING/SUMMER 2010

www.uscg.mil/band

# BEHIND THE SCENES

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U.S. Coast Guard Academy  
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## Touring Taiwan

While most members of the U.S. Coast Guard Band were relaxing and visiting with family and friends over the 2010 New Year's holiday, members of the **United States Coast Guard Brass Quintet** and **Saxophone Quartet** traveled to Taiwan where they performed four concerts in as many days, along with a master class.

### A little background

In October 2009, the president of the Taiwan Clinic and director of the Taipei Wind Orchestra, Canon Huang, formally invited the Coast Guard Band to perform at the Taiwan Clinic. While the full band was not available, the two groups graciously volunteered to go instead. Talk about taking one for the team! Once Coast Guard Headquarters and the State Department gave the go-ahead, planning ensued: Choose suitable programs, rehearse, rehearse, and rehearse some more, send out publicity materials, secure airline flights. Does a tuba need its own seat?

### The tour

It seemed as if the day of departure would never come and then, suddenly, it arrived. After eighteen hours in the air and a layover in Anchorage, the group met Mr. Huang and two assistants at the Taipei airport a day-and-a-half after departure. The group traveled, according to MUC Kelly Watkins, via a "cute bus with tasseled curtains" to Chiayi City, a three-and-a-half hour drive south.



Transportation to Chiayi City

The first two performances were held at the concert hall of the Chiayi City Cultural Affairs Bureau in conjunction with the 2009 Chiayi City International Band Festival. The festival, in its 18th year, is so prominent and highly-regarded that Chiayi is known as the city of wind music. The Chiayi City International Band Festival is a ten-day event with, this year, groups from the United States, Japan, Thailand, Singapore, Taiwan, and Inner Mongolia performing. The two groups were among 66 bands, comprised of over 5,000 performers who played 73 concerts.

In the concert hall, the ensembles were introduced to an extremely enthusiastic audience of over 1,000 screaming fans. The screaming "actually hurt," says MUC Adam Williamson. He likened it to the noise made by Obama supporters during the arrival honors at the 2009 Midwest Inaugural Ball, for which the Band played. The crowd was particularly pleased to meet the female trombone player MU1 Karna Millen, with her long blond locks and Nordic features. Members of the Brass Quintet present were MUCS Greg Martin and MUC Kelly Watkins, trumpets, MU1 Jaime Thorne, French horn, and MUCS Rich Denton, tuba. Members of the Saxophone Quartet in attendance were MU1 Greg Case, soprano, MUC Josh Thomas, alto, MUC Adam Williamson, tenor, and MU1 Jeff Emerich, baritone.

Several short hours later, both groups performed again outdoors in the courtyard of the Cultural Affairs Bureau. The quintet was invited back for three encores and had a chance to speak with members of the audience after the concert in English, of course, not Mandarin!



The Saxophone Quartet performs in Chiayi City

The groups departed for Taipei the next morning, where they rehearsed with the Ministry of National Defense Symphony Orchestra. Despite its name, the MOD Symphony is actually a wind band that provides music for national ceremonies, visiting foreign dignitaries, and cultural outreach.

Musicians from the Coast Guard Band enjoyed comparing notes with their counterparts from the MOD Symphony. While both groups have strict uniform requirements and rehearsal schedules, the Taiwanese live in barracks, whereas the Coasties live in and around New London. Also, the Taiwanese musicians volunteer to perform in the band from the various branches of Taiwan's military, whereas the American musicians enlist specifically to serve in the Coast Guard Band.

The next day the groups returned to the MOD barracks to lead a master class for members of the ensemble, many of whom had studied at the collegiate level, both in the United States and in Europe. That evening in Sanchong City, a large suburb of Taipei, both ensembles played for a warm audience for broadcast on the local public television station.

The fourth and final performance took place in Novell Hall in Taipei. This was a joint concert with the Ministry of National Defense Symphony Orchestra and was sponsored by the Taiwan Clinic. After one musical selection each, both groups joined the MOD ensemble for a concerto-like joint performance. With a DVD recorded for release and over 800 people in attendance, many prominent music educators and conductors from all over Taiwan among them, this was the conclusion to a highly successful tour with new friendships and experiences of a lifetime.

#### The Icing on the Cake

In addition to viewing the changing of the guard at the Chiang-Kai-Shek Memorial and visiting the National Palace Museum, the nine musicians also had time for some elaborate meals. "We ate ridiculously large amounts of food," says Watkins, "including shark fin, sashimi, stinky tofu (ICK!!!), hot pot, noodles, dumplings, squid, blood tofu and who knows what else!" Williamson agrees, "It felt like we ate five meals a day, each with lots of courses. We tried to guess which course would be the last. When we thought we were finally done eating, more food would emerge from the kitchen."



The Brass Quintet with Mr. Liu, the assistant conductor of the MOD



Members of both groups with the MOD

Please direct comments or questions to:

Public Affairs  
U.S. Coast Guard Band  
U.S. Coast Guard Academy (pb)  
15 Mohegan Avenue  
New London, CT 06320  
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## Around the State

**Sunday, May 30—2 p.m. Leamy Hall: CANCELED**

The Band's concert home, Leamy Hall, is closing for major year-long renovations. After summer concerts at Fort Trumbull and around the state, the Band will take up a residency at the Garde Arts Center in New London, CT.

**CANCELED**

**Sunday, June 13—3:30 p.m. Norwalk Green, Norwalk, CT**

*Rain site: The Norwalk Concert Hall*

**Wednesday, June 16—7 p.m. Manchester Band Shell, Manchester, CT**

*Rain site: East Catholic High School, New State Road, Manchester*

**Sunday, June 20—3 p.m. Fort Trumbull, New London, CT**

**Under Summer Skies, the first of three concerts at scenic Fort Trumbull, celebrates music of the great outdoors.**

**Sunday, July 4—3 p.m. Fort Trumbull, New London, CT**

**The Band salutes John Philip Sousa in this Independence Day celebration.**

*Rain date: Monday, July 5—3 p.m. Fort Trumbull, New London, CT*

**Wednesday, July 28—7 p.m. The Wadsworth Mansion at Long Hill Estate, Middletown, CT**

*Rain date: Wednesday, August 4—7 p.m. The Wadsworth Mansion, Middletown, CT*

**Sunday, September 5—3 p.m. Fort Trumbull, New London, CT**

**The Band ends the summer season with a bang: Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture.**

*Rain date: Monday, September 6—3 p.m. Fort Trumbull, New London, CT*

## The U.S. Coast Guard Band Spring 2010 Tour\*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Locale</u>
Monday, May 3, 7:30 p.m.	Abravanel Hall	Salt Lake City, Utah
Tuesday, May 4, 7:30 p.m.	Assembly Hall	Salt Lake City, Utah
Wednesday, May 5, 6 p.m.	The Scera	Orem, Utah
Thursday, May 6, 7:30 p.m.	Heritage Theater	Cedar City, Utah
Friday, May 7, 8 p.m.	Events Plaza Amphitheatre	Henderson, Nevada
Saturday, May 8, 7:30 p.m.	Flagstaff High School	Flagstaff, Arizona
Sunday, May 9, 7:30 p.m.	Sun Bowl	Sun City, Arizona
Tuesday, May 11, 7 p.m.	Palm Springs High School	Palm Springs, California
Wednesday, May 12, 7:30 p.m.	Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts	Cerritos, California
Thursday, May 13, 7 p.m.	Glendale High School	Glendale, California
Friday, May 14, 1:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.	James Armstrong Theatre	Torrance, California
Saturday, May 15, 1:30 p.m.	City of Torrance Parade	Torrance, California

\*For ticket information, visit [www.uscg.mil/band](http://www.uscg.mil/band)

## SPECIAL PERFORMANCE

**Tuesday, August 3, 2010, United States Navy Memorial, Washington, DC**

**The United States Coast Guard Dixieland Jazz Band celebrates the 220th birthday of the Coast Guard!**

[www.uscg.mil/band](http://www.uscg.mil/band)