

Changes in the Air for Area Bands

By Andrew Barbin

Crisp air, the crackle of leaves underfoot, and the sound of a marching band practicing somewhere in the distance, are sure signs of fall in central Pennsylvania. But there are changes in the air for local band competitions.

While most area bands have traditionally competed in the Tournament of Bands (TOB) program, three local units will shift direction, and compete in United States Scholastic Band Association (USSBA) competitions.

Three times defending Champions in Division III of the TOB Atlantic Coast Championships Mechanicsburg will return to TOB competition to defend its title. Carlisle, Northern York, Cumberland Valley, Susquehanna Township and Camp Hill, likewise, remain with TOB.

Perennial local competitors, Red Land and Cedar Cliff, will be joining Hershey competing in the USSBA programs this fall. The lines between the competition groups are not hard and fast though, as TOB members Susquehanna Township, Camp Hill and Cumberland Valley also participated in the USSBA "Bands for Autism" event co-hosted by Red Land and Cedar Cliff. Red Land was edged out by Governor Thomas Johnson in their first USSBA competition 73.90 to 73.15, and Cedar Cliff edged out Susquehanna Township, 74.30 to 74.05. Other local schools have their first competitions this weekend.

Mechanicsburg will host its fall *Music in the Park* Competition on October 4, 2008. Carlisle hosts its home show on October 11, 2008. Cumberland Valley hosts the TOB Chapter Championships on November 1, 2008 and the Atlantic Coast Championships will be held in Allentown on November 15-16, 2008. Hershey hosts the USSBA Pennsylvania Championships on October 18, 2008. Regional Championships will be hosted in both Hershey and Allentown on November 1-2, 2008. USSBA National Championships will be hosted at Annapolis, Maryland November 7-8, 2008.