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Portland, Oregon

It Takes Dough to Blow a Band All the Way to Shanghai

PORTLAND -- Brass bands conjure up thoughts of parades, football games, band shells ... and, on April 3, a trade show. **The Beat Goes On Marching Band** (TBGO) will entertain and exhibit at Business Expo West, which takes place from 1:00 – 5:00pm in the Conference Center on the Tektronix campus in Beaverton.

Playing for several hundred Westside business leaders is part of a long-range plan to have TBGO playing for several hundred *thousand* Far Eastsiders – in China in September. The group will join a worldwide gathering of musicians for the Shanghai Tourism Festival. The Portland-based adult band will be the lone U.S. ensemble performing at the festival.

The band's players range in age from 18 to 82. While their middle-aged and senior members turn heads, their contemporary rock 'n' roll playlist turns ears. The combination often leads to prestigious gigs like the one in Shanghai. They will participate in the festival parade, as well as play concerts in at least three locations in the city.

“Being invited is such an honor, we *had* to accept even though we already had two major out-of-state performances scheduled in 2014,” says TBGO music director Steve Tolopka. “We’d budgeted for our San Francisco appearance [last month] and our Fourth of July parade in Bristol, Rhode Island. Now we’re growing both the size of the band and the size of our treasury to make Shanghai happen.”

“We hire out to do corporate and private events as a way to build our travel budget, so serenading business leaders at the Expo makes a lot of sense,” says clarinetist Tom Higham, TBGO’s travel coordinator. “The aim of the Expo is to ‘accelerate your business.’ We want to accelerate their heart rates since they’ll be expecting John Philip Sousa and we’ll hit ’em with Lady Gaga instead!”

The goal is to take 120 band members to China ... and to raise \$150,000 to get them there. The band has been soliciting corporate and governmental sponsorships through its Website (www.tbgo.org) for months. Now Business Expo West gives the band a chance to strut its stuff in front of attendees and potential sponsors. Tickets to the Expo are available at the door and at <http://besthq.net/biz-expo-west/>.

Tolopka, a saxophonist, knows the task at hand: “Some musical consciousness-raising at Business Expo West makes sense since it takes *dough* for us to *blow*, especially across the Pacific Ocean!”

THE BEAT GOES ON MARCHING BAND: More smiles per mile!

Want to come out and play?

Email: director@tbgo.org

Website: <http://www.tbgo.org/>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheBeatGoesOnMarchingBand