

THE LEON HIGH SCHOOL MARCHING REDCOATS

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NEWS / COMMUNITY

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Leon Band to Perform in London

Fundraising Efforts Launched, Rummage Sale March 23, 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.

(Tallahassee) - Last September, members of the **Leon High School Marching Redcoats** burst into cheers upon learning they were *one of 12 U.S. college and high school marching bands* selected to perform in the **2014 London New Year's Day Parade and Festival**. With a street-side audience of nearly a half million spectators and over 200 million viewers worldwide, the parade is the biggest event of its kind in the world and a once-in-a-lifetime honor for the students. As part of the festivities, the band was also invited to perform in a concert setting at Cadogan Hall, home of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

The special invitation, extended personally when Deputy Lieutenant of London Roger Bramble and other representatives of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, stopped by Leon High for a brief band exhibition last fall, came as a surprise to the students. *"The invitation was the result of many years of dedication and hard work by our students, faculty, and staff, as well as the band's many noteworthy successes,"* says **Brett Pikuritz, Leon High's Director of Bands**. *"I'm proud of our long-standing tradition of musical excellence, our students' accomplishments, and the opportunity to represent our community, our state, and our nation on such a high-profile, international stage."*

To make their participation a reality, however, and ensure that as many of the 130-some band members who want to make the trip can do so, the group has a substantial financial goal of raising \$450,000 to help defray the students' travel, meal, and lodging expenses. The organization is reaching out to businesses, leaders, alumni, and individuals in the community for support. A number of fundraisers and outreach initiatives are underway with the first major fundraiser, a **Rummage Sale, scheduled for Saturday, March 23, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in front of the Leon High School gymnasium.** The community can search for treasures and support the band at the same time.

(more)

Leon Band to Perform in London

Page 2

March 19, 2013

The community will have the opportunity to hear students perform at the **2nd Annual Leon Jazz Benefit Concert and Fundraiser** scheduled for **Sunday, April 28, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the American Legion Hall on Lake Ella**. In addition, among a host of other efforts, the band is partnering with numerous local restaurants for Share Events, during which a portion of the checks of patrons mentioning Leon2London will be donated to the band, and on select weekends, students will play outside various retail locations. The Redcoats will also march in the **Springtime Tallahassee Parade, on April 6**.

“We sincerely appreciate the businesses and individuals who have already stepped up to help,” says Pikuritz. *“We look forward to exploring opportunities with others, be it through financial support or in-kind services.”*

For a list of upcoming events or to make a financial donation online, please visit the band’s dedicated website at **Leon2London.com**. “Like” the band at **[Facebook.com/Leon2London](https://www.facebook.com/Leon2London)**, where additional information and performance links are available.

The Leon High School Band embodies more than six decades of musical excellence and education. Accomplishments during the 2012-2013 school year include: juried “Grand Champions” of a tri-state event, Battle on the Border Marching Band Competition in Valdosta, GA; “Superior” ratings, for the 64th consecutive year, in the Marching Band Music Performance Assessment (MPA) by the Florida Bandmasters Association; and numerous “Superior” ratings in the Concert Band Music Performance Assessment.

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