

Band boosters make final payment on concession stands

TEMPERANCE — Since December, 1999, members of the Bedford Band and Orchestra Boosters have been making payments to Bedford Public Schools to pay off the \$235,000 construction cost of Bedford Community Stadium's three concessions stands.

On Thursday, Don Balazs, president of the boosters, presented a ceremonial check to board of education to mark the final payment.

"We're thrilled to have finally reached this point," Mr. Balazs said in a news release. "This makes the 14 years of hard work by hundreds of volunteers — giving up their Friday nights for home football games, not to mention all of our other fundraising efforts — well worth the effort."



— Monroe News photo by KIM BRENT

Students fill the stands at Bedford Community Stadium. The Bedford Band and Orchestra Boosters just made the last payment on its three concessions stands there.

With the loan now paid off, according to a signed agreement, the boosters will operate the concessions at the stadium for the next 99 years of home football games and track meets. The group also operates the concessions during Relay for Life but donates the proceeds — roughly \$5,000 — to the community fundraiser.

The boosters also operate the concessions inside the high school gym for boys basketball games and wrestling meets and tournaments, as well as the Bedford Business Association Trade Fair and other special events.

The boosters are a volunteer group composed mostly of parents who support the band and or-

chestra programs, including the marching band.

The group provides scholarships to graduating seniors, extends grants to students attending summer music camps and helps offset student costs for certain music-related extracurricular programs.

Mr. Balazs said the next goal of the boosters is to purchase new uniforms for the marching band. The current uniforms are 20 years old.

Cory Meggitt, director of the marching band, wore the same uniform while a student at Bedford.

"We hope to have the new uniforms in time for the band and orchestra trip to Disney World during spring break," Mr. Balazs said, adding the boosters have not made any musical instrument

purchases while paying off the concessions loan.

Running the concessions operations during the football games is a massive undertaking.

During a typical game, as many as 50 volunteers will staff the three concessions stands. By the end of the night, football fans typically will purchase about 350 hot dogs, 400 boxes of popcorn and 500 bottles of pop, among other items offered.

Mr. Balazs said other booster groups also use the concessions stands, as well as the band boosters' concessions equipment, free of charge.

The boosters have partnered with local businesses, including Marco's Pizza on Secor Rd., Decapo's and Kimberly Cleaners.