THE PRESIDENT'S PODIUM
by Jim Marchman

You can tell when any organization has lived beyond its useful lifetime. When its first president is elected president again, it is a sure sign of desperation or group insanity. Actually, I'm told that the real reason I was elected (in addition to the fact that no one else would allow themselves to be nominated) was a desire to find some purpose in the band for a member that has so many instruments but can't really play any of them.

Anyway, for better or worse, I'm the guy who gets to stand up at break time every week and drive away potential members by making them identify themselves and explain to a room full of strangers how they stumbled upon our rehearsal. I also get to stand there with a blank stare on my face when Ed proceeds to announce all the things that no one has told me about.

As this is written (this is a "qualifying" statement to let the readers, both of them, know that it is not my fault that this will probably be published about Thanksgiving time) we are preparing for our Spring Concert, the annual event where we dress up, bring in all the "ringers" that we only see at spring concerts because they can play the parts we stumble over, and perform for whatever friends and family we have bribed or forced to attend. We all know that primary purpose for our Spring Concert is to force our kids to endure the same thing we have had to sit through at all their piano recitals. Actually, I have hopes that we can get out enough publicity in the right places this year to attract a few folks beyond our usual "groupies". This time this is printed we should know if we were successful. I really wanted to try to attract better attendance by offering a cash prize for the person who, via a pre-concert ballot, came closest to guessing the actual number of wrong notes, clarinet squeaks, etc. detected at the concert by a panel of experts, but the other officers voted me down.

My other thought at pre-concert publicity was to ask Seth Williamson to write a concert "preview" for the Roanoke Times. Perhaps if Seth Continued on page 2

8th Annual Spring Concert
SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 1997
MUSIC DIRECTOR - ED SCHWARTZ
NOTE: Earlier starting time 7:30 PM
The Golden Eagle Concert March - Harold L. Walters
Selections from Carousel - Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein II, arr. Erik Leidzen
Guest Conductor - Ken Mulzet
A Reflective Mood - Sammy Nestico
Trombone Solo - Spencer Taylor
Fallon's Daughter - Steve Brown
Guest Conductor - Steve Brown
Finale from the "New World" Symphony - Antonin Dvorak, arr. Erik Leidzen
Dreadnought March - Steve Brown
Guest Conductor - Steve Brown
Bell of the Ball - Leroy Anderson
Trumpeter's Rhapsody - Bill Holcombe
Trumpet Solo - John Gregg
The Wizard of Oz - Harold Arlen, E. Y. Harburg, arr. James Barnes
In The Miller Mood - arr. Warren Barker
Guest Conductor - Ken Mulzet

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wrote about how horrible our concert was going to be we could attract an audience of all those folks who always disagree with his concert reviews. Then Seth could print a retraction after the concert, recanting his predictions of disaster and singing the praises of the "brilliant euphonium passages heard throughout an otherwise non-descript performance."

I'm sure our Spring Concert will be as interesting as ever. We will once again get to see Ed in full formal attire. We may even get to see what it is like to play all the way through the Glenn Miller piece without stopping 6 times! If we're really lucky we may get to actually play through two or three numbers with no wise cracks from the trumpet section or to see Ed start a piece without having to wait for the drums to figure out what we are playing.

I suppose that after the concert we will once again have the obligatory get-together where we are stuffed into the corner of a local restaurant which didn't seem to remember that we were coming. There we will give out our annual "awards" for things like "least improved musician", "worst attendance record", and "most embarrassing wrong note in a concert".

 Seriously, I'm looking forward to a spring concert with good music, improved attendance, and a good performance. I'm also anticipating a good schedule of spring and summer outdoor concerts all around the area and I promise to try to make sure that we have no more than one concert in any given week. I can't guarantee that that will actually happen but I know that past experience shows that our own attendance at concerts seems to vary in inverse proportion to the number of concerts stuffed into that week. I'd really like us to have a concert schedule that will allow us all to make it to every gig. I hope that everyone will make an extra effort to be at every concert. The other people in your section depend on you as much as you depend on them and one missing person can mean the difference between a great performance and a disaster. Our concerts are always fun when most of us are there and all the parts are covered. On those occasions we find that the harmonies work, the notes come easier, and the audiences have fun (I've even seen some people dancing as we played!). Let's make all our concerts that kind of fun this Spring and Summer.

See you at band.
Jim Marchman

PS. My latest purchase is a 1919 Conn Victor - New Wonder model cornet, an instrument with an "opera glass" tuning mechanism and a special lever which instantly moves all the normal tuning slides at once to change the horn from Bb to A. It's in great shape for a 78 year old and plays well.

By the way, Jim wrote a fine article about his other instruments (Rescued from pawn shops, yard sales and second hand stores.) for the November newsletter. Ed.

New Members
The Blacksburg Community Band would like to welcome all of our new members from the past few months. We are starting the season with a strong group. Let's keep up the good work and have a great year.

CONDUCTORS
Steve Brown
Ken Mulzet

FRENCH HORN
Brian Berry

CLARINET
Jennifer Rueger

TROMBONE
Rick Murray

BASS CLARINET
Garret Bonnema

PERCUSSION/BELLS
Laine Buckwalter
Since we are performing *Carousel* these lyrics might be of interest.

**A Real Nice Clambake**

This was a real nice clambake,  
We’re mighty glad we came.  
The vittles we et  
Were good, you bet!  
The company was the same!  
Our hearts are warm  
Our bellies are full,  
And we are feelin’ prime!  
This was a real nice clambake  
And we all had a real good time!

Remember when we raked  
Them red-hot lobsters  
Out of the driftwood fire?  
They sizzled and cracked  
And sputtered a song,  
Fitten for an angel’s choir.

Chorus:  
Fitten for an angel’s,  
Fitten for an angel’s,  
Fitten for an angel’s choir!

We slit ’em down the back  
And peppered ’em good,  
And doused ’em in melted butter—  
Then we tore away the claws  
And cracked ’em with our teeth  
’Cause we weren’t in a mood to putter

Chorus

Then at last came the clams

Steamed under rockweed  
And poppin’ from their shells  
Just how many of them  
Galloped down our gullets—  
We couldn’t say oursel’s  
Oh-h-h-h—

This was a real nice clambake,  
We’re mighty glad we came.  
The vittles we et  
Were good, you bet!  
The company was the same!  
Our hearts are warm  
Our bellies are full,  
And we are feelin’ prime!  
This was a real nice clambake  
And we all had a real good time!

**You’ll Never Walk Alone**

When you walk through a storm  
Hold your head up high  
And don’t be afraid of the dark  
At the end of the storm  
Is a golden sky  
And the sweet silver song of a lark  
Walk on through the rain  
Walk on through the wind  
Though your dreams be tossed and blown  
Walk on, walk on  
With hope in your heart  
And you’ll never walk alone  
You’ll never walk alone...
Craig provided this interesting article since we are playing a medley of Miller hits at the Spring Concert.

Glenn Miller

By Craig Turner

Whenever one sees a reference or a documentary program on TV or radio of the “Big Band” era in the 30’s and 40’s, chances are that the musical example heard most often is the sweet reed sound of the Glenn Miller band playing his theme song, “Moonlight Serenade” or a similar slow ballad. The Glenn Miller band was also an excellent swing band featuring driving saxophones with tight crisp brass attacks in such hits as “String of Pearls”, “In The Mood” and “Little Brown Jug”.

By far the most popular dance band of the era, it has produced more hit records than any other entertainment group, and that includes the Beatles. His band was also feature in two hit movies, “Sun Valley Serenade” and “Orchestra Wives”. These movies can still be rented at most video stores. Do not, I repeat, do not rent the “Glenn Miller Story” starring Jimmy Stewart and June Allyson. Jimmy Stewart was completely miscast and was as much like Glenn Miller as John Wayne or Sylvester Stallone would have been.

During the Big Band era, the leaders of most of the bands were excellent soloists and generally featured themselves with their own distinctive styles. These included Benny Goodman, Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, Harry James, Artie Shaw, Gene Krupa and others. Glenn Miller, was primarily an arranger and though a good trombone player, admitted he was not in the league with Tommy Dorsey. Thus, he wanted to produce a sound and style that featured his arrangements. In 1939 he disbanded his unsuccessful first band, which sounded pretty much like other dance bands. He reorganized and this time it was larger than most of the other bands at that time. It had a larger reed section with four saxophones (they all could double on the clarinet), four trumpets and three trombones, not including himself, plus rhythm section. He realized that he had to produce a sound that would separate his group from the others. He remembered that he had previously used a clarinet lead several times for the reed section when he was arranging for the Ray Noble Band. By giving the lead melody to the clarinet and tenor sax and with the other saxophones completing the chords, he produced the famous Miller sound. It didn’t stop there. It was an exceptionally well disciplined organization. The brass section was crisp with a dynamic range from soft muted
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trumpets to a fat brassy sound. An example of this is in the closing part of “In The Mood”.

Not only was Glenn Miller an excellent musician and arranger, he was an astute and practical business man. He was interested in featuring what the public wanted and liked. He admired the band of Jimmy Lunceford in which members stood and waved their instruments when certain sections were featured. He also liked the “doo-wah” sound of the trumpets using metal hats or plungers and he quickly adapted these bits of showmanship to his band. This was the era of the large dance halls. He realized that the people that came to hear his band primarily wanted to dance. The tempos of his swing numbers were moderate and his ballads were very slow. He told his drummer Moe Purtill one time that a guy didn’t want a fast tempo when he was dancing cheek to cheek with his girl. For additional entertainment he expanded his organization to include two singers and a singing group (The Modernaires). He also feature the novelty singing of saxophonist Tex Beneke on many record hits. Tex Beneke has told the story that when he was given the music to learn for “I’ve Got a Gal in Kalamazoo”, he thought it was about the corniest song he had ever heard. As you know it was a huge hit.

Glenn Miller was at the peak of popularity and commercial success when in 1942, he volunteered for the Army. He then went on to form the immensely successful Army Air Force band which performed for troops in this country, England and France. He disappeared in the English Channel in December 1944 on a routine flight to join his band in Paris.

It is interesting to speculate on what direction Glenn Miller would have gone had he survived the war. He was quoted as saying that he had gone about as far as he could with the reed sound. His last orchestra in the Air Force features strings. I am sure that whatever orchestra he started, it would have been well disciplined with unusual arrangements featuring music that the public liked.

More Miller Material

There is a Glenn Miller Web site at the following URL: http://qlink.queensu.ca/~3pje2/gm.html. It even includes an audio clip.

There is also a big band home page at this URL: http://cnct.com/home/mlp/bigbands.html

Some Other Web Sites

Now that most of us are WEBBITES (people who live on the web.) I thought I’d kill some more trees giving you URL’s for web pages that I could have shared electronically. But I needed to fill some white space here.

Tom Lehrer - social commentator from the 60’s. Ah yes, the good old days of peace and love.
http://www.keaveny.demon.co.uk/lehrer/lehrer.htm

Shadd Rapp - a hunting/fishing rapp group from Wisconsin. No, I am not making this up.
http://www.shad-rapp.com/Text/home.html

The Capitol Steps - more political humor
http://www.capsteps.com/

And for those of you who are tired of the Macarena here is the anti-macarena homepage
http://users.why.net/banzai769/antimacarena.html
More On Miller and Moonlight Serenade

BY JIM MARCHMAN

Glenn Miller, one of the best arrangers of his time, was not known as a songwriter, but the one song he actually wrote and made famous is his theme song, the beautiful “Moonlight Serenade”. Miller originally wrote this song to fulfill a composition requirement in an arranging class but he gave it no title and wrote no lyrics. He later asked Eddie Hayman who did the lyrics for “Body and Soul”, to compose words for his music and the result was a sad song titled “Now I Lay Me Down to Weep”. This didn’t work, so in 1937 when Miller formed his first band he had George Simon write new lyrics, giving “Gone With the Dawn”, another sad song which went nowhere. Mitchell Parish, the lyricist for “Star Dust”, was then given the writing assignment. The result, “Wind in the Trees”, was another flop. Finally, when the band was trying to find a song to record as the “B” side of their recording of “Sunrise Serenade”, a Frankie Carle tune, Parish was asked to try again using the title “Moonlight Serenade”. The result is history.

MOONLIGHT SERENADE
I stand at your gate and the song that I sing is of moonlight.
I stand and I wait for the touch of your hand in the June night.
The roses are sighing a Moonlight Serenade.

The stars are aglow and tonight how their light sets
me dreaming.
My love, do you know that your eyes are like stars
brightly beaming?
I bring you and sing you a Moonlight Serenade.

Let us stray till break of day in love’s valley of
dreams.
Just you and I, a summer sky, a heavenly breeze
kissing the trees.

So don’t let me wait, come to me tenderly in the
June night.
I stand at your gate and I sing you a song in the
moonlight,
a love song, my darling, a Moonlight Serenade.

Ironically, after so many false starts before the right lyrics were found for Miller’s tune, it is the simple beauty of that melody combined with the Miller blend of instruments, not the song’s words, that instantly brings to mind all the wonderful sounds of the big band era.

Two other songs in our Miller medley are “I’ve Got A Gal in Kalamazoo” and “Serenade in Blue”, both written by Harry Warren and Mack Gordon for the 1942 movie “Orchestra Wives” featuring Glen and his band. The movie starred George Montgomery as the band’s lead trumpet player, a portrayal marred by Montgomery’s inability to even look like he knew what to do with his fingers on the valves. Jackie Gleason appeared as the band’s string bass player and Cesar Romero as the pianist. The real band members were apparently even worse actors than Miller himself and weren’t allowed speaking roles in the film, but the movie and Miller’s other film “Sun Valley Serenade”, which featured “At Last", gave wonderful displays of the great sound and showmanship of Glenn’s orchestra. The movie’s original taping sessions also gave us the only existing high fidelity, stereo recordings of the band, made at a time when it was impossible to transfer the sound to vinyl.

The last tune in our Miller number, “Anvil Chorus”, is a Jerry Gray arrangement of a theme from Verdi’s “Il Trovatore”. The arrangement was too long to fit on one side of the 78 rpm records of the day and Miller didn’t want to shorten it. It was released as “Parts 1 & 2” on two sides of the same record, a first in the pop recording industry.
Lasagna Party A Great Success

By Kendra Kohl

At the January Board meeting it was suggested that the Band have more social get-togethers for members to become better acquainted with the people outside of their sections.

On Sunday, February 16 we held our first get-together in the form of a lasagna party at the Rec Center. There were about 25 people in attendance who got to sample a half dozen different kinds of lasagna and salads. There was every conceivable type of lasagna; vegetarian, regular (whatever that means), and Ed Schwartz’s Extra Special Spicy Lasagna. (This could have been source of the old Alka Seltzer commercial about the spicy meatball.) The desserts were “to die for” especially the chocolate pie made by Dan McPherson. (See the next column for the secret recipe.)

After dinner we “broke the ice” with Ed’s board game called Tune Din. Players challenged their opponents to guess the tunes they were humming or playing on the kazoo. We laughed more than we sang! About mid-way through the game we requested that Ed hold a special kazoo sectional rehearsal. The champions were Mary Rhoades and Renee Jacobsen. We had a lot of fun teasing Dana Spencer about his humming ability!

Many thanks to Amy Hall and Renee Jacobsen for setting up and to all who brought the delicious food. If you couldn’t make it this time consider the next get-together a MUST. We really had a great time!

Double Chocolate Chess Pie

By Dan McPherson (Trumpet)

INGREDIENTS (1 pie)
1/2 cup butter
2 oz semi-sweet chocolate
1 cup sugar
3 eggs, lightly beaten
1/4 cup creme de cacao liqueur
2 Tbsp all-purpose flour
1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
1/8 tsp salt
1 baked pie shell
(optional) Vanilla ice cream
or sweetened whipped cream

PROCEDURE
(1) Preheat oven to 350 deg. F. In a medium saucepan over low heat melt butter and chocolate. Remove from heat.
(2) Blend in sugar, eggs, liqueur, flour, vanilla and salt. Beat until smooth.
(3) Pour into the pie shell. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until set. Cool on a wire rack for at least 30 minutes.
(4) Serve with ice cream or whipped cream.
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Upcoming Schedule At-A-Glance

1. April 6, 3:45pm, Brush Mountain Crafts Fair, Rector Field House, Virginia Tech Campus
   Come early and enjoy the crafts. Free admission when you tell them you are with the band.

2. April 12, 7:30 pm, Spring Concert, Blacksburg High School
   Reception following at Custom Catering, "Food Lion Shopping Center", Patrick Henry Rd.

3. May 18, 2:30pm, Mountain Lake Wine Tasting Festival, Mountain Lake Hotel

4. May 23, 6:00pm, Henderson Lawn, Virginia Tech

5. June 21, Smithfield Plantation, Details to follow

6. July 4, Afternoon Parade and Night Concert, Blacksburg, Details to follow

7. August 2, 12 noon, Stepping Out, Blacksburg

Disclaimer

The Blacksburg Community Band Newsletter is an occasional communication organ of the Blacksburg Community Band (sort of).

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily anyone’s in particular, so they are not necessarily the views of the Blacksburg Community Band, the Town of Blacksburg, the Commonwealth of Virginia or the United States of America! Believe what you wish to believe, forget the rest.

If you have a problem with anything in this rag, contact our lawyers in Boston, the law firm of Dewey, Cheetham & Howe (firm on retainer by Click & Clack).

If you decide to litigate one of our writers, let us know so we can run the slanderous louse out of town.

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