WOW! That really sounds pompous. Perhaps I should begin with “Mah Feller Amer-i-cans”, a la Lyndon Johnson in his Viet-Nam War TV speeches, or “I am not a crook” (Richard Nixon) or “Well, uh, I think Nancy, uh, was the one who sold arms to, uh, Iran, or was it Iran that sold, uh, arms to Nancy? I really don’t recall.”

More seriously, I do appreciate your having enough confidence in me to ask me to serve as the first president of the Blacksburg Community Band. It has been a real pleasure to have been with the band almost since its beginning and to be a part of such a great group of people. I think most of you, like me, are greatful that we finally have an outlet for our musical inclinations and a chance to play our instruments again in a “non-threatening” environment (where no one will laugh too loud every time we hit a wrong note!).

I’ve been trying to play the cornet (yes, the cornet, a true band instrument and not that wimpy imitation made for use in orchstras, the trumpet) since fourth grade. In my younger days I played in school bands, pep bands, etc. and even did a few gigs for money. In college I played in marching and concert bands at N.C. State where I was 1st chair in a section of 30 cornets (no trumpets were allowed) in the marching band and I played the 2nd cornet part in concert season. My instrument burned in a music building fire during college and I used a school instrument the rest of the time during my seven years (slow learner) in the college band.

When I left college I didn’t have an instrument of my own but later was given a “generic” brand cornet. It actually had a place to engrave any brand name you wanted. Shortly before our band was started I bought a good used cornet from Ken at the same time I bought my daughters new instruments for high school. Since then I have bought a new cornet and, more recently, a flugelhorn (I always wanted to know how to play flugelhorn). So, just as it was when I started college, I again have a musical instrument which is much more capable of making good music than my talents can ever bring to the mouthpiece; but, thanks to this organization, I can have the fun of trying to play again.

I’m excited about the opportunities ahead for our band. Those of you who select as officers and board members are interested in the band trying new things and are especially eager to develop a concert series that will allow us to play for bigger crowds. We know that we have lost some past participants because they were tired of the...
A Message From The President...continued from page 1...
“nursing home circuit” and of audiences that were smaller than the band. While we know that we are appreciated at the VA Hospital and the rest homes, we would like for at least every concert to have a little larger and more enthusiastic audience. We think we will find this at places like the Brush Mountain Craft Fair on April 7 and we know we have it on July 4. We also hope that our concerts this year will again include the Harding Avenue School “Spring Fling” and similar events. We need everyone’s help in finding such events. We also hope to play at Steppin’ Out this summer.

Another idea we hope to try is concerts with “guest” performers such as groups like “Idlewild” and “Simple Gifts” which have a strong local following that would help us draw audiences. Any ideas that you have will be appreciated. We know it’s a lot more fun to play when there is a real audience at the concert and this is going to be a significant part of our concert planning.

As I said above, it is really fun to once again pretend that I know what I’m doing with a horn and I think most of you enjoy the band as much as I do. Part of what makes it fun is the real diversity of our group. I know that word (diversity) has taken on a code meaning as part of today’s academic “politically correct” double-talk, but our band really does exemplify diversity. We don’t all see eye-to-eye on the type of music we like or the type of humor that we enjoy. Some of us may even think that we are the only sane people in the whole band. Despite that, we can all find enough in common in our love of trying to make music to put up with tunes with “whistle” themes and with people who tell jokes about “safe sax”. Some of us make it to almost every rehearsal and some appear less regularly; but that's ok.

This band has brought a much missed dimension back into all of our lives. Let’s all continue to work together to bring that dimension to others who may join us in rehearsal and to those who hear us in concert.

—Jim Marchman, BCB President

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The Blacksburg community Band Newsletter is published sporadically at the whim of the director and the editor. We try for about four times a year but sometimes we only publish twice; other years we may publish six times. The views expressed in this newsletter are not anyone’s in particular and are not necessarily the views of the Town of Blacksburg Department of Parks and Recreation. It is with great appreciation for their tolerance that we publish this newsletter. Contributions to future newsletters may be given to Russell Shock or Ed Schwartz. Please save all wordprocessor files in ASCII or TEXT format, and try to NOT type two spaces between sentences. Thank you!

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HIDDEN TALENTS

We begin a new feature in this newsletter—Hidden Talents! This issue features a song written by Mary Rhoades, and already published.

Mary collaborated with a coworker in her lab to produce this song for the annual door decorating contest in the Dept. of Entomology. It tied for the prize of most original. Mary was responsible for the music, a graduate student wrote the words. In case you didn’t know, Mary works on scale insect taxonomy, and this little song is being sung by a one of those insects while it waits out the winter under its protective cover.

The song was published in “The Scale,” a newsletter sent out by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Systematic Entomology Lab in Beltsville, Maryland, to anyone working on scale insects. We’ve reprinted the song here.

Let us know YOUR hidden talent for the next issue of our band newsletter!

CHRISTMAS SONG OF THE SCALE

Under the white wax of Christmas,
I long for the sap flow of Spring,
Under the white wax of Christmas,
I huddle and cuddle and sing.

I and my friends all about me,
Are waiting for warm days to come,
Although the harsh wind’s ablowing,
We’re snug and covered at home.

Lyrics by Steve Bullington
Music by Mary Rhoades
Christmas 1986

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PERSONALS

—Sara Tice (Flute) has accepted a position with DuPont in Wilmington, Delaware. She apparently made good use of her time as an intern by showing her talents in the business world. We certainly hope that you keep up your musical talents by playing in the Newark Community Band in Newark, Delaware. In any case, don’t forget us down here and stop in whenever you pass through the area. Good luck!

---EVEN MORE STORK STORIES---

Well here we are again, speaking of storks. The first stork story blossomed into an entire epic that has worked its way through the clarinet section (and infecting 100% of the alto clarinet section). Here is the current tally and stats for the records:

STORK 7, BAND 0
4-90 Grace Baldwin (Clarinet)-Gisela-Ann
7-90 Stephanie Thomas (Coordinator)—Samantha
12-90 Beth Hulet (Alto Clarinet)—Randall Anders
1-91 Leslie Gregg (Trumpet spouse)—Evan
4-91 Barbara Self (Alto Clarinet)—Tracy Ann
?? Liz Roop (Clarinet)
HONK if you like Group Sax

The dynamic, magnetic nature of the saxophone has once again proven irresistible. Certain previously obscure members of the Blacksburg community Band (and members of similar famous and well-paid musical organizations) have joined forces, and now regularly abandon their loyalties to other instruments in order to experience the most unique and creative form of group sax going:

That's right, I mean HONK - the first set of non-identical saxophone-playing quintuplets to ever be born in the New River Valley. Why name it "HONK," you ask? I might suggest that merely experiencing the fabulous sounds of this group live would answer that question - and besides, The Community 'Round Blacksburg No Idle Strings Ramblers' Quartet was both inaccurate and too long to fit on the engraved nameplates on our luggage. (Well, we have to TOUR, don't we?)

HONK is definitely worth closer scrutiny - the group appears almost symbolic: It shows how inspite of the startling physical differences between the saxes, we all come from the same family, and when working together are capable of maintaining true harmony ...with a little discord sprinkled in for spice. HONK minimizes sentiments which have perpetuated the age-old "battle of the saxes," since it proves that whether one is bass, baritone, tenor, alto or soprano, we all have sax appeal.

A word for the faint of heart - You have nothing to fear! The incredibly powerful sound and personality of this new group has been tempered by the tasteful intervention of three monomousicians who keep the group sax in check with their unique rhythm method. (After all, raw sax in quintuplicate would be a little overwhelming!) Anyone will agree that the strings and percussion polish off HONK's sound with liting finesse.

The debut performance of HONK was on February 24th at South Main Cafe during a benefit for the New River Valley Environmental Coalition. For more information on NRVEC, contact Sandy Lacey or Mary Rhodes. For more information on HONK, open your ears - some soundwaves are bound to still linger in the Blacksburg air after each practice.

The "Classifieds"

BAND CAMP for Adult Musicians! 1991 Band Camp to be held at Edinboro University, Edinboro, Penn. June 16-22. Features full band rehearsal, master classes, and ensembles. Two concerts given at end of the week. Fee: $320 per person incl. room and board. Non-refundable deposit due May 16. Please contact Jim Marchman or Russell Shock for more information, registration form, etc.

The "Classifieds" are THE PLACE for messages, notices of items for barter, trade, or sale, party invitations and more! Place your message with the editor TODAY for the VOL. 3 NO. 2 edition of the newsletter! (The editor reserves the right to edit and/or refuse publication of any notice which is not deemed suitable for inclusion in this publication.)

Message From... THE PODIUM

It is that time again, when we look at the growing list of concerts for the spring and summer ahead of us. Each of the scheduled concerts proves to be a concert with audiences that will be greatly appreciative of our efforts. At this time we have not scheduled any of the public service concerts at the area retirement/nursing communities, but I hope that we will be able to fit one or two in. Even without these public service concerts, we have a respectable number of commitments.

We should, however, stand back for a moment and look at the effect of our work upon our community. We need to realize that our community is what we make it, and every concert we play, we add to the realization of the type of community that we would like it to be. Our example should be telling our fellow citizens that it is a healthy, caring community that provides artistic outlets for its citizens. More importantly, we need to be a living example that illustrates the message that it is good to be a part of and to promote these types of activities, even after graduation from high school or college.

The fun that the band has through music is indeed contagious and satisfies an emotional and sometimes spiritual need in most of us. These emotional and spiritual intangibles are also felt by our audiences. Whether or not each of us feels this strongly about a higher purpose of our efforts is not as important as the ultimate effect. The fact is we DO have an impact on those people who hear us, we DO have active control of how we impact our audiences and we ARE setting, in my opinion, a wonderful example for our youth and community as a whole. Every so often, we should remember that our enjoyment of music, when shared with others, can provide more than just an aural experience, and the whole experience is indeed much greater than the sum of its parts.

Thanks again for all of your hard work!

- Ed Schwartz, Director

We're STILL looking for a logo!
4th of JULY CONCERT

We are looking for a bigger and better 4th of July this year in Blacksburg. The festivities will again include the band with the Celebration Chorus. The chorus is comprised of singers from the area who meet only to perform at the 4th of July Celebration in Blacksburg. The chorus is open to anyone who wishes to sing. There is no specific rehearsal requirement, although there are rehearsals scheduled and everyone should attempt to make at least one rehearsal to get a feel for the tempo, transitions and ad libitum sections. If you know of any person interested, please have them call the Blacksburg Department of Parks and Recreation to get on the mailing list. Music and rehearsal schedule will be mailed out in mid-May.

For those of you in the band that wish to sing again, I do encourage you to feel free to do so. All I ask is that you work with the others in the section to sit in a location accessible to the singers, and that you be sensitive to the musical needs of the band. Last year worked out well, and with the combo/chorus arrangements that we will be getting, it should provide you even more opportunity to sing and play!

Below is a tentative list of some of the music that we will be performing:

Star Spangled Banner (new arrangement for band and chorus)
Songs of the American Revolution (band and chorus)
This Land is Your Land (band and chorus)
America The Beautiful (same band and chorus arrangement as last year, but with added narration)
Dixieland Jamboree (combo and chorus)
Alexander’s Ragtime Band (combo and chorus)
The Blue and the Gray (band alone)
Dixieland Jam (band alone)
National Emblem (band alone)
Tribute to Sammy Davis, Jr. (band alone)
Stars and Stripes Forever (band alone)

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To subscribe to the Blacksburg Community Band Newsletter, please put all your money in a box and ship it to the editor or director (freight prepaid please) and we will add your name to our mailing list. If you send no money, we will still be pleased to add your name to the mailing list in hopes that you will attend one of our concerts (and leave all your money to us...or join the band; which ever happens first) Seriously, we would be very happy to share our newsletter and our music with you. THANK YOU!