



**SYLACAUGA HIGH SCHOOL
HALF MILLION DOLLAR BAND
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**
Volume 6 – Summer 2011



Sylacauga High School Marching Aggie Band
Fall 2010

**Sylacauga High School
Alumni Band Night
September 9, 2011**

Alumni Band Night is a home game against Talladega on Friday, September 9, 2011. We now have all the music, including the music that is played in the stands (“The Horse”, “Beginnings”, etc.) on the website - [SHS Alumni Band Music](#). Please plan to participate. We can guarantee it will be fun. Do not be concerned if you cannot attend the Thursday practice, we will make room for you on Friday. You also do not have to actually blow the horn, just be counted on the field and have fun. Also please encourage your former band friends and family to participate.

Practice with alumni and students will be at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 8, 2011 and a reception or some type of social activity afterward. We will also have a social time on Friday from about 5:00 p.m. until about 6:30 p.m. near the band practice field. If you plan to participate, please be at the band room by 5:30 p.m. if possible or notify us if you will be late by calling the band room at 256-245-2506.

The attire will be red shirt and black pants, if possible. If you would like an alumni band shirt, please order by August 1, 2011. The order form is on the website or is available from this hyperlink: [SHS Alumni Band Shirt Hyperlink](#)

DUES NOTICE

This newsletter will constitute your statement for dues to the SHS Band Alumni Association. Annual dues for the period July 2011 through June 2012 are \$15.00 per member or \$25.00 per family. This association is open to both SHS alumni and friends. If you would like to donate more, as many members have, we will gladly accept with a smile and a thank you.

2011-12 Officers

<i>President.....</i>	<i>Henry W. Nunnelley</i>
<i>Past President.....</i>	<i>Judy Ward</i>
<i>Treasurer.....</i>	<i>Henry W. Nunnelley</i>
<i>Secretary.....</i>	<i>Sheri Smith</i>
<i>Director.....</i>	<i>David Simpkins</i>

Please mail your payment to:
Sylacauga High School Band Alumni Association
P. O. Box 2083
Sylacauga, AL 35150

Treasurer Report – We still have approximately \$1,400 in the bank. We donated a total of \$2,000 to the band uniform fund, which was really appreciated. We also continued paying for hosting of the band website, www.shsband.net.

President's Column

We are pleased to present our annual newsletter. Just so everyone knows, even though there is not a lot of day to day activity, this organization is making an impact on the current band students. You can read more in the next few pages. Your support, both financially, attending Alumni Band night and otherwise, is appreciated more than you know.

This is a plea for more help. We need more officers. Sheri Smith and I have basically been working this organization from its inception. Although it is a labor of love, we would like to “pass the baton” so as to provide new ideas to the Association. We also are in desperate need of a newsletter editor. We did not have a Fall/Winter newsletter as we would have liked and this newsletter should probably have been published in May instead of July. If you are interested in any of these positions, please let myself or Sheri know. You do not have to live in the Sylacauga area to be an officer.

Email Addresses – We need your email addresses. While we distribute the newsletter to all paid members, this is relatively expensive and time consuming. If you are receiving this newsletter via physical (snail) mail and have an email address, please let us know at hnunnelley@shsband.net. Thanks.

We would like to further emphasize the importance of your support, financially by dues and donations; however, most importantly in participating in the SHS Alumni Band Night. **We would like to see all of you on Friday, September 9, 2011.** Our goal is to have more alumni on the field than students on that night. We hope you will attend.

Henry W. Nunnelley
SHS Alumni Band President

Band Director Section

The 2011 year began with a bang! The first Aggie football game saw the Half-Million Dollar Marching Aggie Band round the south end of the stadium in their brand-new Red Coats – for the first time in nearly 10 years. It was great to see the Aggie Band in those sharp new jackets and hats.

The rest of football season progressed very smoothly as the band continued to improve its performances, featuring the music of Carlos Santana and others. We were blessed to have over 60 young girls participate in “Twirl Camp” and perform with us at one of our home football games. We were also blessed to have a great number of Alumni return for our Alumni Band Pre-Game Show. It was wonderful to see all of the “old” faces again.

The Aggie band was highlighted in several special events this year. First, the band received superior ratings at the “Heart of Dixie Marching Band Festival” in Prattville. We were also asked to provide special entertainment and play the Alabama and Auburn fight songs at the “Iron Bowl Challenge” Golf tournament, sponsored by the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame. The students were thrilled to get to meet celebrities such as Bob Baumhower, Pat Dye, Ray Perkins, Jeremiah Castille, Big Al and Aubie.....just to name a few. The event was held at FarmLinks, in Fayetteville. The band was featured in a number of Christmas parades this year and pushed things a little higher by performing their parade music at Walt Disney World in Orlando. As you can see, it has been a busy and eventful year for the Aggie Band.

As we begin making plans for the 2011-2012 school year, we would like to sincerely thank all of you for the support and encouragement you have given our program in recent years. We all know that there are some dark days ahead for us in education. Of course, all of our arts classes (including band) are in a battle for survival. Your continued support, both vocally and financially, have never been more important. I hope that you will be able to stay involved with our program this year. I hope that you will plan to be at our Alumni weekend. We would love for you to perform with the band, but you certainly don’t have to. It would be wonderful just having you back on campus.

Continued blessings to you all and we look forward to seeing you soon!

Sincerely,

David Simpkins
Band Director

Band Student Section

Words really can't describe how much the past 6 years of marching band has meant to me. It has been an honor to play under the direction of my dad; he's taught me a lot, not only about music, but about sticking things out when they get tough and building character. I really appreciate all of the alumni that allowed the band this past year to march in new cardinal jackets. It was an excellent way to go out. As I graduate from Sylacauga High School I will be moving to Jacksonville, AL and going to college under a full tuition jazz band scholarship at Gadsden State Community College and will be majoring in Business. After a long time of prayer and thinking, I feel like God is calling me to Jacksonville, Alabama, so I can be closer to my girlfriend and room with my two band mates that I play with in "Out Of Shame". On top of college, I will be releasing a collection of songs I have written for Out Of Shame on May 17, 2011, and will be touring and striving to become a "regular" in the music business. Thank you for all of your support over the years, and please continue to support the legacy of the Sylacauga High School band.

-William Simpkins

Marching in the band has been a truly life-changing experience for me. I have developed confidence, and I have also met some people that have become the best friends a person could ask. I have marched for the past five years, and I am so glad that I made the decision. I marched this year as Drum Major and seeing those new red marching jackets made me so glad to have such a dedicated alumni program. After I graduate from SHS I will be moving to Montgomery and attending Auburn University at Montgomery. I will not be pursuing a degree in Music or Music Education; however, I will be double majoring in Marketing and Business with intentions of having a career in musical performance and management. Thank you so much for all of your support and funding over the past several years. I pray that you will continue to promote funding for the arts and SHS students.

-Jay Bradford

Former SHS Drum Major

The summer of 2010 had been long-awaited for me. After four previous years marching as a flute player in the Sylacauga High School Half-Million Dollar Band, I was finally a senior. I had always admired the drum major and section leaders, and now my friends and I held those positions. We were starting preparations for a halftime show that was a tribute to Stevie Wonder, and we even had brand new uniforms with beautiful red jackets. Between the great show, fun games, and making new friends in the scorching heat, I had the time of my life during my last marching season.

Now, I'm a month away from graduation. This spring brought many other new experiences for the band. The highlight was a trip to Disney World – my first time there – which unfortunately included a killer epidemic stomach virus. But the band members even managed to bond over green faces and Pepto-Bismol. Last weekend, some of my friends and I participated in the Talladega All-County Band festival. I had the honor of being placed in first chair, one of my goals since my first year in the band.

Next fall, I'll be headed off to Troy University as a history major on a full academic scholarship. While I'm very excited about all the changes happening in my life, I will really miss people and things here in my small hometown – in particular, the band and all my friends in it. I can honestly say that marching in the band has been one of the best experiences of my life. I wouldn't be where I am today without the support of the band boosters. I am so grateful for all the time, money, and energy invested into our program. I plan to always support the SHS band myself and get home to watch as many halftime shows as possible. Thank you so much for all that you do.

-Hannah Lindley

Alumni Member Section

Why Should I?

By Chip McEwen (1974)

Fall, September, Friday night, community, memories, and celebrating “good times.” All these describe the joy and satisfaction your fellow Alumni experience when they “choose” not to “worry about what people will say” and “step out” and be counted by participating in the annual SHS Alumni Band event with the current members of the “Half Million Dollar” band!

Having participated for the past four years, I can truly say it has enhanced and helped me appreciate all the hard work and success the SHS Band has meant to my life. What will it mean for you? You'll never know unless you “step up” and say, “I'll do it!” If the only thing you take away is the smile you see on a student member's face seeing they are surprised you can still do it, then won't it be worth your time and effort? Every year I look for some theme as a thread to wrap through the article, but this year I'll just share some conversations with others showing the blessing of participation.

Elaine Mitchem (1954) sat in the stands these past three years and finally decided to “step out.” She pulled out her clarinet, and even though she admitted to not playing this her first year, she could be nominated for an Oscar performance. Why did she “step out?” According to her, if these other Alumni can do it, I should do my part and at least try. She not only tried, she did!!!

Kristie Riggins Mitchell (1976) lives in Gulf Breeze, FL. With some encouragement from another old Alumni friend, she decided to “step out” and did it for the first time! She had the problem of deciding whether to play clarinet or twirl since she did both “back in the day.” The decision was made easier since finding her baton in her attic storage yielded no success. With a borrowed clarinet from friends which had sticking keys, dried cork, and breaking in a new reed challenges, sound came forth and Hail to the Varsity emanated from her efforts as she stood on the field facing the stadium crowd.

And the “three amigos” from the Class of 1974 – Henry Nunnelley, Steve Terrell, and I – were hoping the Aggie Football team would drive the ball and score just before the half while the Student Band was moving to the field for their half-time show. Guess what? They did it!! In fact, they did it twice!! We had Buddy Simpkins (David's Dad and our former Band Director) lead us **AND** play!! Do you want proof? Go online to **YouTube** and search for “**alumni band hail to the varsity and beginnings.**” Click on the resulting search showing a September 17, 2010 date in the description. Now remember, the football team had a good first half scoring and we had played a pre-game show. One thing I have found out by participating in the Alumni Band event; your lips are the first to go and the last to come back!! Hail to the Varsity was great but Beginnings needs some work, especially the trombones and baritones!!

You can also see the 2010 Alumni Band Event with the full band by looking at the previous search on **YouTube** for the Alumni band. Here again look for the September 17, 2010 event date.

As always at the end of the game when the football team and cheerleaders stood on the field in front of the Band in the stands, we played the SHS Alma Mater while they sang!! I get “goose bumps” just writing about it, but it is a fitting tribute to a great Band Family, school student body, and hometown!!

I want to close with a challenge to **ALL** SHS Band Alumni from **EVERY** year!! Social Networking is a big thing these days and a picture was posted on FACEBOOK of the 2010 Alumni group participants. A number of people listed comments on the picture. But, let me make participation for this event “*perfectly clear.*” **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO PLAY, TWIRL, OR HOLD A FLAG, TO BE ON THE PRE-GAME SHOW!!** All you have to do is be able to walk from the sideline on to the field, stand and face the stands, and allow us to recognize you!! Of course speaking from experience, it is more fun to play or at least try, but you, like Elaine Mitchem, can be nominated for an “Oscar” faking performance!!

What’s the challenge?? **STEP UP AND STEP OUT!!** Be counted and show your Aggie Pride!! Commit to being “**ON THE FIELD**” for the 2011 event. The date is September 9, 2011 and we hope you will participate.

And lastly and most importantly, many thanks to all the Student Band family members for allowing us Alumni members the honor of playing with you!! You are why we do it and together we look and sound like a “Million Dollars!!”

Scenes from the Alumni Band 2010

For more pictures of the students in action and better views, we recommend looking at the website, www.shsband.net or searching for the various SHS Band Facebook pages.



New Uniforms for the 2010 Season AND Four New Tubas



Congratulations to the Class of 2011

Charles Martin Barnett
Jay Kiesh Bradford
Emily Hannah Carden
Rhiannon Lea Carroll
Carlee Elizabeth Gardner
Michael Chase Garrett
Michael Ray Giddens
Arnissa Goggins
Alison Marie Griffitt
Katelyn Savannah Hamilton
Kristina Lynn Hamlet
Shelley Lynn Harmon
Daniel Seth Harris
Casey Danielle Holmes
Jaclyn Chelsea Humphries
Phillip Reid (P. J.) Ingram
Deven Luke Jackson
Hannah Lee Lindley
Matthew David Ragsdale
William David Simpkins
Jordan Kyle Smith
Benjamin David Strong
Brian Jamar Williams
Chelsey JanaRae Woods
Tyler Krisitna Yates
Steven A. Zook

Alumni Band Members

July 2011

This is the membership list as best we can determine at this time. It includes all members who have paid or made significant contributions from August 2010 to the present plus the past 2 graduating classes of band students. If some names are misspelled or inadvertently omitted or the class years are incorrect, please let us know and we will be glad to correct it in the next newsletter.

CLASS	Name	CLASS	Name
1944	Dr. & Mrs. Morris Hollis	2008	Clint Wright
1951	Dorris Stone	2009	Travis Higginbotham
1952	Catherine McEwen*	2009	Shawn Nelson, Jr.
1953	Jill Parker Gillum	2009	Jennifer Nunnelley
1954	Elaine Mitchem	2010	Victoria Bailey
1955	Robert Grice	2010	Madison Cleveland
1955	George (Buddy) Simpkins	2010	Matthew Pearce
1958	Janelle Cadenhead	2010	Ansley Shurum
1959	William Ferguson	2010	Micah Sims
1960	Travis Wesson	2010	Carlin Walker
1961	George Stewart	2010	Taylor Wood
1963	Averiette Holly Wesson	2010	Maeghan Youngblood
1969	Gail Lusk Posey	2011	Charles Martin Barnett
1970	Matt Hare	2011	Jay Kiesh Bradford
1971	Carol Horton Sprayberry	2011	Emily Hannah Carden
1971	Alan Stone	2011	Rhiannon Lea Carroll
1971	Bryan Stone	2011	Carlee Elizabeth Gardner
1974	Parky Allen	2011	Michael Chase Garrett
1974	Diane Stone King	2011	Michael Ray Giddens
1974	Chip McEwen	2011	Arnissa Goggins
1974	Henry Nunnelley	2011	Alison Marie Griffitt
1974	Sheri Smith	2011	Katelyn Savannah Hamilton
1974	Steve and Dalia Terrell	2011	Kristina Lynn Hamlet
1976	David Cochran	2011	Shelley Lynn Harmon
1976	Kristie Mitchell	2011	Daniel Seth Harris
1978	Karen Allen	2011	Casey Danielle Holmes
1978	Donnie Wickersham	2011	Jaclyn Chelsea Humphries
1979	Tina Kilgore Wagon	2011	Phillip Reid (P. J.) Ingram
1979	Kelley Sawyer Wassermann	2011	Deven Luke Jackson
1982	Sandy Snyder	2011	Hannah Lee Lindley
1983	Karen Blocker	2011	Matthew David Ragsdale
1983	David Simpkins	2011	William David Simpkins
1987	Wendy Bearden	2011	Jordan Kyle Smith
1987	Mary Beth Kromer	2011	Benjamin David Strong
1988	Amanda Atchley	2011	Brian Jamar Williams
1994	Scott Williams	2011	Chelsey JanaRae Woods
1996	Cheri Williams Cunningham	2011	Tyler Krisitna Yates
2000	Joshua Lee Barnett	2011	Steven A. Zook
2006	Brittany Varner		

** In memory of Tony McEwen – Class of 1974