



The Bridge



Connecting Members of the Auburn Knights Alumni Association

VOL. VI NUMBER 1 OCTOBER, 2004

A Note From The President



The reunion of 2004 has come and gone. For those of you who could not attend this year, we hope to see you next year. Each year we lose some dear friends to all that is natural about living. This year was no exception with the losses of more of our beloved friends and alumni. Please make a special effort to come to the next reunion. It's not the same without them, and it's not the same without you.

Next year the Auburn Knights Orchestra will be celebrating 75 years of making some of the greatest music imaginable together! But don't come to the same old place: We are moving! The next time we are together we will be at *The Lodge and Conference Center*, a

beautiful facility located in Opelika, off US 280, that is part of the Robert Trent Jones Grand National golf resort. All rooms will cost \$69.00 + tax. Our goal is to have all 129 rooms booked so we have the entire place to ourselves. Check out their website at <http://www.lodgecc.com>.

Call now to book your rooms at **334-741-9292**. Be sure to tell the person at the registration desk that you are with the Auburn Knights Alumni to receive our rate. The rooms are ready to be booked now. Give them a call and book a room!

Moving a group like this to another location is a lot like moving your family. There are anxious moments about how things will work when we arrive, and how nice the new place will be compared to the old one. There is also the ever-present question of cost of living in the new place compared to where we lived. I can assure all that the board of directors was well informed by Charlie Higgins, our reunion coordinator, regarding all aspects of changing venues. After deciding it was time for a change of location, the board unanimously selected to

move our wonderful event to The Lodge.

Charlie Higgins and Don Culley continue to be our mainstays for the reunion. Charlie gathered the information from all considered venues, including our present host, and presented his findings to the board for careful consideration. Don gave the board input on the sizes and shapes of the rooms where the performances are held. The choice was made, and we will abide by the decisions of the board that represents the best interests of our group.

I want to extend a personal thank you to our fearless leader, Jon Smith, in guiding the board and membership through the decisions over the past two years. It has been a rather arduous task at times, and Jon showed great leadership through his patience and his love of the AKA. Our brother A. J. Coleman also deserves a huge vote of thanks. He served as our legal counsel throughout all negotiations of the contract in order to obtain all the concessions we have enjoyed over the years together at the current Best Western. The goal of the board was to continue in the same successful format that was

set up years ago, but move all that we do to a new location. I applaud the board for the courageous decision. We needed a change and a fresh outlook on our gathering.

On another very important matter, I have asked that the current organizers of the era bands think about how we can help solve the dilemma of so many bands and not enough players. Don Culley sets the rehearsals each year for the bands. It is becoming increasingly difficult to set rehearsals without conflicts because a number of us are filling out most of the groups. This is something that will need careful consideration. We don't want to lose the value of the different era bands. There is too much history contained in each era. Your thoughts will be greatly appreciated by your leaders. Give them a call or e-mail them if you have suggestions to help us.

Lastly, let us all thank the wonderful ladies who welcome those attending our gathering. Please remember that our dues and ticket sales for the reunion performances generate the money needed to hold the events and cover the costs of supporting the current

Auburn Knights Orchestra. Without the help of these ladies at registration and at the door we would have a rather difficult time trying to accomplish all that we have obligated ourselves to do. Please keep Celia Higgins in your prayers. The reunion is not the same without her presence. Charlie and his family need our prayers.

Remember, we are all the family of the Auburn Knights Orchestra. Please mark your calendars and make plans to join us next year for the celebration of 75 years of great music and memorable times! The dates are July 28-30. I hope to see you there with us.

Fritz Siler
AKAA President

Scholarship Winners 2004

Words cannot adequately describe my gratitude for receiving the Dave Edwards Memorial Scholarship. The Auburn Knights have truly made my experience here at Auburn fulfilling; and as I embark on my Senior year, I want to thank you all for your encouraging hugs, friendship, and leadership. Furthermore, I look forward to many more years of sharing this great music that we are so fortunate to be able to be a part of. Thank you again, and I look forward to seeing you all next July!

Sincerely yours,

Jana Burns

Jana is a trumpet player from Opelika, Alabama.

She is a senior majoring in Business Administration and minoring in Music.

Thank you very much for awarding me the Mike Ellis Scholarship. This award comes at a very important time in financing my education. I am honored to be a part of the rich tradition of the Auburn Knights Orchestra.

Dorsey Tippett

Dorsey is a vocalist from Opelika, Alabama and joined the Auburn Knights in August 2003. She is also the business manager for the band. She is a junior majoring in Elementary Education.

“Means” a Lot



The following are the notes from which Steve "Governor of Gadsden" Means made his comments regarding our move to the new location. I asked him to send me his notes so that they might be published for all who were there, and for all who were missing from the general meeting. They are written from the heart, and should be taken to heart by all of us who love and are the Auburn Knights. — Fritz

"(The Best Western is) Almost like this place was built for the Auburn Knights for those who don't walk quite as well as they used to can get around with relative ease - shopping & restaurants are just across the street. For three days we're not guests ... we're the owners. There are some, if not several, who don't want to move -- including me.

What we are about is more important than where we are.

From the old Holiday Inn to the Farmhouse to a series of other ratty places, we've experienced a certain amount of disagreement and a few hard feelings ... but at the end of the day we've preserved the tradition & legacy of the Auburn Knights.

Whatever decisions are made today - whether we agree or disagree - if we truly love this organization, we have an obligation to preserve the tradition & make this thing work."

After Steve gave us his sincere words it was suggested that we have a group hug and sing "Kumbaya" or a tune of like spirit, then go have bar-b-q and listen to some jazz. There is no place on Earth that can liken itself to when the Knights gather. It is not where, it is when. There is probably a tune in there somewhere...

OUR LEADERS

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Jon Smith

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Joe Watson

AKO Business Manager

Dorsey Tippett
(334) 524-9801

Gayle Riley



Gayle Riley died peacefully at his home on Sunday, August 8, 2004 – his 88th birthday. While at Auburn, Gayle played drums with the 1930's Auburn Knights as well as the Auburn University Marching Band. He played with the 1930's era band at several Auburn Knights reunions; of special significance to him was his participation in the 50th anniversary reunion, which was attended by his entire family. Gayle was a strong supporter of the Auburn Knights and to this day, his drum set still sits in the music room at his home in Crestline, just outside Birmingham.

A memorial scholarship fund has been set up in his name. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please send donations to Vic Atkins, 22 Berkeley Road, Selma, AL 36701-6805. Checks should be made out to the *Auburn Knights Alumni Association – Scholarship Fund*. Be sure to designate on your check (or in a cover letter) that your donation is in memory of Gayle Riley.

Faith Richardson

Faith Richardson, a vocalist with the Auburn Knights and the widow of Bob Richardson, passed away on June 1, 2004. A memorial scholarship fund has been set up in her name. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please send donations to Vic Atkins, 22 Berkeley Road, Selma, AL 36701-6805. Checks should be made out to the *Auburn Knights Alumni Association – Scholarship Fund*. Be sure to designate on your check (or in a cover letter) that your donation is in memory of Faith Richardson.

Ivan D. Grable

Ivan Grable died on August 3, 2004. Ivan attended Auburn University from 1937 through 1938, studying accounting and playing drums and violin. He played with the Auburn Knights during that time and also played at many reunions. During World War II, Ivan served as a corporal in the Army, in charge of correspondence and inventory for the 723rd Railroad Battalion, serving primarily in France.

A memorial scholarship fund has been set up in his name. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please send donations to Vic Atkins, 22 Berkeley Road, Selma, AL 36701-6805. Checks should be made out to the *Auburn Knights Alumni Association – Scholarship Fund*. Be sure to designate on your check (or in a cover letter) that your

donation is in memory of Ivan Grable.

Robert C. Humphrey, Jr.

Robert Humphrey, an associate member of the Auburn Knights Alumni Association, passed away on May 4, 2004. If you would like to make a memorial contribution to the scholarship fund in his name, please send donations to Vic Atkins, 22 Berkeley Road, Selma, AL 36701-6805. Checks should be made out to the *Auburn Knights Alumni Association – Scholarship Fund*. Be sure to designate on your check (or in a cover letter) that your donation is in memory of Robert C. Humphrey, Jr.

Joann Mann

Joann Mann, the wife of Dale Mann, passed away on May 26, 2004. If you would like to make a memorial contribution to the scholarship fund in her name, please send donations to Vic Atkins, 22 Berkeley Road, Selma, AL 36701-6805. Checks should be made out to the *Auburn Knights Alumni Association – Scholarship Fund*. Be sure to designate on your check (or in a cover letter) that your donation is in memory of Joann Mann.

Vaughan “Sonny” Timberlake, Jr.

Vaughan Timberlake, a longtime associate member of the Auburn Knights Alumni Association, passed away earlier this year. If you would like to make a

memorial contribution to the scholarship fund in his name, please send donations to Vic Atkins, 22 Berkeley Road, Selma, AL 36701-6805. Checks should be made out to the *Auburn Knights Alumni Association – Scholarship Fund*. Be sure to designate on your check (or in a cover letter) that your donation is in memory of Vaughan Timberlake.

Need a great band for your club or organization's next dance? Contact now:

Auburn Knights Orchestra
P.O. Box 1024
Auburn, AL 36830
www.auburnknights.com

Dorsey Tippett
(334) 524-9801
tippesd@auburn.edu

The Bridge is the official newsletter of the Auburn Knights Alumni Association. Letters and articles are welcome. Lyle Johnson, Editor, 108 Millsford Drive, Madison, Alabama 35758.



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