



The Bridge



Connecting Members of the Auburn Knights Alumni Association.

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Some Advantages Related to Not Playing Your Instrument at the AKA Reunion

There will be certain times when, if you forget to bring your axe, split your lip or develop something more serious, you will not be able to play in an era band at the AKA reunion. The purpose of this article is to point out that, while playing is great, not playing ain't all that bad either and, indeed, has certain advantages.

Three or four years ago I became aware that, vision-wise, I couldn't tell the difference between a natural, a flat or a sharp (Jack Drescher said I never could) and so I became a non-player. This allows me to address this subject with a certain degree of authority. But the real authority in this regard, however, is Vic Atkins, the **Great Communicator** and **Past Grand Master of Not Playing His Horn at the Reunion** (he never has). I am in hopes that I will have his full approval in all the things I'll be saying here. So in order of increasing importance, the advantages are:

Less Lower Back Pain. Since you will not have to lug around bulky, heavy instrument cases, etc. you will be less likely to develop lower back pain, will have fewer doctor visits and lower medical bills. You must remember that, as you get older, everything gets a lot heavier.

No Deadlines. You don't have to be anywhere, any place, on time or any time. Sleeping late is not frowned upon, nor is being late.

Less Practicing. There is no need to keep up your lip, your chops or even your embouchure.

Sunday Reunion Fatigue Lessened. On the **Johnson Reunion Algorithmic Fatigue Scale** (judged as being from 0 to 10) the following holds: Playing with three bands is 10/10, two bands 8/10, one band 6/10 and no band 0/10. If you play with four bands, you will be lucky to be back to your old self by Thanksgiving.

More Time for Socialization. This means more stories, more jokes, more laughter, more relaxation and more general communication, and, for those of us so inclined, more time for the consumption of adult-type beverages. This time for communication is, by far, the most important advantage of being a non-player and, seriously, the lack of such represents a real problem that was associated with the advent of the era-band format and with no mitigating solutions evident to date.

Plans are being made for the formation of a full big band of non-players and the name "Silent Knights" would certainly seem to be appropriate. Rehearsal times will be set and, in the spirit of our organization of course, nobody will show up. I plan on asking Tommy Goff to be the musical director and front man for our group, and I feel sure he will accept since his duties in this position should not be time-consuming to any extent.

So think about it. All you have to do is to leave your instrument at home next reunion and we will welcome you into our group, with all the associated advantages thereto.

Dick Johnson.

The Auburn Knights Alumni Association

77th Year Reunion
Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel
and Conference Center
at Grand National
July 26-28, 2007

Rooms for our AKA Reunion can be reserved **now** at the Marriott, by calling (800) 593-6456. Anyone on that number can assist you, but be sure to mention the **Auburn Knights Reunion**, to get our special rate. Rooms will start to go fast, and I urgently recommend that you call promptly. Rooms are \$75.00, plus tax.

*Charlie Higgins,
Reunion Coordinator*

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

Stuart Ivey
(334) 826-0741
iveystu@auburn.edu

AKAA Archives

Please go through your photos, letters, movies, VHS tapes, 8mm movies, 16mm movies, DVDs, CDs and any other memorabilia that need to be a part of Knights history. Our archives need submissions from the eras before the 50's and after the 90's, however, we will appreciate any material from **any** of the great Knights years!

If you decide to share your memories with us, AKAA archivists Jef Thurman and Lisa Ray will catalog, ID, and keep your treasures safe in the Archives Division of the Draughn Library on the Auburn University Campus. Please send your contributions to:

Jef Thurman, AKAA Archivist
169 Tessie Drive
Jacksons Gap, AL 36861-2522

AKAA Library

The library is growing a little (1897 charts) and getting into better shape as some of the older charts are rewritten and recovered for use. To do that properly, Library Archivist Tom Winstead needs to find tapes for several charts, since proper recovery is to keep the structure as it was originally intended. Carol Cunningham wrote wonderful charts, and Jay Owen has reconstructed several, and graced the reunion with the original intent. We have most of "I'll Remember April," by Cunningham, but need a recording to get the reconstruction right. There is also a good looking chart on "Without a Song," arranged by Gerlach, but without any rhythm parts, and Tom would like a recording so that we can recover that chart for use.

We also need a copy of the Alto I part to a Wolpe chart on "Chattanooga Choo Choo," which has gone missing from the 70's-80's band library.

Please send what you can to Tom Winstead, 12002 Mt. Charron Drive, Huntsville AL 35810, and he will return your copy promptly with many thanks!

Sonny Thompson



George M. "Sonny" Thompson passed away on November 3, 2006. He was 71 years old. He is survived by his wife, Martha. Sonny played with the Auburn Knights in the 50's, but many will remember him as the drummer for the 30's band at AKAA reunions.

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 Sonny Thompson.

Charles S. "Red" Blackledge

Charles S. "Red" Blackledge, Sr., passed away on November 4, 2006. He was 93 years old. Red was the one, and the original, trombone player in the 1930 Auburn Knights Orchestra, and he played with the band until his graduation. He was the last of the original Auburn Knights.

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 Red Blackledge.

Donald W. Irvine

Donald W. Irvine, 77, passed away on February 3, 2007. He grew up in Auburn, Alabama, and in 1952 received a B.S. degree from Auburn University. He served in the Navy for two years and then completed his education in 1960 with a Ph.D degree in Education from the University of North Carolina. He subsequently held faculty positions at East Carolina University, the University of Georgia, Indiana State University and the University of South Alabama.

Don is survived by his wife Karen, and children Carolyn, Donald, Jr., Cynthia and Mark. Music was a large part of Don's life. He played trombone with the Auburn Knights Orchestra while at Auburn, and later played with the Mobile Pops Orchestra and the Baldwin Pops Orchestra.

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 Don Irvine.

The **Auburn Knights Orchestra, Inc.** Articles of Incorporation were filed on March 23, 2007 in the Lee County Probate Judge's Office in Corporations Book 1281, Page 784. Therefore, for the first time in history, the AKO is "legal" as an official Alabama corporation.

Thanks to A.J. Coleman, Esq. for his excellent legal work, and to Hank Elliott and Charlie Higgins for spearheading this effort!

2007 Auburn Knights Orchestra Reunion

JULY 26-28, 2007

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Era	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30's	12-2 PM Ballroom	9-10 AM Ballroom	1-2 PM Ballroom
40's	6:30-8 PM Ballroom	1-2:30 PM Lounge	
48/49	2-3:30 PM Ballroom	2:30-4 PM Lounge	2-4 PM Lounge
50's	5-6:30 PM Ballroom	10-11:30 AM Ballroom	
60's	3:30-5 PM Ballroom	11:30-1 PM Ballroom	
70/80	8-10 PM Ballroom	2:30-4 PM Ballroom	
90's		1-2:30 PM Ballroom	2-4 PM Ballroom

BAND COORDINATORS

Era	Coordinator(s)	Phone
30's	Charlie Higgins Terry Mosley	(334) 288-5001 (828) 697-8604
40's	Tom Winstead	(256) 852-0138
48/49	Don Irvine Bob Hurston	(251) 666-4720 (901) 755-4567
50's	Al Norman	(404) 237-5916
60's	Steve Means	(256) 549-4646
70/80	Lisa Ray Fritz Siler	(334) 887-1544 (770) 978-1287
90's	Wade Johnson	(334) 285-6846

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Time	Friday	Saturday
7:30 PM	40's	30's
8:30 PM	50's	48/49
9:30 PM	60's	90's
10:30 PM	70's/80's	Current

OUR LEADERS

PRESIDENT

Mark Belfast
500 Webster Rd. #193
Auburn, AL 36832
(334) 887-9384

VICE-PRESIDENT

Jana Burns
355 Jennings Mill Pkwy. #1417
Athens, GA 30606

SECRETARY

Nat Michelson
82 Surf Dr.
St. Augustine, FL 32080
(904) 460-1396

TREASURER

Craig Lunsford
2608 Crofton Springs Dr.
Raleigh, NC 27615
(919) 870-1906

HISTORIAN

Charlie Kinzer
1101 Fourth Ave.
Farmville, VA 23901
(434) 392-1731

ARCHIVIST

Jef Thurman, jefth@charter.net

LIBRARY ARCHIVIST

Tom Winstead
(256) 852-0138

PUBLICITY

Hank Elliott, (334) 826-1054

AKAA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Vic Atkins, Chairman

REUNION COORDINATOR

Charlie Higgins
(334) 288-5001

EDITOR, AKAA NEWSLETTER

Lyle Johnson
(256) 837-5540 or lyle@knology.net

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Fritz Siler

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2007

Wade Johnson
Steve Means
Lisa Ray
Doug Stevens
Joe Watson

2008

Peter Blaise
Richard Garrett
Woody Leonard
Jef Thurman
Milton Welch

2009

Rob Cothran
Hank Elliott
Phil Gipson
John Norton
Bud Taylor

AKO Business Manager

Stuart Ivey
(334) 826-0741

Minutes of the AKAA Board Meeting

The Auburn Knights Alumni Association Board of Directors met on Saturday, February 24, 2007, at the Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel and Conference Center at Grand National. The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by President Mark Belfast. The following is a summary of the minutes for that meeting, as submitted by Nat Michelson.

Reading of the Minutes. Previous minutes were approved, with one correction made by Peter Blaise, regarding his charge to research new sound reinforcement system for the band for gigs and reunions.

Library Archives. Librarian handout of categorized music was submitted by Tom Winstead. Clarification of missing parts was explained. Tom requested to have a new librarian assigned due to several factors: he has been doing this for 15 years (since he was 60), he is an associate member, and therefore according to the constitution, cannot hold this office. After discussion by the board, President Belfast asked Tom to continue as interim until suitable replacement can be appointed. Tom was highly praised for his diligence and dedication to the preservation and maintenance of the very valuable book. Tom encouraged more usage of the library by the era bands. It is a really incredible collection of arrangements.

AKO Website. Jeremy Leff does the updates for the AKO web site. He has found a new hosting provider for the site, although it is not up and running yet. He needs to contact Craig for help and to ensure the domain name is held. Current site is maintained and working well, especially for gig requests and audition applications.

AKAA Scholarship. Scholarship Committee Chairman Vic Atkins was not present, but submitted his report prior to meeting via e-mail. Richard Garrett moved, and Lisa Ray seconded, that this report be accepted. This motion passed.



Current Band. Stuart Ivey is the new business manager for the Auburn Knights. Current status of the band membership is ten full members, five probationary members (to be voted on March 11) and three long-term subs consisting of trombone, drummer, and piano players. A scanner/copier/fax machine was ordered to fill in library as needed, etc.

A written report and PowerPoint presentation regarding the sound system was submitted by Jeremy Leff. The current sound system is old, in need of replacement or serious repair, and sound system rental is expensive.

A motion was made by Hank Elliott and seconded by Steve Means that Option C (see written report) as presented by Jeremy be accepted. Discussion by Hank and Steve followed.

A sound system presentation and written report was submitted by Peter Blaise. After further discussion, Hank withdrew his original motion regarding Option C as presented by Jeremy.

A motion was made by Steve Means, and seconded by Joe Watson, to continue to rent a sound system for the reunion. This motion passed after further discussion.

Motion by Fritz Siler (second by Lisa Ray) to purchase an appropriate sound system for the Knights. Passed (with Hank Elliott voting nay). President Belfast asked Peter Blaise, Jeremy Leff and Tom Winstead to

continue investigation for appropriate purchase. Main issue is powered speakers vs. passive speakers. The committee is charged with providing a solid recommendation by next meeting.

Charlie Higgins emphasized the importance of maintaining an accurate inventory for insurance purposes.

Stuart will have a report of the van's condition at the July board meeting.

Special Committee Report. President Mark Belfast regarding AKO-related legalities. A set of articles written by A. J. Coleman, proposed set of by-laws prepared by Charlie Higgins (done for IRS) using rules and by-laws of current band. Biggest concern of current band is Form 1099 for taxes. \$600 is reported income in order to file form 1099.

Charlie Higgins noted that the business manager must keep accurate records and issue 1099s as required. Free services will be provided by Attorney Stabler in Montgomery, should there be a need.

It was moved by Hank Elliott, seconded by Jef Thurman, that the AKAA move forward to incorporate with all expenses (as requested by AKO) to incorporate AKO as an incorporated entity. Incorporation consists of a member of the AKO (the current business manager, an appointed member from the AKAA, and a chosen individual as agreed upon by the AKO and AKAA. This motion passed.

Thanks to Charlie Higgins and A. J. Coleman for the monumental amount of work done on this project. The "Auburn Knights Orchestra" name will be copyrighted through Hank Elliott. Steve Means made the motion, and it was seconded by John Norton.

Filing for tax exempt status will be done by Charlie Higgins. So moved by Jef Thurman and seconded by Hank Elliott. The motion passed.

Archives Report. A written report was submitted by Jef Thurman. Jef recommended that the ACAA continue to recover and preserve discovered recordings and visual materials, as well as newsletters. He needs funding as appropriate; the cost to recover tapes is \$50 per tape.

A motion was made by Lisa Ray, and seconded by John Norton, to fund archive restoration with \$400. The motion was amended by Hank Elliott to increase the amount not to exceed \$500. The motion passed as amended.

Publicity. Jana Burns reports continuation of past efforts. Additional radio stations were suggested. New signs were requested that say "Auburn Knights" reunion instead of "ACAA" reunion. Jana will take care of all as suggested.

Reunion Reports. President Belfast reports that the taping/video project by the Music Department is on hold. Business Manager Stuart Ivey reports that the video portion is not happening as planned at the moment.

Charlie has an advanced copy of the room rates as contracted for the 2008 reunion. There are no changes in prices. There will be a slight change in the cost of the midnight breakfast.

Jef Thurman motioned to accept the contract as presented, and Lisa Ray seconded. The motion passed.

With regards to sound for the reunion, Charlie will contact a sound man from Valley.

The rehearsal schedule was presented by Charlie, pointing out the miraculous work done by Don Culley over the years.

There was small discussion on band consolidation. Bands will remain

as they are for this year, with consideration for possible changes for the 2008 reunion. This is to be decided by the leaders of the bands, with input from the band members still attending.

Charlie pointed out the staff at the motel is very supportive, even to the top of the Marriott franchise. Marriott would like for this site to be our permanent home for reunions.

New Business. Discussion of new business began with a motion by Joe Watson, seconded by Richard Garrett, to pay insurance premium. This motion passed.

Recruitment. There was a lengthy discussion regarding how to reach more qualified incoming students for the AKO. Ideas presented by President Belfast included mailouts to students through high schools on the ABA list; having a booth at All-State; inviting incoming freshmen to audition during All-State (in April) or during Solo & Ensemble; and, the current band could do "run-out concerts" before school is out for summer.

Additionally, Dr. Bob Greenleaf suggested to President Belfast prior to the board meeting that the AKO might be involved with Auburn University's Summer Music Camp. This topic was tabled after more discussion.



Alumni Association. Hank Elliott reported that Debbie Shaw (A.U. Vice President for Alumni Affairs, and Executive Director of the Auburn Alumni Association) would like to have the Auburn University Alumni Board meeting in conjunction with the reunion. Seating will have to be on a first-come, first-served basis, but they are most certainly welcome at the reunion.

The meeting was adjourned.

*Nat Michelson
ACAA Secretary*

