



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

• Nov. 19, 2011

Reunion

Game time still undecided due to TV Broadcast.

Details will follow via Facebook & email

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ALUMNI BAND AID

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NOVEMBER 2011

REUNION 2011

By: Nancy Hess
Cougar Doll 1976-80

Make plans to join the Spirit of Houston Alumni Organization on Saturday November 19th! Because we are having such a successful football season, the time of the game has not been determined. We are waiting to see what time CBS sports wants to feature our game, which is looking to be very exciting. For those of you from the old Southwest Conference days, we will be playing long time rival, SMU. This game could determine who will represent the conference at the Championship game. New band director, Troy

Bennefield is planning a very exciting pre-game and halftime show. Alumni members are welcome to join in as we play some favorites from the past such as “El Cid”, “Get It On”, and “4 Minutes”. Exact times for practice will be posted as soon as possible.

Alumni who would like to eat before the game are invited to join the UHAA for a barbecue lunch fund-raiser which will benefit former Lady Cougars Basketball Coach, Joe Curl. Coach Curl is on the list for a heart transplant and does not currently have insurance to cover this life saving procedure. BBQ plates will be available at the President’s

Pavilion for \$10 each—right next to our tailgate pad.

We will be offering snacks before the game at our tailgate pad behind the UHAA pavilion. All alumni will need to purchase their own tickets prior to the game. Be sure to plan early as this game could be a sell-out.

Due to the increased size of the student section, alumni will not be able to sit in the band section during the game this year.

Remember to check the Facebook page and the Spirit of Houston Alumni page at <http://uhbands-alumni.com/>. We hope to see many of you at this year’s reunion!

Tailgating 2011 Style!

By: Chris Mims
Clarinet /Frumpet 1978-80

First a big thanks to Trey and Jennifer Zuber-Garrison for another great season of tailgating. The food and fun have been terrific. But it takes more than feet on the ground to make a great tailgating experience. It takes money.

Unfortunately, nothing is free. We want to take a moment to thank those that have sponsored our tailgates this year.

Cathy Coers Frank –
Class Act Reunions
www.reunionscoop.com

Hugh Bob Lawrence
Chris Mims –
Wagner Insurance Agency
www.farmersagent.com/kwagner

Janet & Lee Jones

Lisa Cushing –
Petals by Design
www.petalsbydesign.us
Judge Charley Prine

Please take the time to thank our sponsors personally and if possible, give them the opportunity to earn your business.

If you would like to know about other sponsorship opportunities, please contact Chris Mims at chrismims1031@gmail.com.

Catching Up with Mr. Mayes

By: Chris Foster
Tubad & Horn 1996-02

From 1984-2000, Robert Mayes was the Director of Bands at the University of Houston. During that time, the Cougar Marching Band and Cougar Brass performed around the world as the University of Houston's musical ambassadors. One might suspect that moving into a role as a classroom professor might lead to a slower life. One would be wrong. The prospect of writing a 'Where Are They Now?' article about Mr. Mayes sounds like a great way to spend an afternoon. However, the logistics of tracking him down and getting fifteen minutes of his time is much easier said than done. Few would suspect that now, eleven years since the end of his tenure as Director of Bands, he is more on-the-go than ever. While many tenured professors soften their course load with each passing year, Mr. Mayes, in his *twenty-eighth* year on the UH faculty, is a hard man to pin down.

Mr. Mayes is a very busy Associate Professor of Music Education. With the recent departure of the head of the music education department, he's also 'minding the store' during the search for her replacement. In addition to continuing to teach his courses in instrumental conducting and brass methods, he teaches the introduction to music education courses and

supervises student-teachers every semester. "You should see the mileage on my car!" he replied when I asked about what the observation sessions are like. After teaching courses before lunch, many afternoons he's out observing student-teachers in school districts as far as Katy and Brazosport. While he admits to missing working with marching bands, he says that he enjoys the opportunity to help the music education students take all of the knowledge they have gained and learn to refine it and present it successfully to students ranging from kindergarten through high school. He says that's a good way of "seeing the end result; that's what teaching is all about."

While his work with future music educators keeps him busy during the week, Mr. Mayes is still a very active adjudicator and clinician for bands on weekends. Every winter, Mr. Mayes works with Bowl Games of America, leading the mass bands & dance team halftime shows at major college bowl games, including recent appearances at the Alamo, Orange, and Liberty bowls. In the spring, he travels coast to coast to judge concert and marching band competitions for Heritage Festivals. He says the best part of all the touring he does is not only working with bands, but also keeping abreast of what's new and current in the school band field, which he

can then take back to his music education students at UH.

With the annual Alumni Band Reunion approaching, Mr. Mayes says he is very much looking forward to seeing former students, catching up with them, meeting their kids, and most importantly, reminiscing! Mr. Mayes' office on the first floor of the Moores School of Music has become a living museum that preserves an era of accomplishments for the Cougar Marching Band. He says current students marvel at the many awards and trophies from around the world that the Cougar Band and Cougar Brass received during his years as director. He says that his relationship with the band department has grown and developed into a warm friendship and respect that goes both ways, and this coming Band Alumni Reunion will be a highlight for him to work with the marching band. Any update wouldn't be complete without knowing how things are going with his family. His wife, former Cougar Dolls Director, Diane Mayes, continues to stay busy working as an orthodontic assistant. His daughter, Maggie is a successful elementary school teacher at Laura Bush Elementary in Pasadena ISD. Also, for those who remember the legendary couch that made the trip from the Band Annex to the Moores School of Music, it's still around furnishing his office and providing student naps as

**2011
Football Schedule**

- Sept 3—vs UCLA
Emphasis: Band Directors
- Sept 10—at North Texas
- Sept 17—at LA Tech
- Sept 24—vs Georgia St
Emphasis: 2000 Grads
- Sept 29—at UTEP
- Oct 8—vs East Carolina
Emphasis: Dolls, Cheer, Guard, Letters, Twirlers
- Oct 22—vs Marshall
- Oct 27—vs Rice
Emphasis: K&Ψ & TBΣ
- Nov 5—at UAB
- Nov 10—at Tulane
- Nov 19—vs SMU
BAND REUNION
- Nov 25—at Tulsa

it has for decades. Mr. Mayes also wanted to express that for a few years now, he has had interest in recreating some of the special moments from his time with the band. He has been approached about possibly organizing an alumni group to make one more trip to Dublin, Ireland, for the St. Patrick’s Day Parade in an upcoming year. We would be taking an actual “spring break”, donning the red and white jumpsuits, and pulling out an arrangement of “Deep in the Heart of Texas” one more time. He said the idea is very intriguing, but he wonders how much interest there would be. If you’re interested in exploring this

idea, you can email him at rbmayes@uh.edu. You’re also welcome to add him as a friend on Facebook, but he said the learning curve there might delay his response a bit.

The 2011 Band Alumni Reunion is scheduled for November 19, 2011, and Mr. Mayes would love to see you there!



Mr. Robert Mayes (Director, 84-00) with Jennifer Zuber Garrison (Twirler & Percussion, 90-93 and SOHAA President-Elect) at Band Alumni Reunion 2010

2011 Senior Class

*By: Matthew Cushing
Trumpet 1992-1997*

The Spirit of Houston Alumni would like to extend a special congratulation to the following marching band seniors. We look forward to welcoming you to our alumni organization!

- Johnathan Alvarez
- Sammy Butts
- David Carr
- Sheila Dawson
- Scott Dupre
- Richard Durham
- Carter Frederick
- Mollie Guttman
- Elizabeth Harrison

- Damon Haywood
- Gene Malixi
- German Morfin
- Thomas Neal
- Lee Redfearn III
- Steven Rosario
- Jacob Rudisill
- Adrianna Vargas

Red 27- Cougar Homecoming 2011

By: Nancy Hess
Cougar Doll 1976-80

Saturday, October 22nd we celebrated homecoming by once again participating in the Tailgate Challenge. This year the theme was Red 27, with a throw back to the Bill Yeoman era. Our tailgate area was turned into a Cougar Big Red

Carnival. Hillbilly Golf, washers, bean bag toss, cupcake walk, tic-tac-toe, and a duck pond provided entertainment for our alumni and their families. Trey and Jennifer Garrison cooked up a feast of seafood, corn on the cob and red potatoes.

Coogs treated us to another win over Marshall,

and the Spirit of Houston Alumni garnered Best Alma Mater Singing in the Tailgate Challenge for the second year in a row.

Special Thanks to everyone who helped to make this event a huge success!

Music Notes

Lyndon Hughes (Percussion, 03-07) and **Charity Kester Hughes** (Flute, 01-04) welcomed their son Jonah Lyndon Hughes, 6 lbs. 9 oz., on October 13, 2011

Please notify Matthew Cushing at matthewcushing@yahoo.com of any events you would like to have listed in this column.

Jamie Lawrence received a surprise marriage proposal at the 2011 Spirit of Houston Concert. Her boyfriend was in the Shasta suit. She said YES!



Another GOLD BANNER Year!

By: *Chris Mims*
Clarinet /Frumpet 1978-80

Spirit of Houston Alumni wins prestigious Gold Banner Award for Fifth Year in a Row.

Every year, the UHAA awards the various alumni groups for their previous year's activities. These awards are

based on University support, membership, student recruiting, scholarship awards and other activities. For the fifth year in a row, your Spirit of Houston Alumni was awarded the Gold Banner. This is the highest award available and also comes with a \$500.00 award to our scholarship fund.

The Spirit of Houston Alumni has been awarded the gold banner every year that it has been offered. To our knowledge, no other group can make that claim. Spirit of Houston Alumni, you have a lot to be proud of!!! You are the Pride!!!!

A Note from the President

By: *Chris Mims*
Clarinet /Frumpet 1978-80

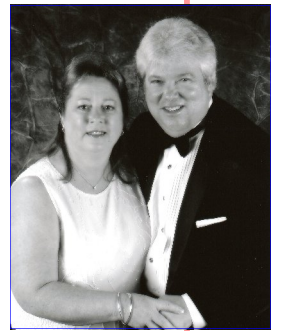
By the time you get this newsletter, two thirds of the football season will have come and gone. Spirit week, Homecoming, Marching Band Concert, Alumni Silent Auction, Bayou Bucket and five fantastic tailgates have all come and gone. Were you there for them? Why not? The Spirit of Houston, Cougar Band, Dolls, Cheer and Dance have always been the backbone of supporting the University of Houston. Now more than ever, the University of Houston needs our support.

Why do we need to support our University? Every stride the University makes enhances our degrees. For the first time in many, many years, we have an administration that is not using the University of Houston as stepping stone but is committed to the University of Houston. The only way to keep them here is to show them our support. If we want to continue to have the best music program in the state, we must show our strength in numbers. If we want to keep people like President Khator, Coach Kevin Sumlin, AD Mack Rhodes, and Professor Simon Bott, then we

must give them our support.

So what must we do? Do whatever you can. Some can give money. That is not me although I tried to give what I can. Some give time. I love volunteering. Some can go to athletic events. Some can go to concerts. It doesn't really matter what you do as long as you do something. If we all do one thing more than what we are already doing then we will be on our way to being better than great. Maybe that first step should be joining UHAA or upgrading your membership to a life membership.

Whatever it is, make that commitment today.



**Chris & Trish
Mims**

10th Annual Spirit of Houston Concert

*By: Trish Mims
Tenor Sax 1979-80*

What a night! If you have never had the opportunity to attend the Annual Spirit of Houston Concert and Silent Auction, you are truly missing an exciting and inspirational show. The Band is at it's best, there are vignette performances by many sections of the Band. There are drummers drumming, dolls dancing, twirlers twirling, flags flying, Shasta sashaying and a partridge in a pear tree. The 10th Annual Concert was no exception, and moved the bar higher once again for what we have come to expect from this annual tradition for many Cougar Fans.

David Bertman announced some exciting news as well. Bert F Winston Jr and the Sterling Foundation has pledged \$8 Million dollars towards a new Band Hall and Performance Center to house the Spirit of Houston in conjunction with the construction on the new Cougar Stadium. Mr. Bertman did tell us that "we will" get that new stadium! We're going to hold you to that Mr. B!

The Spirit of Houston Alumni Silent Auction was a huge success again this year netting over \$5,000 for our Scholarship Fund. This is a new record for funds raised at this event. We are so grateful to the donors of the auction items as well as those who bid on them to help our organization continue to support our deserving band students scholarship funds.

Special mention goes to Alumus Carol Wells who donated a beautiful original oil painting of a cougar which



auctioned for a wonderful sum. The winning bidder, Gary Reinsch, collected his painting, paid his bid, and handed the painting to our new Assistant Director of Bands, Mr. Troy Bennefield and told him "This will look great in the new band hall". Our Cougar Family is amazing—don't you agree? And Carol, your art will be represented permanently among future generations of the Spirit of Houston.

As soon as the fall schedule for 2012 is published, be sure to mark your calendar so you can attend this event. Once you've been you won't miss it again!



The Band Monument Story

By: Skip Schultz
Trombone 1993-99

It's grey, it's made of granite and it's a proud testament to our band's beginnings. But do you know how it all began?

Bringing the Cougar Band Monument to life was a nine-month endeavor and, like having a baby, this was a real labor of love. It started in the spring of 1996 after basketball season had finished. We were starting the mammoth task of sorting through what would go from the Band Annex into our brand new home at the Moores School of Music. While looking through archive photos and documents kept in the massive wood-bound tomes stored under the Tau Beta Sigma's care, I discovered the earliest Band photographs from 1946. And it dawned on me that the Band was turning fifty that year. However, when I asked around there seemed to be nothing set to mark this milestone in the Band's history. Not wanting to let this date pass without a little pomp and circumstance, I set about investigating when the Band actually started and where.

I became very familiar with the university archives on campus and *The Daily Cougar* office, dropping by when I wasn't in class, and I discovered some interesting facts. Many of you may not be aware but the Cougar Band story actually started near the residence halls on campus on 25 March 1946. That's when an ad went in the *Cougar* (it

wasn't "Daily" then) asking for musicians interested in joining a performance ensemble. Their first gathering was in the quanset huts located roughly where the Cougar Village residence halls are today and the ensemble would become the start of the Cougar Band program. Over twelve months later, the Cougar Marching Band debuted.

Finding all this out got me really excited and determined to celebrate our golden anniversary with a whole lot more than a typical Band party (y'all know what I mean). And I knew there would be plenty of others out there keen to support such a project. Whether this was to be a plaque or something more was still to be decided but the seed of an idea had been planted.

The first task was to decide what to create and how to go about it. I approached Mr. Mayes with the idea of marking the Band's 50th anniversary. He asked if it was a fraternity-sorority project. I thought this about for a moment before responding no, as I believed it belonged to all supporters of Cougar Band, regardless of their membership of the fraternity or sorority. He thought it was a good idea and asked what was going to go on it. I drew a blank and panicked. At this point, I genuinely didn't know. I suggested perhaps a factual

statement but Mr. Mayes had a better idea; as well as the bare facts, why not hold a competition among band members to write a personal inscription to go on the monument? Any funds we raised would then decide what kind of monument we could afford.

My next stop was to visit Forest Park Cemetery just down I-45 to speak with workers there about monument options available to us. They were impressed with the idea and keen to help out in any way they could. They offered to do any engraving for free and to supply the stone at cost.

Then came the hard part: fundraising. A few volunteers and myself started burning up the phone lines throughout the Summer, calling any alumnus or alumna we could track down and asking them to spread the word. We also ambushed alumni attending football games. This continued throughout the fall of 1996. Some were incredibly generous; most gave what they could and



The Monument as it appears today outside Cougar Village

The Band Monument Story—cont'd



Robert Mayes, Jenny Jones, Skip Schultz, Jason Hargrave

every little helped. I panicked when I realized we'd be unable to beat the March anniversary date so the decision was made to aim to complete fundraising and break ground for the monument in 1996 (small ceremony with just the band just before Homecoming) and unveil the completed monument before the

first football game of the season. This coincided with the date of the first home game played by U of H Band back in 1947.

And so fundraising carried on in earnest through November. Donations far exceeded our expectations (a fantastic \$5500!) and when I returned to Forest Park, they said this would be enough to purchase a three-ton block of granite plus its foundation and have enough left over for maintenance of the stone.

The monument's eventual design was inspired by my own love of Texas Historical Markers (yes, still a History geek!), simple drill design, and the contest Mr. Mayes held to write part of the monument's inscription. This was won by Meagan Keck (now Gormly). It reads:

"TO USE THE LOVE OF MUSIC TO PROMOTE UNIVERSITY SPIRIT AND FORM A FAMILY OF FRIENDS IS TO BE A MEMBER OF THE COUGAR BAND."

Weeks of talks followed, through the university's Office of Planning in order to secure a site for the monument and approval from the relevant departments. But they were very helpful and supportive. And the final design was approved and set for completion two days before the unveiling.



Singing the Alma Mater at the unveiling

Pictured: Robert Mayes, Nichelle Gibbs, Jana Norton, Skip Schultz, Jason Hargrave

As promised, Forest Park set to work on engraving the granite block with our chosen words and turning it into the monument we still see to this day. A small unveiling ceremony was set to take place before first game pep rally on 21 August 1997. In attendance were current band members, alumni, including a few of the original 1947 Cougar Band and university officials. I envisaged a short speech, the unveiling, a few photographs and smiles all round. But I was taken aback when Dr. Tomatz, the Director of the School of Music, gave me a certificate of thanks for

all my efforts on the project. (It hangs proudly in my home to this day.)

I still consider this project to be one of my proudest endeavors at university and if you go down to the Cougar Village residence halls today, you can see for yourself our monument to mark the Band's 50th birthday in the courtyard. Anyone out there fancy a new challenge for the 75th anniversary? Only ten years to go so you better get moving! Go Coogs!



Dr. David Tomatz presents plaque of appreciation to Skip Schultz (trombone 93-99) for his dedication in bringing the monument to fruition



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***THE BAND OF
YESTERDAY TODAY!***

The Spirit of Houston Alumni Group is an organization whose primary function is to raise scholarship funds for deserving students and to provide a fun outlet for all Spirit of Houston Alumni—Band, Dolls, Corp, Guard, Cheerleaders, etc to meet and fellowship at home games and other events.

STAY CURRENT AND CONNECTED:

www.uhbands-alumni.com

uhbands-alumni@yahoogroups.com

FACEBOOK PAGE

- Spirit of Houston Alumni Association
- Spirit of Houston Alumni Association Executive Board

CHECK OUT THESE OTHER UH BAND

INTEREST GROUPS ON FACEBOOK

- Univ of Houston Band Annex
- Stars of David
- The Bill Moffit Fan Club
- University of Houston Cougar Marching Band—
The Robert Mayes Years

Alumni Spotlight



Rhonda and Guinn Pitts both attended the University of Houston and played trumpet in the Cougar

Band. Guinn was the valedictorian of his class when he graduated from Lamar High School in 1974 and was a recipient of the Jesse H. Jones scholarship. While in high school, Guinn would pick up some spending money by marching with the Rice MOB and he has the distinction of being part of the MOB at the Texas A&M game when the Aggies chased the MOB off of the field because they had made fun of Reveille, the Aggie mascot. After graduation, however, Guinn knew he wanted to be part of a real band and enrolled at the University of Houston. While at UH, Guinn was in the Marching Band under Bill Moffit and the Wind Ensemble under James Matthews. He graduated Summa Cum Laude in 1978 with his Bachelor of Music Education degree. He continued his education and received a

Master of Education in Curriculum & Instruction in 1979 and a Master of Theory in 1983. Guinn began working at Sam Rayburn High School in Pasadena in 1979 and remained there until he retired 30 years later in 2009. He continues teaching privately today 5 days a week in the Deer Park and Pearland school districts. Guinn is an active member of the Houston Professional Musician's Association.

Rhonda graduated from Pasadena High School in 1977 and entered the University of Houston that fall. She played in the Marching Band and Cougar Brass under Bill Moffit. Rhonda also studied marching band techniques and arranging under Dr. Moffit. She played in the antiphonal group that was often featured in the halftime shows and was part of the recording group that recorded Bill Moffit's arrangements each year and she also transcribed music for his new arrangements. Rhonda joined Tau Beta Sigma in the spring of 1978 and is proud to serve as the current sponsor of the Tau Chapter at UH. After graduating in 1983 with her Bachelor of Music in Education, Rhonda postponed her teaching career and began working for law firms. Rhonda's legal career lasted 13 years and during that time she was a member of the

State Bar of Texas, Legal Assistants Division and was in the first class of paralegals to become Board Certified in Civil Trial Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Rhonda began her teaching career in 1996 when she became the band director at Miller Intermediate in Pasadena. Rhonda remained at Miller until she left teaching in 2009 to become a full time volunteer with the Spirit of Houston Cougar Marching Band, Cheer and Dance. Part of her duties as a volunteer is to teach the current band how to march Patterns of Motion style of marching that Bill Moffit made famous while he was at the University of Houston. Rhonda has two daughters, Jaime and Noel Lawrence, who not only carried on the family tradition of attending the University of Houston but they were also members of the Cougar Band. Rhonda has been on the Board of Directors of the Spirit of Houston Alumni Association since it was founded.

Guinn and Rhonda still love to play their trumpets and enjoy playing together at church and in the Pasadena Philharmonic Orchestra.