

The Saginaires Alumni Association Newsletter

January 2001

Calendar of Events:

March 31: MCBAIA Finals at Saginaw Valley State University & Saginaires/NA Alumni Gathering

Letter from the Alumni Board:

Another year has come and gone, and a new millenium has now truly begun. We of the Saginaires Alumni Association are taking this opportunity to turn over a new leaf. At the close of the year 2000, three members of the Alumni Board met to discuss the role and future of the Saginaires Alumni Association.

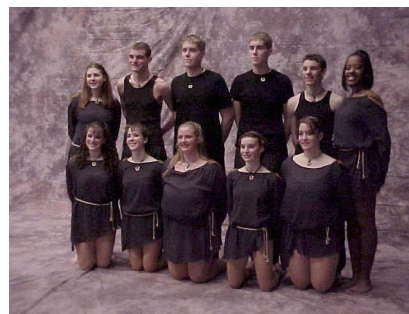
Although the Northern Aurora Drum & Bugle Corps is not currently active, the Saginaires Youth Organization does have a successful ensemble: Northcoast Academy Winterguard. We take pride in our award-winning winterguard, and want to make sure they feel supported and appreciated. Therefore, the next alumni gathering will be held at the Michigan Color Guard Circuit Finals at Saginaw Valley State University, Saturday 31 March 2001.

While we may have to find surrogate drumcorps to cheer on in the marching season, we still have a premier winterguard to cheer for in the winterguard season. We wish all the members of Northcoast Academy the best of luck in the upcoming season.

Diana M. Cook
SAA Vice-Chair

Winterguard Season Kicks Off

The first camp for Northcoast Academy's 2001 season was held on November 15th and 16th, 2000. Check the Michigan Color Guard Circuit webpage at <http://www.mcgc.net> for schedules and scores as the season progresses. Best of luck to Northcoast Academy in the 2001 season—continue the tradition of excellence! %



Northcoast Academy, 2000 Season

Want a piece of Saginaires History?

During last summer's cleanup of the corps hall, the piles of old trophies were assembled, and it was discovered that we have a heluva lot of old trophies! Many will go into a trophy case, but keeping all of these trophies, many of which are showing their years, is rather impractical. Therefore, the call goes out to alumni!

Rather than simply throw away these priceless pieces of drum corps memorabilia, we are asking you, the alumni, if you want 'em! Trophies from as far back as the 60's are available to you! Come by the corps hall if you're in the area and hunt for a trophy from your favorite show or parade! A voluntary donation is requested. Help the Saginaires and take home a piece of *your* history! %



Marion Cadets and the Cincinnati Glory Merge

Michael W. King, Executive Director • Tim Cardinal, Educational Coordinator
from cincinnati-glory.org

We are excited and proud to announce a partnership of two great Division III organizations: The Marion Cadets and the Cincinnati Glory have formed an exciting new corps called The Glory Cadets Drum and Bugle Corps.

The Glory Cadets will be operated by the Marion Cadets organization and will maintain the quality, excitement, and family atmosphere each organization is known for in the drum corps community. The Glory Cadets Corps Director will be Michael King and the Educational Coordinator will be Tim Cardinal.

"Both Tim and I are committed to maintain the quality, traditions, and family atmosphere that each corps is known for in the drum corps community," said corps director Michael King. "I am constantly receiving e-mails and phone calls from members of each corps. They are eager to get started."

"This is a great match for us. Our kids have toured together for many years and we stayed at the Marion Cadets facility last summer prior to attending the DCI II/III Championships," commented Tim Cardinal. %

In This Issue...

'Faint Recollections of Drum Corps Past' by Bill Heilig, Saginaires '67-'73 Chapter 1: "In the Beginning"

DCI Today announces *three championship events* to be held in the 2001 season

'Letters from Alumni' — in this issue, an NA alum from Japan gives thanks

'Faint Recollections of Drum Corps Past'

Chapter 1: "In the Beginning"
by Bill Heilig [Saginaires '67-'73]

There I was, all of 13... a musician of sorts, putting forth my maximum efforts in first year marching band.

"Hey, ya wanna try something new?" one of my bandmates offered with almost no explanation. Well, it *was* the 60's, and most of us would try almost anything during those days. I was game.

I knew Frank, Ken and Leo pretty well, so I was picked up on a Wednesday night in a beat up '58 Chevy, and we drove over to Carrollton.

Carrollton? Who in the world goes to Carrollton? Questions about where we were going got the response, "To play some music—you'll see." What the heck, we do that all the time; I didn't try to escape.

Anyone that has ever been to Carrollton might remember the old 6th Street bridge. The one that was so old and rickety that one wondered when it would collapse under the weight of pigeons roosting. Well, it didn't. It took one final collision with a passing freighter to earn its demise quite a few years later. And when it was finally broke, it was decided not to bother to replace it.

Oh, am I wandering here? Well, OK...

We arrived at the VFW hall on Carrollton road not long after my bridge musings and pulled into the parking lot. Next to the hall was a building that the drunken vets... umm, I mean the distinguished members... rented for parties and such. Milling about the open doorway were half a dozen or so other people. (Last names will be omitted to protect the totally guilty.) I met Fran, Sue, Danny, Larry, Gregg, Rob, Jamie, Patty, Cathy, another Sue, Blake, Cindy, and a couple of 'old men' named Tom and Bob something or other and a few more. All those names became a blur after a short while. Each in their own way tried vainly to explain what Drum Corps was all about, and none of the stories matched. I frowned and shook my head. None of it made much sense and I wasn't buying it right then, as someone played chopsticks badly on a severely out of tune piano, a couple of guys made bleating noises on trumpets with no valves and several people chased each other about the room. I

had the distinct feeling of total chaos. Hmm... might not be a bad thing to get involved in. At least the girls were cute.

One of the "Sue"s sidled up to me and asked if I was gonna join up—of course, with those big brown eyes staring at me pleadingly, I said, "Yeah, I guess so." I wasn't sure yet what I was joining, and 'yes' appeared to be the right answer. She took me by the hand (which wasn't all bad either) and around the room we went, with me being patted on the back, hugged and welcomed by all.

Finally someone got around to asking if I played an instrument.

"Umm, yeah... I play saxophones, the baritone, and a little drums." OK, what kind of band am I getting into that does not have a sax section in it? Oh, drum corps. Brass and drums, flags (how in the world do you 'play' a flag?) and rifles? I decided to play drums.

Now the fun began. I talked with some of the others that had been identified to me as being in the drum line and we were soon headed off to a small storage room to 'make' my drum.

Make my drum? That's right! Make it, build it, put it together like a puzzle. There, piled in the corner of the closet was a number of wooden drum shells of various sizes, a box full of hardware and a small box of tools. The door was closed and we sat on the floor, dumped out the hardware, and began to try to make a matched set of sorts, like some pagan ritual. It was decided that I

would play tenor. Didn't matter to me—I was still trying to sort out what I had gotten myself into. Building my own drum? How do you play flag? Or play rifle? Am I losing my mind?

Someone tossed me a sling, then a mismatched pair of sticks and not long after, we got to work actually constructing a 'drum' from the mismatched parts we had in front of us. Uh-oh, no pliers? Well, *you* try turning a nut with a couple of screwdrivers and a lot of hand tension... it ain't easy. But we got the thing put together. And then... The passing of the key!

That sacred ritual: that became almost our most important function as percussionists. They entrusted one of the few working, non-stripped, undamaged drum keys to a neophyte. I received the offered key with the proper reverence and respect, and slid it into my pocket to guard and protect it till my jeans needed a good washing. A rough tuning completed, we swung open the door, with us all strapped into our slings, we walked (not marched) out of our hallowed sanctuary (read: closet) and presented ourselves to the rest of the corps.

And what could we play on our newly fabricated, mismatched instruments? *Absolutely nothing.* We hadn't the faintest idea of where to start.

Until the horn line told us what song they were going to play, we just made random noises, just to try out our handiwork. Oh, it really wasn't as bad as I make it out to sound—most of us knew the basic rudiments and we showed off a little. And all were duly impressed. §

next issue: 'You want us to play and march?'

Each in their own way tried vainly to explain what Drum Corps was all about, and none of the stories matched. I frowned and shook my head.

Get On the Bus Now!

The Quest for Gold has taken a new direction.
excerpt from DCI Today, Fall 2000

Drum Corps International is excited to announce that there will be not one, not two, but THREE CHAMPIONSHIP events in 2001. The Quest for Gold begins on Saturday, July 21, 2001, as DCI stages the first Championship event west of the Mississippi since the 1991 World Championships. The DCI Southwestern Championships in San Antonio, Texas at the Alamodome will feature ALL of the Division I corps from 2000.

The Quest for Gold continues on Saturday, July 28, 2001. The second Championship event is the DCI Midwestern Championships in Indianapolis, Indiana, at the RCA Dome, and also features ALL of the Division I corps from 2000.

The third and final determining Championship event in the Quest for Gold is the DCI World Championships to be held August 6th through 11th in Buffalo, New York, at the newly renovated Ralph Wilson Stadium, home of the Buffalo Bills. §

Letters From Alumni

Editor's Note: This letter was posted on the Saginares Alumni Association Message Board on Tuesday, December 19, 2000. The author, Masa, is Japanese, and spoke virtually no English when he came to march with Northern Aurora in 1996.

Thanks, Northern Aurora!!!!
from Masahiko Shinohara

Northern Aurora made me what I am today!!!! I was section leader of tenor line in NA96. It was first time to play in drum corp and I had not even played in marching band etc until that so I didn't know anything about marching at that time. Very kindness instructors and members helped me a lot and I learned so many things and I had great time.

Yamato official web site <http://www.yamatodrumcorps.org/>
Masa's home page <http://www.geocities.co.jp/MusicHall/7298/>

I got aged out in 2000. I made the Blue Devils snare in 2000 but unfortunately I broke my arm and couldn't march but I'm so glad I could made. Northern Aurora helped me to make the Blue Devils.

I would like to thank Jon Weber, Chris Thompson, Rich, John, Tracy and Greg for teaching me how to play tenor drum. I also would like to thank Landon Ewers who was section leader of drum line. He helped me to understand rudiment, marching technique, and how I should behave as a section leader. And of course, I would like to thank to all the instructors and member of NA96.

Now I teach drum in Yamato drum and Bugle corps which is the best drum corps in Japan and only drum corps from Japan to play in DCI every year. We got great stuff like Scott Johnson, Jeff Lee, and John Meehan etc.

I will never forget what I learned in Northern Aurora and I will teach NA Spirit in Yamato. Please visit Yamato web site or my home page (everything is written in Japanese but I will try to change). Also please do not hesitate to ask if I can help anything. Thanks NA!!! %

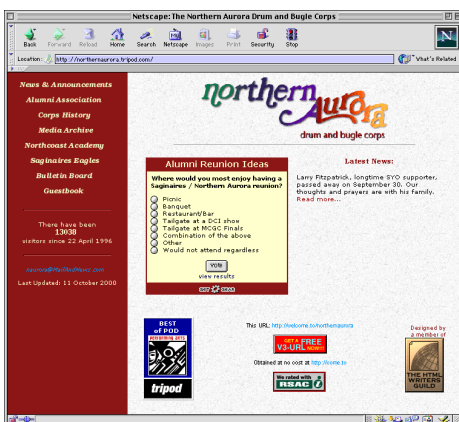


Above: The 1965 Saginares Drum and Bugle Corps, with staff.
Thanks to Grover Clark [colorguard 1974, mellophone 1976-79] for providing this photo.

Attention Saginares Eagles Alumni & Former Staff:

The webmistress would like *you* to submit your photos, videos, repertoires, and stories for a new section of the website devoted to the Saginares Eagles! Several Saginares and Northern Aurora alumni either started out in the Eagles or taught the Eagles. Since many NA alumni have no recollection of what it's like to be in a feeder corps or to have one from which to draw members, we call on you to share your memories with all of us, young and old.

In addition, the website is in need of more photos from the 60's and 70's. There are some photos ready to be added to the site, but we still need more! If you have any photos of the corps in uniform, whether in a show, a parade, or just being candid, contact Diana Cook at di@angelfire.com and we can arrange for your photos to be posted to the Saginares/Northern Aurora website. %



Visit the Northern Aurora website at <http://www.northernaurora.tripod.com> to:

- Learn the latest news about the corps and winterguard
- Contact alumni via the alumni e-mail listing, the guestbook, the bulletin board, or the chat room
- Submit your information so others can contact you
- Join the SAA mailing list to receive the latest information on the SYO ensembles and upcoming alumni gatherings
- View pictures of years past, from 1965 to 2000
- Watch Quicktime videos and listen to audio files

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