



FALL NEWSLETTER

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA[®]

ALABAMA



STATE OF THE MILLION DOLLAR BAND

The 102nd edition of the Million Dollar Band has enjoyed a fantastic season. From the hours on Butler Field during Band Camp to our recent trip to Baton Rouge, it has been an exhilarating three months! The 2014 Million Dollar Band has 416 talented young men and women in

second show featured the music of the iconic American band Earth, Wind and Fire. The show opened with "Got to Get You Into My Life," then one of their best known titles "In the Stone." We closed the show with the popular "September." The show had everyone singing in the stands! For the Mississippi State game, we honored our veterans by



its ranks...keeping in line with our membership over the past 6 to 8 years. Everyone in the band — wind players, percussionists, and members of the auxiliary teams — must audition for membership each spring or summer, and all members of the band must audition each year. Our Pre-Game Show contains a new addition this year with the band forming the famous "Script A" logo during the National Anthem. We are again featuring our "marching elephant" as we perform "Tusk" to bring on the Crimson Tide each home game. We have received many compliments on our halftime show music selections this year. Our first show was centered around dance music, featuring "Dancing Queen" by Abba, "Dancing in the Moonlight" by King Harvest, "Time Warp" from the Rocky Horror Picture Show and "Happy" by Pharrell Williams. Our

performing "Precious Lord, Take My Hand" and "America, the Beautiful." Our third and final show was a fiery, driving Latin show, featuring two all-time favorites "Land of Make Believe" and "Maleguena." It was a musical and visual explosion at the Iron Bowl as we performed the show for the first time!

For the 2014 season, the full band travelled to Atlanta, Georgia for the opening win versus West Virginia University and the traditional full band trips to Knoxville, Tennessee and Baton Rouge, Louisiana. A representative Pep Band attended games in Fayetteville, Arkansas and Oxford, Mississippi. No matter if we have our full contingent of 416 or our Pep Band of 50, the members of the Million Dollar Band are always ready to give their full support to our Crimson Tide and do our part to pave the "Road to 16!" Roll Tide.

BUTLER FIELD TO BE RENOVATED

Improvements to Butler Field over the past 30 years have been few and far between. The first and most significant upgrade was prompted by a visit to Butler Field by Coach Gene Stallings during fall band camp in the early 90s. During one of his annual visits with the MDB, Coach Stallings remarked that the turf on Butler Field was "not in very good shape and in bad need of water." The following year, UA Athletics installed prescription turf like that at Bryant-Denny Stadium, as well as an irrigation system to keep it hydrated. The next upgrade came through the generosity of the Bradford family, whose daughter Morgan played clarinet in the band. The Bradford family owned an electrical business and donated \$30,000 worth of equipment and installation services so that the band could hold rehearsals after dark. The last improvements were made in 2003 when a permanent sound system was installed and stairs were added to the original rehearsal tower. Both staff and visitors no longer had to risk life or limb to climb the vertical ladder to watch the band.

Now we are excited that significant changes are in store for the 2015 season. UA

President Dr. Judy Bonner has announced that she will finance a complete overhaul of Butler Field. Improvements will include artificial turf on the field, a new lighting system, and a new rehearsal tower. Dr. Ozzello and UA construction officials have met several times with various artificial turf manufacturers and installers to determine the best options for the new field. Several innovations have been made in the artificial turf industry, including ways to combat the high temperatures usually associated with these types of surfaces. Some manufacturers include hydration systems while others use industrial cork fillers to lower the ambient temperature of the surface by 15-20 degrees.

These improvements to Butler Field will be extremely helpful to the MDB. In recent years, drainage has become such a significant problem that the band has been forced to hold rehearsals off campus on several occasions. The staff and students of the MDB are extremely grateful to Dr. Bonner for this upgrade. Construction is scheduled to begin in January, 2015. The next time you visit Butler Field, you just might want to pluck a few blades of grass for posterity's sake, but be careful to avoid the fire ants.



MDB GOES PINK FOR THE CAUSE

Crimson Tide fans know from a very early age that October is time for The University of Alabama's annual rivalry game with The University of Tennessee. Million Dollar Band members know the same as rehearsals become a bit more intense and the days leading up to the third Saturday in October bring with them cooler afternoons and earlier sunsets. But this October of 2014 was different. This October brought with it for the first time the Million Dollar Band's commitment to recognizing October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. It all began this past July with band and bass drum section member, Barrett Elder, inquiring about the

Flum that his wife was a breast cancer survivor and that he thought the pink script "A" was a "great idea." From Barrett Elder's initial request, the pink-bass drum-head idea developed further into the percussion section placing pink ribbons on the front of their drums, taping their sticks pink, the cymbals taping their straps pink, and the rest of the band joining in as all of the wind players wore pink gloves for the October games. Anna Davis, a cymbal section member, even went so far as to color a small section of her hair pink, doing so after the cymbal section asked what they could do to recognize breast cancer awareness month and Neal Flum jokingly replied, "You could all color your hair pink."



possibility of the bass drums having their drumheads customized to have the script "A," synonymous with Crimson Tide athletics, made pink, the color used by the Susan G. Komen Foundation for breast cancer awareness. Typically, the script "A" on the bass drum heads is crimson. One of the assistant directors of the marching band and director of the percussion section, Neal Flum, contacted Remo, the company that produces the drumheads used by the University band, and inquired about the possibility of customizing the bass drum heads. The request was met with an enthusiastic "yes," by Brock Kaericher and Bruce Jacoby of Remo. Since the Pearl drums logo is also on the bass drumheads, an email was sent to Steve Armstrong of the Pearl Corporation and he responded very quickly with a "yes" sharing with Neal

For the past three years, the Million Dollar Band has sent a pep band to perform at the Manderson Cancer Center's "Just for You Day," which honors cancer survivors. Before each of these performances, Dr. Ozzello asked the band "How many of you have been affected by cancer?" A lot of hands were raised. This October all of the drumline members held sticks and mallets taped pink and all of the wind players in the band donned pink gloves on their hands—the same hands that acknowledged that cancer has affected so many of us. Next October, look for the pink bass drum heads and the Million Dollar Band's continuing commitment to breast cancer awareness. And remember, "A" not only stands for Alabama; it also stands for "Always" vigilant in the fight against cancer.

CHRIS HAINSEY AWARD INSPIRES YEARS OF MEMBERSHIP

When Dr. Ozzello became director of the Million Dollar Band in 2002, Chris Hainsey was seemingly just another member — always participating, never complaining and sharing a positive attitude with his fellow members. By the time he joined the band, though, Chris had already been diagnosed with brain cancer and was in remission. Originally from Columbus, Mississippi, he was a remarkable young man during his time at The University of Alabama. Chris was resilient and he encouraged, supported and lifted up those around him at all times — he was the ultimate team player.

Unfortunately, after a relapse of brain cancer later in his time with the band, he was forced to leave UA and return home for treatment. Dr. Ozzello said the leadership team actually went to visit him at his home in Mississippi during their summer retreat. He said his parents helped plan the visit and even a special performance of "Yea, Alabama!" for Chris. It was a testament to how much the members of the band loved and supported him through such difficult times.

Chris passed away in the fall of 2005 after years of battling brain cancer. Soon after, his parents and other members of the band wished to establish a memorial scholarship fund in his honor. The first Chris Hainsey Award was presented that year and has been given to at least one individual in the band ever since. It was Dr. Ozzello who initially suggested that the award could also honor a particular individual.

"Chris always participated like everyone else and never complained about his situation," Dr. Ozzello said. "Because he had to work through struggles and never complained about it, we find someone in a similar situation."

Last year's winner of the Chris Hainsey Award was Jonathan Eagerton, a senior from Hoover, Alabama and one of the trumpet section leaders. Eagerton said he feels incredibly honored to be a recipient of the award. "I can remember hearing the

stories of the recipients from my first three years in band and being inspired by the obstacles they may have had to overcome to even participate in band," Eagerton said. "I remember being a part of this team alongside them and the example they set in their work ethic and attitude."

Eagerton said that each year's recipient was always someone he looked up to and tried to emulate. This select group of people had an impact. His inspiration to stay in band was this community he found himself invested in during his first year as a member.

"When the upperclassmen surrounded us freshmen and sang the Alma Mater arm-in-arm around us, I knew that I had found a family that I could count on for the next four years," Eagerton said.

To be considered for the award, members must be nominated by their peers and demonstrate "a persistent and outstanding work ethic," as well as "the highest level of integrity, character, sportsmanship and sense of team." Recipients are individuals who engage themselves in the band with great passion, dedication and commitment.

"It's people that put the needs of the organization over their own personal needs," Dr. Ozzello said. "Individuals that buy into the mission of the program and generally improve a student's experience at UA."

Dr. Ozzello said he still frequently hears from most award recipients and that people are still contributing to the memorial fund today, which provides scholarships to award recipients. He said it's essentially the only award given in the Million Dollar Band, due to the team activity. Nominations for this year's award have already been submitted, and the award will be presented at our annual banquet in December.

"It's very special," Dr. Ozzello said. "There's no award more valuable than one voted on by your peers."

ALABAMA AND AUBURN: THE BOND BETWEEN

Typically when raised in the South, allegiance to a particular college football team is decided very early in life. Two of the Million Dollar Band's graduate teaching staff, Emily Gray and Kaitlyn Traylor, were born in Alabama and raised as Auburn fans. For years, they had known which college they wanted to attend. Both pursued Music Education degrees from Auburn and graduated this past year. They enjoyed their experiences with the Auburn University Marching Band and the numerous other ensembles in which they participated. When considering graduate programs, they wanted to choose a school that would have the same level of love and dedication

to its program and students. They decided The University of Alabama was a perfect fit!

After being accepted into the graduate program at UA and earning graduate teaching assistantships, they were given the opportunity to work on the staff of The Million Dollar Band. But they were immediately challenged with one question: "How would they deal with the Iron Bowl?" They actually embraced the inquiry and responded that last year they cheered for Auburn, and this year they support the Crimson Tide. Their love for the band activity and music education transcended allegiance to a particular team.

The pair point out that all college marching bands have similar goals: to perform entertaining shows at a high level, to boost the morale

and motivate their teams, and to serve as great ambassadors for their university. They believe the Million Dollar Band definitely encompasses those goals. They have found that the students and staff of the MDB are hard-working people who are enthusiastic about performing and constantly setting higher goals of achievement for themselves and their program. They feel like they could not have made a better choice than to attend The University of Alabama and are honored to have the opportunity to work with such a great group of students that make up The Million Dollar Band. Both Emily and Kaitlyn say that the directors, staff and students have taught them one important lesson: music education and band transcends all.

DRUM ROLL, PLEASE, AS THE FRIENDS OF THE MILLION DOLLAR BAND KICKS OFF

A new organization for the support and promotion of the Million Dollar Band will kick off January 1, 2015 and hold its first meeting in April 2015. The Friends of the Million Dollar Band, which will be part of The University of Alabama, College of Arts and Sciences, and the School of Music, was formed following conversations with the officers of the independent Million Dollar Band Association and MDB alumni and friends over a two year period.

"After much consultation and planning with community leaders and band officers and constituents, I'm pleased to announce the beginning of the Friends of the Million Dollar Band at The University of Alabama. This organization will have new advantages for its activities, such as access to College and University resources for managing the promotional, organizational, accounting and financial business of this support group. The organization will also inherit and carry forward the enthusiasm, dedication and impressive performances of the alumni of the Million Dollar Band, certainly one of the most dynamic and respected groups of alumni at the University," said Dr. Robert Olin, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The mission of the Friends is to actively assist,

support and promote the Million Dollar Band. Specific goals and objectives include: to assist in the recruitment of students to the band; to assist the College in securing financial resources for scholarships; to coordinate, market and implement the annual Alumni Band weekend; to function as an advocacy group for the band and UA; and to provide advice to the Dean on matters related to the Million Dollar Band.

Membership is open to individuals who support the objectives of the organization, meet the membership financial commitment, and actively participate in the organization's activities. Membership in the Friends will be \$100 for the first year of operation and includes the opportunity to play in the Alumni Band each year. MDB alumni who do not join the Friends may also continue to play in the Alumni Band for a donation of \$35. Gifts will fund the Friends of the Million Dollar Band account at The University of Alabama, which will be used to support the MDB.

By-laws will be formalized and officers elected at an April 2015 meeting. Officers will preside at meetings and facilitate the business of the organization. Nominees for office are currently being developed by a nominating committee comprised of community leaders.

"We are grateful to the leaders and alumni of the Million Dollar Band who worked with care and dedication to help develop a vision for the Friends of the Million Dollar Band that we trust will continue and expand the valued traditions and support of the Million Dollar Band alumni," Olin said.

"We are excited about the inauguration of the Friends of the Million Dollar Band and look forward to active participation of many MDB alumni and others who love the band. Our goal is to support the band to attract talented students to maintain its longstanding tradition of excellence both on and off the field," said Dr. Ken Ozzello, professor of music and director of the Million Dollar Band.

Please consider joining this effort to support our beloved Million Dollar Band. Joining is easy—simply visit the University's website at onlinegiving.ua.edu to make your gift of \$100 to the Friends of the MDB. Or gifts can be mailed to: Friends of the Million Dollar Band, Box 870368 Tuscaloosa, AL 35487. Your check should be made payable to The University of Alabama with a notation that your gift is for the MDB.

Watch your mailbox in January for further details about membership in the Friends of the MDB.

FINDING A BALANCE

The decision to return to graduate school leaving a full-time, well-paying job can be a difficult choice, especially with all the questions one might receive. Why quit teaching? What school are you attending? What are the responsibilities of a GTA? Danielle Todd is a current graduate staff member with the band. Here, she gives her perspective on the role of a GTA with the Million Dollar Band.

Since my decision to work on my Ph.D. at The University of Alabama, I have heard these questions and dozens more. They are ongoing no matter how long you have been pursuing the degree. However, among those who ask, a few remain who can see the obvious. With a championship football team, the opportunity to work with the nationally known "Million Dollar Band," and the vast array of opportunities available to students attending The University of



Alabama, accepting a graduate teaching assistantship to work with the band is a no brainer. Free Games! Free Trips! No responsibility like in the 'real' world! You are the envy of everyone! Right? Almost!

Graduate Teaching Assistantships are full of fun opportunities but in reality; but, in reality, it's a job in

exchange for the opportunity to further your education. The job comes with responsibilities, deadlines and daily tasks requiring a large commitment similar to those of a public school band director. In fact, as a GTA, I teach classes serving as course instructor, ensemble conductor and class teaching assistant. With the UA marching band three other full-time GTAs and I serve as an extra set of ears, eyes and hands to complete required tasks for the 416 marching members of the "Million Dollar Band."

However, in addition to the obvious fun times and GTA responsibilities, I attend classes, explore research, and complete coursework for my degree program. The ultimate challenge is finding the perfect balance—the time to complete the tasks required of a GTA while also successfully fulfilling the role of a doctoral student. The hours are lengthy, the job is time-consuming and the sacrifices are many, but in the end it is a once in a lifetime experience like no other.

UA'S MILLION DOLLAR BAND OFFERS COMPREHENSIVE COLORGUARD PROGRAM



The combination of the Million Dollar Band's colorguard and its winter guard, Alta Marea, offers students a unique experience not matched by many other universities. Crimson Tide fans see the Million Dollar Band Colorguard's dazzling visual routines on Saturdays at Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa during football season. Then during the spring semester of each year, Alta Marea takes to the road to travel throughout the Southeast and Midwest to compete against other winter guard ensembles, a trip that culminates in a final stop at the world championship competition held in Dayton, Ohio and sponsored by Winter Guard International.

Both groups are comprised of over forty young women who earn mem-

bership through a challenging and competitive audition process held each spring. Like any activity, one of the keys to success is recruiting the most talented team members. The colorguard program is able to attract students nationally because The University of Alabama affords them a world-class education and the opportunity to continue their involvement in the colorguard activity beyond performing with the Million Dollar Band.

While both groups have earned excellent reputations as performers, that does not begin to account for the more important life lessons they experience. A focus of the program is to develop students who have great self-discipline and who are goal-oriented individuals of great character and integrity. Ultimately, the colorguard program will have provided young women with valuable skills that will empower them for success in their lives beyond their university experience. These young women are wonderful ambassadors for The University of Alabama, and the program serves as an important recruiting tool to attract some of the best and brightest women to the Capstone.



NEW TECHNOLOGY ON BUTLER FIELD

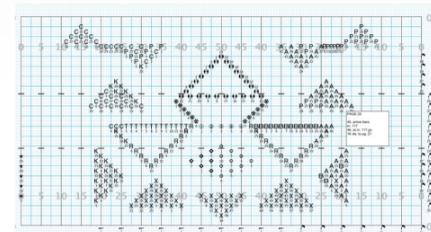


As technology continues to permeate our lives in the twenty-first century, it has become a useful tool in educational settings, including on the marching band field. Since the late nineties, the drill or the visual marching component of the Million Dollar Band's performance has been created

with drill writing software known as Pyware. This software has made it possible to create shapes and formations in a fraction of the time that it formerly took to draw and label each band member on paper by hand with tools such as compasses, rulers and protractors. Pyware also made it possible for drill writers to preview animation of the movements that they created in order to avoid potential collisions or difficulties before teaching the drill on the field. During the 2014 season, it is now possible for the animation to be viewed by staff members and students on Butler Field during any Million Dollar Band rehearsal using an application called Drill Book Next. After the drill is written, it is uploaded to the app for view-

ing through password protection. All staff members and graduate teaching assistants have been provided iPads this year so they can easily view the animation and aid in the teaching process. They are also able to zoom in to view individually labeled dots for each student. Many MDB members have also been utilizing the app on their personal tablets or smart phones. This allows them to view their own animation in addition to zooming in to better see their individual dot. However, many students must still rely on the traditional paper drill, which can often be difficult to read as it is only a half page in size. These students rely on staff members for access to the app so they can better understand their drill maneuvers. Graduate teaching

assistants have also been able to utilize their iPads to videotape portions of rehearsal. These videos can then be shown to students in order to critique and improve their performance. By having more continued access to technological devices, such as the iPad, the Million Dollar Band can have more efficient and productive rehearsals in the hopes of creating even more innovative and exciting visual performances.



"THE MORE YOU GIVE, THE MORE YOU GET"

The title well may be the unofficial credo of the Million Dollar Band. When it comes to giving, marching band members not only give their time at rehearsals, performances and away-game trips, but they also enthusiastically participate in outreach activities that instill in them the importance of giving their time to others. Each fall, in addition to the many hours band members spend preparing for their football-Saturday responsibilities, they engage in community outreach. By the time the committee for the college football play-off announces its finalists for the 2014 National Championship, Million Dollar Band members will have performed for the RISE School, The Manderson Cancer Center, the Good Samaritan Clinic, the March of Dimes, Better Relations Day and the Capstone Retirement Village.

As Franny Jones, assistant director of the RISE School says, "Seeing the band marching down the hall gives us chill bumps. Being able to interact with members of the Million Dollar Band gives our students such joy, especially for some who, because of their challenges, might not be able to actually attend a game and see the Million Dollar Band perform." Giving of their time to others is not limited to formal performance events. Million Dollar Band members can frequently be seen interacting with children and adults alike wherever the band assembles, sharing with them their passion and respect for what it means to be a member of the University Marching Band and a student at The University of Alabama. More than being band students, members of the Million Dollar Band are, as

every itinerary for home and away-games reminds them, ". . . ambassadors for the University."

That perspective of band being more than band is consistently a part of Dr. Ken Ozzello's approach to teaching. To his way of thinking, band is more than drill dots, notes on a page and playing cheers at a football game. It is about the life skills that can be imparted to band members and the ways in which they can serve others themselves and through music. There's an old saying that reminds us that worship does not end when the service does. For students of the Million Dollar Band, band does not end when rehearsal ends, but continues on in the spirit of giving that is as much a part of the marching band identity as "Yea, Alabama" is for Crimson Tide football.

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