



**The Teaching Career of  
Warren Thaxton**

## Warren Thaxton

Warren G. Thaxton, son of LeRoy and Razzie Thaxton, was born April 21, 1932, in Abilene, Texas. He has lived in Abilene most of his life.

During his school years in Abilene, Warren began playing trombone in the sixth grade band at South Junior High School. He was then in the Abilene High School band under Prof. Raymond Bynum and Mr. Bob Fielder.

In 1948, Warren finished high school and entered Hardin Simmons University, where he was a member of the Cowboy Band. In 1950, during the Korean War, he joined the Air Force and played trombone in the 669<sup>th</sup> Air Force Band stationed at Goodfellow Air Force Base, San Angelo, Texas. In 1953, Warren was discharged from the service, and he again entered Hardin Simmons, where in 1955, he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Bachelor of Music degree.

Warren was hired to begin a band program in Trent, Texas. He remained at Trent for two years. In July of 1957, he became the Junior High School Band Director in Colorado City, Texas. Here he worked with Dwight Tomb. He remained in this capacity for three years. His band made first divisions, two of these three years. In 1958 he received a Masters Degree from Southern College of Fine Arts.

In 1960, he became Band Director in Breckenridge, Texas, for one year before coming to Abilene in 1961. He became the first Band Director of the newly completed Madison Junior High School. While at Madison, his bands won a First Division all but one year during his five years tenure. In 1966, he moved to Cooper High School. While at Cooper, the bands went from one band of approximately 100 students, to two large bands, with programs containing twice as many members. After the third year, the band began winning Sweepstakes, and continued achieving Sweepstakes, as long as he was their director. In 1977, not only did he take the Cooper Band to contest, but he also took the Sophomore Band. This band also continued with Sweepstakes records. During Warren's tenure as Cooper Director, he did not have the help of assistants. In 1979, the Abilene Schools decided to add two assistant directors for each High School. Warren chose to become the assistant at Abilene High School, where he worked with Bill Spencer the first year.

From 1979 until 1997, his duties were to assist other directors. He helped at Abilene High School and then taught beginning students in many of the Middle Schools of Abilene.

Warren is married to Laura McBeth Thaxton. They live in Abilene and have two sons, Eric and Kirk Thaxton. His first child, Tamara Lynn Thaxton, died

in 1970. All three children were involved in music. He now has five grandchildren, and his oldest grandson, plays in the Wylie Middle School Band.

During his career, he has started hundreds of students on instruments. Many of these have gone on to become Band Directors or play professionally.

Warren has played trombone for over 50 years and regularly plays professionally. He has taught in Band Schools at McMurry College, Abilene Christian University and Angelo State University. He has been a member of the Musicians Union since 1962. He has played for ice shows, circuses, and many other road shows that have come to Abilene. He played with the Abilene Philharmonic Orchestra for many years. He now plays with B.A. Waldrop and his dance band, and the Abilene Community Band. He plays for churches and anyone else who asks for his services.

Warren retired from the School System in 1997, after 42 years of teaching. He still is an often used judge at many U.I.L. contests. Many of the directors in Abilene call on him to help work with students before Solo and Ensemble Contest. Warren will always be involved with bands and band music.

# **First Teaching Position:**

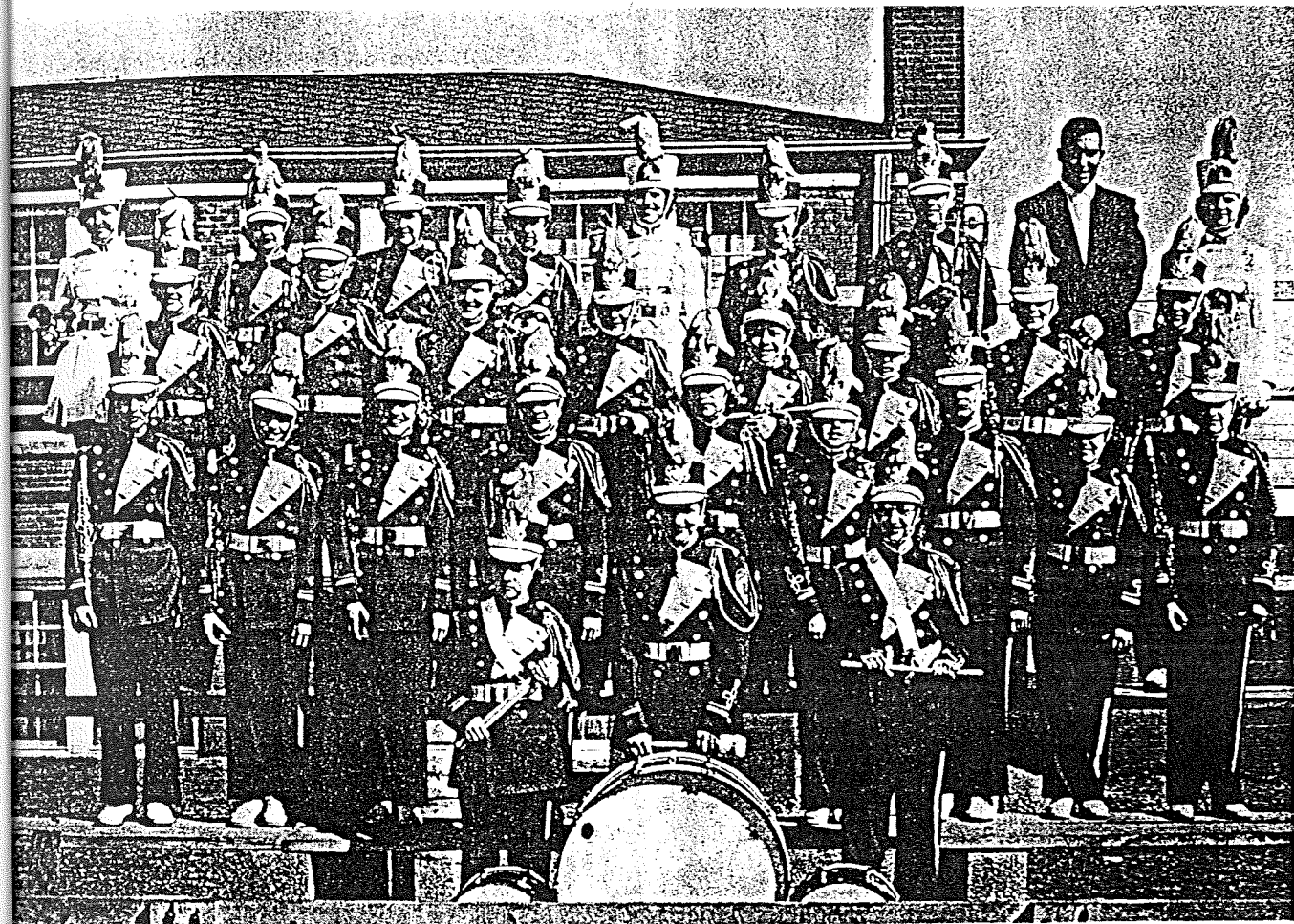
**Trent High School  
Trent, Texas**

**1955 – 1956**

**1956 - 1957**



First year at Trent, Texas



Second Year at Trent, Texas

## **Second Teaching Position:**

**Colorado City Junior High School  
Colorado City, Texas**

**1957 – 1958**

**1958 – 1959**

**1959 - 1960**

# Top Trophy to Jr. High Band

Colorado Junior High band organization won the sight reading trophy with the best performance among Class C bands playing two selections

They earned the award Saturday with first place in sight reading in the Class C division of the sixth annual Sweetwater Band Festival.

The 70-member Junior High band was No. 2 behind the first place winner, Snyder Junior High.

Colorado Junior High did not enter marching, which also was won by Snyder Junior High.

Directors Dwight Tomb and Warren Thaxton said they were especially pleased with Colorado Junior High's champion performance in sight reading. That is because sight reading competition reveals the band's potential more than the playing concert selections which have been practiced sometimes for months.

Judges for the Sweetwater festival, which included 20 high school and junior high bands in various divisions, were James Neilson of Oklahoma State University, Pat Arsen of Alamo Heights High in San Antonio; Irving Dreibrod, director of Southern Methodist University's marching band, and Gene Stuchbery, director of Pasadena High band.

Colorado High Wolf Band did not compete in the festival. Next competition for the musicians will be solo and ensemble contests April 4 in Abilene.

Interscholastic League Band Festival is scheduled May 1 and 2 in San Angelo.

12 PAGES

COLORADO CITY, TEXA



## Congratulations, Champ!

Len Northcutt and Ann Sellier happily congratulate each other for the first place trophy Colorado Junior High Band won Saturday in sight reading competition in Sweetwater Band Festival. Northcutt is president of the band and Miss Sellier is a stellar oboe player.



## IN REGIONAL MEET

# Top Ratings For Junior High Band

Colorado City Junior High Band scored the highest possible Friday in Texas Interscholastic League competition in San Angelo.

The band, directed by Warren Thaxton, earned No. 1 rating in concert and sight reading.

Two members of the band — Gary Gresham and Arla Jo Payne — received the same No. 1 rating, too, for student conducting.

Colorado City and Lamar Junior High of Snyder were the only bands in the Class C competition scoring No. 1 ratings. Like the locals, Lamar also had No. 1 in both concert and sight reading.

Five other bands in the Class C Competition were Dublin Junior High, 3 for concert and 4 for sight reading; Hamlin Junior High, 2 for concert and 2 for sight; Mason Junior High, 3 for concert and 2 for sight; Wingate Junior High, 3 for concert and 2 for sight; Travis Junior High of Snyder, 2 for concert and 2 for sight.

Seventy students composed the Junior High band for the regional competition. They played at 4 p. m.

Colorado City High Wolf Band, rushing for double duty during the day, received No.

## BAND

Continued from page 1

3 rating in marching, concert and sight reading.

The senior band played Friday morning, then hurried back to Colorado City in time for the Tumbleweed Festival parade at 2:30 p. m.

Other rankings for AAA high school band competition were: Lake View, 3 for marching, 2 for concert and 1 for sight; Newman High of Sweetwater, 1 for marching, 3 for concert and 1 for sight; Snyder High, 1 for all three.

## JUNIOR HIGH BAND EARNS TOP RATING

Colorado City Junior High Band entered two divisions of University Interscholastic League competition Friday in San Angelo and won superior ratings in both.

The superior of No. 1 ratings were earned in concert and sight reading.

Uniformed band members traveled to San Angelo in buses with Dwight Tomb and Warren Thaxton. They left in the morning and returned in late evening.

As junior high musicians, the band competed in the

Class C competition with judging on the basis of performance standard, not band against band.

Only other band earning No. 1 rating in Class C was Snyder Junior High, which gained superior rating in concert, sight reading and marching.

Wingate Junior High was No. 2 in concert and No. 3 in sight reading. Dublin Junior High was No. 3 in both concert and sight reading.



**All-State Band Member, Instructors**

Michael Dorn, French horn player chosen as a member of the All-State Band, receives valuable instructions for the forthcoming band event in Galveston from band directors, Warren G. Thaxton, left, and Dwight H. Tomb.

## Michael Dorn Receives Band Honor

Michael Dorn, son of Mr. and Mrs. Landon Dorn, was chosen as a member of the All-State Band, which will play in Galveston Feb. 19 through Feb. 21.

Dorn, a senior student at Colorado High School, was selected as a member of the All-State Band, to represent Region II, at a recent band clinic in Abilene at McMurry College.

Dorn, who plays the French horn, has been a member of the CHS Band since he entered high school.

Dorn's band career began back in grade school when he played a trumpet. In about the sixth grade he changed musical instruments, and has played the French horn since that time.

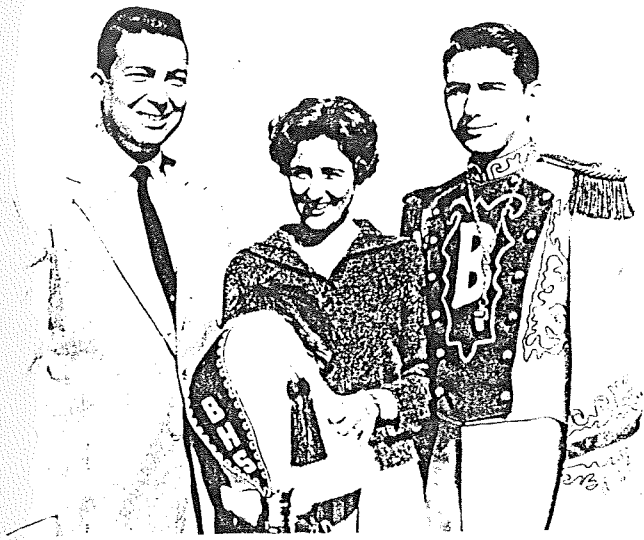
In addition to his regular band instructions at CHS from Dwight H. Tomb, high school band director, he has been taking private lessons from Warren G. Thaxton, associate band director for the past year.

Dorn was also named a CHS Favorite — Boy Most Likely to Succeed — during Howl Night Ceremonies recently at the school.

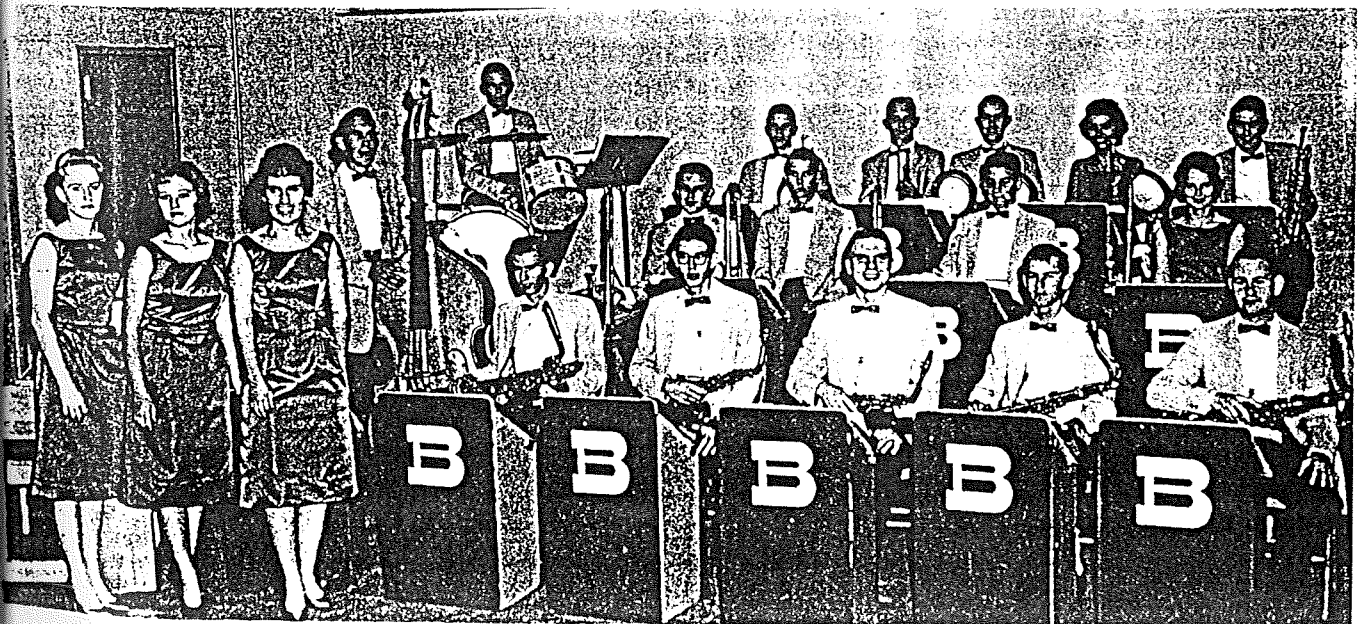
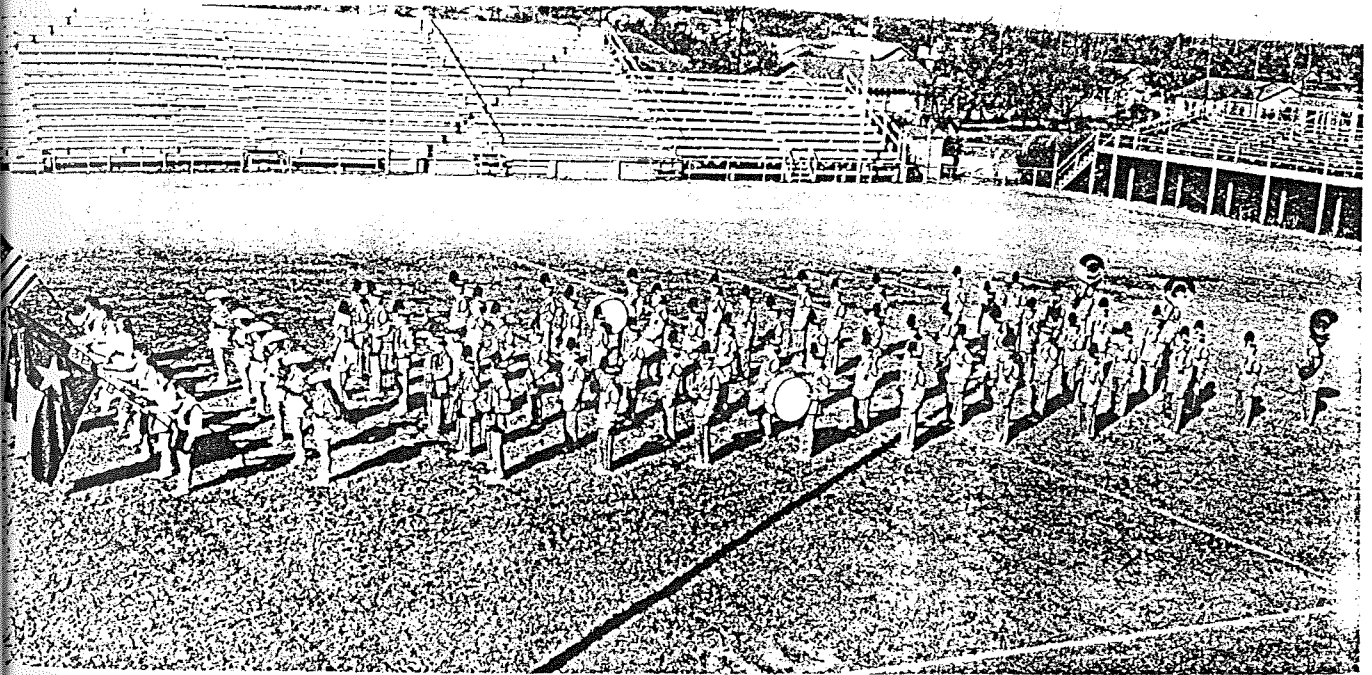
## **Third Teaching Position:**

**Breckenridge High School  
Breckenridge, Texas**

**1960 – 1961**



Breckenridge Band



LORAINÉ'S NEWMAN HERE

# Thaxton to Director's Post in Breckenridge

Warren Thaxton has resigned as Colorado City Junior High band director to become director of bands for Breckenridge public schools.

Tabbed to succeed him here is Bob Newman, band director at Loraine High for the last 4 years; according to Supt. Frank Wilson.

Newman's appointment, however, is subject to official approval Monday night by Colorado Independent School District's board of trustees.

Continuing here as Colorado High band director and head of the public schools band program is Dwight Tomb.

Tomb and Thaxton have teamed together in recent years to develop the finest

public school band program in Colorado City's history. Their development program begins in Hutchinson Elementary School, progresses through Junior High and High School.

Thaxton plans to move to Breckenridge about Aug. 1 with Mrs. Thaxton and their 2 children. He will arrive there in time to begin band rehearsals 2 weeks before the opening of the fall term.

A graduate of Hardin-Simmons University with a master's degree, Thaxton was high school band director in Trent for 2 years before joining the local schools staff 3 years ago. He organized the Trent band.

In addition to his director's duties here, Thaxton has played professionally with San Angelo Orchestra, the VFW Band in Abilene and other musical groups.

Newman is a graduate of McMurry College who has received recognition for his band development program at Loraine during the last 4 years. Prior to accepting the director's post at Loraine, he was with the school staff in Roby.

Newman has worked closely with Tomb and Thaxton in various band activities. During the summers of 1959 and 1958 he was associated with the pair in the Colorado City school's summer band school.

## Meet The New H. S. Band Director

Band practice will open tomorrow, and the new Breckenridge band director, Warren G. Thaxton has issued a call for all candidates



WARREN THAXTON

to be on hand at 8 o'clock in the band room. Practice will continue each day from 8 until 10 o'clock until school starts.

The new Breckenridge director, who succeeds Jim Campbell, comes here from Colorado City where he was band director, and prior to going there organized the band at Trent.

Thaxton is a graduate of the Abilene High School, where he played with the Eagles band, holds B. S. and B. M. degrees from Hardin-Simmons, and a Master of Music Education degree from the College of Fine Arts at Houston.

He plays the trombone and, besides the Eagles, has played with the Cowboy Band of Hardin-Simmons; with the Air Force Band during the Korean War; and for six years played with the San Angelo Symphony Orchestra.

Thaxton was reared at Sweetwater. He married the former Laura McBeth in Irving in 1952, and the two have two children, Eric 13 and Tamara 5. The couple resides at 305 South Harding street. Mrs. Thaxton formerly was a school teacher.

## BUCKAROO BAND

- Totem Pole (Concert March) ..... Osterling
- Brigadoon ..... Gordon-Loewe
- Tropical Trumpets ..... Leidzen-Lengsfelder  
Trumpet Trio: Johnice Brannan, Lyndon Latham, Ben  
Frank McMahan
- Timpat ..... Leist  
Timpani Solo: Nolan Kelley
- Caribeguine ..... Schaefer
- A Study In Lavender ..... Osterling
- Italian Festival ..... Osser
- Cabo Yubi ..... Smedvig
- Concerto In Jazz ..... Lang-Phillips  
Piano Solo: Johnice Brannan

## JUNIOR BAND

- Sky Pilot March ..... Cannan
- Little Irish Suite ..... Jackson
- Hansel and Gretel Overture ..... arr. Erickson
- Dry Bones ..... arr. Vincent
- When the Saints Go Marchin' In ..... arr. Ortone

## BUCKAROO STAGE BAND

- Bill's Idea ..... Loveall  
Solo by Johnice Brannan, trumpet
- Sophisticated Lady ..... arr. Farris  
Solos: Bill Rogers, alto sax; Bob Magers, tenor sax;  
and Johnny Creager, tenor sax
- Ol' Man River ..... arr. Warrington  
Solo by Ronnie Fields, vocalist
- In A Pensive Mood ..... Whitford  
Piano solo by Sandra Hudlow
- Opus In Turquoise ..... Roland  
Solos by Hank Black, trombone; Johnnie Creager, tenor  
sax; and Nolan Kelly, drums
- I'll Remember April ..... arr. Osser  
Solo by Betty Ann Brewer, vocalist
- Toll Road ..... Seibert  
Solos by Wayne Broyles, bass; Lyndon Latham,  
trumpet; and Johnnie Creager, tenor sax

Spring Concert  
April 20, 1961

Breckenridge High School  
Breckenridge, Texas

# **Fourth Teaching Position:**

**Madison Junior High School  
Abilene, Texas**

**1961 – 1962**

**1962 – 1963**

**1963 – 1864**

**1964 – 1965**

**1965 – 1966**



Madison Junior High School Band  
Dyess Air Force Base  
November 16, 1962



# 500 Participate In Music Contest

Approximately 500 entries from 23 junior high school and high schools took part in the University Interscholastic League Instrumental Solo and Ensemble Contest for Region VI (Eastern) at McMurry College Saturday.

The area covered by Region VI (Eastern) is roughly that of the Big Country.

Raymond T. Bynum and the McMurry Band were hosts for the contest. Byron Gray was the contest chairman.

All those who received a rating of 1 in Class 1 will be eligible to compete in the state finals in Austin in June.

Class 1 entries who received a rating of 1 include:

Terry Bird, baritone solo; Richard Pickett, trombone solo; Doris Everts, alto sax solo and sax quartet; Reba Jackson, alto sax solo; Reba Jackson, sax quartet; Kaye Turner, timpani solo; Gordon Gray, snare drum solo; Greg Carter, snare drum solo; Randall Curtis, snare drum solo; Billy Jay, snare drum solo; Cherry Barlow, drum solo; Cherry Barlow, snare drum solo; Jimmy Davis, woodwind quintet; Sharon Townley, clarinet quartet; Steve Owens, clarinet solo; Betsy Pepper, flute solo; Jimmy Davis, flute solo; Judy Voelkel, clarinet solo.

Also Janey Orms, clarinet solo; Jan Williamson, clarinet solo; Cheryl Foster, clarinet solo; Paul Tipton, clarinet solo; Mike Aston, French horn solo; Grady Waddell, French horn solo; Barry Owens, French horn solo; David Hale, French horn solo; Pat Perrin, French horn quartet; Larry Williams, trombone solo; Max Mearse, French horn quartet; Perry Combs, viola; Tamara Thaxton, French horn solo; Nelda Harshberber, French horn solo; Grady Waddell, French horn solo.

Also Kerry Kimbrough, cornet solo; John Thomas, brass sextet No. 1; Robert Manly, cornet quartet; Nancy Williams, cornet solo; David Tullis, tuba solo; Roy Bartels, baritone solo; Bruce Kenner, tuba solo; C.A. Jenkins, brass solo; Jerry Tate, trombone solo; Susan Carothers, baritone solo; Danny Proctor, baritone solo; Norman George, baritone solo; Jeff Boggs, woodwind quintet; Vikki Gilchrest, cello trio; Robert Hale, sax quartet; Guy Gamble, sax quartet.

## FOR UIL EVENT

# 3,000 Bandsmen 'Ignore' Weather

Bandsmen are every bit as sturdy as postmen and they proved it again Saturday when 52 bands and about 3,000 students competed in Region II University Interscholastic League marching contests despite cold, windy and wet weather.

Performing in Fair Park Stadium, the bandsmen did not compete against each other, but against a standard rating.

Contest director Warren Thaxton, Madison Junior High Band director, said the marching ratings will be figured with the concert and sight reading ratings in contests next April in San Angelo to determine trophy winners.

Judges of marching Saturday were Dr. Ted Crager of West Texas State College, Fred Junkin of Victoria and Don Leavitt of Abilene. Richard Thompson of Kermit was inspection judge. Tearing was judged by Mr. and Mrs. R.H. Woodward Jr. of Fort Worth, Bill Woods of Levelland, Fred Smith of Brownfield and William T. Postlethwaite of Arlington.

In marching, top ratings of 1 went to all three Class AAAA bands competing, Abilene High, Cooper of Abilene and San Angelo Central; to Colorado City, Snyder and Sweetwater Newman in AAA; Cisco, Ballinger, Comanche, Haskell, Stamford, Winters and Hamlin in AA; Roscoe, Eastland,

Cross Plains, Ozona in A; Roby and Loraine in B; Lamar and Travis Junior Highs of Snyder in CC; and Madison (Abilene), Lincoln (Abilene), Mann (Abilene), and Lee (San Angelo) in CCC.

II ratings went to: AAA — Stephenville, and Lake View (San Angelo). AA — Brady, Coleman and Mason. A — Ranger, Baird and Santa Anna. B — Rochester and Bronte. C — Lake View Junior (San Angelo), OCC — Reagan Junior (Sweetwater) and Edison Junior (San Angelo).

III ratings: AAA — Brownwood, AA — Hamilton, DeLeon. A — Rotan, Mentel, Eldorado, Goldthwaite, Albany. B — Moran. OCC — Franklin Junior (Abilene), Jefferson Junior (Abilene).

IV ratings: B — Trent. V ratings: B — Menard and Rising Star.

Contest director Thaxton said compiling individual ratings on the more than 300 players and majorettes was a virtually impossible task and that such listings were not available.

# Six Bands Share UIL Sweepstakes

SAN ANGELO — Bands from Abilene, San Angelo, Sweetwater and Snyder won sweepstakes titles Friday in the regional Interscholastic League music competition here.

San Angelo Central, Snyder and Sweetwater's Newman high school bands won sweepstakes awards with I ratings in marching, concert, and sight reading.

Sweepstakes winners in junior high competition, with I ratings in the same three contests, were Madison and Lincoln of Abilene and Robert E. Lee of San Angelo.

In high school competition, Abilene and Cooper Highs both got ratings of I in marching, II in concert, and I in sight reading.

Partial results of student conductors ratings:

Madison — Gail Carter I, Rusty Turner II.

Jefferson — Tommy Swindel II, Barry Brock I.

Colorado City Junior High — David Feaster II, Carol Cooper I; Gery Gresham I, Arla Jo Hayne I.

Stephenville — Byron Walters II.

Results of band contests (rating, marching, concert and sight reading in that order:

#### Junior High

Abilene Lincoln, I, I, I; Abilene Madison, I,I,I; San Angelo Lee, I,I,I; Abilene Mann, I,I,I; Abilene Franklin, III,II,II; Abilene Jefferson, III, III, II; San Angelo Lakeview, II, III, II; San Angelo Edison, II, I, I; San Angelo Reagan, II, II, III; Mason, no rating, II,II; Hamlin, no rating, I,I; Colorado City, no rating, I,I,I; Snyder Travis, I,I,II; San Angelo Lamar, I, I,I; Brownwood, no rating, III,III.

#### High School

San Angelo Lakeview, II,II,III; Colorado City, I,I,I,I; Stephenville, II,III,III; Breckenridge, no rating, III, IV; Brownwood, III,III,III; San Angelo Central I, I,I; Snyder, I,I,0; Sweetwater, I, I,I.



**MADISON'S FIRST TROPHY**—John Ruth and Betty Black place Madison Junior High School's first trophy on the very top shelf of the trophy case after it was presented to Edward V. Tapscott, principal. The trophy was awarded the Madison School for placing first in the concert playing division at the Sweetwater Band Festival March 3. John is the son of Capt. and Mrs. John H. Ruth of 111 Rhode Island, Dyess AFB, and Betty is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Black Jr. of 15 Elmwood. Both are ninth grade members of the band. (Staff Photo by Henry Cliff Jr.)

## Madison Band to Play H-SU Grad's Composition

The first public presentation of a musical piece composed by a graduate of Hardin - Simmons University will be featured at the 5th annual Madison Junior High spring concert Monday at 7:30 p.m., according to Warren Thaxton, Bison band director.

The selection Arroyo, was written by W. Francis McBeth of Ouachita University in Arkansas, a 1954 graduate of H-SU. Arroyo was commissioned by the Bison Band in 1964 and completed this year.

Other features of the concert include McBeth's Chant and Jubilee, which the band played for University Interscholastic League competition in April and Spirit of '76. Thaxton

said.

This selection is based on songs of the time of George Washington and the American Revolution. Marches and several selections of a lighter nature will be presented at the concert to be held in the Madison Auditorium, Thaxton said.

McBeth, a former composition student of Macon Summerlin of Abilene, holds degrees from the University of Texas and Eastman School of Music.

Numerous pieces he composed for band and choir have been published. Arroyo will be published this fall, Thaxton said.

There is no admission for the concert and Madison officials invite the public to attend.

**CLASS OF SERVICE**

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# WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

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WARREN G THAXTON

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# 50 Marching Bands Compete in Event

About 50 marching bands from Abilene and area schools participated Saturday in the University Interscholastic League Marching Contest held at the San Angelo Stadium.

Bands were judged both on inspection and marching, but some bands did not enter inspection.

Approximately 200 twirlers also competed Saturday, but information was not available as to the outcome of that event, in which 80 received top ratings.

The bands were divided into classes CCC, CC, B, A, AA, AAA and AAAA.

In the following list, the name of the school is followed first by its inspection rating and then by its marching rating. The letter 0 signifies that the band did not stand inspection.

—CCC: Madison Junior High, 0, 2; Franklin Junior High, 0, 3; Mann Junior High, 0, 1; Lincoln Junior High, 0, 2; Jefferson Junior High, 0, 2., all of Abilene.

—CC: Lamar Junior High, 2, 1; and Travis Junior High, 1, 2; both of Snyder.

—B: Bronte High School, 2, 1; Roby High School, 1, 1; Lorraine High School, 2, 3; Trent High School, 2, 3; Rochester High School, 1, 3.

—A: Jim Ned High School (Tuscola), 2, 4; Roscoe High School, 0, 2; Merkel High School,

1, 1; Rotan High School, 1, 2; Baird High School, 2, 2; Santa Anna High School, 2, 2; Ranger High School, 1, 1; Albany High School, 1, 2; Eastland High School, 1, 2; Early High (Brownwood), 3, 5; Clyde High School, 0, 2; Goldthwaite High School, 2, 4; Cross Plains High School, 0, 1.

—AA: Ballinger High, 0, 1; Winters High, 1, 1; Coleman High, 2, 3; Dublin High, 3, 3; Brady High, 0, 1; Mason High, 2, 2; Comanche High, 1, 1; Hamlin High, 1, 1; Haskell High, 2, 2; Cisco High, 1, 1.

—AAA: Breckenridge High, 0, 3; Lake View High (San Angelo), 2, 2; Brownwood High, 2, 2; Sweetwater High, 1, 1; Colorado City High, 1, 1; Snyder High, 1, 1; Stephenville High, 1, 2.

—AAAA: Central High (San Angelo) 1, 1; Cooper High (Abilene), 1, 1; and Abilene High (Abilene), 0, 1.

The bands were required to be on the fields from five to eight minutes and were penalized one rating if their times were more or less.

The marching judges were Dr. Gary Garner of West Texas State, J. W. King of Hale Center and Bill Wood of Levelland. The inspection judge was Richard Thomas of Kermit Junior High School.

# ,000 Bandsmen Due Here Today

Abilene's Fair Park Stadium will be site for the Region II University Interscholastic League marching contest Saturday. Thirty-three bands from the region involving some 3,000 students will compete for honors in different classes. Marching contests begin at 8:30. Some 350 twirlers will begin competition for honors at 8. said Warren Thaxton, band director at Madison Junior High School, who is heading the Saturday events. Judges for the marching contest will be Dr. Ted Crager, Texas State College; Fred King of Victoria and Don Leavitt of Tulsa, Okla.

Richard Thomas of Kermit will be inspection judge.

Twirling contest judges will be Mr. and Mrs. F. R. Woodward Jr. of Fort Worth, Bill Woods of Levelland, Fred Smith of Brownfield and William F. Postlethwaite of Arlington.

Thaxton said the public is invited to view the contests.

Bands entered in the various contests are:

CLASS AAAA — Abilene and Cooper high schools, Abilene, and Central High School of San Angelo.

CLASS AAA— Brownwood, Colorado City, Stephenville, Snyder, Lake View (San Angelo), Newman High School (Sweetwater).

CLASS AA — Hamlin, Mason,

Anson, Winters, DeLeon, Stamford, Hamilton, Coleman, Haskell, Comanche, Ballinger, Cisco and Brady.

CLASS A — Roscoe, Santa Anna, Baird, Eastland, Cross Plains, Ranger, Albany, Goldthwaite, Eldorado, Merkel, Rotan and Ozona.

CLASS B — Roby, Moran, Rising Star, Rochester, Menard, Bronte, Trent, Lorraine.

CLASS C — Lake View Junior High (San Angelo).

CLASS CC — Lamar Junior and Travis Junior highs of Snyder.

CLASS CCC — Madison Junior High, Franklin Junior High, Mann Junior High, Lincoln Junior High and Jefferson Junior High, all of Abilene; Reagan Junior High (Sweetwater), Lee Junior High and Edison Junior High, both of San Angelo.

# **Fifth Teaching Position:**

## **Cooper High School Abilene, Texas**

**1966 – 1967**

**1967 – 1968**

**1968 – 1869**

**1969 – 1970**

**1970 – 1971**

**1971 – 1972**

**1972 – 1973**

**1973 – 1974**

**1974 – 1975**

**1975 – 1976**

**1976 – 1977**

**1977 – 1978**

**1978 - 1979**

April 18, 1964

# Abilene, Cooper, Snyder, Angelo Win Sweepstakes

Five bands took sweepstakes at Cooper High School and one took top honors at Madison Junior High Friday in the first of two days of competition in the University Interscholastic League Concert and Sight Reading Contest.

The meet is to end at noon Saturday at Cooper and at about 6 p.m. at Madison.

More than 4,000 students in 58 bands are participating.

Sweepstakes winners were both Cooper and Abilene High Schools of Abilene, San Angelo Central High School, Snyder High School and Lamar Junior High of Snyder.

To win sweepstakes, bands are required to make a rating of "I" in marching (contests were held last November) and in the sight reading and concert playing events now under way, according to Cooper contest chairman Merlin Jenkins. Warren Thaxton is contest chairman at Madison.

Friday's ratings for bands at Cooper were as follows, with the ratings given in order for marching, concert and sight reading:

Class AAAA:  
Cooper High School - I, I, I; Abilene High School - I, I, I; Central High School, San Angelo - I, I, I.

Class AAA:  
Breckenridge High - III, III, IV; Brownwood High - II, III, II; Newman High, Sweetwater - I, II, II; Stephenville High - II, III, III; Colorado City High - I, II, I; Snyder High - I, I, I.

Class AA:  
Dublin High - III, IV, III; Cisco High - I, II, II; Mason High - II, V, III; Winters High - I, I, I; Brady High - I, III, II; Coleman High - III, II, II.

Competition at Cooper High among AA bands begins at

8:30 a.m. Saturday. Competing will be Stamford, Haskell, Hamlin, Ballinger, Comanche, Hamilton and De Leon.

Madison Junior High is host for A, B, C, CC and CCC schools.

Ratings for Friday's competition at Madison also are given in the order of marching, concert and sight reading:

Class CCC:  
Madison Junior High - II, I, I; Edison Junior High, San Angelo - I, II, II; Franklin Junior High - III, III, III; Lincoln Junior High - II, III, I; Mann Junior High - I, I, II; Jefferson Junior High - II, III, II; Lee Junior High, San Angelo - I, II, I; Reagan Junior High, Sweetwater - II, III, III.

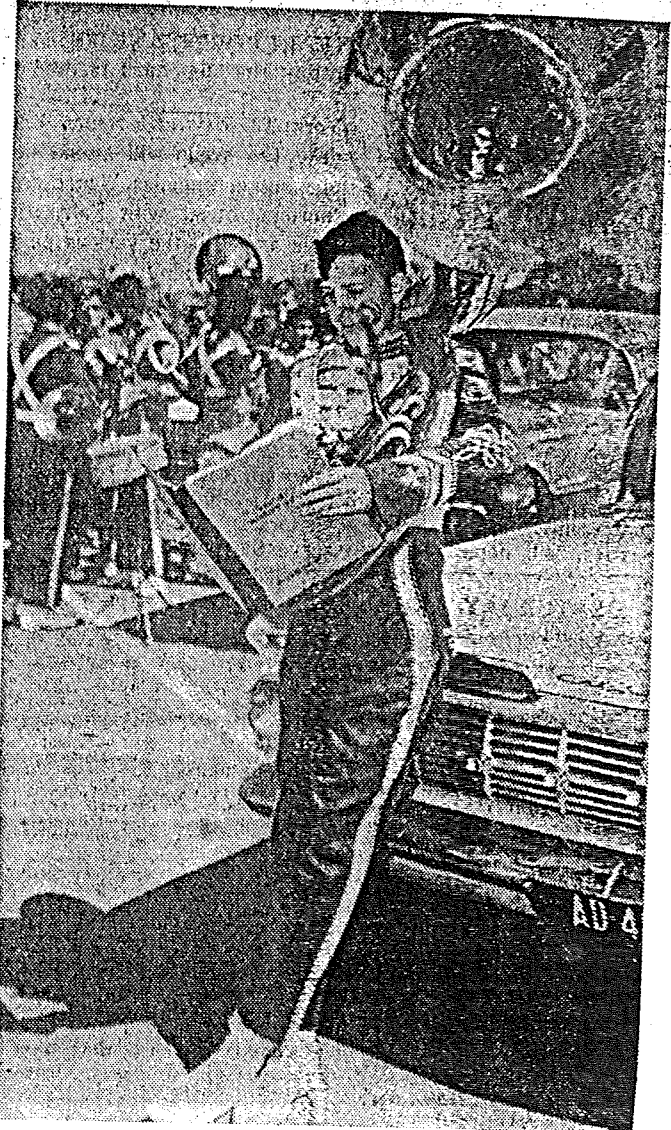
Class CC:  
Colorado City Junior High - no contest, II, II; Brownwood Junior High - no contest, II, II; Lamar Junior High, Snyder - I, I, I; Travis Junior High, Snyder - II, II, I.

Class C (None competed in marching; ratings are for concert and sight reading only):  
Albany Junior High - III, III; Mason Junior High - III, III; Hamlin Junior High - I, I; Lakeview Junior High, San Angelo - III, III.

Twenty bands will compete at Madison Saturday. They are:

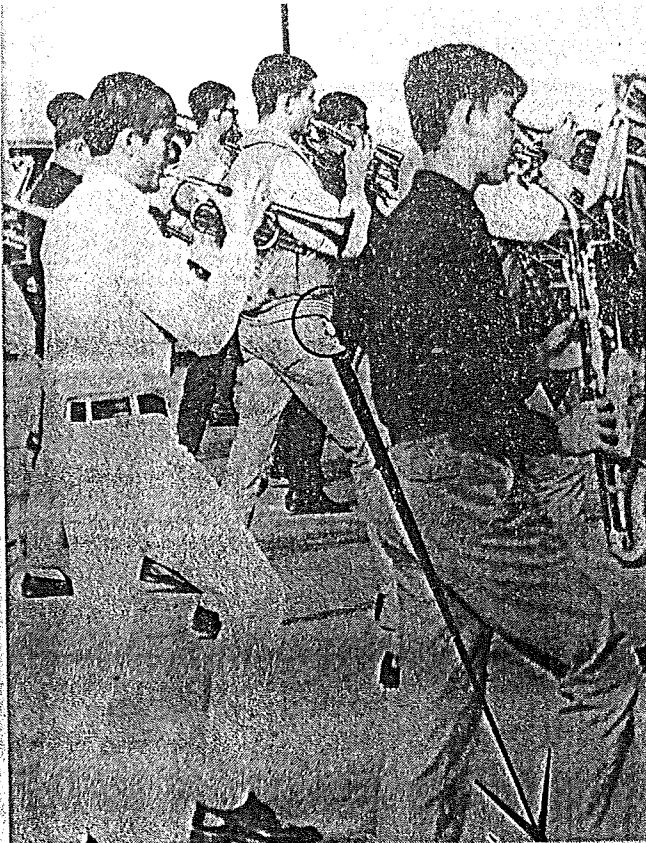
Loraine High School, Trent High, Menard High, Rochester High, Borden High of Gail and Roby High (B); Class A high school bands will include Clyde, Baird, Cross Plains, Goldthwaite, Rotan, Eldorado, Merkel, Aspermont, Ranger, Roscoe, Albany, Eastland, Santa Anna and Ozona.

Each band plays three selections, a march of its own choice and two selections from a concert list.



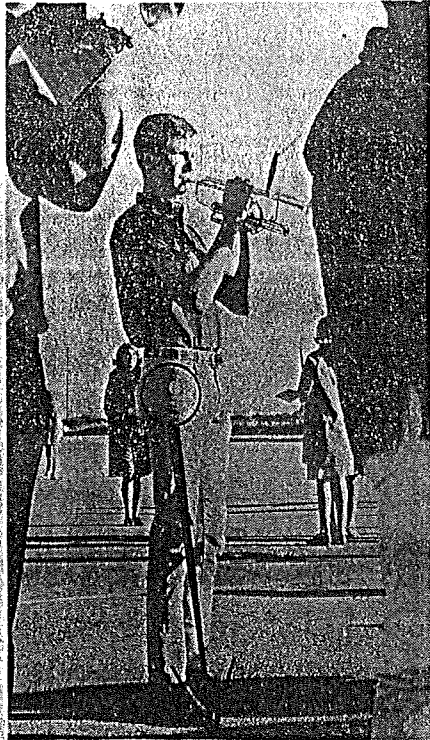
**OOMPHA! OOMPHA!** — Winters High School Blizzard Bandsman Mike Griffin tunes up in the parking lot at Cooper High School Friday afternoon before his band takes part in the University Interscholastic League Concert and Sight Reading Contest. (Staff Photo)

# It Takes a Heap o' Marching



START OF MARCHING WEEK

There are 835 marching about 9,625.6 miles each week. Stadium Friday night, half-103 pairs of aching feet. . . which instrument for accurately mea-  
 been seen in the City of Abilene. And that's not counting the time of the Cooper-San Angelo would be 835 pairs of aching  
 this football season, and if the additional three-fourths of a High football game. feet in the City of Abilene almost  
 Cooper Cougar Band's march- mile trudged during the half- That half-time exertion adds any football weekend.  
 ing habits are any yardstick, time show itself, like the one another 626.25 man-miles of These statistics were com-  
 those 835 bandsmen march Cooper put on in P. E. Shot. II marching. . . which would be piled after a pedometer (an in-



MIDWEEK



FRIDAY NIGHT

sureing distances walked) was borrowed from Mackey Discount Sports and was attached to the belt of Cooper High School bandsman Mike Burt, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Burt of 1941 Poplar.

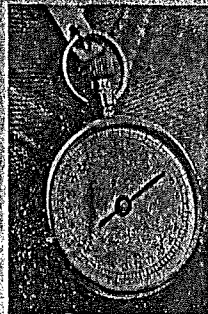
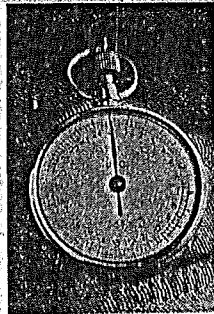
Trumpet player Mike chalked up 11 miles of marching during his estimated five hours of practice during the week and during the half-time performance Friday.

All Abilene bands do not practice marching the same amount of time, which further complicated the computation. For instance, Abilene High School averages about nine hours, according to its band master, while Abilene Christian College and McMurry College bands practice only about three hours per week. The junior high bands average an hour to and hour and a half per day.

Nevertheless, Mike averaged marching 2.1 miles per one-hour drill, while using the pedometer all last week.

All of which goes to show that there is more to the half-time than meets the eye when the referee blows his whistle for the gridirers to take a rest and for their respective bands to march onfield for their 20-minute share of the spotlight.

Let's see now, 9,625.6 miles—that's about a round trip to Germany, or 48 trips between Abilene and Dallas, or 161 trips to San Angelo, or a one-way trip from Portland, Ore., to Coatsland, Antarctica, as the bandsman marches.



Staff Photos  
 by  
 Don Blakley



**A DOUBLE WINNER** — Director Warren Thaxter, left, whose Abilene Madison Junior High Band won a first division concert award Friday at the University Interscholastic League Region VI, eastern division contest held at Mann Junior High, receives the award from Ed George, band director at Lincoln Junior High and chairman of the contest. Madison's band scored a I in the regional marching contest last November, but a II in sight reading cost them a sweepstakes award Friday. (Staff Photo)

## Snyder Bandsmen Win Sweepstakes

Only one band achieved Sweepstake honors in the University Interscholastic League Region VI, Eastern Division band contest held at Mann Junior High School in Abilene Friday — Lamar Junior High of Snyder.

Lamar, of Class 2C, won first division rating in concert and sight reading Friday and had taken a first division award in the marching contest last November.

Two orchestras, both from San Angelo junior high schools, competed in the band event. They were Edison, which earned a rating of II in concert and I in sight reading, and Lee, with I and I.

In Class C, Colorado City was II and II; Post and Hamlin both had III in concert and II in sight reading.

In Class 2C, Franklin of Abilene scored IV in concert and III in sight reading; Travis of Snyder scored II and II; and Lamar of Snyder post I and I.

In Class 3C, Lee of San Angelo had a II and II; Edison of San Angelo had I and II; Lincoln of Abilene scored II and I; Madison, I and II; Reagan of Sweetwater, III and II; Jefferson of Abilene III and II; and Mann of Abilene a I and a II.

Concert judges were J. W. King of Hale Center, Ralph Mills of Huntsville and Luther Snavely of McAllen.

Sight reading judges were Bruce Cook of Tulia, Charles Enloe of Wichita Falls and Sam Watson of Spearman.

They also will judge the Region VI Western Division in Odessa Saturday.

According to Ed George, director of Lincoln Junior High of Abilene who served as chairman of the local contest, there are too many bands in the region to compete in one day. He said they were divided into two divisions in order that the contest could be completed in two days.





**ON TO THE COTTON BOWL** — Gary Israel, Sharon Sudberry and Galen Barrett, from left, Cooper band officers, take a look at marching instructions before leaving Sunday at 4:30 a.m. to perform at the televised Cotton Bowl match Jan. 1. (Staff Photo by Billy Adams)

## Cooper Band Bowl Game Debut Slated

The Cooper High band will be on national television for the first time Jan. 1 when they perform at the Cotton Bowl match between the University of Texas and the University of Tennessee.

Local TV viewers will see the band perform at halftime of the game which starts at 12:45 p.m. For the grand finale, Cooper will combine with three other high school bands, the two visiting teams' bands and the Kilgore Rangerettes, for an 1100 instrument sound.

Theme of the halftime show is "Things of the Thirties."

The Cooper students will perform in the parade at 9:30 a.m. and at pregame activities also. The other high school bands are Roosevelt High School of San Antonio and Belton and Lancaster high schools.

According to Warren Thaxton, band director at Cooper, the band members received the invitation from Harry Barton, director of pageantry at the Cotton Bowl.

The group performed at the Bowl last year when Cooper was playing for the state championship in football.

The 122 Cooper band members have been selling fruit cakes to pay for expenses of the trip.

# 2 Local Directors Believe Band Music Quality High

By ALICE MILLER 1973

Reporter-News Arts Editor

Directors of the bands at the Abilene High Schools disagree with any music educators who question the cultural value of "big football marching bands" and "the quality of concert band literature."

Both items were mentioned in the related story on this page by Donald Dierks of the Daily News Service.

The Abilene band directors say that members of marching bands become members of concert bands of the schools, all in the same year, and that the concert bands play excellent music. They say, too, that the quality of concert band literature is better now than it ever has been.

BILL SPENCER, band director at Abilene High, and Warren Thaxton, band director at Cooper High, agreed today that their bands, and high school bands throughout Texas, are engaged for two-thirds of every school year in playing classical and contemporary music of high caliber. "More composers are writing music for bands now than for orchestras," says Thaxton. "This is because — since there are so many bands — a composer's music will be more readily heard through bands than orchestra concerts."

He says that composers writing music for concert bands are often college music professors — men such as Edward Hanson at Eastman School of Music and Francis Beth of Ouachita University — director of the Little Rock symphony as well.



BILL SPENCER  
... Abilene High



WARREN THAXTON  
... Cooper High

Cooper High School

THUS THE Abilene directors believe that the educators are mistaken, since the marching band is, in essence, the concert band which plays classical and contemporary music written by, according to Thaxton, "The Top living composers."

Ninety five per cent of the students who play in the marching band during football season remain in the concert band during the rest of the year, Spencer estimates. At both Abilene high schools, a student enrolls for band as for a class, and receives one full credit for his year in band. If he drops out after football season, or at any time in the year, he loses the entire credit. No part-time credits are allowed.

Spencer says he thinks this is true at most Texas high schools and in most colleges and universities as well.

"We divide our AHS marching band, which is composed of 135 students, into two smaller concert or symphonic bands for the remainder of the year," he says. "And we forget all about marching."

BOTH BAND men say that a big incentive to the playing of fine symphonic music is the University Interscholastic League contest in the spring.

Bands from high schools throughout Texas are engaged in competition with each other in those contests in marching, sight reading and concert selections.

"The concert selections are difficult and of the finest musical type," says Thaxton.

But both men are proud of the marching ability of their bands. They don't like to have that put down. "It's show biz," says Thaxton, and it takes work."

SPENCER thinks the coordination and self-discipline learned in the marching band is worthwhile. And that there is nothing in the experience of playing in the marching band which detracts from a student's cultural enrichment, gained from concert selections played later in the year.

"Band literature today is by far the best we've ever known," says Thaxton. "Playing in the marching band is part of a very enriching experience, culturally as well as in the total development of the student."

# Cooper Band To Perform in Cotton Bowl Jan. 1

The Cooper Cougar band will be heading for Dallas Dec. 30 to perform at the Cotton Bowl game between the University of Texas and the University of Tennessee Jan. 1, according to Warren Thaxton, CHS band director.

The Cougars received the invitation to perform from Harry Barton, director of pageantry at the Cotton Bowl.

The band will march in the Cotton Bowl Parade and will perform at both the pregame show and the grand finale at half-time.

Cooper will combine with three other high school bands for the pregame show. The other high schools are Theodore Roosevelt High School of San Antonio, Belton High School and Lancaster High School.

Theme of the pregame show is "Things of the Thirties," and the local band now is rehearsing the music and learning the formations that go with the show. They will spend two days in Dallas putting the show together.

For the grand-finale at half-time, the four high school bands will combine with the two college bands and the Kilgore Rangerettes in forming a giant eagle and globe on the field as John Phillip Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever" is played by over 1,100 instruments.

Cooper band members are currently selling fruit cakes to raise money for the trip.

## Cooper Band to Give Graduation Concert

The Cooper High School Band, directed by Warren Thaxton, will present its graduation concert at 2:30 p.m. Sunday in the Cooper auditorium.

The program is free to the public and will honor Cooper's seniors.

The program will include "Finale from a Nordic Trilogy" by Erickson; "Meditation and Festiva," Spears; "Serenade," Reed; "Ragged Rozey," King; "Concert Miniature."

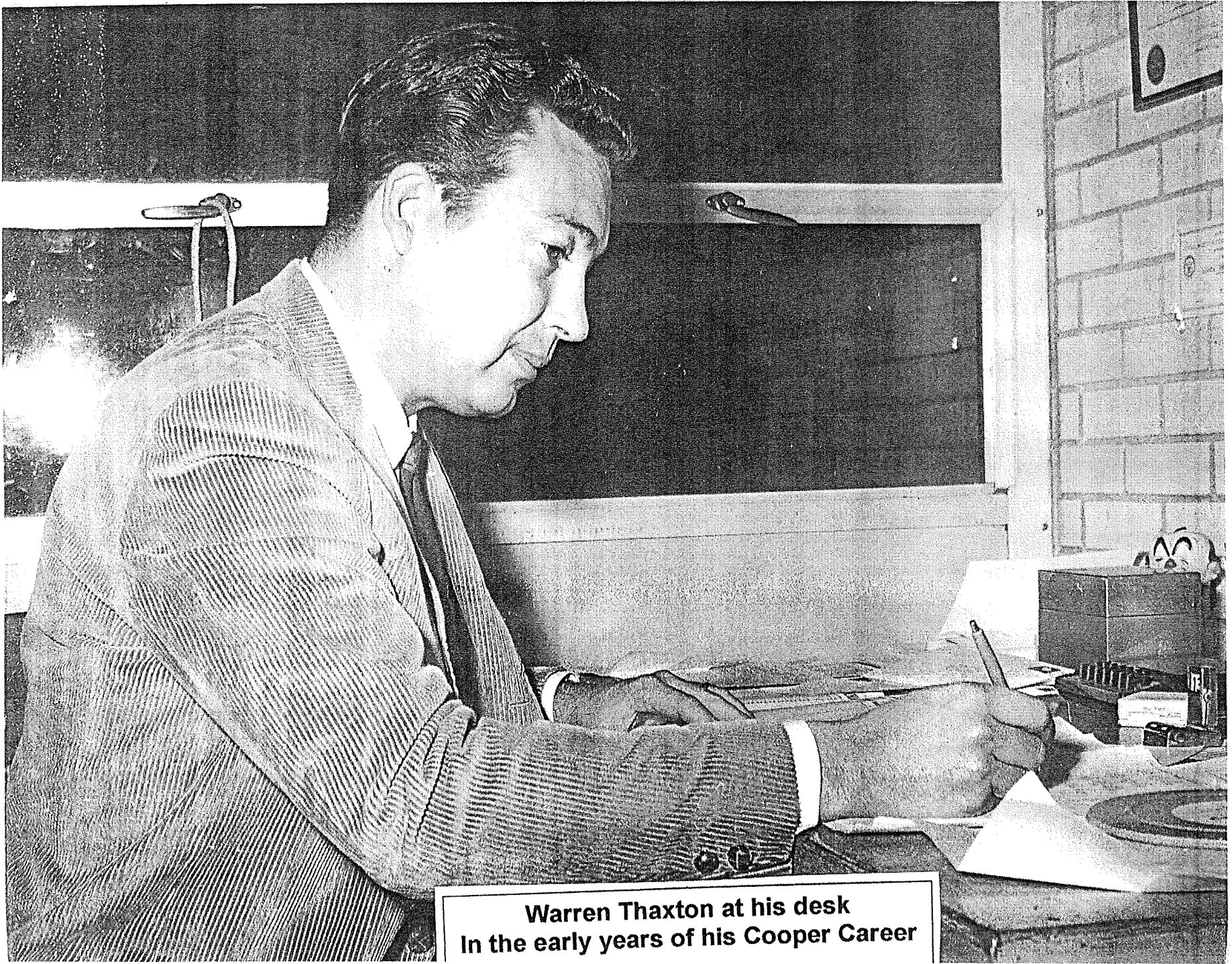
Also, "Concert Piece," Phillips; Selections from

"Raisin," Woldin; "A Sacred Suite," Reed, and "Clear Track," Strauss.

Soloists will be Tim Owens and Kelly Nichols.

The John Philip Sousa Award will be presented and the Most Valuable Girl and Boy awards will be announced.

The concert will cap a year that was highlighted by a Sweepstakes Award in University Interscholastic League competition and participation in the Buccaneer Festival in Corpus Christi last month.



**Warren Thaxton at his desk  
In the early years of his Cooper Career**

# Band School Staff Lists 4 Abilenians

Four Abilene public school band directors are among 12 named to the staff of the 20th annual McMurry College Summer Vacation Band and Twirling School which opens at McMurry Sunday and concludes July 22.

Dr. Raymond T. Bynum, director of the school, said, "We have secured the top teachers on the various instruments and have outlined a course of study and recreation that should be helpful and enjoyable to those attending."

The Abilene teachers are:

Warren Thaxton, band director at Cooper High School, who will be teaching trombone. This is the seventh year for Thaxton to teach at the Summer Band school.

Bill Spencer, band director at Mann Junior High School, will be teaching cornet. This is his first year to teach.

Ed George, band director at Lincoln Junior High School, in his first year, will be teaching saxophone.

Jerry Tate, former drum major and twirling specialist at McMurry College, now band director at Jefferson Junior High School, will be Drum Majoring and Twirling School coordinator. Tate is a veteran of the school.

Fred Smith, band director at Brownfield and 17-year veteran of the band school, has been named its dean and will teach clarinet.

Other staff members include



**WARREN THAXTON**  
... trombone



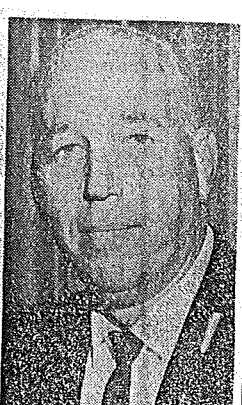
**BILL SPENCER**  
... cornet



**ED GEORGE**  
... saxophone



**JERRY TATE**  
... drum majoring



**FRED SMITH**  
... dean of school

Tim Jones, band director at Hamlin, who will be teaching the French horn; Miss Judy Mathis, from Roscoe, who will be teaching percussion; Miss Barbara Sperberg, Ralls band

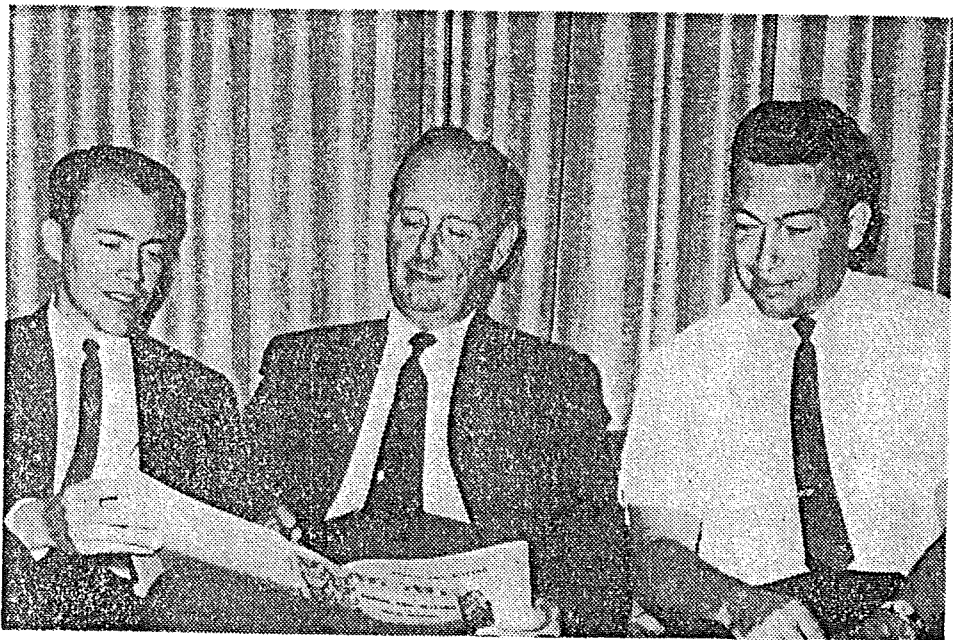
director, teaching flute; Cecil Morris, Denver City band director, teaching bass; Kyle Ellison, Graham band director, teaching oboe and bassoon; Darryl Phillips, Memphis band

director, teaching baritone and theory; and Bobby Brooks, Clyde band director, teaching theory.

Dr. Bynum said the school is designed for students who want

to study for two weeks on their own horn under an expert on that instrument. "Students have told me that they learn more about their instrument in these two weeks than in a year at

their local school. This does not reflect on their band director but simply says that here at the school the emphasis is on instruction on their own individual instrument," he said.



**'MUSIC MEN'** — Dr. Raymond T. Bynum (center), director of McMurry College's Summer Band and Twirling School, looks over new music with two of the band school's faculty members, Ed George (left) and Warren Thaxton, both of Abilene.

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# Region Band Winners Decided

Winners of the Region II University Interscholastic League band and twirling contests held Wednesday at the stadium in Oscar Rose Park were:

Locally, Cooper, Abilene High, Lincoln Junior High, and Mann Junior High, all scored superior ratings for their marching performance.

A first place award is rated superior, second is excellent, while third place winners were rated good.

### Marching band ratings:

Class C: (1) Jayton High, Lincoln Junior High, Mann Junior High; (2) Bronte High, Jefferson and Madison Junior High; (3) Rochester High.

Class A: (1) Albany and Robert Lee High; (2) Knox City and Spur High; (3) Roscoe High.

Class AA: (1) Hamlin High, (2) Stamford High, (3) Anson, Merkel and Haskell High.

Class AAA: (1) Sweetwater High.

Class AAAA: (1) Abilene and Cooper High.

Twirling competition: (Only superior ratings announced)

Sweetwater High: Donna Dabwell, Becky Chapman, Deena Clark, Gloria Evans, and Lana McWilliams.

Cooper High: Brenda Alexander, Shelly Burgess, and Mickey Lucas.

Abilene High: Sherrill Foster, Bonnie Young, and Cathey Allen.  
Roscoe: Debbie Frazier, Phyllis Haynes, Tonya Frazier, Candice Huff, Sue Reeves and Sue Holderman.

Anson High: Charlotte Cutbirth, Carolyn Langford, Patricia Lindsey, Sherron Parks, and Linda Ritter.

Haskell High: Bonnie Adkins, Denise Roberson, Lynda Lane, and Karen Felker.

Merkel High: Jan Beasley, Susie Wilson, Cathryn Criswell, Donna Diltz, and the Beasley Sextet.

Hamlin High: Peggy Jones.

Bronte High: Susan Cumbie.

Spur High: Daphnia Fry and Jama Maritt.

Jefferson Junior High: Fred Bedford, Tamara Thaxton, and Jan French.

Robert Lee: Patti Ivey.

Knox City: The Trio.

## Cooper High School



### Plan for huge band

1970

Abilene bandsmen participating in putting together the huge "Big Country Band" for the "Big Country 4th of July Spectacular" are, seated left to right, W. A. Anderson of Abilene High School and Walter Chalcraft of Franklin Junior High; standing left to right, Ed Burt of Lincoln, Bill Spencer of Mann and Warren Thaxton of Cooper High. Musicians throughout the Big Country have been asked to participate in the "biggest band ever" here and the single rehearsal prior to the 4th will be Monday, June 29, at 7:30 p.m. in Pete Shotwell Stadium near the Taylor County Fairgrounds at Abilene. (Staff Photo by Sam Pendergrast)



Austin Elementary School Band  
March 1962



# State Title Quest Is Tough on Band Too

MARILYN KUEHLER  
Young Outlook Editor

is a Cooper High School all game and the stands are with screaming Cougars. The moment is tense for a of players standing in the cone. They're suited up, memorized their plays, anxious to get on to the field.

signal is given the awaited alltime begins. Halftime? While the Cougar football team leaves the field, "team" prepares to over.

STEAD OF FOOTBALLS, carry trumpets and flutes. And their "coach" is Band Director Warren Thaxton.

a wave of baton, the end comes to life with marching and rows of light blue uniforms.

ugh Merrill Green works says out of eleven men," Thaxton. "I work 'em out."

I don't have to worry what the other side is do."

each Green has developed, says during skull practice, so has Thaxton. ed new routines and for the play-off halftimes, ect, since the continuance ar games, Thaxton's s have increased.

ING THE REGULAR band trips are backed by from program sales at games, and a percentage ceptions receipts.

ran out of money after oosa (Amarillo) game. ey are primarily used for the three buses. The system is now financing on Bowl (Dallas) and t. Worth game."

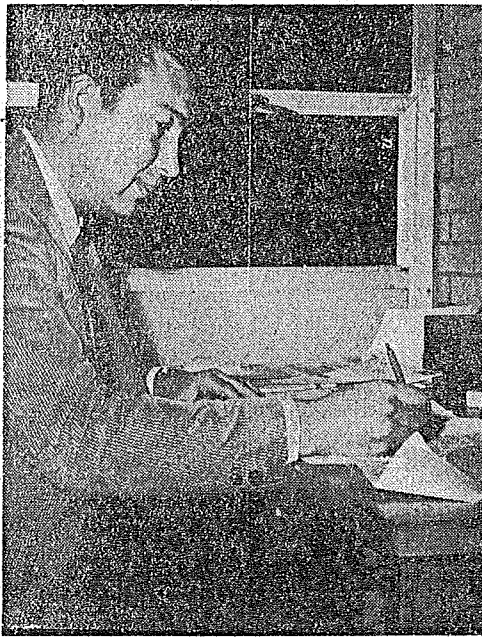
am's other headaches from "transporting that dents long distances." t left for Amarillo at 5 urday and returned 12:30 a.m. that next

ECTOR, Thaxton must range accommodations g and changing into as, there was no place change and we finally in the public relations on the Fairgrounds."

room was small and o change in shifts — then boys.

on the trips back, every usually tired and it's

udents are holding up ell," said Thaxton, an I am. But the band football team — it's a in the arm to march



COOPER BAND CHIEF WARREN THAXTON  
... and bad weather doesn't help

in the Cotton Bowl. It has to be, affects us more than the football team 'cause rain and dampness ruin instruments."

THAXTON'S WORRIES about new music and routines came "with the Permian game."

"I looked ahead and felt the possibility was there that we would go on (into playoff games)."

He added new marches and pop music, such as "Georgy Girl" and "Born Free," to the band repertoire, but routine practices became harder.

"How much time we get out side for routines depends on the weather," said Thaxton. "It

affects us more than the football team 'cause rain and dampness ruin instruments."

Because of foul weather, and subsequent lack of practice the band performed the same show at Tascosa and Richardson halftimes.

"Our show at Fort Worth will be half-new — we're working now to reshuffle and do what we have time to."

AND JUST LIKE football players, CHS band members will scrutinize other schools' bands — sometimes picking up ideas.

"We haven't seen anything really new in the past three years," said Thaxton, "but all

directors tend to borrow from band or television if we see a drill we like. Nowadays, there's more emphasis on playing."

Good playing comes from much practice, and band members spend two and one-half extra outside-classroom-hours per week in the band hall.

"Band period is from 8 a.m. until 9:25 a.m. each morning and this doesn't count afternoon rehearsals and section rehearsals only when necessary."

FOOTBALL TEAMS have pep rallies for spirit, but the band can sparkle with a new piece of music.

"I can't really explain it," said Thaxton, "but you can feel it when they really like a piece of music."

Thaxton said he didn't consciously try to boost spirit in the band "but it's hard not to."

"Just like the team, we have a certain respect for the bands we're going to meet at halftime, and some schools are good."

"This is the toughest football region in the state, and we tend to feel the same about the bands we meet week to week."

BECAUSE OF THE extended season, Thaxton has canceled the annual band Christmas concert.

"When we finish marching at the regular time of the season, we have four weeks to prepare for the concert, but we didn't have time this year. We will have a winter concert, however, sometime in January."

But right now, Thaxton is showing some signs of strain.

"With rehearsals, new shows and the advance planning gets to be a little headache," he said. "I'm beginning to get tired and I'm sure with the constant grind, Coach Green is getting the same."

"But with the team we have, it's a real pleasure to watch."



## Waiting for the bus

Cooper High School band students waited Thursday morning for the bus to arrive to take the group to Dallas. From there the band will fly to Mexico City to participate in a band

festival. Twylia Duresedow, Chris Cox, Pat Lowther and Tim Edins, from left, wait for the bus. (Staff photo by Don Blakley)

# Cooper band off to Mexico City

By MARSHA CAWTHON  
Staff Writer

With bags packed and music ready the Cooper High School band director Warren Thaxton departed Thursday for the trip to Mexico City.

The 114 students and 17 adult sponsors boarded a bus for Dallas about 1 p.m. Thursday. From Dallas they will catch a charter plane for Mexico City and a music festival.

The Mayor of Mexico City invited the band to participate in the music festival, said John E. Beall, president of the Cooper Band booster Club.

"The festival will consist of about 20 choice bands throughout the United States. Cooper High School was invited because of recommendations by one of the bands that attended the festival last year," Beall said.

The band will play three concerts, sightsee and meet with some Mexican students to exchange ideas.

"We want them to feel that it's like to be in a foreign country," Beall said.

At the beginning of the year the band set out to raise about \$25,000. Fund raising projects such as selling cookbooks, fruit cakes, car washes, peanuts and more are completed and the band is ready to go.

"Each one of the students pledged to pay \$100 to make the trip. The rest of the money we raised," Beall said.

The festival is part of a cultural exchange program began during President John F. Kennedy's administration. Because of this the governments have worked to keep costs down for the band.

"The total cost is \$188 per student," Beall said.

Mayor Fred Lee Hughes designated Thursday as Cooper High School Band Day in Abilene. He also sent along with the students a Bicentennial medallion that the students will present to the mayor of Mexico City.

The group will return to Abilene Monday after the five day trip.



## Back from Mexico

Holding the banner received from Mexico are, left to right, V. E. Bryant, sponsor, 2426 Hollis; Warren Thaxton, band director, 4066 Brookhollow; Mrs. V. E. Bryant; Janice Bryant; Jon Caudle, 2102 Greenbriar; and

James Hughes, 1422 Tanglewood. The Cooper High School band traveled to Mexico City for five days. The 104 students and 17 sponsors returned Monday from Mexico City after attending a musical festival. (Staff Photo)

## Outstanding bandsman

Conlise Prucell, 17, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Conley Prucell of Brady, is given the outstanding bandsman award Friday by Warren Thaxton, Cooper High band director, at the conclusion of the Abilene Christian College summer band camp. (Staff Photo by Thomas Anderson)

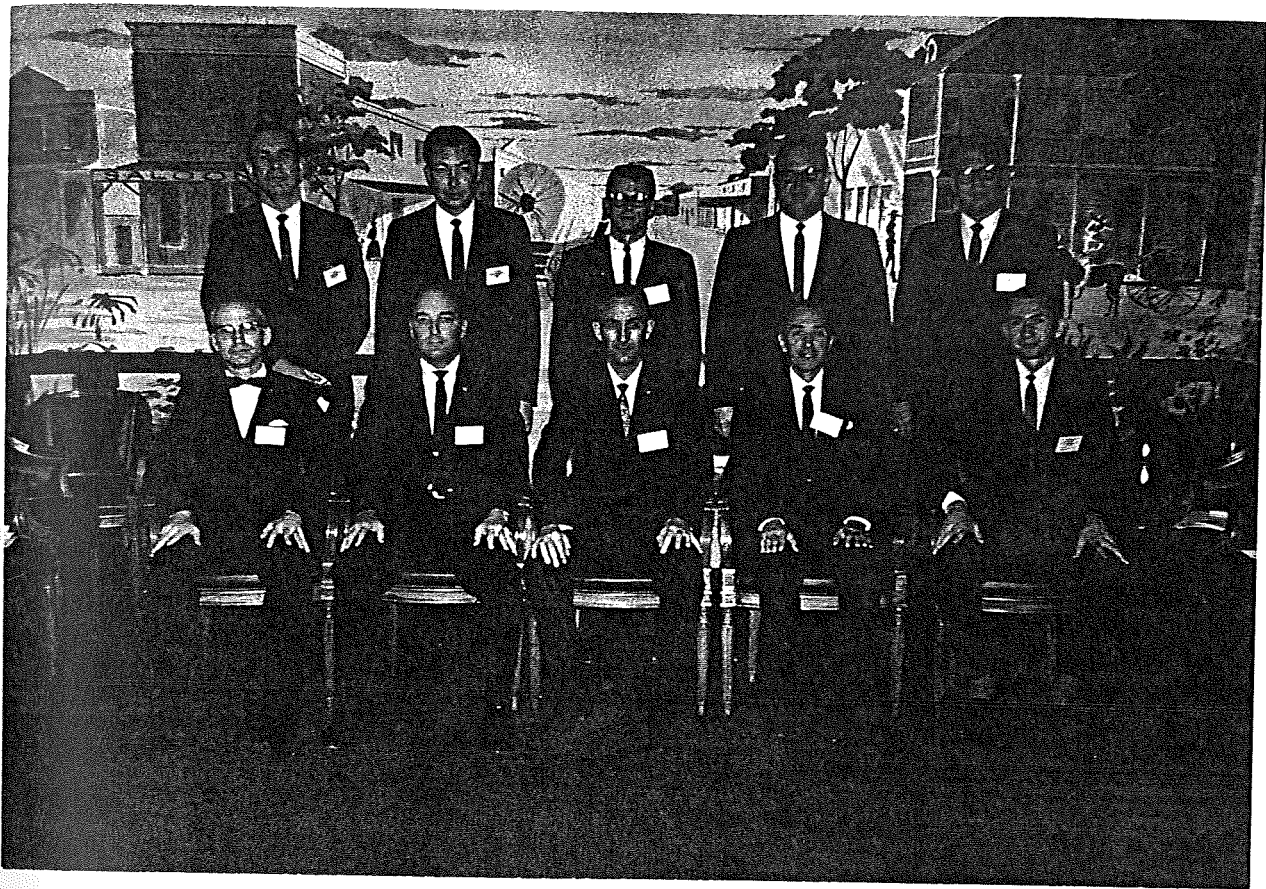




## Facing the music

Sammy Talamantes, one of about 250 junior and senior high band students who tried out for places in the All-Region Band Friday at Hardin-Simmons University, faces his judges, John Simmons, band director of Childress High School,

Warren Thaxton, Cooper band director and James Wickerson, Wichita Falls band director, from left. Those selected presented a concert Saturday evening in the H-SU chapel-auditorium (Staff photo by Gerald Ewing)



1967 Alpha Chapter of Phi Beta Mu, National Bandmaster Fraternity, at its annual meeting in Houston, Texas, February 11, 1967

First row, left to right:

Fred McDonald, Lake Jackson; Jack C. Smith, Tyler; Albert Long, Groves; LaFalco Robinson, Austin; and Neil Grant, White Oak.

Second Row, left to right:

George Bledsoe, Amarillo; Warren Thaxton, Abilene; George Riddell, Levelland; J.B. McDonald, Kilgore; and Charles Forque, Baytown.



## Principal trombonist

Abilene Philharmonic's Principal Trombonist Warren Thaxton, 4066 Brookhollow, has a musical background which covers some 27 years. He holds a Master of Music degree from Southern College of Fine Arts and has played with the San Angelo orchestra. Thaxton is band director at Cooper High School and plays baritone in addition to trombone. (This is second in a series of pictures of principals in the Philharmonic.)

# Story Behind Each 'Principal' Player

By ALICE MILLER  
Abilene Reporter - News Fine  
Arts Editor

A hush falls just before the concert. It's a moment of excitement for both orchestra and audience.

The last string is tuned, and the hands and musical instruments are ready. The audience waits.

The music of the well-trained orchestra begins.

Do you know the persons who hold the violins? The cellos? The flutes? Who is standing behind the drums? Who are they? What do they think? Why are they there?

Each has a story all his own. Yet all share one thing in common—the love of good music and the will to practice until his rendition is the best he can produce.

They share one other thing also. Each is a part of the community. Some teach, some

practice medicine. One runs a business, another runs a home. Some are students striving to complete an education. But when concert time comes round, they form a harmonious unit which is not each man for himself, but all at one as one.

They become the Abilene Symphony Orchestra, directed by George Yaeger.

The 65-piece orchestra has 12 designated "principals." Each plays the lead roles in his section. Starting last Friday, the Reporter-News is giving readers a picture and a bit of insight into these leaders of the orchestra. It is too bad that we cannot write something about each of the 65, but for now, the "PRINCIPALS" are the ones to whom we will introduce you. Each day until the big Pops Concert we will introduce to you one of the principals. They are neighbors of yours.

CLASS OF SERVICE

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W. P. MARSHALL  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

R. W. MCFALL  
PRESIDENT

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1966 NOV 19 AM 7 39

WARREN THAXTON AND COOPER COUGER BAND (DLR IN AM)

3264 GRAND ABILENE TEX

THE COUGAR BOOSTER CLUB SAYS OUR GREAT COUGER HIGH BAND IS  
THE BEST IN THE STATE. GOOD LUCK IN CONTEST. ALWAYS REMEMBER  
THAT THE SOUTH HAS RISEN  
COOPER HIGH BOOSTER CLUB.

Sept. 30, 1966



**THE MUSIC MEN** — Abilene Public Schools are music conscious all year 'round, but especially during football season. These are the men who mold the students into performing musicians and marchers. Left to right in back row are Howard Caver of Woodson Jr.-Sr. High; Jerry C. Tate of Jefferson Junior High;

Walter Chalcraft of Franklin Junior High and Jim Pollard of Abilene High. Seated, in same order, are Warren Thaxton, Cooper High; Bill Spencer of Mann Junior High; Ed George of Lincoln Junior High and Byron Gray of Madison Junior High. (Staff Photo by Don Blakley)



# ACC Summer Band Camp Planned Here July 5-17

directors from Stanton, Hamlin, Clyde and Abilene public schools will be the faculty of the first Abilene Christian College band camp July 5-17, according to Charles Trayler, assistant professor of music and band director. Trayler said the band camp will be open to all interested students who will be between 7th graders and high school seniors in the 1970-71 school

year. Trayler will instruct the drum major class. Three ACC Twirlers — Sue Churchill of Dallas, Chris Nowell of Lovington, N.M., and Karen Roemer of Port Lavaca — will teach the twirling class. Judy Mathis of Abilene, a former band director, will teach the percussion class and Thaxton will work with Trayler in the honors band class. Spencer will teach concert band, Jones will teach stage band and Smith will teach reading band.

select music theory, music appreciation, twirling, drum majoring, reading band, stage band or additional section rehearsal for the three optional hours.

Trayler said, "The band camp will feature an outstanding faculty of competent teachers in all areas of bandsmanship. Instruction in all band instruments, music theory and music appreciation will be given as well as in baton and drum majoring." Members of the ACC Music faculty who will be in the band camp are: Daniels, professor and department head, music; Trayler, honors instructor of music, saxophone; Ed Jones, assistant professor and band director, saxophone.

The camp will be held on the ACC campus, primarily in the air-conditioned Leonard Burford Music Center. Campus recreation facilities — including an indoor swimming pool, bowling alley, pool and ping pong tables, and handball, tennis and badminton courts — will be available.

Trayler said camp tuition for the two-week period is \$30. For out-of-town students, room and board cost is \$55, which includes 36 meals and lodging for 13 nights in air-conditioned dormitory rooms. Reservation fees for the camp are \$30 for tuition-only students and \$40 for tuition and rooming students.

Applications should be sent by June 20 to Trayler at ACC Station, Box 8151.

The ACC band director said students in the summer program would be in classes six hours a day, beginning at 3:30 a.m. and the last class scheduled to close at 5 p.m. The schedule will include two hours of band rehearsal, one hour of section rehearsal and three hours which are optional.

Trayler said the student may



## Planning band camp

Charles Trayler, standing, assistant professor of music and band director at Abilene Christian College, meets with three other teachers to plan the first annual ACC summer band camp July 5-17. They are, from left, Warren Thaxton, band director, Cooper High School; Bill Spencer, band director, Mann Junior High, and Sally Johnston, ACC instructor of music. Applications for the two-week program for area band students are due June 20.



**Warren Thaxton and wife, Laura, visiting with William Revelli  
after a concert at ACU in 1983.**

## **Six Teaching Position:**

**Abilene High School  
Assistant Director  
And director of Middle Schools  
Abilene, Texas**

<b>1979 – 1980</b>	<b>1980 – 1981</b>
<b>1981 – 1982</b>	<b>1982 – 1983</b>
<b>1983 – 1884</b>	<b>1984 – 1985</b>
<b>1985 – 1986</b>	<b>1986 – 1987</b>
<b>1987 – 1989</b>	<b>1989 – 1990</b>
<b>1990 – 1991</b>	<b>1991 – 1992</b>
<b>1992 – 1993</b>	<b>1993 – 1994</b>
<b>1994 – 1995</b>	<b>1995 – 1996</b>
<b>1996 – 1997</b>	

# Cooper band director steps down to assist

By WILLIAM WHITAKER  
Staff Writer

Warren Thaxton, longtime band director for Cooper High School, was made assistant band director for both Cooper and Abilene High, on his own request, it was announced Monday.

The 47-year-old band director, in stepping down, said the change would result in "younger blood, fresher ideas" for Cooper.

Stepping into Thaxton's shoes is Jack Nall, a 1973 graduate of West Texas State University who expects to receive a master's degree in music soon, administrators said.

Administrators said Nall is in his late 20s. They said they weren't sure where he was doing his master's work, either.

Thaxton's duties will consist of assisting band directors at



**WARREN THAXTON**  
...stepping down

both high schools in marching and concert bands.

The change of command

was approved by the Abilene school board, which praised Thaxton for having "done a great job."

Superintendent Gordon Harmon, saying Thaxton had done a "super job" at Cooper, explained he wanted to escape some of the pressures he had experienced in his post during the last 13 years.

Thaxton decided it would be best to do this on the eve of various changes in the band program, Harmon said.

A 1948 graduate of Abilene High, Thaxton pursued his music studies at Hardin-Simmons University, becoming president of the university's famous Cowboy Band.

Following graduation, Thaxton taught at area schools, returning to Abilene as band director at Madison Junior High.

He remained in that position for five years before being made band director at Cooper.

# Parents, Students Sound Out Thaxton's Praises

By LARRY ZELISKO  
Youth Editor

"If not for you (parents), they would have had to pull me out of a tree a long time ago," said Warren Thaxton, long-time Cooper High School band director, at a reception in his honor Thursday night.

Thaxton, Cooper band director since 1966, is stepping down to become assistant band director for both Cooper and Abilene High Schools.

He thanked parents of band members who gathered to pay tribute to him, saying he probably would not still have his sanity if it hadn't been for help from the parents. He said it was quite a task to handle a 4-A band by himself.

The Cooper Band Boosters and band members presented him with a plaque for his 13 years of service as Cooper Band director.

The plaque reads, "This is presented as a token of our appreciation for your distinguished service and your unrelenting concern for the musical development of the Cooper band."

Thaxton's reason for relinquishing his job as band director was that the change would give the Cooper band "younger blood" and "fresher ideas."

Thaxton, a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University, led the Cooper band to honors all over the state.

Friends joined in a light-hearted roast of the former band director. Gary DeShazo, owner of Caldwell Music Company, said that he and Thaxton went back 30 years together, but his wife would not let him tell any of the stories about being in the H-SU Cowboy Band together.

On a serious note, DeShazo said that



**WARREN THAXTON**  
...band director honored

he had two children in the Cooper band and that he would like to thank Thaxton for his helping them in band and in school.

Bill Spencer, Abilene High School band director, said that he and Thaxton are the best of friends and that they have "always been competing, but he has always helped me."

An open letter from a parent thanked Thaxton for "teaching and loving." The letter, read by Juanita Cole, president of the band boosters, said that Thaxton taught values as well as music.

Replacing Thaxton is Jack Nall, a 1973 graduate of West Texas State University.

# Band Director Hospitalized After Scrape With Truck

By J.T. SMITH  
Staff Writer

Veteran band director Warren Thaxton of Abilene may not feel lucky being laid up at Hendrick Medical Center, but considering the tall, 210-pound man was run over by an 18-wheeler, he looks pretty good.

Thaxton, 47, formerly head band director at Cooper High School for 13 years, was hit by a "semi-truck" late Wednesday afternoon near his farm south of Abilene on Highway 36. Thaxton, on his motorcycle, came out the worst for the wear.

His wife, Laura, said Sunday that her husband had a fractured right ankle, left shoulder, and left foot, with "a lot of the hide off one of his arms." Thaxton is scheduled to go home Monday, after Hendrick physicians finish their cast work on his injuries.

Thaxton has a meticulous system of doing things, which normally includes running five miles on the YMCA track each day after he finishes band instruction at Abilene High, where he accepted a teaching position this fall. Thaxton said the Abilene High job would slow his hectic schedule some, and let him concentrate more on teaching.

Ironically, since Thaxton is known as perhaps the strongest runner for endurance at the YMCA, an oft-repeated joke at the Y by many has been: "The only way anybody will ever run with Thaxton is for Warren to break a leg!"

After running, Thaxton would sometimes check on his cattle at the Thaxton farm off Highway 36, and then return home to Abilene. He rarely used his cycle for the farm trip, but he did that day, he said Sunday.

Ironically, what led to the accident is also the thing that helped rescue Thaxton: an ambulance.

Thaxton saw an ambulance west-bound toward Abilene for Hendrick Medical Center with its lights flashing and he, east-bound, pulled over to the right to stop and yield.

After the ambulance had passed,



WARREN THAXTON  
...wreck victim

Thaxton put his blinker on, and returned to the left lane, his wife said, driving slowly as he prepared to turn in to the entrance to the Thaxton farm. At that instance, an east-bound truck ran over Thaxton, his wife said.

Thaxton said he did notice the truck coming in his mirror — just for an instance — but realized it was too late, and that the truck was not going to stop in time to avoid him, she said. Thaxton knew it was going to hit him, she said.

As the truck struck Thaxton, the woman ambulance driver saw the accident in her rear view mirror. The ambulance was transporting a football player from Cross Plains to Hendrick.

The ambulance driver immediately rushed back to the accident, where a "lucky" Thaxton was able to get immediate medical attention, only seconds after the accident.

Mrs. Thaxton said that because her husband's running gear was in a compartment on the back of the motorcycle,

the shoes, shorts, and shirts were thrown under the truck on impact, causing the ambulance driver to fear the worst — that Thaxton had been thrown under the wheels of the truck.

The quick action by the ambulance helped Thaxton come out of the accident as well as he did. As always, he was wearing his helmet, although he was lucky enough not to hit on his head.

Ironically, Eric Thaxton, the older son of the Thaxtons and a KTXS Television newsman, heard the accident on his police scanner. But it was then being reported as an accident involving a "Wayne Thaxter."

The name was close enough to "Warren Thaxton," and when pieced together with the location of the farm, the son guessed it was his father.

The Thaxtons have two other children, Karen and Kirk.

Thaxton graduated from Abilene High in 1948, was president of the Hardin-Simmons University Cowboy Band 1954-55, and taught band at Trent, Colorado City, Breckenridge, and Madison Junior High (five years), before taking over as head band director at Cooper High in 1966.

Known as the "phantom of the track" at the YMCA, Thaxton has run more than 5,000 miles in the last five years, and this superb physical conditioning and agility no doubt helped him survive the crash as well as he did, his wife said.

Thaxton has already run more than 900 miles in 1979, and hopes to get his casts off in time to make his 1,000 miles before New Years, he said from his hospital bed Sunday night.



# Agri-Voice

by J.T. Smith

## Phantom of 'Turf'

A little more than a year ago, this farm writer wrote about faithfully running out-of-doors to lose fat, and being attacked by three monstrous dogs.

Result: he joined the Men's Health Club at the Y.M.C.A. and now runs indoors. No longer does he worry about dogs. They are not allowed on the indoor artificial turf track. But he has learned two lessons about running indoors: never chew gum and try to run with Warren Thaxston; and never try to run with Warren Thaxston with or without one's Double Bubble.

But before the Double Bubble story...some background information on this phantom of the Y.M.C.A. turf.

Thaxston is better known as the band director of the Cooper High School Band. Thaxston has ramrodded the band to top honors all over the state for many years. Nobody would challenge his ability there. It goes way back.

Like in 1954, Thaxston, the Hardin-Simmons University junior from Abilene, was chosen president for the world-rekknown Hardin-Simmons University Cowboy Band. A veteran, Thaxston had attended H-SU prior to entering the armed services and returned to his Alma Mater February 1954.

That gives a hint that Warren isn't a teenager. In fact, Warren will never see 30 again, or 40. A couple of weeks ago, the big fellow turned 45. It didn't slow him down any...not even bubble-gum can slow him down...but again...I'll tell you about that shortly.

In 1967, Marilyn Kuehler, then R-N Young Outlook Editor, provided an inside glimpse of the special stamina it takes to be a band director...at least one like Thaxston.

That year, Thaxston admitted that while a football coach works his plays out of 11 men "I work 'em out for 102."

New routines and transportation for 100 plus aren't easy. And, the band director is responsible.

Warren recalled that season "we ran out of money after the Tascosa (Amarillo) game." It does cost to charter three busses.

Thaxston had to get together with the school system and



**COOPER HIGH BAND DIRECTOR WARREN THAXSTON**  
...before and after Y.M.C.A. running program

figure out a way to finance the band on to the Cotton Bowl (Dallas) and Fort Worth games that year. They made it.

Besides Cooper and H-SU, Thaxston taught band students at Trent in his early days. And, he is a common figure all over the region as a band judge. For many years, Warren has taught at the annual McMurry College Summer Vacation Band and Twirling School, including trombone.

Yes, stamina is the word. There isn't a summer vacation for Thaxston, really. In fact, there are not enough hours in the day. When's he is out-of-town, he tries to find a track to jog. Warren recalls an example of a tiring trip.

One season Warren says the band made a trip to Amarillo and "left at 5 a.m. that Saturday and returned at 12:30 a.m. the next morning."

Or another time at the Cotton Bowl, the band had no place to change "and we finally ended up in the public relations building on the fairgrounds." And, then dressing was by shifts, as the room was small.

But the Cotton Bowl to a fine marching band, is what a great game and enthusiastic audience is to a football team in what it can do for spirit, Warren says.

Rain is harder on a band's practice than a football team's. It affects bands more because "rain can dampen and ruin band instruments," Thaxston notes simply.

Over the years, Thaxston's formula for a good band has been similar to his present running program...consistency

and hard practice including 2½ hours outside the classroom per week in the band hall.

"Football teams have pep rallies for spirit," Thaxston says, "but the band can sparkle with a new piece of music."

Thaxston says ours is the toughest football region in the state, and the same is true for bands.

Thaxston once told former R-N Arts Editor Alice Miller "Band literature today is by far the best we've ever known...playing in a marching band is part of a very enriching experience, culturally as well as in the total development of a student."

So it is a diverse Warren Thaxston who amazes most of the rest of us on the Y.M.C.A. track. Warren, who liked to box in his younger years, jogs (looks like a run to me!) five miles a day. He gets in about 30 miles per week, usually. And, he gets faster on his last two miles, I'll swear to it.

And finally, Warren is interested and well-versed on agriculture, including his "little ranch" near Abilene where he sees after a herd which includes a Maine-Anjou bull named "Luigi."

Warren has plenty of ranchhands including wife, Laura Fay, and sons, Eric, 19, a junior public relations major at Baylor University, Kirk, 16, a Cooper sophomore; and daughter, Karen, 13, an 8th grader at Madison Junior High.

Oh yes...the Double Bubble story. This farm writer was sure he could stay 88 laps

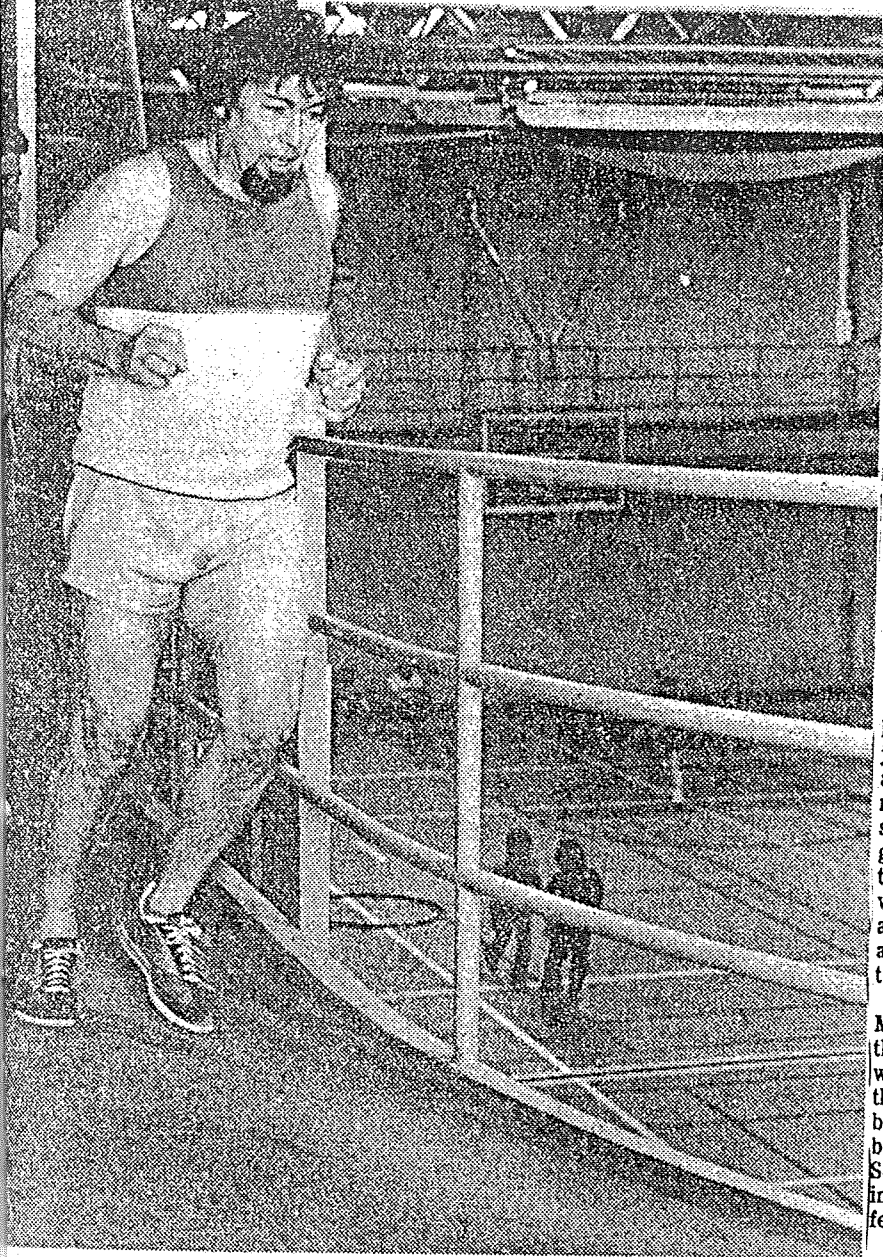
(five miles) around the track if he rested, caught Warren after a rough day, and got a big chomp of Double Bubble (instant energy.)

We had passed lap 80 and Warren had almost a two-lap lead, when the near-dead farm writer — trying to produce a burst of energy — lost his gum. And, before he could retrieve it, 200 pounds of Thaxston stepped on it, never losing his stride.

I got some scrubbing equipment and managed to get it all off the tracks, while Warren, now finished, laughed something about how certain people shouldn't chew gum and try to run at the same time...

I'm not going to argue with a guy as big or fast as Warren. I value my health. I'm just glad he was good-natured about the gum.

Warren stays trim to keep pace with Mrs. Thaxston (Kirk says his mother claims to get plenty of exercise keeping up with the crew). And when you see Mr. and Mrs. Thaxston all decked-out for a night on the town such as the Philharmonic Pops Concert or the like...don't let looks deceive...band directors aren't all softies...I know one that runs like a jackrabbit with a coyote on his heels.



*on the circuit*

Warren Thaxton circles the running track at the YMCA with the same dedication but at a little slower speed than before he and his motorcycle were run over by an 18-wheel truck in mid-October. He's back up to four miles a day now and aiming for his routine thousand miles this year. (Staff Photo by David Kent)

*sions of accident  
ep runner moving*

nd's eye, Warren  
ill occasionally  
the motorcycle  
mirror to see the  
ape of the 18-wheel  
down on him.  
s running on the  
at the time of the  
flashback, it's just  
ded incentive to  
g on.



**Potpourri**

By GERALDINE SATTERWHITE

run at all after the Oct. 17 accident that left him with a broken left foot, right ankle and right shoulder and numerous abrasions. And he is convinced that had he not been in top physical condition (he has been running for years) the accident might have been more serious, possibly even fatal. Certainly the fact that he was back on the Y track less than three months later is proof that his conditioned body helped him get back on his feet more quickly than he would have otherwise.

Thaxton had just completed a running session on the Y track and, his running gear stowed in the luggage case of his motorcycle, was en route to his farm 17 miles south of town on Highway 36. He was turning left onto his property when he saw — too late — the approaching truck.

A woman driving an ambulance from Cross Plains had just met the truck and saw the accident in her rear-view mirror. When she returned to the scene and saw the running gear scattered under the truck, she naturally feared the worst. Thaxton, however, was able to get immediate medical attention and quick transportation to the hospital.

That was on Wednesday. Monday he was released from the hospital, a cast with a walking heel on each leg, and the following Monday he was back at his job as assistant band director at Abilene High School, a member of a teaching team at Madison and Jefferson junior high schools.

That first day back, the AHS band worked out on the practice field, and Thaxton was there with his casts and crutches.

"Of course, it took me awhile to get out there and back," he said.

The day the second cast came off, Thaxton started a walking program, and the following Monday he began running at the Y. Very slowly. It was January before he could raise his arm over his head.

He's back up to four miles a day now, and he logged 80 miles in January. He predicts he will soon be back up to five miles a day, but it may take awhile to manage it in the 40 minutes he used to. He started running six years ago to lose weight, "and I've gained some during the inactivity and I need to get it off," he said.

He had hoped to run 1,000 miles in 1979, as he had done the three years previous, and before the accident it was beginning to look like he'd go

over his goal by at least 10 miles. Even after he was hurt he had visions of making the 1,000, but it didn't work out.

He usually runs after work hours and before he goes home.

"Sometimes it takes quite a lot of self-discipline," he said. "It has to be a part of your schedule, but I've done it so long, it's routine now."

And on days when he is especially tired, running is great therapy, he said.

"When I'm through, I'm more relaxed than when I started."





Cooper High School's band directors, from left, Jack Nall, '79-'94, Warren Thaxton, '66-'79, and current director Anthony Gibson, present, stand with members of the Cooper Band and some of the awards the group has won over the years.

Steve Hebert/Reporter-News

# MARCHING ON

## Directors keep in step with band's top ratings

By LINDSAY TOZER  
Staff Writer

Nall fondly remembers his "sleeping

inherited an amazing pool of talent in the said Monday, with great parental administrative support. A program had lovingly and painstakingly crafted by predecessors Merlin Jenkins and Warren

Cooper High School Band just needed a nudge to thrive under its full potential, said.

Under Nall's tutelage, Cooper blossomed as one of the largest, most revered band programs in the state.

It remained at the summit.

Last month, Cooper received a superior rating in the University Interscholastic League State Marching Contest, or Sweepstakes, for the 30th consecutive year in the school's 38-year history. Sweepstakes is a division one rating in marching, concert band and sight-reading from a prescribed list of music.

Although it is not the only school to boast such a record, Nall said the program is inching its way toward extraordinary as it enters its third decade of top ratings.

During that time, the school has gone from a 3-year program to incorporating a freshman class in addition to introducing block scheduling.

But the band has played and marched on, to everything from the Oak Ridge Boys to

Madonna to more time-honored fare and from traditional to corps-marching styles.

"I felt we could compete with anyone, anywhere," Nall said of his time at Cooper's band helm.

But the former director is quick to point out the contributions of so many who brought it to such a level.

From those who taught his students before him — "A high school program is only as good as the middle school feeder program," Nall said — to those who succeeded him.

Anthony Gibson took over the Cooper program from interim director Don Baldwin, in 1995, a year after Nall stepped down from his

Please see BAND, 4A

(OVER)

# Band

Continued from 1A

post.

"Abilene is known to be a band town — it is one of the reasons I came here," the 38-year-old said. "The parents and the administration back you big time. People know we are going to go out and knock their socks off on the football field."

Awesome Cooper Band plaques decorate the walls of local businesses and the bumpers of area cars. Some 350 students, about one in every seven of the 2,500 who attend class at Cooper, participate in the band.

But being in the band isn't about

playing at football games and going home, Gibson said.

Minute details are engineered, every footstep choreographed, months ahead of game time.

But people don't realize that.

Hearing the band is simply part of the event to them, said Gibson.

To the band director so much more is involved.

Among Gibson's goals are giving students a positive experience they will carry past high school and into the work-a-day world.

Lessons learned in the band hall — including promptness, pride and commitment — can help students achieve after graduation, he said.

The dividing line between the band member and the athlete blurs in the Cooper halls, Gibson said, estimating that about 25 percent of his students also played sports.

The self-described "band coach" drew from his own experience at Deer Park High School, outside Houston, to help guide his flexibility.

"I knew by ninth grade I was going to be either a band director or a basketball coach," he recalled.

When he announced he intended to participate in both activities, Gibson was told he had to choose.

"I am still ticked off about it," he

said. "So, when one of my students comes to me and says he wants to be in athletics too, I tell them 'we can make it work.'"

"There is a lot of give and take, and we work with the coaches, and there are huge payoffs for both the kids and the programs."

Huge payoffs are something Warren Thaxton, who commanded the program from 1966-79, never saw. His squads had to help earn the money necessary to follow the football team to out-of-town games.

"We did everything imaginable," he said, laughing at the memory of fund-raising efforts. "If you can name it, we probably did it."

Even under such budget constraints, Thaxton is credited with beginning the 30-year Sweepstake's streak.

"Our only concern in 1969 was to make it in '70," he said. "It wasn't so much adding to the streak as it was not ending it."

When Nall took over he was a 27-year-old junior high director willing to take a \$2,000 pay cut and a smaller budget to come to a 5A high school. He inherited a program with no assistant directors and 20-year-old uniforms.

"I was willing to work hard and put lots of hours into it to see

dreams come true," he said. "They did come true, and that doesn't happen to too many people."

After 15 years of constant charting, competitions and practice, Nall said, he stepped down from his position thoroughly exhausted but still in love with the program.

Known for a no-nonsense approach toward the program, Nall said he never lost the spark for the Cooper Band.

"I still tear when I hear them play," he said.

It is a pride with which every Cooper band-coach is familiar.

"When everyone stands up and applauds for the marching band's quality, the hair on my arms stands up," Gibson said, crediting his teaching staff and associate director for allowing him the accolades — and the criticism of the program.

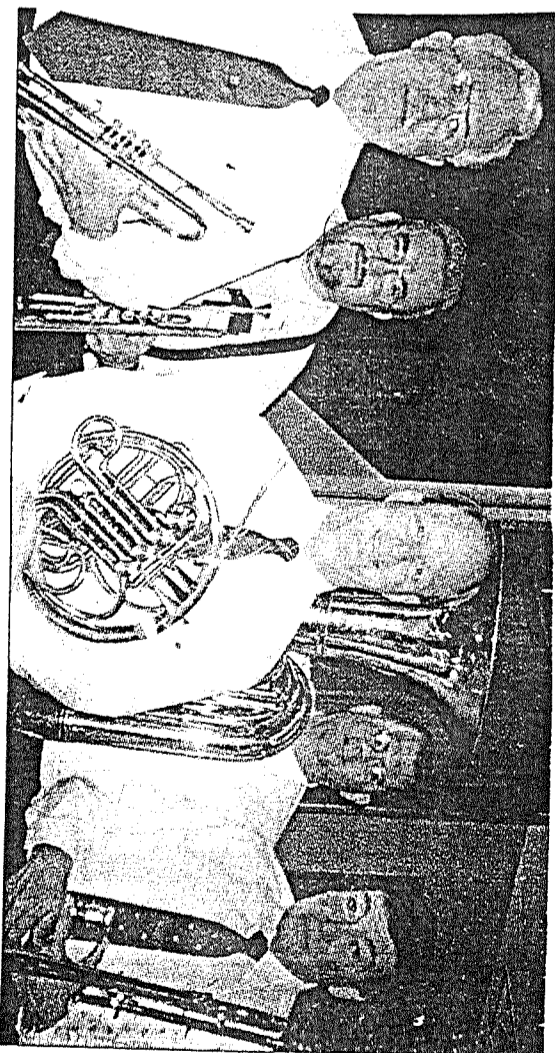
"I know I need to be here," he said of being Cooper's director.

Nall said he would do it all over again.

"I would be a band director again tomorrow if I go somewhere else and face the same challenges I did here," he said.

The challenge to awaken another sleeping giant.

Lindsay Tozer can be reached at 676-6721 or tozerl@abineews.com



▲ The Abilene Community Band Brass played at United Bank and Trust for Artwalk. Playing great music for the walkers were B. A. Waltrip, left, Ray Warren, Bob Cameron, Michael Grady and Warren Thaxton.

# Ratings of Bands Directed by Warren Thaxton

- 1955 – 1956 Trent High School, Trent, Texas  
Band program begun
- 1956 – 1957 Trent High School, Trent, Texas  
Did not attend UIL
- 1957 – 1958 Colorado City Junior High School, Colorado City, Texas  
Concert II, Sight Reading II
- 1958 – 1959 Colorado City Junior High School, Colorado City, Texas  
Concert I, Sight Reading I
- 1959 – 1960 Colorado City Junior High School, Colorado City, Texas  
Concert I, Sight Reading I
- 1960 – 1961 Breckenridge High School, Breckenridge, Texas  
Marching II, Concert II, Sight Reading II
- 1961 – 1962 Madison Junior High School, Abilene, Texas  
Concert II, Sight Reading II
- 1962 – 1963 Madison Junior High School, Abilene, Texas  
Marching II, Concert I, Sight Reading I
- 1963 – 1964 Madison Junior High School, Abilene, Texas  
Marching II, Concert I, Sight Reading I
- 1964 – 1965 Madison Junior High School, Abilene, Texas  
Marching I, Concert I, Sight Reading I
- 1965 – 1966 Madison Junior High School, Abilene, Texas  
Marching I, Concert I, Sight Reading II
- 1966 – 1967 Cooper High School, Abilene, Texas  
Marching I, Concert II, Sight Reading III
- 1967 – 1968 Cooper High School, Abilene, Texas  
Marching \* playoff game, Concert III, Sight Reading III
- 1968 – 1969 Cooper High School, Abilene, Texas  
Marching II, Concert III, Sight Reading I
- 1969 – 1970 Cooper High School, Abilene, Texas  
Marching I, Concert I, Sight Reading I
- 1970 – 1971 Cooper High School, Abilene, Texas  
Marching I, Concert I, Sight Reading I
- 1971 – 1972 Cooper High School, Abilene, Texas  
Marching I, Concert I, Sight Reading I
- 1972 – 1973 Cooper High School, Abilene, Texas  
Marching I, Concert I, Sight Reading I
- 1973 – 1974 Cooper High School, Abilene, Texas  
Marching I, Concert I, Sight Reading I
- 1974 – 1975 Cooper High School, Abilene, Texas  
Marching I, Concert I, Sight Reading I

- 1975 – 1976 Cooper High School, Abilene, Texas  
Marching I, Concert I, Sight Reading I
- 1976 – 1977 Cooper High School, Abilene, Texas  
Marching I, Concert I, Sight Reading I
- 1977 – 1978 Cooper High School, Abilene, Texas  
Honor Band Marching I, Concert I, Sight Reading I  
Sophomore Band Concert I, Sight Reading I
- 1978 – 1979 Cooper High School, Abilene, Texas  
Honor Band Marching I, Concert I, Sight Reading I  
Sophomore Band Concert I, Sight Reading I
- 1979 – 1997 Assistant at Abilene High School, Abilene, Texas