

## Melvin Kenneth Meads

Melvin Meads, born in Baltimore, Maryland on April 4, 1927, was the fourth child of Charles and Bessie Meads. The Meads family, including Melvin's brother, Charles, and his three sisters, Gloria, Kathleen, and Shirley, the youngest, moved to Texas in 1935. As of this writing, Charles is the only surviving member of the family.

Melvin attended Luther Burbank High School in San Antonio and played slide trombone in the Bulldog band under the direction of the late Vernon Mayfield. There he forged many lifelong friendships with fellow band members, several who became band directors themselves. World War II was still raging when Melvin graduated in 1944. He joined the Navy that year, but saw little action because the war ended shortly after he finished his basic training.

Following his discharge from military service, Melvin Meads enrolled in the Vandercook School of Music in Chicago, Illinois. There he earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Music Education. Melvin returned to San Antonio and met his future bride, Helen Jo Buchanan, through mutual friends. Helen Jo, affectionately known as Jody, and Melvin raised three children, a beautiful daughter, Cheryl, and rambunctious fraternal twin boys, Larry and Leslie.

Melvin played slide trombone in dance bands in the San Antonio area before beginning his career as a band director. He also sold band uniforms part-time for Bruno's and Company. He began his high school music vocation following his marriage to Jody. His first directing job was at Pleasanton High School, near San Antonio. After three First-place University Interscholastic League awards in two years at Pleasanton, Melvin directed the Poteet, Texas High School band. He earned two more first place awards in two years at Poteet. In the fall of 1954, Mel Meads moved to South San Antonio High School where he directed for 12 years. The South San Bobcat band earned a UIL Sweepstakes award in Melvin's last year at South San. The late Robert Geisler helped the South San band prepare that year while Melvin recovered from a terrible bout with gout. Melvin Meads then moved to Robert E. Lee High School in the fall of 1966. Under the direction of Mr. Meads, the Lee Volunteer band continued its long tradition of earning UIL sweepstakes awards.

Countless numbers of Melvin Meads' students have said that Mr. Meads had a lasting positive influence on their lives. Even sons and daughters of his band student's participated in school band programs because of that influence. Many of his band members continued their interest in music programs following high school. Quite a few of his students completed college music programs and became band directors or professional musicians or both. Others served in the armed services music programs. One endearing story not only shows the positive influence Melvin had on his students, it also reveals his generosity. A student at South San High School told Mr. Meads he would have to give up band because his family could not afford to pay for his clarinet. Mel Meads used his own

money to cover the cost of the clarinet. That student not only finished high school as a band member, he became a high school band director as well in south Texas and is still teaching today.

Throughout his teaching career, Mr. Meads was emphatic in telling his students that being on time to class meant that you were warmed up and ready to play as soon as class started. It was practically a sin for a student to enter the band hall just as the bell rang. Correction, it was a sin! All of his students can tell you one of Melvin's mantras was "If you're on time, you're late!"

Melvin Meads' band at South San High School was the first marching band in the San Antonio area with a bass drum that could be twirled. Melvin also appointed the first female drum major at South San in 1965. One Robert E. Lee High School student is quoted in the 1976 yearbook saying "You spend so much time together as a band member, you either love it or hate it. Either way, we learned a lot more than music from Mr. Meads."

Melvin Meads ended his music career on a high note. He took the Lee High School band on a trip to Daytona Beach, Florida to participate in a prestigious band competition. Besides having a lot of fun, the band earned the Best 3-A Band award, the Best Jazz Band award, the Best Marching Band award, and the Best Overall Band award.

We cannot hope to recall every one of Melvin's students by name, but we can surely say that he helped them all to become better adults and citizens because of his devotion and commitment to them.

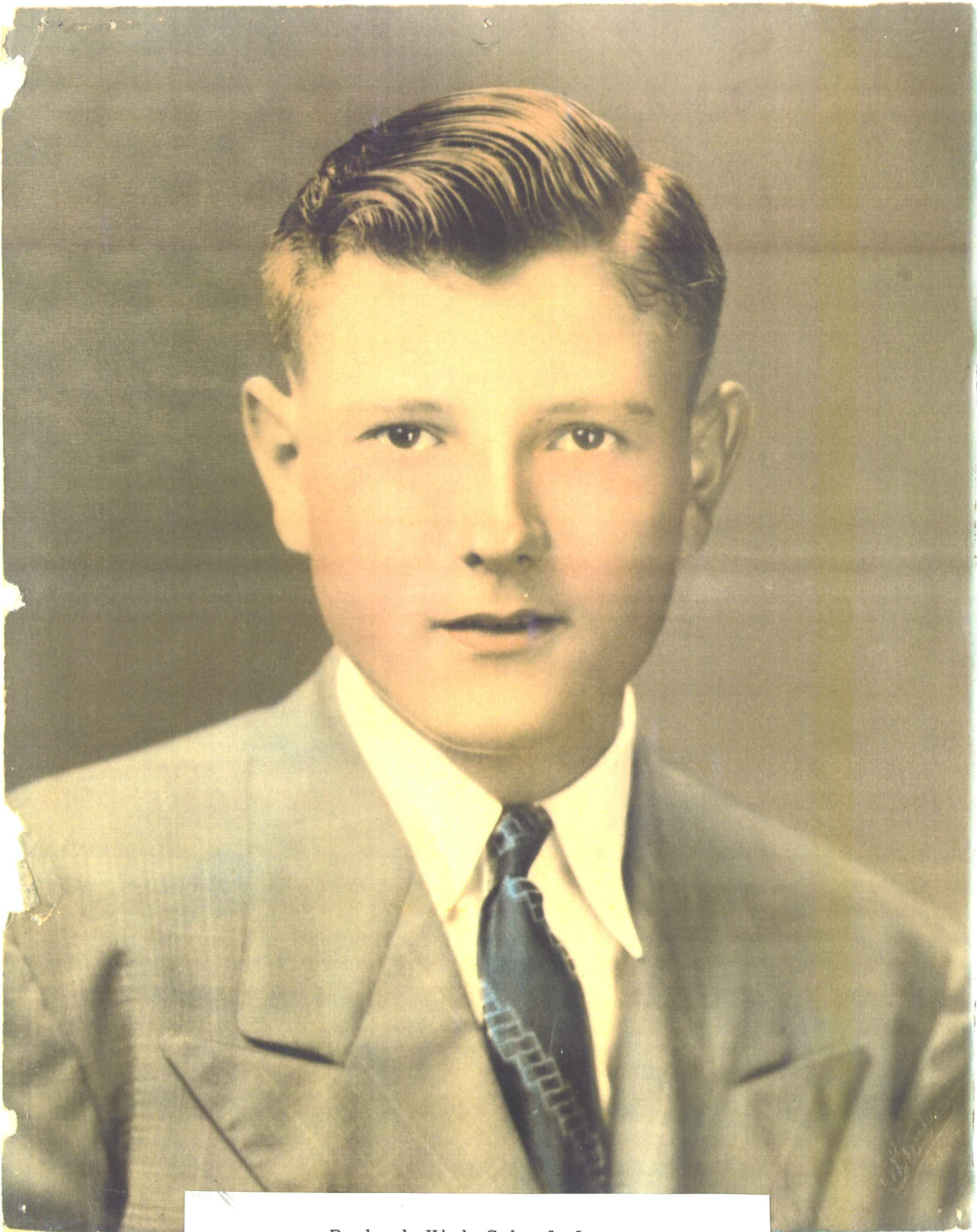
Melvin Meads was also an active member of the Texas Bandmasters Association during his teaching career. He served in every executive position in the organization and was the Association President in 1967.

Melvin and his wife Jody, who was a schoolteacher as well, both retired in 1982. Besides his love for music, Melvin enjoyed traveling the open road. He drove charter buses for several years for the Kerrville Bus Company. He drove during those few weeks in the summer when he was not working with the band. He drove the charter bus for the San Antonio Missions baseball team for two seasons in the early 60's. Once Melvin and Jody retired, they sold their San Antonio home and became full-time travelers, living in a travel trailer that they took all over the United States and Mexico making many new friends along the way.

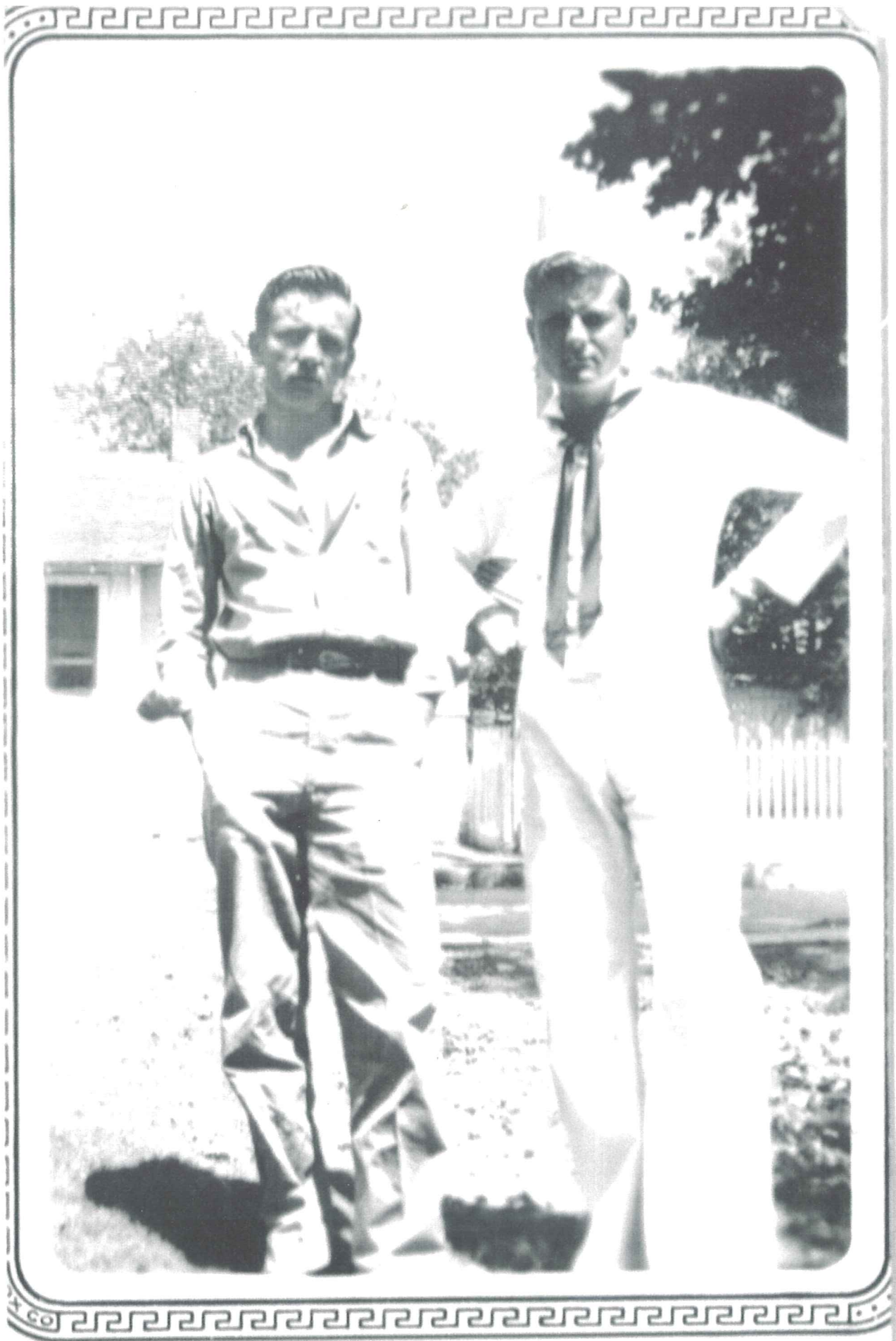
Sadly, Melvin was diagnosed with cancer in December 1998. Mel and Jody gave up their travels while he underwent extensive treatment in San Antonio. His life ended prematurely on October 24, 1999 at the age of 72, less than two months shy of his 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. His wife, children and grandchildren all remain in San Antonio.



Siblings in Baltimore: Kathleen, Charles, Mel and Gloria



Burbank High School days



WW11 servicemen: Brother Charles with Mel



Mel (on the left) playing trombone at the Gunter Hotel



Wedding cake after marriage vows



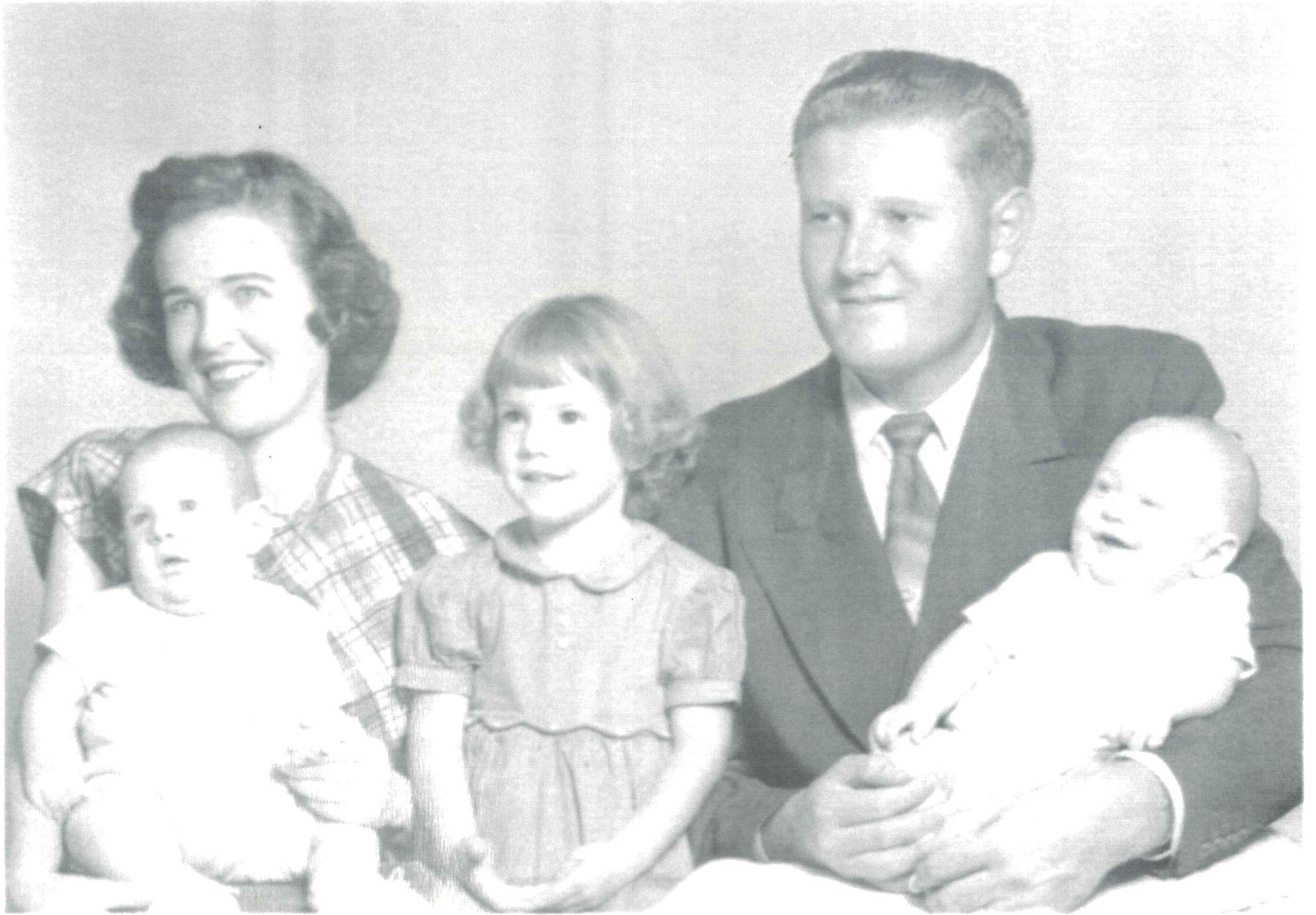
Family members at wedding of Mel and Jody





NOV. 1951

Mel playing with Les, one of his twin sons



Christmas card with children: Les, Cheryl and Larry

# Melvin Meads New Bandmaster At South San



MELVIN MEADS

Melvin Kenneth Meads was recently appointed as bandmaster of the South San Antonio High School. He replaces Bob Geisler who left to accept a similar position at Burbank High School.

Mr. Meads comes to the position with a number of years of experience behind him. He has been bandmaster at Poteet High School for the past year and one-half. During this time, his band won three first places and one second in Inter-Scholastic competition.

Previous to his Poteet assignment, he spent two years at Pleasanton, where his band also won three first places and two second, in Inter-Scholastic competition.

He is a native San Antonian, having graduated from Burbank High School, before leaving for Vandercook College of Music in Chicago.

The Meads and their three children make their home at 643 Kashmir. Mrs. Meads is also a teacher.



Striving for perfection, Mr. Melvin Meads, Director, corrects marchers at their early morning practice.

As a new member of Lee's family, Mr. Melvin Meads, Band Director, conducts the Volunteer band in Rebel Rouser at the end of a pep rally.











MAR • 73

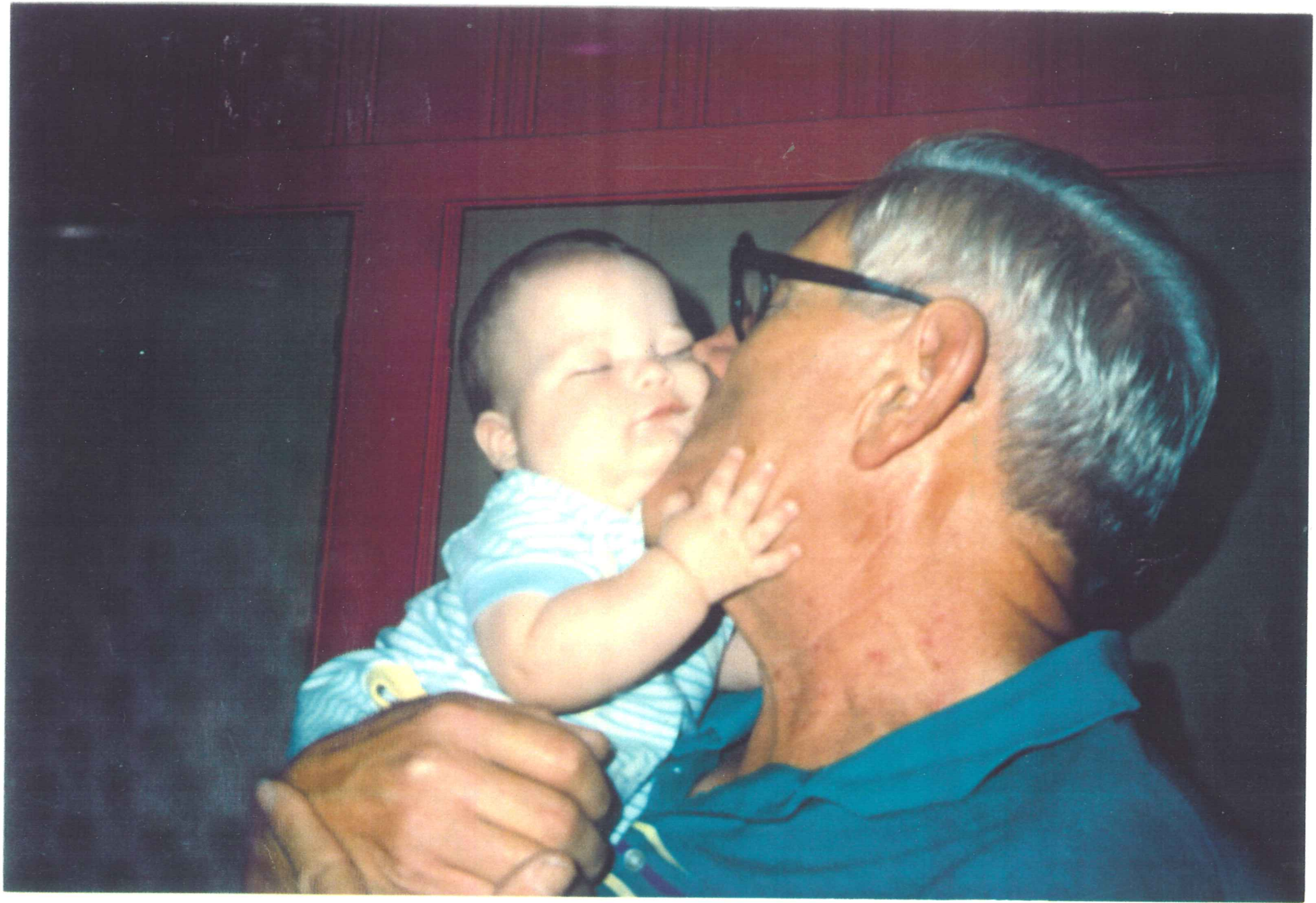


Battle of Flowers Parade



First grandson, Shawn, brought great joy







"Home on Wheels" which provided a happy home on the road;  
grandsons Matthew and Andrew checking it out



Ready for a hike up DEL Norte Peak in Colorado



Horseback riding in Colorado

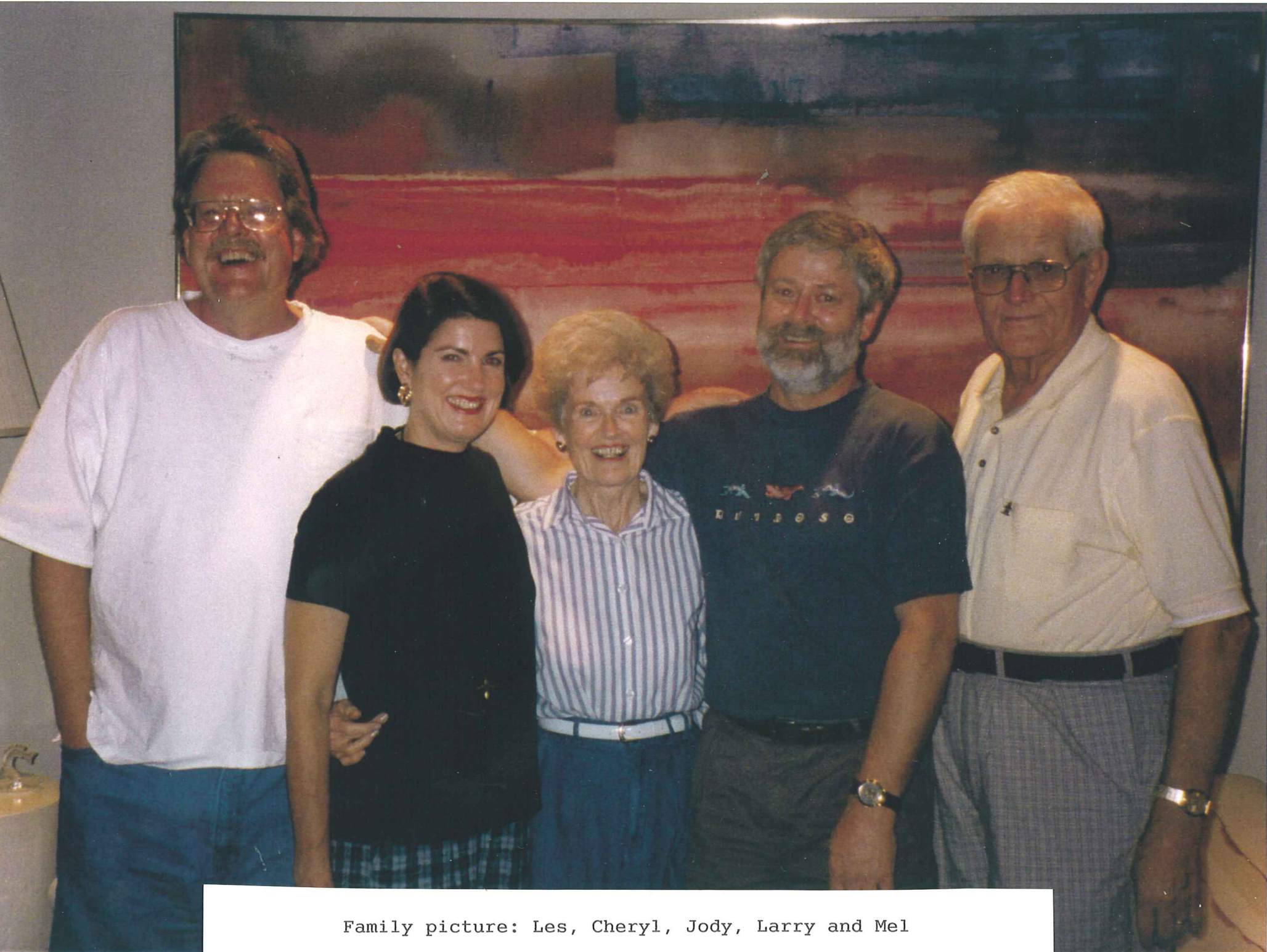


Vancouver, BC





Everybody wants an interview!



Family picture: Les, Cheryl, Jody, Larry and Mel



### MEADS

Melvin Kenneth Meads, 72, passed away Sunday, October 24, 1999 of cancer. Mr. Meads was a high school band director for 30 years and retired in 1982 as band director of Lee High School. He had previously taught at South San High School. He was an officer of Texas Bandmaster Association and served as President in 1967. He and his wife enjoyed 16 years of travel across the U.S. and Mexico. Mr. Meads was a member of First Baptist Church. He is survived by his devoted wife, Helen Jo (Jody) Buchanan Meads; children, Cheryl Myers and her husband, Charles, Larry Meads and his wife, Valerie, Leslie Meads and his wife, Adrienne; grandchildren, Shawn Meads, Matthew Myers, Andrew Myers, Melissa Hatton, Beverly Bynum and Ray Bynum; great grandson, Cameron Locke. He is additionally survived by his sister, Gloria Mills; brother, Charles Meads and his wife, Aileen of Irving, TX; sister-in-law, Renna Pierce and her husband, Tom, Seattle, WA; numerous nieces and nephews.

#### MEMORIAL SERVICE

WEDNESDAY - 11:00 A.M.  
PORTER LORING CHAPEL  
Memorials may be made to Hospice San Antonio, 8721 Botts Lane, San Antonio, TX 78217-9735 or the charity of your choice. Arrangements with

**PORTER LORING**

**MORTUARY**

1101 McCullough • 227-8221

# REGION VOCAL CHAIRS

2006-2008

As of 8/29/2006

1	Roderick Zeman	Tascosa HS	7012 Adirondack Trl	Amarillo	TX	79106-2648	S: (806) 326-2655	H: (806) 353-8928	roderick.zeman@amaisd.org
2	Mark Baker	Denton HS	1517 Amherst Dr	Denton	TX	76201-0616	S: (940) 369-2056	H: (940) 484-0035	mbaker@dentonisd.org
3	Teresa Berrier	Lake Highlands HS	5802 Southampton Dr	Richardson	TX	75082-4942	S: (469) 593-1063	H: (972) 238-5899	terry.berrier@risd.org
4	Jackie Byler	Liberty-Eylau HS	921 Mockingbird Ln	Atlanta	TX	75551-1935	S: (903) 832-1530	H: (903) 796-7208	jackie.byler@leisd.net
5	Kay Owens	Martin HS	5039 Toftrees Dr	Arlington	TX	76016-1875	S: (817) 483-6462	H: (817) 446-7471	aowens@aisd.net
6	Michael Matlock	Andrews HS	609 NW 12th St	Andrews	TX	79714-4716	S: (432) 524-1993	H: (432) 524-3794	mmatlock@andrews.esc18.net
7	Robyn Hollimon	North Crowley HS	678 Baldrige Rd	Burleson	TX	76028-7409	S: (817) 263-1270	H: (817) 447-6131	rhollimon@northcrowleychoir.
8	Rebecca Northen	Shoemaker HS	3006 Las Moras Dr	Temple	TX	76502-1644	S: (254) 501-0920	H: (254) 771-5863	rebecca.northen@killeenisd.org
9	John Krystyniak	Tomball HS	7215 Spring Cypress Rd #1131	Spring	TX	77379	S: (281) 357-3220	H: (713) 299-8802	jkrystyn@tomballisd.net
10	Renee Kloes	Nederland HS	1403 Navasota Ave	Nederland	TX	77627-3729	S: (409) 727-2741	H: (409) 721-9218	rkloes@nederland.k12.tx.us
11	Aaron Hufty	O'Connor HS	11122 Candle Park	San Antonio	TX	78249-4205	S: (210) 397-4757	H: (210) 845-3201	aaronhufty@nisd.net
12	Christie Brown	MacArthur HS	2434 Encino Cedros	San Antonio	TX	78259-2653	S: (210) 650-1100	H: (210) 404-9087	cbrown1@neisd.net
13	Donna Baskin	Sweeny HS	704 Alice St	Sweeny	TX	77480-2602	S: (979) 491-8154	H: (979) 548-0246	dbaskin@mail.sweeny.isd.esc4.
14	Fernando Fernandez	Flour Bluff HS	6440 Everhart Rd Apt 5G	Corpus Christi	TX	78413-2642	S: (361) 694-9031	H: (361) 774-6899	ffernandez@flourbluffschoools.net
15	David Alvarez	Edinburg HS	3105 Goldcrest Ave.	McAllen	TX	78504	S: (956) 289-2400	H: (956) 971-9161	mctenor@rgv.rr.com
16	Joey Lowrance	Coronado HS	7305 Aberdeen #3404	Lubbock	TX	79424	S: (805) 766-0638	H: (806) 252-9952	jlowrance@lubbockisd.org
17	William Few	Brazoswood HS	322 Live Oak Ln	Lake Jackson	TX	77566-4632	S: (979) 730-7300	H: (979) 297-7339	billfew@houston.rr.com
18	Nancy Cavendish	Hays HS	401 Treetop Way	Buda	TX	78610-2856	S: (512) 268-2911	H: (512) 295-3045	cavendishn@hayscisd.net
19	Daniel Ponce	Galena Park HS	10139 W Palm Lake Dr	Houston	TX	77034-3785	S: (832) 386-2831	H: (281) 484-5403	dponce@galenaparkisd.com
20	Randy Preston	Midlothian HS	911 S 9th St	Midlothian	TX	76065-3636	S: (972) 775-8237	H: (972) 775-3753	randy_preston@midlothian-isd.
21	Amy McMichael	Whitehouse HS	10442 County Road 1265	Flint	TX	75762-9134	S: (903) 839-5540	H: (903) 894-6380	mcmichaela@whitehouseisd.org
22	Richard Myler	Socorro HS	3650 George Dieter Dr Apt	El Paso	TX	79936-1253	S: (915) 937-2252	H: (915) 204-4080	rmyler@sisd.net
23	Gail Land	Lamar HS	907 Montview Dr	Katy	TX	77450-2809	S: (713) 522-5960	H: (281) 578-3171	gailland@sbcglobal.net
24	Rachel Forester	Hebron HS	4116 Creekhollow Dr	Carrollton	TX	75010-1108	S: (469) 713-3025	H: (972) 394-6158	foresterr@lisd.net
25	Derrick Brookins	Plano HS	10251 Darkwood Dr	Frisco	TX	75035-4715	S: (469) 752-9430	H: (214) 450-7464	derrick.brookins@pisd.edu
26	Elizabeth Gove	Cedar Park HS	2007 Spring Hollow Path	Round Rock	TX	78681-4402	S: (512) 435-8501	H: (512) 218-9368	beth.gove@leanderisd.org
27	Grace Littlefield	Cypress Springs HS	17138 Kiowa River Ln	Houston	TX	77095-4256	S: (281) 345-3073	H: (281) 256-2277	grace.littlefield@cfisd.net
28	Matias Garcia	Donna HS	1004 S Cherry Blossom Cir	Weslaco	TX	78596-7229	S: (956) 464-0377	H: (956) 973-0317	matagar@rocketmail.com

## Meads, Larry P.

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**From:** Power Plants, OWS Water Lab  
**Sent:** Monday, November 01, 1999 5:15 AM  
**To:** Meads, Larry P.  
**Subject:** Uncle Mel

I was saddened to read in the paper of your Father's passing. I did not know you were an employee until I saw the notice on the bulletin board a few minutes ago.

I was in the band 4 years at Lee. I graduated in '83, so I was there for his last three years at Lee. There were two things that he always said that have had a lasting impression on me (and I'm sure anyone else who was in the band.) The first was "If you're on time you're late" and the second was "Get a horse."

I was not a very good trombone player. But I did learn the importance of teamwork and what can be accomplished. We raised \$50,000 to go to Daytona Beach. We went to State Marching Contest (I don't know if they've ever been back). I'll probably never play in a band again, but the many things learned from "Uncle Mel" (that's what we called him behind his back, although he knew it) will stick with me and be applied for the rest of my life.

Tom Brotherman

Dear Mrs. Meads,  
I saw Mr. Meads  
obituary in the newspaper  
and was so very sad to learn  
of his passing. I was one of his  
band students at Robert E Lee High  
school from '73-'77. He was such a  
positive influence on his students. he shared  
with us his love for music and taught us to  
work hard to be the very best. I will always have  
such fond memories of Mr. Meads. You and your  
family are in my thoughts and prayers. May  
Gods love carry you through this time of  
and bring you peace and comfort in the  
days to come.



Honoring the life  
of someone very special  
who will always be  
remembered.

With deepest sympathy,  
Cindy Cleverger Hannasch

October 27, 1999

To the Mel Meads Family,

You have my deepest sympathy on the death of your husband and Father.

He played a very influential part in my life and career as he did with many of his students at South San and Robert E. Lee High Schools.

I met Mel at C. Bruno and Son along with Robert Geisler, Irving Driborodt, and Vernon Mayfield.

Mel Meads talked me into becoming a music major at St. Marys University with Pop Sturchio. I never regretted it.

As a band director he judged my band with good constructive criticism. He always started "If I were you I would".... I respected him for this.

Once he was a sight reading judge and heard me tell the students where we were in the tune. We were out of our league at Fox Tech playing with Lee, Churchill, and Roosevelt. We finished and he said "I have to disqualify you for telling them where they were in the music." Then he said "I would have done the same thing; its better than a "5". It made me feel good.

I will miss his smile and soft spoken manner. God bless you , Mel!

A friend,  
Mike Pagonis  
October 27, 1999



**MICHAEL PAGONIS**  
331 Cragmont Ln.  
San Antonio, TX 78213  
Ph 344-4226

*P.S. Enclosed is a poem I wrote in her memory.*



*Elegy to Mr. Music*

*Melvin Meads, how do you do?  
The Lord in heaven has been waiting for you.  
You spent good time while down on earth,  
But destined to be with Me since birth.*

*You were Mr. Music for all of your life,  
But found time for a family and wife.  
They stood by you through thick and thin,  
And look at the sweepstakes your band did win!*

*Toward the last you really suffered a lot,  
But in heaven with Me—see all that you've got!  
I want to have the best director in the land,  
So, I've chosen you to lead My band.*

*Mel, go ahead and look around,  
For you are no more earthly bound.  
So, pause and pray for a moment or two,  
And remember when Mel's band entertained you.*

*Thanks for your help, Mel!*

*Mike Pagonis  
10/25/99*



October 27, 1999

Dear Mrs. Meads,

Just a note to thank you for sharing your fine husband with so many band students who flourished under his influence. Four of our sons who were in the R.E. Lee band under his direction - Tom, Richard, Doug and Frank - enjoyed a wonderful musical and educational experience through their relationship with him. And I thought it so special that Frank, through his medical care of him, was able to repay him in a way for his wonderful mentoring during his teenage years.

The memorial service today was so touching. We have sent a memorial in his honor to Hospice

San Antonio.

We shall remember him and you in our prayers.

With sincere appreciation,

Mary Helen Mueller

1-6-2000

Dear Mrs. Meads-

As a 1979 graduate of Lee High School, and a French Horn player in the band all four of those years, I was very saddened to hear of the passing of your husband. Mel Meads was a very important force in my teen years, and someone who really encouraged my musical abilities. Although he could appear rough on the outside, I have great memories of seeing the warm hearted man he really was underneath the exterior. I also remember him as a proud father and grandfather who took joy in bringing his grandson on the band bus to attend football games.

Mel always expected the best from his students, and at least while I was at Lee, he got it! Although I no longer have a place to play my horn on a regular basis, I refuse to sell it, in part, now, out of respect for this man who encouraged me to play my heart out. I will surely miss him!

Sincerely,  
Paul J. Williams  
Class of 1979

Michael Samulin  
1918 Encino Belle  
San Antonio, Texas 78259

February 29, 2000

Mrs. Jody Meads  
6701 Blanco Rd.  
San Antonio, Texas 78216

Dear Mrs. Meads:

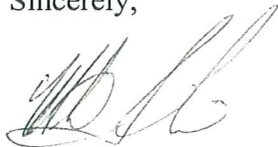
While I know that some time has passed since the loss of Mr. Meads, I wanted to take this time to write to you and let you know important Mr. Meads was in my life. I am truly sorry to hear of your loss but I hope that you are comforted in the fact that he touched so many people in his life.

I was in band at Lee High School from 1970 to 1973 and have very fond memories of those times under the guidance of Mr. Meads. He was a great teacher and friend to his students. I think of him often in my day to day life and remember what a positive influence he was on my life. I also remember (laughingly) at the time that we papered your house (it must have been around the fall of 1973). Of course we had been seen, and to this day I tell my friends of the call from Mr. Meads the next morning asking us to come back and clean up the mess. And to top that off I remember you making hamburgers and fries for all of us that Saturday after the cleanup.

These are special memories that I will always carry with me – and as your friends and family return to their day to day activities and as you must settle down into your new routines I thought that I might share this with you in hopes of brightening your day.

Thank you again for being so nice to us when we were at your home, and for sharing Mr. Meads with us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Michael Samulin', written in dark ink.

Michael Samulin  
Class of 1973

9619 Moss Haven Drive  
Dallas, Texas 75231  
Sept. 7, 2000

Dear Mrs. Meads,

I am so sorry that my letter to you is so overdue, however, I wanted you to know that I wanted to extend my sympathies to you on the death of your husband. I was so saddened to know that Mr. Meads had passed away. My sister sent me a copy of Mr. Meads' obituary. Mr. Meads had been my high school band director many, many years ago when I was a high school student at South San Antonio High School.

He was also the band director when my younger brothers and sister were in the band. I played the alto sax, my sister the clarinet, my younger brother the clarinet and my youngest brother the trombone. I graduated from high school in 1964 and from Southwest Tx. St. University in 1968.

Although I am now a 54-year-old woman with children of my own, in my mind Mr. Meads never aged. He was the only band director we ever had. He taught us the basics of music, marching basics and a whole lot about being a part of a band of which we could be proud. During the era I was in band, the bass drum player revolved the drum as we marched. We were so proud of that because no other band could do that. No other band had a bass drum player who could twirl their drum in a parade or on the field.

Mr. Meads had such a tremendous influence on our lives. He treated us fairly and with a great deal of respect at a time when not all other teachers thought it was important to do so. By being in band, we were busy and did not have time to get into any mischief. Our parents were so grateful, I am sure.

As you can tell, Mr. Meads had a tremendous impact on my life and that of my brothers and sister. Because of band, we were able to travel to cities we might not have otherwise seen. El Paso was (probably still is) not a very interesting city to visit, but for a poor kid from the barrio it sure was a new adventure. We went to Corpus for Buccaneer Days. Those trips were among the first we took outside of San Antonio.

It is with complete and utter fondness that I remember Mr. Meads. He would say things like "Everyone but Odellia is out of step." Needless to say, I knew that I was out of step. Because of our music lessons, my brother Ernest learned not only to play his clarinet, but the saxophone and trumpet as well. He and some of his friends formed a small band that played for pay at the local recreation center and such. My brother Felix earned first chair on the state level one of the years he was in band. He is still very proud of that medal.

Even when I have gone back to our high school reunions, the people I still recognize and visit with are the people who were in band with me. We still have that bond of the South San Antonio High School Bobcat band. Some of the first boys I had a crush on in junior high and high school were in band with me. I never learned to enjoy football, but I had fun flirting with the boys around me during football games.

As a parent, I encouraged both of my sons to join band. Our oldest son played the trumpet in his high school band and took piano. In college, he sang in the choir. Our youngest son played trombone and guitar. Both of them were involved in band as a direct result of Mr. Meads' influence on my high school career. My nephew plays the alto sax and is very proud to be a part of his high school band. Both of my brother's daughters played musical instruments, as well. So, you see, Mr. Mead's influence did not end when my sister, brothers, and I graduated from high school.

Some of my fondest high school memories are about band. I wanted you to know that Mr. Meads made a tremendous contribution to our education and us. No, I was not one of his favorite students nor was I a star musician. In fact, I never did learn how to sight read music, but I sure tried. I even made first chair during my senior year.

As an adult, I became a teacher, a wife, a mother, and a community and school volunteer. One of the places where I volunteered when my sons were in school was with the band. All of that was due to Mr. Meads' influence. I cannot remember many of my other high school teachers, but I do remember Mr. Meads.

Again, I extend my deepest sympathies to you on the death of Mr. Meads. He was one of a kind. I know that I am not the only former student who remembers him fondly. He touched our lives in ways he may have never even known about.

My deepest sympathy,

*Odelia Rendon Weaver*

South San Antonio H.S.  
Class of '64