

“If success in life is to be measured by the influence for good that one has upon another, then Don Fleuriet (lived) a most successful life indeed.”

La Feria News, May 22, 1986

Taking over from Warren Reitz
August 1952



Band First In Valley with Spats

1953



The La FERIA Band, under director Don Fleuriet in accordance with its custom of ranking first in its every undertaking, chalks up another first. This time it is the colorful addition of spats to the band uniform. La FERIA is the first and only band in the Valley, and one of the few in the Southwest that is wearing spats.

The spats will make their debut at the La FERIA-Lyford game (if it does not rain) on Friday night, October 30. The townspeople are urged to be out to see the game and watch the marching maneuvers of the band, with special attention to the spats.

The importance of this part of

the uniform is that it will emphasize the precision of the marching and brighten the overall appearance of the uniform, which is mainly maroon.

The spats, designed by Mrs. J. S. Sanders, and made by the mothers of the La FERIA Band Parents Association, are of gold

corduroy matching the gold trim of the uniform, with maroon buttons completing the maroon and gold motif of the suit. The band mothers cut out the first pair on Monday of last week, and by Saturday morning fifty-five pairs were ready for fitting.

Everyone is reminded that the culmination of the band's fall program is the annual Pigskin Jubilee on December 10, at Weslaco. There the La FERIA Band will make its main appearance as a separate marching unit, as well as participating in the massed band finale.



1954/1955 LaFeria High School Band

Band Sets Local Record

Music Jubilee Draws Large Crowd; La Feria Band Rated First Division

An impressive spectacle of music, color and marching was witnessed by a crowd of about 6500 people last Thursday evening, December 9, when the twelfth annual Texas Interscholastic League Marching Band Contest of Region Nine, popularly known locally as the Pigskin Jubilee, was presented at Barbee Field in Weslaco.

The jubilee is a climax of months of practice. The bands do

not compete with each other but against set standards as required by the Texas Music Educators Association and sanctioned by the Texas Interscholastic League of Music Festivals.

Twenty-three bands took part in the jubilee, the main event, which climaxed a day of several outstanding activities that made up the annual Weslaco Birthday Party of 1954. The first, second and third prize winning floats of the huge parade, held earlier in the day, added to the pleasure of the spectators as they circled the field during the band pageant.

The grand finale of massed band formations put on by members of all competing school bands was a beautiful sight. During these marching and playing formations, "Happy Birthday" was played in commemoration of Weslaco's 35th anniversary. As the final formation, a map of the United States

and the letters, U.S.A., were formed, all lights were turned off, with flashlights held by the performing members outlining the map and letters, the national anthem was played while sky rockets were set off and burst overhead.

The La Feria High School Band was again given a First Division rating in the Class A bands, which makes the nineteenth consecutive First Division rating for the band in the past six and one-half years. This is a record among the Valley bands.

Margaret Kolley, drum major of the La Feria Band, was highly commented by the judges on their comment sheets. Band Director Don Fleurlet was chairman of the committee which planned and directed the grand finale of the jubilee.

Other bands in the contest and their received ratings were: Class B Bands - San Isidro, First Division rating; Sharyland, Second Division; Class A bands - Los resnos, First Division; Edcogh - Elsa, First Division; La Joya, Second Division; Lyford, Second Division; and Rio Hondo, Third Division. Class AA bands - Weslaco, First Division; Mercedes, Second Division; Donna, Second Division; and Raymondville, Second Division. Class AAA bands - Harlingen, First Division; Edinburg, First Division; Mission, First Division; San Benito, Second Division; McAllen, Second Division; Pharr-San Juan-Alamo, Second Division. Class AAAA Bands - Brownsville, First Division.

Judges for this year's jubilee were Tony Fassino of Luling High School, Tommy Williamson, Refugio High School; and Jack Manry, El Campo High School.

"The La Feria High School band was again given a First Division rating in the Class A bands, which makes the nineteenth consecutive First Division rating for the band in the past six and one-half years. This is a record among the Valley bands."

His influence on me as a band student in his small town La Feria band was immeasurable, but no other single individual had as much influence on the direction of my professional life as did Don Fleuriet. It seemed that when my career came to a crossroad Don Fleuriet was there with just the right directional sign to turn right, turn left or go straight. Example one is the letter to the Dean of the school of music from which I took my first degree; the second was when he used his influence to help me to secure a major teaching position after graduate school; the others came in the form of regular informal evaluations of my teaching made possible by the close proximity of the school districts in which we worked. Living and teaching in adjacent towns in the Rio Grande Valley, where it was a common activity to visit each other's band halls to critique each other's work, led to a life-time friendship and mutual regard for each other's work.

**Carl Seale, Doctor of Musical Arts
Conductor Emeritus,
Valley Symphony Orchestra and Chorale
Professor Emeritus, Department of Music,
University of Texas-Pan American**

Mr. Fleuriet dedicated his life to the students and band of La Feria Schools. He touched so many lives and made a dramatic impact on the quality of the music in an amazing amount of students throughout the years that he was alive.

**Jana Lee Jones Gondran
La Feria High School
Class of 1977**

Band Takes Sweepstakes Award In Brownsville Festival of Music

The La Feria High School Band, under the direction of Don Fleuriet, made a clean sweep of all trophies given in its class at the First Annual Brownsville Festival of Music held last week at Brownsville.

The band was awarded a plaque for winning a superior (First Division) rating in both concert playing and sight reading. These were the twenty-second and twenty-third consecutive years.

In addition, the band won the sweepstakes trophy in Class CC for amassing the greatest number of points in all events; solos, ensembles, concert playing and sight reading.

And the band also came home with the most coveted of all trophies, the one given to the best concert band in each class. The other bands in Class CC (100 to 250 enrollment in high schools) were Edcouch-Elsa, Goliad, Luling, Three Rivers and Los Fresnos.

The La Feria band was the only band in any class to win all three of the possible awards. Bands in other classes included Weslaco, Mission, Donna, Sinton, San Benito, Victoria, Edinburg, Harlingen, Miller (Corpus Christi), Parris, and Brownsville.

The concert judges were Harold Bachman, University of Florida; Hugh McMillen, University of Colorado; and L. Bruce Jones, Louisiana State University. The sight reading judge was Col. Earl D. Irons, Arlington State College.

Gold medals were given to each student making a first division rating in a solo or an ensemble. La Feria entered twenty-four such events, winning twelve first divisions. In winning sweepstakes trophy, the La Feria band scored 152 points; Luling had 135, Three Rivers 125, Goliad 111 Edcouch-Elsa 60 and Los Fresnos 35.

Concert playing and sight reading for class CC bands took place last Thursday afternoon at Jacob Brown Auditorium. The solo and ensemble contest was held on Friday at Brownsville High School.

On Saturday, the All-Festival Band rehearsed during the day and presented a concert at night, at which time the trophies were awarded. This 113-piece band was composed of some of the outstanding players from each of the bands competing at the festival. Those representing La Feria were Ruth Vigness, Bobbie Smith, Grace Butcher, Margaret Kelley, James Holley, Miriam Lamm, Peter Llewellyn and Frances Till.

The band will conclude this year's activities with its Annual Spring Concert on Tuesday, May 17, at 8 p. m. in the high school auditorium.



MUSIC FESTIVAL TROPHIES awarded to the La Feria High School Band at the First Annual Brownsville Festival of Music held last week in Brownsville. Left to right, Bobbie Smith holding the sweepstakes trophy in Class CC, Band Director Don Fleuriet with plaque award for a superior rating in both concert playing and sight reading, and Ruth Ellen Vigness holding the most coveted of all trophies, the one given to the best concert band in each class. (Staff Photo)

La Feria band was the only band in any class to win:

**1st Division Concert & Sightreading
Sweepstakes Trophy
And
Best Concert Band**

1955

The La Feria News

"THE PAPER THAT CARES ABOUT THE WEST CAMERON COUNTY AREA"

NUMBER 33

VOLUME XXXV

LA FERIA, CAMERON COUNTY, TEXAS

PRICE 5c

SEPTEMBER 4, 1958

La Feria Selected Best AA Band in State



La Feria High School Band, No. 1 in Class AA in Texas, To Play in Galveston at Convention of Texas Music Educators Association in February

Band Has Come Up Through Years

by Mrs. J. S. Sanders

The band has done it again! So what? For years hasn't the La Feria High School Band rated first division, won sweepstakes plaques, sent members to All-Valley and All-State Bands, where some made first chair? Yes, the band has done all these things, but don't become complacent about it. The band members are not. They know that honors are not

izing one. Then Phil Murray came home from college and got the band organized. Some of you are still around who played in that brave little band. There were nine of you, or was it a dozen? Anyway, you and your director were a dedicated group and made a reputable showing. But Phil moved on to another school, and the band disintegrated.

It was then that "Los Tarrabores," an all-girl drum corps, was formed. The girls did some right nice marching and drumming, but that just did not take the place of a band. Through the next few years, band directors came and went. During all this time the school administrators were not sitting idle. They were trying desperately to find the right man to get the band started again.

It was then that Warren Reitz came down from San Antonio to start with almost nothing and build a good band. This was the band that you had been waiting for; this was a band you could be proud of, and you supported it. When after for years, he decided to retire to private business, the school administration asked him to find a worthy successor. It was he who bro-

"The record of the band under the direction of Don Fleuriet speaks for itself. And what a record! Don has taken a good band and made it into a superior band during the six years that he has been here."

ught Don Fleuriet to the attention of the Board of Trustees and the Superintendent.

The record of the band under the direction of Don Fleuriet speaks for itself. And what a record! Don has taken a good band and made it into a superior band during the six years that he has been here. This band has an unbroken record of 32 consecutive first division ratings in concert, marching, and sight reading. Thirty of these were awards in Texas Interscholastic League competition-festivals, and two were received at the Brownsville Music Festival in 1955, at which time the band also received the sweepstakes trophy and the trophy for the best concert band in its class. This year, as a climax to the years of hard work on the part of every band member and the director, the La Feria High School Band has been selected as the best concert band in class AA in the state of Texas.

The band has produced some outstanding drum majors. Two of these, Jimmy Hudellatt and Carl Scale, went on to become drum majors at their respective colleges.

An active Band Parents' Association supports the band program. Each year this organization gives a barbecue to raise funds for new uniforms and other equipment. The parents also cook and serve a banquet to the senior band each year, as well as sponsor annual picnics for both the junior and senior bands. This year the Band Parents are sponsoring the selling of memberships to the series of two concerts to be given by the band in the spring.

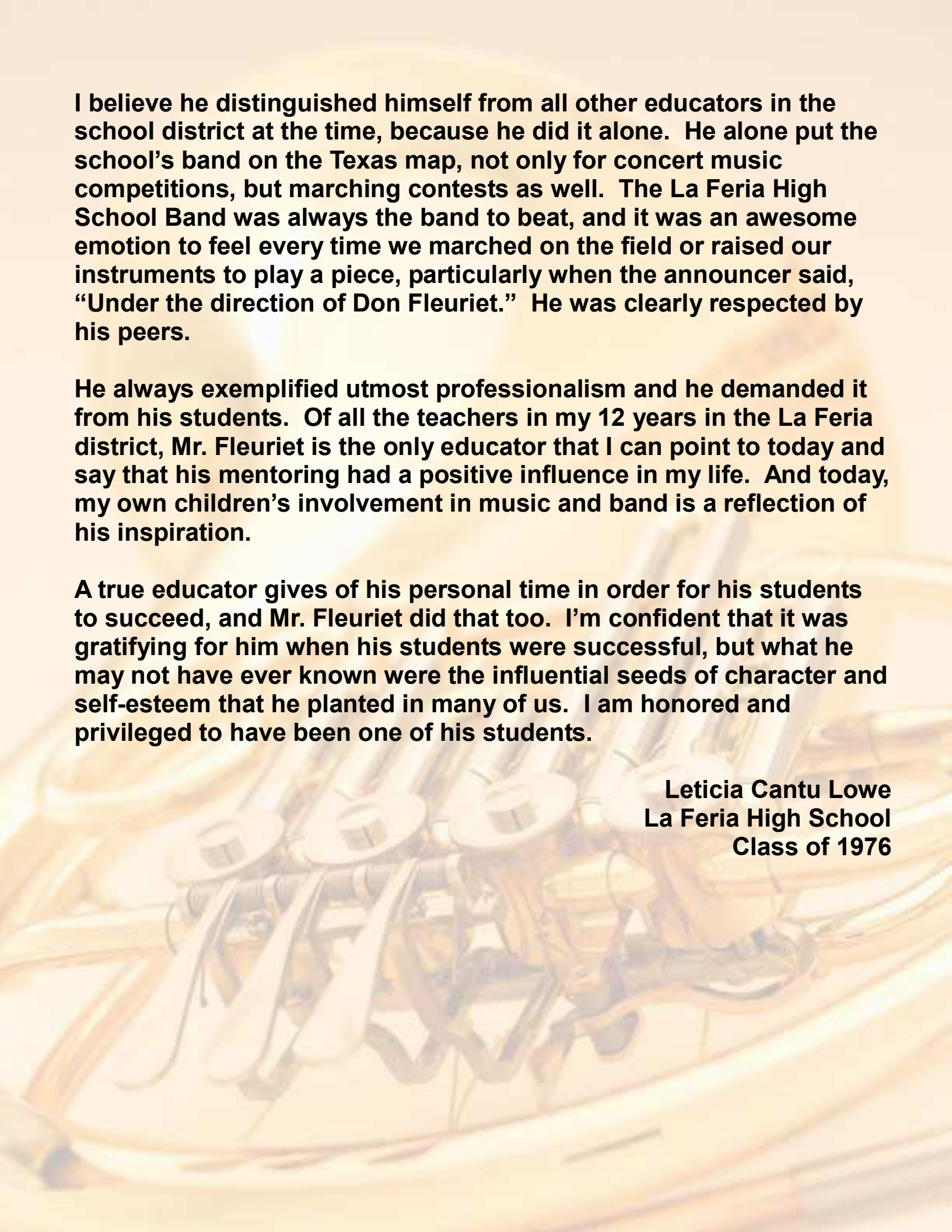
Each year the band goes on a three-day concert tour. In recent years performances have been given in Corpus Christi, Galveston, Austin, and San Antonio. This year, as a result of the recent honor bestowed upon it, the band has been invited to perform in Galveston in February during the state-wide convention of the Texas Music Educators' Association.

As we said before, this is a band you can be proud of. It represents the community of La Feria, as well as the school, and makes our town known throughout the state. You pride in the band is evidenced by the enthusiastic support that you give its program.

Editor's Note: Joe Gavito, chairman of the membership drive of the La Feria School Band Concert Series, today announced that due to the heavy rains in the area, the drive has been extended for another week in the hopes that workers may contact all persons in the area.

won on past excellence; that only on present performance is a band judged. That is why every member of the band is on his toes and alert to the instruction of Don Fleuriet the director.

Can you remember when La Feria had no band? Some of us can. Those were the years when we felt keenly the need of a band. We talked about it, and even made several sporadic attempts at organ-



I believe he distinguished himself from all other educators in the school district at the time, because he did it alone. He alone put the school's band on the Texas map, not only for concert music competitions, but marching contests as well. The La Feria High School Band was always the band to beat, and it was an awesome emotion to feel every time we marched on the field or raised our instruments to play a piece, particularly when the announcer said, "Under the direction of Don Fleuriet." He was clearly respected by his peers.

He always exemplified utmost professionalism and he demanded it from his students. Of all the teachers in my 12 years in the La Feria district, Mr. Fleuriet is the only educator that I can point to today and say that his mentoring had a positive influence in my life. And today, my own children's involvement in music and band is a reflection of his inspiration.

A true educator gives of his personal time in order for his students to succeed, and Mr. Fleuriet did that too. I'm confident that it was gratifying for him when his students were successful, but what he may not have ever known were the influential seeds of character and self-esteem that he planted in many of us. I am honored and privileged to have been one of his students.

**Leticia Cantu Lowe
La Feria High School
Class of 1976**



La Feria High School Band

DON FLEURIET, Director

The La Feria High School band has climaxed a decade of award-winning efforts by having been named the outstanding concert band in the state of Texas in class AA. As a result the band has been invited to perform at the Texas Music Educators' Association convention in Galveston in February.

The 89-piece band is directed by Don Fleuriet, who is beginning his seventh year in that capacity. Mr. Fleuriet is a graduate of Donna High School and Edinburg Junior College and holds BBA, BMus, and MMus degrees from Baylor University. He was recently elected to membership in the American School Band Directors' Association.

The La Feria band holds a most enviable contest record—it has received only first division ratings at all types of contests for the past ten years and as a result has amassed an unbroken string of 32 consecutive first division ratings in concert, marching, and sight reading. Thirty of these ratings were awarded in Texas Interscholastic League competition-festivals, and two were received at the Brownsville Music Festival in 1955, at which time the band also received the sweepstakes trophy and the trophy for best concert band in its class. The La Feria contest record was begun in 1948 by Mr. Warren Reitz who was director of the band for four years.

La Feria is a town with a population of 3,800 located in the heart of the Lower Rio Grande Valley of

Texas. It is a small AA school with a total enrollment of 1,400 and a high school enrollment of 250. There are a total of 123 students participating in the band program which includes 89 in the senior band, 19 in the junior band, and 15 in the beginner band. The beginner band is composed of fifth graders and the junior band of sixth graders. All students move into the senior band upon entering the seventh grade. This year's senior band is composed of 48 seventh and eighth grade students and 41 high school students. Last year's band had a similar balance.

The band program at La Feria is assisted by a very active Band Parents' Association. Each year this group sponsors a barbecue to raise funds for maintenance and replacement of uniforms and treats the band members to an annual winter banquet and spring picnic.

Each year the band takes a three-day concert tour. In recent years it has performed before high school audiences in Corpus Christi, Galveston, Austin, and San Antonio.

A selection committee of one college director and four high school band directors, appointed by the state band chairman of TMEA, was the group which met in August and chose the La Feria band to represent class AA bands in Texas. The decision was reached after the committee listened to tape recordings of the outstanding AA bands nominated from the sixteen music regions of the state. Crane High School Band was the runner-up in AA.



TMEA Convention Galveston, Texas February 20, 1959



Don Fleuriot
Director

Don Fleuriot has been the director of bands in the La Feria school system since August, 1952.

He was born in New Orleans and resided in the Lower Rio Grande Valley where he was graduated from Donna High School in 1939 and from Edinburg Junior College in 1941.

In 1943 he received the degree of Bachelor of Business Administration from Baylor University and then served for three years with the U. S. Marine Corps.

Returning to college after World War II to study music, he was assistant conductor of the Baylor Symphony Orchestra and conductor of the Baylor Summer Symphony before receiving the Master of Music degree in 1950. Following another tour of duty with the Marine Corps in Korea, he became the band director at La Feria High School.

Mr. Fleuriot is director of choirs at the La Feria Methodist Church and a member of the American School Band Directors' Association.



1958-1959 La Feria High School Band

PROGRAM

<i>Prelude and Fugue in Bb Minor</i>	Bach
<i>First Swedish Rhapsody</i>	Leidzen
<i>Nutmeggers March</i>	Osterling
<i>Bear Dance</i>	Bartok
<i>March to the Gallows</i>	Berlioz
<i>Fandango</i>	Perkins



C. E. Vail
Superintendent

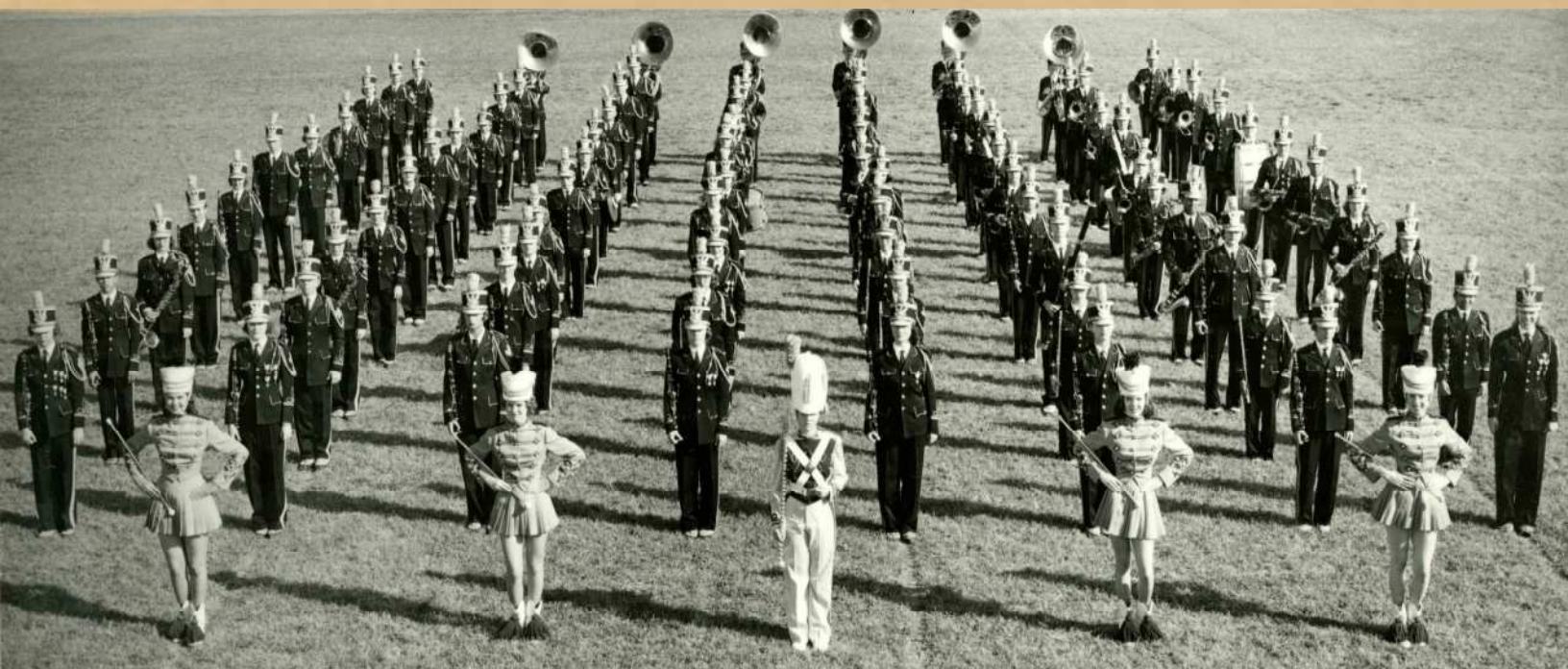
C. E. Vail has been associated with the La Feria public schools for twenty-seven years and has served as superintendent since 1949. Stirling Prince is the high school principal and John Toeller is junior high principal.

Members of the Board of Education are Lloyd La Fond, president, J. E. McDonald, Jr., vice-president, Dr. E. L. Seyder, secretary, J. R. Adams, Jr., Ralph Brooks, Jr., Art Gesham, and Fella Till.

La Feria, a town of 3800 in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, is a small AA school with 1400 total enrollment and 250 in high school.

There are 120 students participating in the band program, which includes 87 in the senior band, 19 in the junior band, (sixth grade) and 14 in the beginner band (fifth grade).

The band program at La Feria is assisted by a very active Band Parents' Association. Each year the band takes a three-day concert tour to such cities as Corpus Christi, Galveston, Austin, and San Antonio.



Director of Top Valley Band Switched 'Bars' in College

By HOYT HAGER
 Caller-Times Staff Writer

LA FERIA — Don Fleuriet switched bars midway through his education at Baylor University.

The change was from study of law, which eventually leads to the bar, to music, which entails bars too.

Fleuriet is phenomenally successful in his progress from one musical bar to another as band director at La Feria High School. His Lion Band has won 36 consecutive first place ratings in all phases of band performances during the past 12 years.

As far as is known in South Texas this is the longest string

of musical triumphs current in the state at this time.

Fleuriet's high school band in 1958 was designated the outstanding Class AA concert band in Texas. It was invited to perform at the Texas Music Educators' Association convention in 1959 at Galveston.

Fleuriet fields a 90-piece marching band, taken from a roster of 130 young musicians. His high school band consists of musicians from the seventh grade up to the 12th. Others are in the junior or beginner bands.

Fleuriet, born in New Orleans, graduated from Baylor University in 1943 with a degree in business administration, then

entered the Marine Corps for a four-year tour. He was commissioned in 1945.

After World War II Fleuriet entered Baylor again to study law. He played in the orchestra, and switched his major to music after one year of law study. His second degree from Baylor was a bachelor's degree in music, after which he received a master's degree in music.

He became band director at Mercedes High in 1950 but stayed only 90 days before he was recalled into the Marines and spent a year in Korea. He returned to the Valley and La Feria in 1952 and has been here since.

He is married and has a one-year-old son.

Corpus Christi Caller
 March 1960

If I had to pick the one most important quality from observing the teaching of Don Fleuriet, it would have to be the care and compassion he displayed toward each and every individual in the band. He once told me, “Your overall band sound will only be as strong as its weakest player. Get to know each and every student and work with them – every chance you get.” I knew then what I needed to do to become a successful teacher.

**Roger L. Harms
Director of Music Education
Harlingen CISD**

Having been associated with Mr. Fleuriet for the eight years period from the 5th grade through the completion of high school in the La Feria School system, I witnessed many of his significant contributions to the educational system, the community, and the individual students he taught.

He was the instrumental force behind the extremely successful record of excellence associated with the La Feria Bands . . . that accomplished goals unsurpassed by other organizations of any size at any time.

Mr. Fleuriet achieved these results by teaching and mentoring (his) students. Only much later in life did I recognize the diverse educational skills necessary to teach and motivate kids throughout such a wide (age range). His patience with the younger ones and ability to challenge the older students offer a view into his diverse educational expertise.

**Mark Nothdurft
La Feria High School
Class of 1973**

ANOTHER BIG HONOR FOR LA FERIA

LF News - Aug. 25, 1960

Band Wins 32AA Award Again

The La Feria High School Band has again been named the outstanding concert band in the state of Texas in class AA.

As a result, the band has been invited to perform at the annual state convention of the Texas Music Educators Association. This year's convention will be held at the new civic center in Dallas on February 9-11.

This is the second consecutive state victory in as many tries for the La Feria Band, and the only time any band has received this coveted honor twice.

The judges were appointed by the state band chairman of TMEA and were composed of one college director and six high school band directors. This group met in San Antonio last weekend and chose the La Feria Band as tops in its class in the state after listening for several hours to tape recordings of the outstanding band from each of the seventeen Interscholastic League music regions of Texas.

Other class AA bands which placed are as follows: second —

New Boston; third — Kirbyville; fourth — Pleasanton; and fifth — Marlin.

Class AAAA competition is

held on the same year as Class AA (even - numbered years), while the Class AAA and Class A bands compete on odd-numbered years.

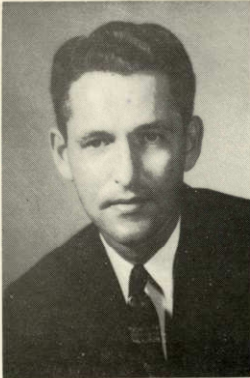
The results this year in Class AAAA are as follows: first — Spring Branch (Houston); second — Harlingen; third — Amarillo; fourth — Laredo; and fifth — Lufkin. The Spring Branch Band will also perform at the convention in Dallas in February.

Last year the Class AAA winner was Weslaco and in Class A it was Three Rivers.



DON FLEURIET
Band Director

"... the only time
any band has
received this coveted
honor twice".



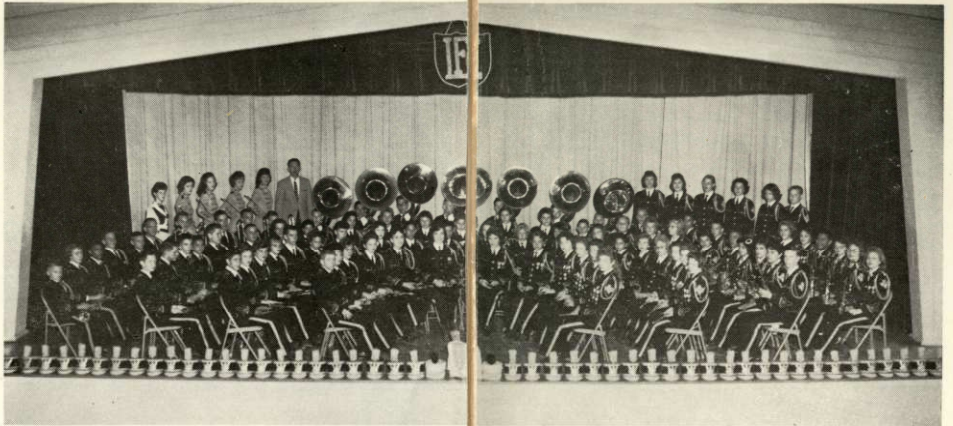
Don Fleuriet
Director

Don Fleuriet has been the director of bands in the La Feria school system since August, 1952.

He was born in New Orleans and reared in the Lower Rio Grande Valley where he was graduated from Donna High School in 1939 and from Edinburg Junior College in 1941. In 1943 he received the degree of Bachelor of Business Administration from Baylor University and then served for three years with the U. S. Marine Corps.

Returning to college after World War II to study music, he was assistant conductor of the Baylor Symphony Orchestra and conductor of the Baylor Summer Symphony before receiving the Master of Music degree in 1950. Following another tour of duty with the Marine Corps in Korea, he became the band director at La Feria High School.

Mr. Fleuriet has served for several years as a band division officer in Region IX. He is a member of Texas Music Educators' Association, Texas Bandmasters' Association and American School Band Directors' Association.



1960-1961 La Feria High School Band

PROGRAM

<i>Excerpts from "Die Meistersinger"</i>	<i>Wagner-Osterling</i>
<i>Toccata</i>	<i>Frescobaldi-Slocum</i>
<i>Allerseelen</i>	<i>Strauss-Davis</i>
<i>Chicago Tribune March</i>	<i>Chambers-Roberts</i>
<i>Procession and Interlude</i>	<i>Frederick Miller</i>
<i>Tango for Band</i>	<i>Glenn Osser</i>

c o n v e n t i o n

Texas Music Educators' Association
Dallas Memorial Auditorium Center
Friday, February 10, 1961

We, the Board of Education of the La Feria Independent School District, and the citizens of the La Feria community are proud to congratulate our band on this outstanding achievement. We are interested not only in the musical development of these students, but also in their growth as better citizens through participation in a cooperative and character-building organization.

We commend the Texas Music Educators' Association for providing our young people enlightened leadership through the years. The high calibre of the musical organizations in the schools of our state is to a great extent due to their untiring efforts.

Ralph C. Brooks, Jr., President

E. L. Snyder, Vice-Pres.

J. R. Adams, Jr., Sec'y.

Lloyd A. La Fond

J. E. McDonald, Jr.

Felix Till

John C. White



Don used to rap his director's baton on the edge of a music stand to help keep a steady beat. The baton being fiber glass used to come apart on the end and Don would wrap tape around the end to hold the baton together.

Don carried a clip board every where he went. Notes written all over it and thick with little sheets piled on little sheets held by the clip. He did that better than if he had a computer.

Don used to say, "a band director had to be consistently insistent while teaching a kid."

Don Fleuriet at La Feria, Carl Seale at Harlingen and Perry Suggs at Edcouch-Elsa were the only bands in the Valley that marched left foot on the yard line.

Don was my idol, my mentor, my traveling companion and my closest friend.

**Perry Suggs
Texarkana, Texas**

Few, if any, of the many people that have been part of the LFISD family have made more contributions to LFISD and to the many students who have been educated in the system than Mr. Fleuriet. He was not only a great teacher, but an inspiration for excellence to hundreds if not thousands of LFISD band students over the many years that he was band director.

**D. Bradley Kizzia
La Feria High School
Class of 1973**

1964 AA HONOR BAND



THE LA FERIA HIGH School Band has been named the outstanding concert band in Texas in class AA. As a result, it has been invited to perform at the annual convention of the Texas Music Educators' Association in Dallas in February.

This is the third TMEA Honor Band award won by the La FERIA Band in three tries.

The director of the 96-piece band is Don Fleuriet, who is in his thirteenth year in that capacity. Mr. Fleuriet is a graduate of Donna High School and Edinburg Junior College and holds BBA, BMus, and MMus degrees from Baylor University.

The La FERIA Band holds a most enviable contest record—it has received only first division ratings at all types of contests for the past sixteen years,

and as a result has amassed an unbroken string of 50 consecutive first division ratings in concert playing,



Mr. Don Fleuriet

marching, and sight reading. This record was begun in 1948 by Mr. Warren Reitz, who was director of the band for four years.

La FERIA, with a population of 3000, is located in the heart of the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Total school enrollment is 1400; high school enrollment is 300. There are 137 students participating in the band program, which includes 96 in the senior band, 20 in the junior band, and 21 in the beginner band. The beginner band is composed of fifth graders and the junior band of sixth graders. All students move into the senior band upon entering the seventh grade.

The band program at LaFERIA is assisted by a very active band parents' association. Each year this group sponsors a barbecue and sells concert tickets to raise funds for maintenance and replacement of uniforms. This year a Band Exes' Homecoming will be held in conjunction with the annual October barbecue, at which time the band parents' association will give special recognition to the band and its former members for having received 50 consecutive first division contest ratings.

A highlight of the band's yearly activities is its three-day winter concert tour. During the past ten years, it has played concerts at school assemblies throughout central and south Texas.

A panel of seven judges, appointed by the TMEA band chairman, met in July and chose the five best AA bands by auditing tape recordings submitted by the top AA band from each of the seventeen music regions of the state. The La FERIA Band's selections were London Pageant by Melachrino, Finale from Death and Transfiguration by Strauss, and the fourth movement of Symphony No. 5 by Dvorak.

Other AA bands ranked by the judges are Kenedy, second; Bishop, third; De Kalb, fourth; and Industrial (Vanderbilt), fifth.

"This is the third TMEA Honor Band award won by the La FERIA Band in three tries."



The La Feria News

"The Newspaper That Cares About The West Cameron County Area"

PRICE 10c

VOL. XLI No. 41

LA FERIA, CAMERON COUNTY, TEXAS, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1964

TEN

Plaque To Be Presented Prize Winning Band

The Homecoming barbecue, sponsored by the La Feria Band Parents' Association, will be held Saturday, October 10, from 5 to 8 p.m. at the high school cafeteria.

Highlight of the evening will be a special ceremony by the Band Parents' Association, presenting a plaque to the band honoring them for winning 50 consecutive first division contest ratings and three consecutive state championships.

This part of the program will take place at 7 p.m., and special recognition will be given to all ex-members of the band who helped win these honors.

Honored guest of the evening will be Mr. Warren Reitz of Austin, who directed the band from 1948 to 1952.

Director Don Fleuriet and the La Feria Band will play a program of marches and light concert music, featuring the best-known songs of the famous American composer, Cole Porter.

The concert will begin at 8:20 p.m. and conclude at 11:30 p.m.

The menu for the evening will

include barbecued chicken, potato salad, baked beans, pickles, onions, bread, and coffee. Cold drinks, pie, and cake will be available at nominal prices, and there will be plates "to go."

R. Wayne Jackie, over-all chairman of the barbecue, and is ably assisted by several committee chairmen. Earl Dunaway is chief chef in charge of barbecuing the chicken.

This event, held annually in the fall, is one of the two major fund-raising projects sponsored by the La Feria Band Parents' Association. The other is the sale of membership tickets to the band's spring concert series.

Officers for this organization are A. C. "Bud" Herren Jr., president; Earl Dunaway, vice - president; and Mrs. Curtis Smith, secretary - treasurer.

Tickets are priced at \$1.50 for adults and 75 cents for students and are being sold by members of the senior and junior bands.

Take this opportunity to enjoy concert by your championship high school band.

Proclamation

Whereas—The La Feria High School Band has won 50 consecutive first division ratings in the past 16 consecutive years, which is a state record,

Whereas—The La Feria High School Band has won 3 consecutive state championships in class AA, which is a state record,

Whereas—The La Feria High School Band has brought honor and credit to the city of La Feria,

I hereby proclaim Saturday, October 10, La Feria Band Day in recognition of and appreciation for the efforts of this outstanding organization and its director, Mr. Don Fleuriet.

W.E. Holley, Mayor

Proclamation

WHEREAS -- The La Feria High School Band has won 50 consecutive first division ratings in the past 16 consecutive years, which is a state record,

WHEREAS -- The La Feria High School Band has won 3 consecutive state championships in class AA, which is a state record,

WHEREAS -- The La Feria High School Band has brought honor and credit to the city of La Feria,

I hereby proclaim Saturday, October 10, La Feria Band Day in recognition of and appreciation for the efforts of this outstanding organization and its director, Mr. Don Fleuriet.

W. E. Holley, Mayor



THE CLIMAX OF "LA FERIA BAND DAY"—was the presentation ceremonies by the Band Parents Association of three plaque to the band honoring them for winning 50 consecutive first division ratings and three consecutive state championships. Dr. A. G. M. Martin III is shown making the presentation, in behalf of the Band Parents Association, to La Feria High School Band director, Don Fleuriet while Warren Reitz, former band director of the LFHS band, looks on. Mr. Reitz led the band from 1948 to 1952. Mr. Fleuriet presented the plaque to the 1964 band president, Ruth Carnicom. The ceremony was at seven o'clock Saturday evening during the annual Band Barbecue held at the School Cafeteria.

(Sterling Prince Photo)

TMEA Convention Dallas, Texas February 11, 1965



La Feria High School Band

PROGRAM

Passacaglia in G Minor	Houston Bright
Sea Songs -- Quick March	Ralph Vaughan Williams
First Suite in Eb Chaconne	Gustav Holst
Liebestod from "Tristan und Isolde"	Richard Wagner
Amparito Roca -- Spanish March	Jaime Texidor
The Blue and the Gray	Clare Grundman



Don Fleuriel
Director

Don Fleuriel has been the director of bands in the La Feria school system since August, 1962.

He was born in New Orleans and reared in the Lower Rio Grande Valley where he was graduated from Donna High School in 1939 and from Edinburg Junior College in 1941. In 1943 he received the degree of Bachelor of Business Administration from Baylor University and then served for three years with the U. S. Marine Corps.

Returning to college after World War II to study music, he was assistant conductor of the Baylor Symphony Orchestra and conductor of the Baylor Summer Symphony before receiving the Master of Music degree in 1950. Following another tour of duty with the Marine Corps in Korea, he became the band director at La Feria High School.

Mr. Fleuriel is a member of Texas Music Educators' Association and Texas Bandmasters' Association and has served as a band division officer in Region IX for ten years.

Although my primary interest was sports, there was not a coach or other school teacher who was as motivating or influential to me. I know of countless others of varying ages who attended the La Feria Schools who have expressed the same sentiment. His lasting message was to prepare, work hard, and be successful at whatever we chose. He made it acceptable to be an athlete yet still experience the teamwork a successful concert or marching band demanded. Though his reputation afforded the opportunity to move to larger schools with larger budgets, it is remarkable that he chose to spend his entire career in the La Feria Schools.

**Dan Matthews, DDS
La Feria High School
Class of 1973**

Mr. Fleuriet began his influence with me in the 5th grade while at Roosevelt Middle School. He continued to influence me through high school and onwards through my adult life. I attribute my life-long appreciation of music to Mr. Fleuriet. He pushed me to reach my fullest potential in the band and fostered a true spirit of caring.

**Becky Goza Reeves
La Feria High School
Class of 1977**

La Feria High Band Receives Superior Rating; State Record

DON FLEURIET RE-ELECTED SECRETARY

Don Fleuriet, director of bands at La Feria High School was re-elected to serve as secretary of Region XV Band Directors Division at a meeting Wednesday, May 17, at the Weslaco High School Band Hall in Weslaco.

Other officers elected for the school year 1967-68, were Pete Cisneros, director of Bands at Pharr - San Juan - Alamo High School as chairman and Lee Boyd Montgomery, Jr., director of Bands at Edinburg High School, as vice chairman.

The Region XV nominees for the state wide selection for Honor Band were selected. The AAA nominee is the Mission High School Band directed by D. P. McNallen and representing the other Classes will be Lamar Junior High School Band of McAllen directed by Ronald Smith.

Tape recordings of both of these bands will be submitted to a committee of outstanding band directors from throughout the state. The committee will convene in August at the Texas Bandmaster Association meeting in San Antonio to hear the nominees from the fifteen regions of the state. They will select one band in each class to present a concert at the Texas Music Educators Convention to be held in February 1968 in Austin.

"This is the band's fifty-seventh consecutive first division rating at all types of contests, which is a state record."



LA FERIA HIGH SCHOOL BAND DIRECTOR Don Fleuriet shown holding a similar trophy to the one added to the large collection of honor trophies won by the Band for their 57th straight FIRST DIVISION (SUPERIOR) rating in the Pigskin Music Jubilee last Saturday night in Weslaco. Fleuriet began his 19th year as director of the La Feria High School band, during which time the Band has held a perfect record (a state record too) of "top-rating" in all participations of sight reading, concert and marching events. (Staff Photo)

57th Consecutive First Division Rating Won Saturday In Weslaco

For the nineteenth year in a row, the La Feria High School Band was awarded a first division (superior) rating at the annual marching contest. This is the band's fifty-seventh consecutive first division rating at all types of contests, which is a state record.

The occasion for number 57 was the twenty-fourth annual Pigskin Music Jubilee held last Saturday night at Weslaco before 5,000 spectators. The Pigskin Music Jubilee is the official University Interscholastic League marching contest for the Rio Grande Valley region.

Twenty-five bands marched and played for criticism and rating, and over 1,500 students participated in the traditional Grand Parade.

This year's Finale was a salute to our great state of Texas, as the massed bands played "Giant," "Deep in the Heart of Texas," and our state song "Texas Our Texas." One of the conductors of the massed bands was Dr. Nelson G. Patrick of Austin, who is the director of music activities for the University Interscholastic League. Dr. Patrick was Director Don Fleuriet's high school band director in Donna.

Contest judges were Mr. Joe Frank of Richardson, Mr. Marico Busby of Corpus Christi, and Mr. Elpidio Lizcano of Austin.

Ratings for all the bands are as follows:

- Class C: Mission Junior High II.
- Class CC: Weslaco Junior High II, Edinburg Junior High I.
- Class CCC: East Jefferson Junior High (P-SJ-A) III, West Jefferson Junior High (P-SJ-A) II.
- Class A: Santa Rosa IV.
- Class AA: La Joya II, Los Fresnos II, Rio Hondo IV, Lyford III, Port Isabel V, La Feria I.
- Class AAA: Rio Grande City II, Weslaco I, Edouch - Elasa I, Raymondville II, Mission I, Mercedes I, Donna II.
- Class AAAA: Brownsville I, Harlingen II, Pharr - San Juan - Alamo I, Edinburg I, McAllen I, San Benito II.

May, 1967

LFHS Band Awarded 25th Pigskin

Twenty-five times the La Feria Band has entered marching contest, and twenty-five times has won a first division rating.

The latest occasion was the 33rd annual Pigskin Music Jubilee held last Saturday night at Barbee Field in Weslaco. This was the official University Interscholastic League marching contest for Rio Grande Valley bands.

The Grande Finale, with over 2000 band students marching together, featured several selections and formations in recognition of our Bicentennial.

Judges were Robert Botello of Laredo, Edward Zamora of Port Lavaca, and John Bridges from San Antonio.

The La Feria Band was the only band in Cameron County to receive a top rating.

Ratings for all Valley high school bands are as follows:

Class A: San Isidro III.

Class AA: La Feria I, Zapata II, La Joya II, Santa Rosa III, Rio Hondo III, Sharyland III. The bands from Lyford, Port Isabel, and Los Fresnos did not enter.

Class AAA: Donna I, Rio Grande City I, Edcouch-Elsa II, Mercedes II. Raymondville did not enter.

Class AAAA: Edinburg I, McAllen I, Weslaco I, Pharr-San Juan-Alamo I, Harlingen II, Mission II, Brownsville Hanna II, Brownsville Porter II, San Benito III.

“Twenty-five times the La Feria Band has entered marching contest, and twenty-five times has won a first division rating.”

1975

1978/1979

**La Feria High School Band
Don's final high school band**



31st consecutive year band takes top honors

For the 31st consecutive year the La Feria High School Band was awarded a first division rating in concert playing at the University Interscholastic League regional band contest at Pan American University in Edinburg on Wednesday, April 25.

Some of the written comments of the judges were "A very fine performance... some really beautiful sounds...this is a great band."

The judges were Lee Boyd Montgomery, Austin, Roberto Botello, Laredo and Humberto Gonzales, Hebbronville.

In the sight-reading competition the band was awarded a second division rating.

The following are the ratings for the Valley Class AA bands (the first rating is concert; the second is sight-reading):

La Feria I, II; Lyford I, III; Port Isabel I, I; Sharyland II, II; Los Fresnos II, II; Zapata II, III; Rio Hondo III, IV.

The La Feria Band will present its final spring concert on Tuesday, May 15, in the high school auditorium.

1979

**Don's bands earned a
1st division rating
EVERY year at UIL
concert contest.**

Tribute

**by a band student in
school newspaper
1979**

Linda's fancy

By Linda Lievens

I'd like to dedicate my column this time to a very special teacher whom I, and other band seniors, have admired since we started band eight years ago. This special person is Mr. Don Fleuriet, band director.

When we band seniors sat down one day and thought about the days when we were younger band students, we wondered how in the world Mr. Fleuriet put up with us--and he's been putting up with kids like us, if not worse, for a long time.

It takes a man with a unique outlook on life to be able to put up with the bad jokes, smart remarks, band tours, and the generally weird situations we involved him in.

Looking on the

serious side, he is the type of person that comes along only once in a lifetime. Because of Mr. Fleuriet's superb training, he has lead the band to receive first place ratings for 31 consecutive years. He not only takes pride in his work but puts out a deep interest in the band --as a whole and individually.

Speaking for the senior band members, I would just like to thank Mr. Fleuriet, in this small way, for the time, patience and understanding he had for us and to tell him how much we respect and love him after eight long years.

It's sad to be leaving after May 31, but we like to think he has given a part of himself to see us through until the next band reunion.

When I was a first-year band director in Rio Hondo, I had the dubious pleasure of having to compete with Don Fleuriet's bands. It was an impossible task to compete because no one, virtually in the entire state, could put a band on the field or the stage that had the maturity and technical expertise that Mr. Fleuriet's bands possessed. I cannot help but think that the literally thousands of students that Mr. Fleuriet touched remember with great pride the accomplishments they attained under his directorship. Moreover, I know that they call on, maybe consciously or unconsciously, the daily lessons of life that they learned in Don Fleuriet's bands.

**Allan R. Brumley
Harlingen, Texas**

(Mr. Fleuriet) taught numerous students to play instruments, read music, and understand music theory. Along with regular band duties, he also encouraged and coached select students to personally compete in area music competitions with excellent results. His work allowed many students, who otherwise would not have had the opportunity, to participate in a challenging and rewarding group experience. Mr. Fleuriet's music selections allowed students from a variety of backgrounds to experience classical composers, Broadway musicals, and other music besides the current popular music. Mr. Fleuriet's high standards for performance were lessons that his band students carried with them beyond high school.

**Beth Briscoe Carson
La Feria High School
Class of 1973**

FLEURIET HONORED

Former LFHS band players enjoy reunion

A reunion of past La Feria band members covering a 30-year span was celebrated the week of May 25-26.

The reunion began Friday with a picnic held at Dean Porter Park in Brownsville. Festivities continued Saturday when band exes joined together for a "rehearsal" session at the band hall.

A banquet honoring Don Fleuriet, director of the La Feria band, was held at Richard's Gold Room in Harlingen Saturday evening. Highlighting the occasion was the presentation of a gift to Fleuriet by former band members.

He was given a five-day trip for two to Mexico City along with a plaque which read "You gave us a love for music. We give you simply our love."

A plaque was also presented, in absentia, to Warren Reitz, band director from 1948 to 1952. He was unable to attend the reunion due to ill health.

Entertainment by ex band members, dancing and socializing followed the presentations.

The band reunion marked the end of Fleuriet's 27 years as the only band director at La Feria. During his tenure, the high school band received 27 consecutive first division ratings at UIL concert contests and 20 first division ratings at Pigskin Music Jubilee.

Also, under his direction, the La Feria Band won four state championships in TMEA concert band competition. This is a state record.

This fall Fleuriet will be the assistant to Solomon Banda, who will be the new head band director for the La Feria public schools.



WITH LOVE--Don Fleuriet, who is stepping down as director of the LFHS band after 27 years, received a special plaque from Gail Graham Brandt, who represented former band members and those who attended the recent band reunion weekend.

(News Photo by Al Villarreal)

Band legend ends career

1986

BY JANET BROOKS

If success in life is to be measured by the influence for good that one has upon another, then Don Fleuriet is living a most successful life indeed. He is retiring at the end of this school year after 34 years of teaching music to a generation of La Feria students.

Fleuriet came to La Feria ISD to replace Warren Reitz as high school band director in August, 1952. The high school possessed the only performing band in the school district for 27 years and Fleuriet was its director during that time. Under his leadership, the La Feria High School band made only first division ratings in both concert and marching contests.

Fleuriet also has the distinction of being the only band director in Texas who has ever had four bands named state champions in the AA conference (now AAA) by the Texas Music Educators Assn.

Seven years ago he became band director at Vail Middle School and has consistently produced outstanding junior high bands.

He rounded out his career in La Feria with his current band having won straight first in concert and sight-reading contest this year.

Upon retirement, Fleuriet, his wife Cathy and daughter Christina will be making their home in Austin and will reside at 3213 Capsicum Cove.

All La Feria wishes him Godspeed and wants him to know he will be sorely missed and long remembered with affection and pride.

A Salute To

Don Fleuriet



1986

Who is retiring from La Feria schools
after 34 years of guiding our youth
The children will miss you ...
but, most of all,

we all will remember you.

Good Luck!



First National Bank

BOX 8 LA FERIA TEXAS 78058 • 812 / 787-2361



FDIC

Always Ready To Serve You



**You gave us a love for music.
We give you simply our love.**

**Plaque presented to Don Fleuriet
by former band members
June, 1979**