

Programs, Ratings and Awards

1975	Miami		Class B	1/1/2
1976	Miami		Class B	1/1/1
	Sweepstakes			
1977	Canadian	Sheila Pankratz, Assistant	Class AAA	3/2/3
	Festival March, Prelude Act 1 La Traviata, Early English Suite			
	21 All Region members, 37 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants			
1978	Canadian	Sheila Pankratz, Assistant	Class AAA	2/2/3
	Antares March, Spring from the Four Seasons, Prologue and Pagent			
	20 All Region members, 34 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants			
1979	Canadian	David Hawkins, Assistant	Class AAA	2/3/3
	The Golden Shield, Slavonic Folk Suite, Lethbridge			
	19 All Region members , 19 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 3 TSSEC performers			
1980	Canadian	David Hawkins, Assistant	Class AAA	2/2/2
	Sol y Sombra, Black Canyon of the Gunnison, Declaration Overture			
	10 All Region members, 32 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 3 TSSEC performers			
1981	Canadian	David Sims, Assistant	Class AA	2/1/1
	Pentland Hills, Arietta for Winds, Chant and Jubilo			
	All Region N.A., 36 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 7 TSSEC performers			
1982	Canadian	David Sims, Assistant	Class AA	1/1/1
	Brighton Beach, Fallen Fallen is Babylon, Devonshire Overture			
	Sweepstakes, All Region N.A., 49 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 15 TSSEC performers			
1983	Canadian	David Sims, Assistant	Class AA	1/1/1
	Marche des Parachutistes, Spiritual from Sy 5 ½, Chorale and Shaker Dance			

- Sweepstakes, 34 High School – 12 Junior High All Region members, 20 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 9 TSSEC performers
- 1984 Canadian David Sims, Assistant Class AA 1/2/1
- The Mad Major, Frescobaldi Toccata, Slavonic Folk Suite
- State Marching, 21 High School-42 Junior High All Region members, 33 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 7 TSSEC performers
- 1985 Canadian David Sims, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1
- Pentland Hills, Brookshire Suite, Novena
- Sweepstakes, State Marching, 43 High School -31 Junior High All Region members, 20 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 9 TSSEC performers
- 1986 Canadian Kyle Maxwell, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1
- Black Horse Troop, Polly Oliver, Concert Variations
- Sweepstakes, 29 High School- 21 Junior High All Region members, 27 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 9 TSSEC performers
- 1987 Canadian Kyle Maxwell, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1
- Fairest of the Fair, Spiritual from Sy 5 ½, Var. on a Korean Folk Song
- Sweepstakes, State Marching, 48 High School-16 Junior High All Region members, 26 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants. 3 TSSEC performers
- 1988 Canadian Jennifer Willison, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1
- Marche des Parachutistes Belges, Yorkshire ballad, Whitewater Festival
- Sweepstakes, 25 High School -26 Junior High All Region, 13 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 7 TSSEC performers
- 1989 Canadian Jennifer Willison, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1
- Valdres, An Irish Interlude, Emperata Overture
- Sweepstakes, State Marching, 49 High School-18 Junior High All Region members, 47 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 21 TSSEC performers
- 1990 Canadian Jennifer Willison, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1
- Emblem of Unity, Chant and Jubilo, Blanco Canyon Sketches

Sweepstakes, Best in Class at the DCI Festival in San Antonio, 39 High School- 17 Junior High All Region members, 89 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 49 TSSEC performers

1991 Canadian Jennifer Willison, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1

Folk Songs from Sommerset, Concert Variations, Dona Nobis Pacem

Sweepstakes, State Marching, 26 High School- 28 Junior High All Region members, 39 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 17 TSSEC performers

1992 Canadian Jennifer Willison, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1

The Mad Major, Yorkshire Ballad, Chorale and Shaker Dance

Sweepstakes, 24 High School-28 Junior High All Region members, 32 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 31 TSSEC performers

1993 Canadian Jennifer Willison, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1

Corcoran Cadets, Hymnsong of Phillip Bliss, Cajun Folk Songs

Sweepstakes, State Marching, HSprings, 61 High School-41 Junior High All Region members, 1 TSSEC Outstanding performer, 72 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 55 TSSEC performers

1994 Canadian Jennifer, Willison, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1

Pathfinder of Panama, Fallen Fallen is Babylon, Visions of Flight

Sweepstakes, State Marching Finalist, 45 High School- 44 Junior High All Region members, 42 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 19 TSSEC performers

1995 Canadian Jennifer Willison, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1

Riders for the Flag, Spiritual from Sy 5 ½, Havendance

Sweepstakes, State Marching, 1 ATSSB All State member, 77 High School-48 Jr High All Region members, 45 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 28 TSSEC performers

1996 Canadian Jennifer Willison, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1

Daughters of Texas, 1st mvt. First Suite in Eb, Fantasy on Barbara Allen

Sweepstakes, 72 High School- 34 Junior High All region members, 31 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 20 TSSEC performers

- 1997 Canadian Jennifer Willison, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1
Seventeen Come Sunday, Down Longford Way, Carmina Burana 1,2,4,9,13
Sweepstakes, State Marching alt., Honor Band Finalist, Best in Small School Class at the Greater Southwest Music Festival, 3 ATSSB All State members, 76 High School- 30 Junior High All Region members, 46 Solo-Ensemble participants, 36 TSSEC performers
- 1998 Canadian Jennifer Willison, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1
Standard of St. George, Serenade, Three Folk Miniatures
Sweepstakes, 5 ATSSB All State members, All Region members N.A., 27 UIL UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 18 TSSEC performers
- 1999 Canadian Jennifer Willison, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1
Thunderer, Irish Tune from County Derry, Hounds of Spring
Sweepstakes, State Marching alt., ATSSB Outstanding performance winner, TSSEC State Sweepstakes Winner, Best in Class Cavalcade of Music, Colorado Springs, 5 ATSSB All /State members, 29 High School-10 Junior High All Region members, 44 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 18 TSSEC performers
- 2000 Canadian Will Brewer, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1
The Tightrope Walker, Spiritual from Sy 5 ½, Longford Legend
Sweepstakes, 1 ATSSB All State member, All Region members N.A., 34 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 28 TSSEC performers
- 2001 Canadian Will Brewer, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1
Moorside March, Hymnsong of Phillip Bliss, Shepherds Hey
Sweepstakes, State Marching alt., Honor Band Finalist, 1 ATSSB All State member, 31 High School- 34 Junior High All Region members, 49 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 38 TSSEC performers
- 2002 Canadian Will Brewer, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1
The Klaxon, 1st mvt. First Suite in Eb, Cajun Folk Songs
Sweepstakes, 1 ATSSB All State member, 22 High School-38 Junior High All Region members, 30 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 23 TSSEC performers
- 2003 Canadian Will Brewer, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1

March of the Belgian Parachutists, Shenandoah, Second Suite if F 2,3,4

Sweepstakes, State Marching alt., 14 High School-40 Junior High All Region members, 30 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 17 TSSEC performers

2004 Canadian Will Brewer, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1

The Standard of St. George, Salvation is Created, West Highland Sojourn

Sweepstakes, 1 ATSSB All State member, 16 High School-43 Junior High All Region members, 23 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 19 TSSEC performers

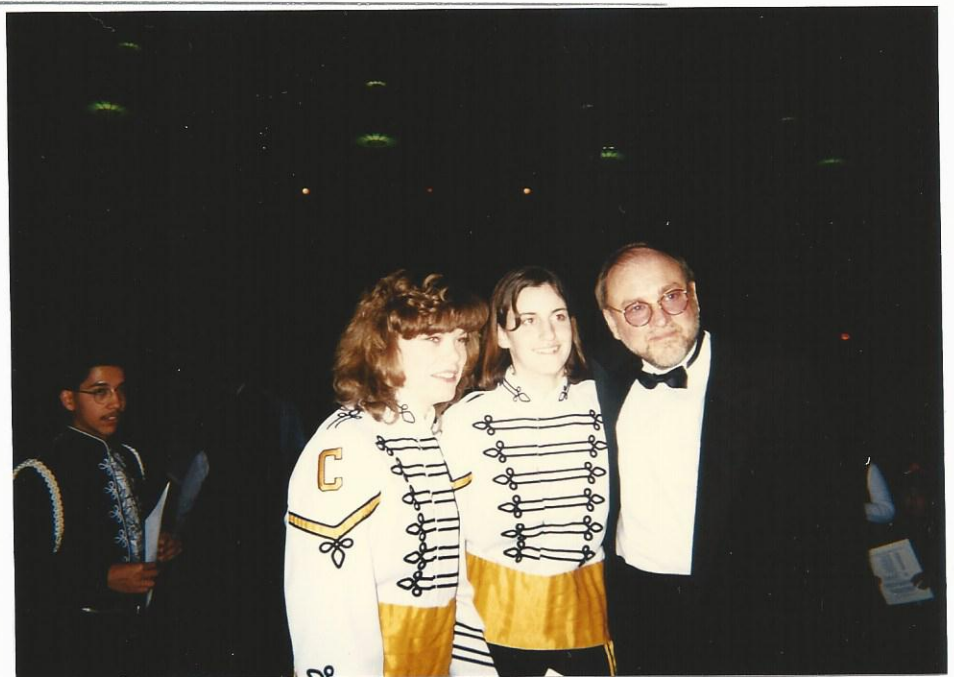
2005 Canadian Will Brewer, Assistant Class AA 1/1/1

Sound Off, Childhood Hymn, Canarios Fantasia

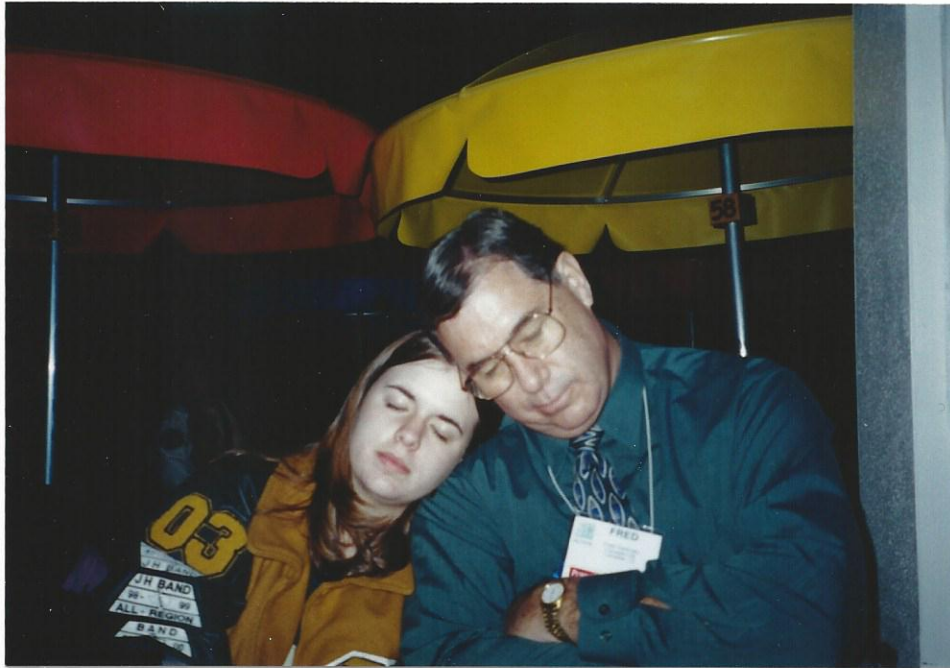
Sweepstakes, State Marching, 18 High School-18 Junior High All Region members, 44 UIL Solo-Ensemble participants, 29 TSSEC performers



Five All State students, parents, and directors



Two students with Conductor, Dr. Tim



All State is hard work, with daughter Christine



Seniors



The after glow



Sweepstakes Award with Sheila and the Brewers



At the State Capital



CHS Band at Disney World



Fred presented the Southwestern Bell UIL Sponsor Excellence Award

By State Director of Music, Richard Floyd, 1996-97



Fred given the Southwestern Oklahoma State University
Outstanding Service Award by Dr. James South, 2003



Cody Myers presenting retirement scrapbook



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 2, 2005

Mr. Fred Pankratz
Canadian, Texas

Dear Fred:

Congratulations on your retirement from Canadian High School. Laura and I are pleased to join your family and friends in celebrating this special occasion.

America's young people rely on our educators for the knowledge and guidance they need to succeed in school and in life. By building the minds and character of our country's youth, teachers enrich lives and inspire students to achieve their full potential. Your hard work and dedication reflect the spirit of our Nation.

Best wishes for a rewarding and enjoyable retirement. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "GWB", written over the printed name "George W. Bush".

George W. Bush

My Dearest Fred,

This is going to be about as hard to do as the senior parent letter but here goes. It's been quite a ride these 34 years, hasn't it? I hope you have been able to feel how exceedingly proud I have been of you this entire time.

What you may not know is what you have taught me through it all. Here are a few of things you have shown me, that I have been able to utilize in my own teaching and dealing with people.

1. "Don't sweat the small stuff"
2. "Don't try to reason with crazy people"
3. Smile even when you don't want to
4. Make everyone feel as if they are the most important one around
5. Say what you mean, and mean what you say
6. Raising your voice doesn't solve anything
7. Kill 'em with kindness
8. Don't take the credit yourself, pass it on to those under you
9. Stand your ground....there are no compromises on the big issues
10. Spell things out far in advance so there are no questions later
11. Be the type leader everyone will want to follow.....by example
12. Put things in writing so once again, there are no questions later
13. Plan ahead, plan ahead, plan ahead
14. Put family first and everything else will fall in place behind it
15. Document everything you think you might need in the future
16. Listen to the concerns of others, weigh their ideas and come up with a compromise acceptable to all.
17. When you get a visit from a person with an axe to grind, just grin and say, "thanks for coming"
18. Always be punctual
19. Volunteer for things nobody else wants to do
20. Always give your superiors a "heads up" when you can so there are no surprises. Nobody likes ugly surprises.
21. Keep the bus foreman and secretary on your side

I should have stopped at 20 but just couldn't resist that last one. I know there are hundreds more, but these seem to be those that stick out the most to me.

Thanks for always rushing home to "your girls" when you had to be away. We always appreciate your efforts to be home as soon as you can. Someone once told me what a prince you are and I replied, "I know, and ha, I found him first". So there you have it. You are and will always be my everything.

Love, Sheila

Dad,

It's hard to believe that this time is finally here. I bet the past few weeks have flown by, but I'm sure there have been times when you thought it would never come. Now you can enjoy the best parts without having to worry about making room lists, planning meals, or keeping up with 100 kids 500 miles from home! Even though you will be ending the big part of your career, your legacy in Canadian, and in the state for that matter, will never disappear.

You probably have no idea how many lives you've touched over the years. I bet that over the hundreds of students you have taught, you have made an impact in each of their lives, in one way or another. Mom and I always teased you that you know everybody at conventions, and it's true. Even when I came over here to college, my last name prompted, "Is your dad Mr. P?" several times, from your years at band camp. It's partly due to your extensive knowledge and passion for music, but the majority of your success has come from your personality and drive. Honestly, I'm not just saying this because you're my dad and I love you, but you truly are one of the most sincere, honest, caring people I know. You have a way of making everyone feel special. One of the greatest things about your program is that everyone can find a place. People that don't fit in anywhere else can find a home there, because you make everyone feel welcome.

I know the band hall has been my second home ever since I was born. Some of my earliest memories are of flag practice, bus trips, TBA, and State Solo and Ensemble. Thanks to your willingness to include me in your profession life, I've always known how to interact with older people, and now I can fall asleep anywhere, anytime, including in a hallway while waiting on soloists! Since I've been around your program my entire life, I've seen how you treat students and how they look up to you. You have had to play so many other roles besides teacher. Sometimes you were the counselor when there was nowhere else to turn. Sometimes you had to be a fill-in parent when someone needed an extra boost. But almost always, you are a role model, a mentor, and a figure of strength.

I've always been amazed that you can make kids want to do well. You can take a bunch of complacent teenagers and

give them a goal, and help them find pride in doing their best. Even after being under your direction, I'm still not sure how you do this. I think it's because you give them the confidence to reach for impossible goals and push themselves harder mentally. I know that all the frustrations and worry is worth it when your students give a performance that you all know is their best. That's all you've ever asked for.

So many people have and can learn from you how to better interact with people. As you've told me so many times, "you can tell anybody just about anything if you say it with a smile". People like you because you use a sense of humor even when delivering the harshest criticism. I've also learned to "not try to reason with crazy people". This is probably my favorite quote from you, and it really does work.

Probably the thing I appreciate most about you and your job over the years is you've always made time for Mom and me. Even though you leave the house at 7:00 and usually don't get home until 6:00, you never acted too busy to talk to me or just hang out with me for a while. I know that as much as you love your job, Mom and I have always been your number one priority. I am so grateful and proud that you are my dad. I bet you'll have a great time getting to play golf all day, every day, and now you and Mom can move to where I'm going to college, like you always threatened to do. ☺ Just know that on this special day, I love you and am so proud of everything you've accomplished over the years.

Your loving daughter,

~Chris~

Mr. Cody Myers
Program Director of Fine Arts
Amarillo I.S.D.

Dear Cody,

I first met Fred Pankratz through our early days during the founding of A.T.T.S.B. I was the director at Sundown H.S at that time and Fred had already been at Canadian for several years. That was a time when there was much divisiveness and were many hard feelings within our profession over the establishment of an All-State Band for small schools and the creation of our new organization.

Fred was the Region Band Chairman for Region 1 and Mike Marsh and I were serving in the same positions for our regions. We met at the Region Band Chairmen's Luncheon held at the T.M.E.A. state convention surrounded by a roomful of other chairman from across the state, all from 5A schools and nearly all of them hostile toward the founding of A.T.T.S.B.

During the next hour, I saw Fred answer questions and explain the educational value and need to establish an organization dedicated to improving music education in small schools. He did this in such a professional manner that many of the large school directors were either persuaded to understanding our point of view or at least were left silent to ponder our concerns and reasons. In all cases, Fred's handling of that situation was a testament to our concerns and our resolve.

I will always believe that in that short period of time Fred Pankratz did more to establish credibility to the cause of A.T.T.S.B. among large school directors across the state than anyone will ever know. All of us who cherish music education in the small towns of Texas owe Fred Pankratz a tremendous debt of thanks. From all the staff in Plainview, we wish Fred the best wishes on a happy retirement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Barry Hurt".

Barry Hurt, Plainview H.S. Band

Mr. Fred Pankratz
P.O. Box 571
Canadian, TX 79014

Fred:

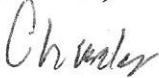
THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES—the first time I heard your Miami band and met that vivacious assistant; the time I flew from Abilene to work with your marching band and met some powerful thunderstorms both ways; the birth of that beautiful daughter; the trips to Denver for the Flag Corps camps; sitting behind you in the Region I Directors' band marveling at the wonderful sounds coming from your horn; hearing the Canadian band's PERFECT performance of "Philip Bliss" at the UIL contest at Boys Ranch; learning from you the countless times you helped me and the Dalhart band prepare for contest; hearing your "Equipment Check" story with Jesse; sharing stories at TBA breakfasts and road trips to Lubbock solo contests; your concern with my health, the cards and gifts while in Houston; the fun times at the Weatherford band camps—on and on the very SPECIAL memories go.

I knew the first time I heard your Miami band that you were a special person, a special musician, a special teacher. I am so fortunate that I was able to meet you and make you my very SPECIAL friend.

CONGRATULATIONS! You have had a marvelous career. You have touched thousands of lives, not only those in El Paso, Miami, and Canadian, but across the southwest. Your service to our profession is exemplary—serving Region I in various capacities, the ATSSB presidency, your work in Phi Beta Mu, your participation in Honor Band and State Marching contests. Yours has been a career of service to those in this great profession of band directing. We appreciate you.

I wish you well in your new career—retirement. I am convinced you will continue to serve our profession, being a role model and sharing your expertise when asked. I suspect you will be busier in those activities than you have anticipated. I sincerely hope you are able to enjoy some time to yourself once you leave the daily grind of Canadian employment.

Your friend,



Charles Trayler

Fred Pankratz says goodbye to Canadian Schools,

LOOKING UP THROUGH THE University of Texas Stadium, nothing was as visible as the black and gold dotting an entire section of the audience. Nothing could be heard over the cheers of that crowd, and the overwhelming sense of pride overcame the marching band that, for the first time in its history, was competing in the state UIL marching finals under the direction of Fred Pankratz.

Like so many other concerts and contests under Pankratz' direction, this experience in 1995 was one for the Canadian High School Band history books.

Pankratz helped the band along to 22 Sweepstakes awards and countless All-Region, All-Area and All-State band qualifications. He also coached Solo and Ensemble participants to many wins. In the meantime, Mr. P helped establish a love for music in hundreds of students—many of whom pursued careers in the music field in secondary education—during his 30-year career as band director for Canadian schools.

In 1976, the Canadian Wildcat High School Band boasted big numbers and several individual successes, but was lacking in community pride and support, and overall greatness. The director's position was up for grabs that year, and then-CISD Superintendent Jim Pollard began a search far and wide for an individual to turn the band program around.

Just 20 miles down the road, a young man was busy with the Miami Independent School District on his first band directing job. Pankratz' career had begun there five years earlier in 1971. The 23-year-old was charged with creating a

band, musicians and all, while teaching seventh and eighth grade English, seventh grade reading and yearbook. Within five years, Pankratz turned a non-existent band program into an award winning one, leading the Miami Warrior Band to its first Sweepstakes award.

That award was the first of many to come for the band director, but the thrill of his first Sweepstakes win was a memorable one. Traffic was backed up and down Highway 60 welcoming the band home after the final performance that sealed their Sweepstakes title.

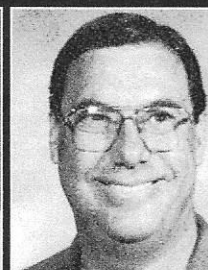
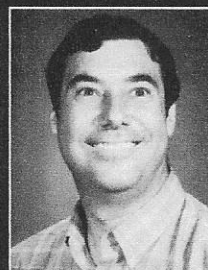
"It was wonderful," he said. "It was very exciting. The whole town turned out."

It seemed like quite an accomplishment for a young man whose original intentions going into college had little to do with music education. When he entered college, he was an undecided major.

"I ended up taking a lot of music classes, because that's what I enjoyed," Pankratz said. "That's where my friends were—that's what I enjoyed doing. I just fell into it."

Pankratz, who played French horn, performed in the orchestra for four years at Austin High School in El Paso. Once in college at the University of Texas-El Paso, he joined the band and orchestra once again. He played for five years in the El Paso symphony and in the summer band, racking up some professional playing experience.

While Mr. P worked with students in Miami, wife Sheila was busy teaching piano lessons to children in Canadian and building a respectable reputation with people in this community.



THE MAESTRO...IN 1977, 1987, 1997

After five years of teaching the same students, Pankratz said it was time to move. The job opportunity presented itself in Canadian, and he instantly applied. The experience at Miami helped Pankratz realize his method of teaching and the different qualities from mentors and teachers that he mimicked.

"We learn positive and negative things from everybody," he said. For instance, one of his directors was very volatile. The band played "because they were afraid not to."

"My whole premise has always been I want the kids to play because they enjoy playing. I don't want them to be afraid of what's going to happen [if they don't]," he said.

When the band director position opened up,

Pollard said he saw an opportunity to change the direction of the band program and posted advertisements for the job across the state.

He narrowed it down to three candidates, and Pankratz was one of them. The 28-year-old's achievements in his first directing job stood out to Pollard.

"He was very young at that time," Pollard said. "That appealed to me because...I was pretty young too. I knew he knew how to put a band together."

Pankratz agreed with Pollard's philosophy that the academic program was the most important for the school, Pollard said. Pankratz also felt the band program was just as important as the athletic program, another answer that made



Terry Brown
Class of 1962

Garrett Stephens



Grayson Stephens



Lily Stephens



Berkley Beedy



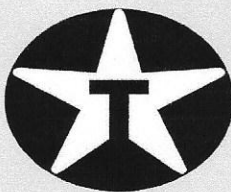
Kay (Abraham) Brown
Class of 1964



Wendi (Brown) Stephens
Class of 1990



Hillary (Brown) Beedy
Class of 1997



**Canadian
Oil & Gas**

320 N. First Street
Canadian, TX 79014
806-323-6481

Enjoy the 2005 All-School Reunion!!!

leaving behind an unparalleled musical legacy

an impression on Pollard.

"It's one thing to sit in an interview and say these things," Pollard said. "The thing is from the time Fred Pankratz was in this school, he proved to me that he believed that."

Many people, especially young people and those new to Canadian, may think the Canadian band was always as successful as it is now, but that is not the case, Pollard said. It took five years for the CHS band to win its first Sweepstakes in 1982.

"Fred was very discouraged at times with the program," he said. "I had to work at keeping his confidence up that this thing was going to work itself out. It was a struggle to get participation up those first four years. He just stayed with it until he got the job done."

The band started out with only 29 students, he said.

Of those 29 students, there were some who were very talented, Pankratz said. But there were areas of poor instrumentation, which means there were not enough instruments in some areas.

"The level of attention to fundamentals wasn't as high as I liked it," he said. "I felt like if we dwelled on fundamentals and got personal skills up, the ratings would follow."

Sure enough, they did. The first Sweepstakes was followed by another, and another and another until 22 UIL Sweepstakes awards adorned the walls at the band hall. Each of those awards was hard-earned, Mr. P said.

Sweepstakes is an award acquired by only one school per district. The winning band has

to earn first division (1's) ratings in marching, concert and sight-reading contests.

"It's a big thing [Sweepstakes]," Pankratz said. "But it's not necessarily an easy thing to do. It's still not easy. It's not based on reputation. It's based on how well you perform that day, period."

Mr. P knew coming to Canadian that he was charged with a difficult task. He began by working with All-Region and Solo and Ensemble try-outs. Working with individual and small groups gradually led to an overall improvement in the band.

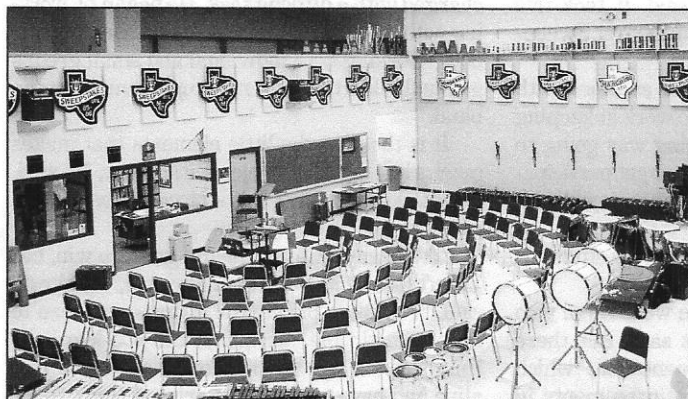
It is tackling the little elements that makes mastering the larger elements easier, he said. Over the years, Mr. P has strived for excellence, not awards.

"It's always fun to win and great to win, but I don't look at it as the primary goal," Pankratz said. "I think to play music is fun—you learn to have a good time, discipline, and you learn the things that make music...For people to be creative and have a love of the arts—I think that's really been important to me."

Mr. P left some big shoes to fill and no one feels that more than Will Brewer, Mr. P's former assistant band director, and now his successor.

"I was looking for someone to train me in everything I couldn't learn at college. I was looking for someone to mentor me," Brewer said.

He knew of Pankratz through his reputation in the band community, and did extensive research on his career accomplishments. When the position opened up in Canadian for an assistant band director, Brewer said he thought "it



The band hall walls are lined with Sweepstakes trophies and other awards from Mr. P's career here.

was too good to be true."

Brewer, whose wife Sarah Beth is also a music teacher, graduated from Wayland Baptist University and taught one year as an assistant band director at Lockney.

Working with Pankratz has taught Brewer directing lessons he could not get at college, he said. For instance, Pankratz helped Brewer recognize the different personalities of each class and how to encourage each one's strengths.

"Every year was not fun and some were even

tragic, but the success of the students has made the journey worthwhile," Pankratz said.

"I give all the credit to the students. They're the ones who have to get it done," he said. "It's not the destination—it's the journey. It's been a good journey."

"There's a lot of people that factor in to the band program," he continued. "While we've had some incredibly dominant players in the band, the band would have been okay without them. The program is bigger than any one player."

Canadian Dental Clinic



Kyle Sparkman D.D.S., M.S.
Orthodontics for Children and Adults

Complimentary Consultations
\$300 discount on full treatment

300 Birch * Canadian, Texas
(806)323-9324

Office hours by appointment

No referrals necessary

Arrington

Cathy (Arrington) Stephens
Class of '72

Julie (Arrington) Culver
Class of '74

Mike Arrington
Class of '76



Welcome
back
everyone!!!
C
J
M



Ex Grads Welcome

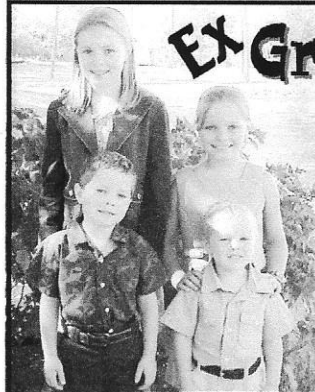
* Kari (Burns) & Chadd Kelton 1990

* Darbi 2011

* Kassidy 2014

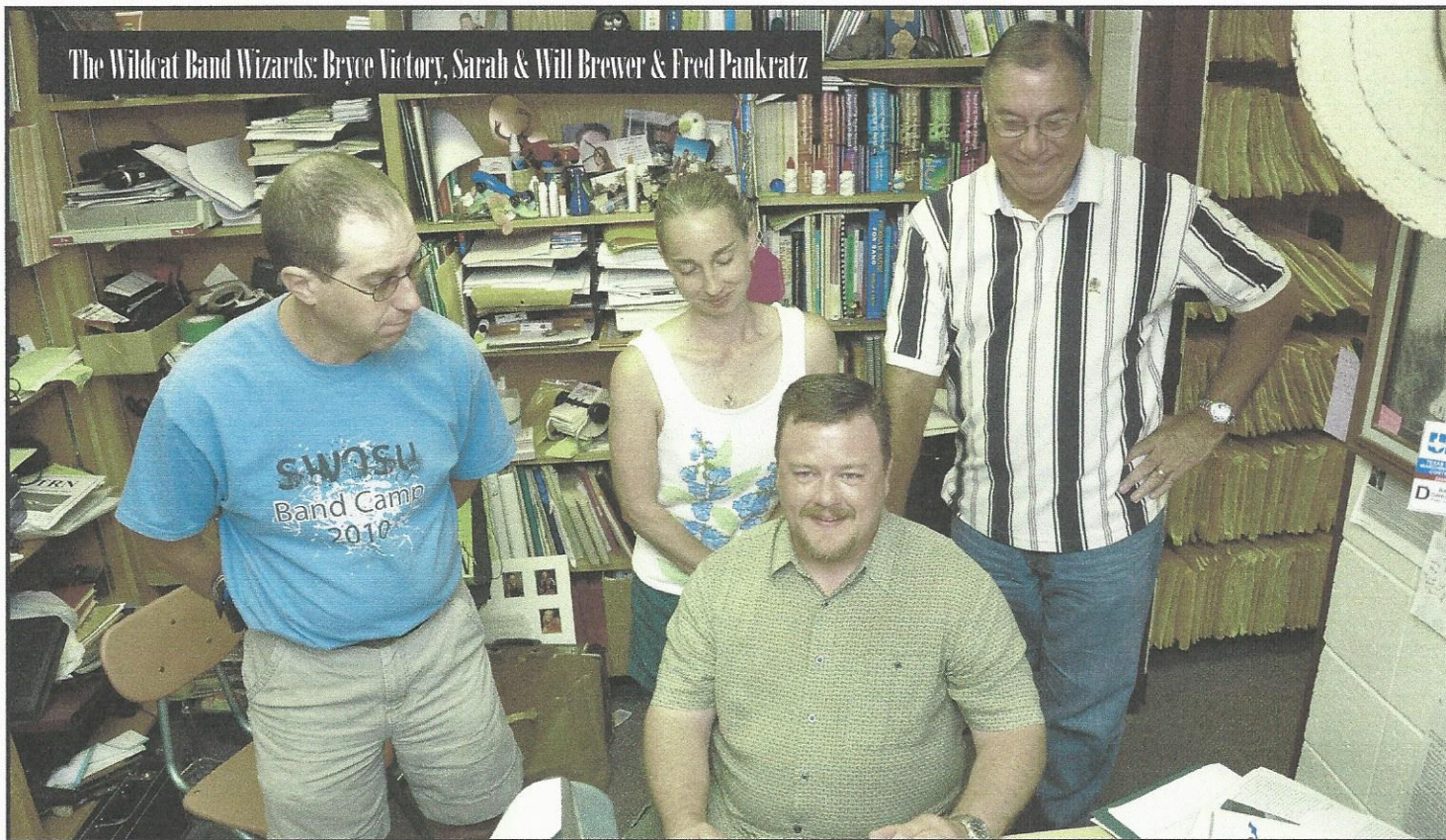
* Cutter 2019

* Twister 2021



Kari Kelton
668 Mobeetie
806-323-9735

The Wildcat Band Wizards: Bryce Victory, Sarah & Will Brewer & Fred Pankratz



Do you believe in magic?

A high school band achieves artistic alchemy

BY LAURIE EZZELL BROWN

WHEN THE WILDCAT MARCHING BAND taps out its cadence and steps onto the field in the season's first halftime performance Friday night, few of those watching from the grandstands will have any idea how much work has already been done.

Few will know the preparation that has gone into each step, painstakingly scripted in computer-generated graphs plotted out in x's and o's months in advance. Few will know the thought and planning that has gone into each note, each piece of music performed and its far-from-accidental instrumentation, as the Canadian High School Band begins its gradual ascent to what everyone believes will be another Sweepstakes year.

Former band director Fred Pankratz calls it magic—which, come to think of it, seems an apt analogy. Though 'retired' now for five

years, Pankratz still plays a figurative role in the team of wizards who each year concoct this special brew of artistic alchemy—an alchemy which has for three decades charmed its appreciative audiences and judges, and produced an impressive array of awards. But this magic—as most—is made of equal parts hard work and disciplined practice, much of it hidden behind the wizards' curtain and rarely revealed to the bedazzled public.

THERE IS LITTLE that can be written about the CHS Wildcat Band that isn't already abundantly evident in the four walls that surround these musicians each day in rehearsals. Every square inch of wall space that is not pressed into service for instrument storage in the two-story band hall displays the institutional history of what must surely be one of the most successful high school band programs in Texas history.

At the top of the wall in a place of lofty honor are 31 State UIL Sweepstakes Awards—most

of them the direct result of the hard work and craftsmanship of the same talented team of teachers. Though four of those coveted Sweepstakes Awards were collected in the 1960s—three under director James Restine and one under Carl Ward—the rest are the product of a program that began with Fred Pankratz' arrival here in 1976 and blossomed in the ensuing years under his and his mentor-successors' collective guidance.

Under Pankratz' direction, the CHS Band collected a remarkable 23 Sweepstakes Awards, five of those in collaboration with Assistant Director Will Brewer and his wife Sarah, who teaches music at Canadian's elementary schools. The Brewers arrival here in 1999 promised a seamless succession and when Pankratz passed the baton in 2005, the band barely missed a beat.

Will and Sarah Brewer—and for the last year, the aptly-named Bryce Victory, recruited from Oklahoma as Will's assistant—have continued the "tradition of excellence." They and

their students have added four more Sweepstakes to the trophy case and, in 2009, claimed a history-making third-place finish at State Marching Contest.

But when word arrived that the Canadian High School Band had been selected as the 2010 Texas Music Educator's Association Class A Honor Band, Brewer's ascension to the director's podium was complete.

The winning performance was recorded at Panhandle High School last spring. From the compellingly whistle-able *Colonel Bogey March*, through the sweetly comforting strains of *A Childhood Hymn* (based on *Jesus Loves Me*), to the final three movements of *West Highlands Sojourn*, the music is transcendent. The confidence of the musicians is evident in each note, and the overall performance suggests a level of maturity far beyond these high school students' years.

Long before the honor was announced,

MAGIC CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

MAGIC CONTINUED

though, Brewer knew the moment was special—one of three that he mentally rewound and replayed when asked what the highlights of his career thus far have been.

Though he credited winning with luck—some quirky combination of good acoustics and good recording equipment—it was clear when he described the perfectly-executed septuagint of *West Highlands* final stanza that this was far more than that.

"The kids just nailed it," he said. "Jooooooooooww. Wow!"

"I can't tell you how many times I've played that recording for people. 'Hey, you've got to hear this! Just that opening bar!'"

Less convinced that it is luck, Pankratz called it magic, without any hint of hype. "I was sitting in the audience at Panhandle," he said, "and from the very first note, I knew it was magic."

THERE IT IS AGAIN. Magic. But how does magic happen? Months in advance, well behind the curtain, the wizardry begins: with planning and preparation, with teaching the fundamentals and then teaching them again, with cultivating student leadership and letting it find its own head, and with plain old repetition and attention to detail.

Everyone has his own role in the process.

This year's marching music was actually selected last February, Brewer said. Once the music has been chosen, Pankratz begins writing the drills. "That means all the marching and maneuvering on the field, where each child goes, has been charted for them," he explained.

Much like a football coach, Pankratz designs each drill in x's and o's, using computer animation to show how it will look. "That way, we don't use the same look more than once and we have interesting shapes," Pankratz said. "You have to be asymmetrical. As a drill designer, I don't make a diagonal line that a judge can look right down and say, 'Oh, that third person back is not perfectly in line.' We do it the other way, so they can't see it. There's a little bit of hiding those things."

Sarah Brewer works with the percussion section. "I make sure all the drums are in tune and in shape and ready to go, which takes a lot of time," she said. "In rehearsal I make sure they can play their parts and that they're where they need to be, that their marching is really solid so they can concentrate on their playing because theirs tends to be more intricate in marching season."

Both she and Victory spend a lot of time on their feet troubleshooting. "There's a lot of things that you can't see on the field, but you need people on the field to fix," Sarah said. "When the clinician or Will or Fred or whoever is watching up there sees something, I can run and get that kid and help them fix it."

Having previously worked as a veritable one-man band in his previous school, Victory has enjoyed the opportunity Canadian offers to work with other people. Before his move here last year, "I had 60 in my high school band, grades 7-12," he said. "I went to my superintendent and said, 'I need another set of eyes, another set of ears.'"

Since Brewer, as Director, is focused on the big picture, Victory focuses on the little one. "When [Brewer] says there's something wrong with this line or curve," he said "I go down and try to find that one person or two people and say, 'Here it is. Pull back.' I try to fill in the role as the detail person."

Victory also takes charge of making sure the equipment is ready to go and where it should be when the band bus rolls. "I see myself as a major supporting person to him, to make sure what he's doing is successful," Victory said.

After shedding his designer hat, Pankratz fills in as the critic. "They see it every day," he said of his colleagues. "They get used to how this sounds or looks. My job is to look at it from a judging standpoint."

Brewer said his role, while all of that is going on, is to direct traffic. "I've got to evaluate everything, plan it all out, get all the right people in the right places," he said.

Brewer constantly pinpoints changes that must be made, details that need to be tweaked. He depends heavily on his assistants and his student leaders—particularly his drum majors—to find the problems that need special attention. For instance, if the marchers are dropping down on their heels when they march backwards, their heads will bob—a mistake that's easily noticed from a marching judge's perch high

up in the grandstands.

"I need [the drum major] to be looking at their heads—not their feet," Brewer said.

Attention to those details continues right down to the wire, as it did last year in San Antonio's Alamo Dome Stadium, where the band awaited its turn in the State Marching Band contest.

"There they were out in the parking lot," said Pankratz, "marching up and down, get-

ting those feet going and that feel."

While marching season is still in full throttle, Brewer has already turned part of his attention to concert season. "I'm already thinking about what pieces will fit this group and what areas are showing growth that I can rely on to be there when we get to February," he said.

Each year, the shape and sound of the band shifts, and it is his job—with the help of his assistants—to find the music that will showcase his musicians' strengths. "Part of the process we go through every year," said Brewer, "is evaluating what each section can handle and the kind of music that caters to it."

One of the benefits of having built such a successful program is the continuity that it encourages. This year's leaders prepare and set the example for next year's, eventually achieving a kind of perpetual motion that creates its own momentum, as it clearly has in the CHS band.

Brewer remembers the moment, at the start of the 2009-10 school year, when his section leaders walked through the door of the band hall and boldly announced, "We're going to state." Asked to elaborate, the students said, "We're going to have sectionals every week, and we're going to run them, and we want you to be available if we want help."

Brewer chuckles when he recalls the conversation, but it is this character building that is clearly central, both to his and his fellow instructors' methods and to the Wildcat Band's success.

ASKED TO REMEMBER a favorite moment in what has already been a career filled with them, Brewer recounts the moment in 2005 at Plainview, as the band prepared to march in an Area competition it ultimately lost.

It was the day after a bruising football game, and several of his band members were also on the football team. "There was a moment," Brewer said, "when the fog was rolling in, and I looked around. Matt Dickinson had gotten his knee blown out the night before. He was there on crutches."

"We've got Jairo [Quezada] and all these injured football players who are just propping themselves up. Eduardo [Campos] is wiping the dew off the timpani. They're all hurt."

When the band took the field, lifted their instruments to begin playing, Brewer remembers thinking, "I don't care what the judges

think. That's the performance I've been waiting on all year."

To a person, each director and assistant director credits high school band with building better human beings: from the leadership skills it develops, to the creativity it nurtures, and ultimately to the self-confidence that results.

"The most important thing," said Brewer, "is the people skills you learn in the process."

"You come into an environment where no two people have the same background. They don't even have the same standards," he said. "And yet, they have to set aside everything to make this unit work. There is no bench in band. You can't take a kid and set them aside because they're not doing what they're supposed to do. They're in there whether they're doing their part or not."

As Brewer continues, we begin to sense the underlying magic that may, in fact, be real after all.

"Those kids will either work together to make it work, or they'll self-destruct," he said. "Our job is to teach them people skills. The creativity. The ability to break it down and figure out how you're going to achieve a goal...the logistics. Then all those things come together, and they have the self-confidence to become very successful citizens."

"I'm really a life skills teacher," he concluded. "I just use band because it's the easiest place to teach all of those skills."

So think of that the next time you're sitting at a Friday night football game, listening to the band rock the grandstands with rousing versions of "Louie, Louie," "We've Got the Beat" and "Runaround Sue" and animate the field at halftime with musical images of everything from tinmen to pirates to this year's Samurai warrior and dancing geishas.

In this Friday night town, there is no Wildcat football without the Wildcat band—and Canadian High School has elevated both its football and band programs to unparalleled heights. Better than all of the trophies and all of the glory, though, is the very real possibility that hundreds of young people may actually have learned the life skills they will need once the trophies are tarnished and the glory has all faded.

How's that for magic?

"Eleven years out of high school, I still miss being a Wildcat Band member. I have so many wonderful memories: State marching contest in 1995, where we placed 4th (we should have won!); playing tuba in the All-State Band my junior and senior years; our dancing tuba section, which danced to 'If I Only Had a Brain' in the Wizard of Oz marching show in 1998 (why isn't that on YouTube?). Mr. P and Ms. Willison not only taught me how to play an instrument and how to read music. They taught me important life lessons: discipline, hard work ethic, commitment to the craft, and always striving for excellence. I use these skills every day of my life. I have never, however, used Algebra or Geometry. Never."

Former drum major/Scarecrow and dancing tuba, Jamie Price is now a professional singer, actor and dancer living in New York City



Fred Pankratz honored as founding member of ATSSB

During the Texas Music Educators Association convention held Feb. 10–13 in San Antonio, the founding members of the Association of Texas Small School Bands (ATSSB) were recognized.

Fred Pankratz, longtime Canadian High School band director—now retired, was one of the 15 band directors who braved the cold on March 16, 1991, and met in Louis Thornton's Abilene Wylie Band Hall. The meeting was the result of an invitation from John Gibson of Ballinger to interested small-school band directors across Texas to discuss the formation of an association to promote the interests of small-school band directors. Pankratz said he served as the association's first vice-president and as its second president.

In all, 380 directors joined ATSSB that first year, which culminated in the first ATSSB All-State Band in February 1992 in the Scottish Rite Auditorium under the baton of Gary Lewis from the University of Michigan. A second All-State band was added in 1997, as was the first Outstanding Performance Series competition under the guidance of OPS State Chair Don Thoede (who has remained at that post since it began). Annually selecting the best contest program from five classes of small schools, the program has enjoyed tremendous participation and success with 2,289 entries since its inception. An All-State jazz ensemble was added in 2004.

ATSSB aligned its audition procedures with the Texas Music Educators Association in 1998 and began holding its All-State concerts in the convention center in 2008, then the Lila Cockrell Theater in 2011. This year, ATSSB has 1,157 members.

Since 1992, 5,746 small-school bandmen have been awarded All-State honors through ATSSB. They include Canadian High School Band students, Monty Barnett, 1995; Jennifer Blasingame, 1997, 1998, 1999; Kathryn Knight, 1997, 1998, 1999; Jace Shaw, 1997, 1998; Jamie Price, 1998, 1999; Lindsay Ricketts, 1998; Autumn Flowers, 1999, 2000, 2002; Jason Price, 1999; Christine Pankratz, 2001; Edgar Rollins, 2004; Carrie Cox, 2005; Caleb Berry, 2009; Claire Abraham, 2012.

In 1994, ATSSB began commissioning works for small-school bands each year until 2010, when the Composition Competition was begun. The winning composition was then premiered in even years, with a commissioned work premiering in odd years. Four-year \$1,000 scholarships were awarded, beginning in 1995, with three-year \$500 scholarships beginning in 2003, when the four-year award was increased to \$2,000. A total of \$311,500 in scholarships has been awarded to 353 individual students to date.

The directors present at the founding 1991 meeting later paid a \$100 charter member fee to get the association off the ground:



President-elect Mike Bartley (left) congratulating Fred Pankratz on his recognition as a founding charter member and past-president of ATSSB.

Rick Ball, West Texas High School in Stinnett; Mike Bendiksen of Montgomery High School; Dwayne Bishop, San Saba High School; Dale Cook, Whitewright High School (deceased June 18, 2005); Lonnie Dooley, Hawkins High School; Jim Gibson, West Texas High School; John Gibson, Ballinger High School; Kenneth Griffin, Van High School; R. Michael Hardy, Mason High School; Barry Hurt, Sundown High School; Michael G. Marsh, Eldorado High School; Fred Pankratz, Canadian High School; Elmer Schenk, Howe High School; Louis Thornton, Wylie High School in Abilene (deceased Oct. 8, 2009); and Jennifer Willison, Canadian High School.

Other members that year also paid the \$100 fee: Pat Autry, Whitesboro High School; Sarah Kerber, Van High School; Bobby Overall, Winona High School; Gregory J. Stewert, Clint High School; Don Stockton, Warren High School; Robert Vetter, Reagan County High School; and Tome F. Walters, Sunray High School (deceased Nov. 30, 2005).

Fred Pankratz as Hall of Famer

Fred Pankratz also will be inducted into the Texas Bandmaster Hall of Fame this year. The announcement was made at the Phi Beta Mu, International Bandmasters Fraternity, Alpha Chapter meeting held in San Antonio on Feb. 11. Pankratz was nominated by Dr. Charles Trayler of Dalhart, with seconding nominations by Dr. Dale Roller of Amarillo, CISD Superintendent Kyle Lynch of Canadian, and former CISD Superintendent Jim Pollard of Canyon.

The Hall of Fame is housed at the Texas Music Educators Association office in Austin. The ceremony will be held during the Texas Bandmasters Association meeting scheduled for July 21–24 in San Antonio and will include memorabilia from the Canadian bands, as well as Pankratz's biography. Anyone with photos to include may send them to Fred and Sheila Pankratz, PO Box 571, Canadian, TX 79014; or email fspankraz@yahoo.com.