

JOSEPH ANGELO DICOSIMO
Band Director 1952-1986

Joe DiCosimo was born in Mt. Union Pennsylvania. He started taking clarinet lessons at the age of 14 from Joseph Monti. He performed in his high school band/jazz band until graduation. He served in the United State Marine Corps during World War II. Upon completion of his time in the military Joe spent a year and a half pursuing other various vocations before starting college at Western New Mexico College to study music. Upon completion of school he landed his first teaching job with the El Paso public school system teaching middle school band for two years. He then taught in the same system at the high school level for two years teaching with people such as Ross Capshaw, Bernie Glover, Roger Wells, and others. Joe then moved to Pampa in the summer of 1955 replacing Orland Butler at Pampa Jr. High School. He served Pampa Independent School District for the next 31 years. He worked with Bill Tregoe, Fred Stockdale, Harris Brinson, Jeff Doughten, Jim Duggan, Charles Johnson. These men all served at Pampa High School. In the Elementary, Junior High, or Middle School he worked with Charles Meech, Sam Watson, Bill Surface, David Fennell, Brent Colwell, Ben Golehon, who replaced Joe at the old Pampa Jr. High, Cecil Darby, Buzzy Green, David Robertson, Darrell Garrison, and Kevin Roberson.

Many of his students went on to pursue a musical career: Van Ragsdale, Bill Duggan, Jim Duggan, David Fennell, Brent Colwell, Kari Guinn, Julie Collins, Robbie Edwards, Crispin Bradsher, Danny Mendoza, Jim Bernard, Michelle Harpster, Susan Evans, Carol Morgan, Jay Miller, Kathy McEntyre, Lynn Hart, David Robertson, Doyle Gerken, Gary Laramore, Buzzy Green, and others. Countless others were directly influenced by Joe's life through music.

Joe started many programs in the Pampa instrumental program that have been key to its continued success. He started the Summer Band program which is in its thirty-fifth year. It serves as a launching pad for young performers to increase their musical skills.

In thirty-one years Joe's band received 73 first divisions out of 93 possible in concert, sightreading, and marching. His band was named Outstanding Band in their class at the Greater Southwest Musical festival in 1981. He was instrumental in the preparation of the Pampa High Band's performance at the Mid-West Convention in Chicago in 1970 and was a guest conductor at that performance. Joe's band participated in marching, concert, and sight-reading at all UIL contests.

While serving as a director in the Pampa system Joe's students went on to the high school band and performed in such events as:

Mid-West Convention in 1960 and 1970

L. A. Rams Game in 1968

New York Jets Game in 1969

Tournament of Roses 1979

St. Patricks Parade in Dublin Ireland 1977

King Kamehameha Parade in Honolulu 1981

Kennedy Center of the Performing Arts 1987

Joe's band served their school and community through concerts, parades. In 1986 he retired from the public school system.

He still teaches privately for the Pampa Instrumental Program.

He teaches at summer band camps, serves as a judge and clinician through the school year.

NEW MEXICO WESTERN COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
Silver City, New Mexico
PHONE 602

May 18, 1951

Joe DiCossimo
New Mexico Western College
Silver City, N. M.

Dear Joe:

May I express my sincere personal appreciation and gratitude for the very fine job you've done for the 1951 "Aqua-Parade" and New Mexico Western College.

The good will which you have helped create locally, and which your efforts will help create through the show's May 26-31 tour, are inestimable. I hope the experience has been as rich for you as it has been helpful to the college.

Yours very sincerely,

Bob Suess

Robert D. Suess
Director of Public Relations

RDS/brs

HOUSTON SCHOOL

Choral and Instrumental Program

May 13, 1953

7:30 p.m.

Promotion March	Chennette
Choral	Oliver
Song of the Rose	Weber
Village Chapel	Ribble
Drumsticks	Metcalf
Neptune Overture	Eisenberg
Honor Band March	Weber

THE BAND

Hallelujah Amen -- "Judah Maccabaeus"	Handel
Coventry Carol	English Melody
Send Out Thy Spirit	Schuckly
Sheep and Lamb	Rach

MIXED CHORUS

America the Beautiful	Ward
From the Opera "Rinaldo"	Handel
The Ride	Old German
Lullaby	Brahms
Hunter's Chorus from "Der Freischütz"	Von Weber
Church Bells	Gounod
La Cucaracha	Mexican Folk Song
Cielito Lindo	Mexican Folk Song

THE ORCHESTRA

Rejoice the Lord Is King	Saint-Saens
Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen	Negro Spiritual
Prayer from Hansel and Gretel	Humperdinck

COMBINED CHORUS

Land of Hope and Glory	Elgar
Lament	William Grant Still
Alphabet Song	Mozart
Take Joy Home	Bassett

EIGHTH GRADE CHORUS

Mr. J. A. DiCosimo	Band Director
Mrs. Richard Gingery	Orchestra Director
Mrs. Jules Novick	Chorus Accompanist
Mrs. Wayne Tretsen	Chorus Director

EL PASO, TEXAS -

FIRST BAND
CONCERT

Band honors its members

By THOM MARSHALL
Pampa News Staff

Saturday was a big night for the DiCosimo family with papa, Joe, specially honored by the Pampa Chamber of Commerce for 21 years of band directing, and son, Vincent, picked as a recipient of the John Philip Sousa Award.

It was pointed out in the presentation to DiCosimo, the elder that his success in teaching junior high musicians is vital in providing material for the Pride of Pampa Band.

Jeff Doughten, director of the high school band, said that this year he could not narrow down to a single student from the many considered for the annual John Philip Sousa Award presented the outstanding band student.

The director named two of his students to receive the award and split the \$100 scholarship that goes with the honor. DiCosimo, the younger, was one. Marsha Holland was the other honoree.

It took two and one half hours

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of banquet in the Coronado Inn to recap events of the past year and complete the presentation of all awards, letters, and the hand-made dolls and pen sets given each year to each graduating senior.

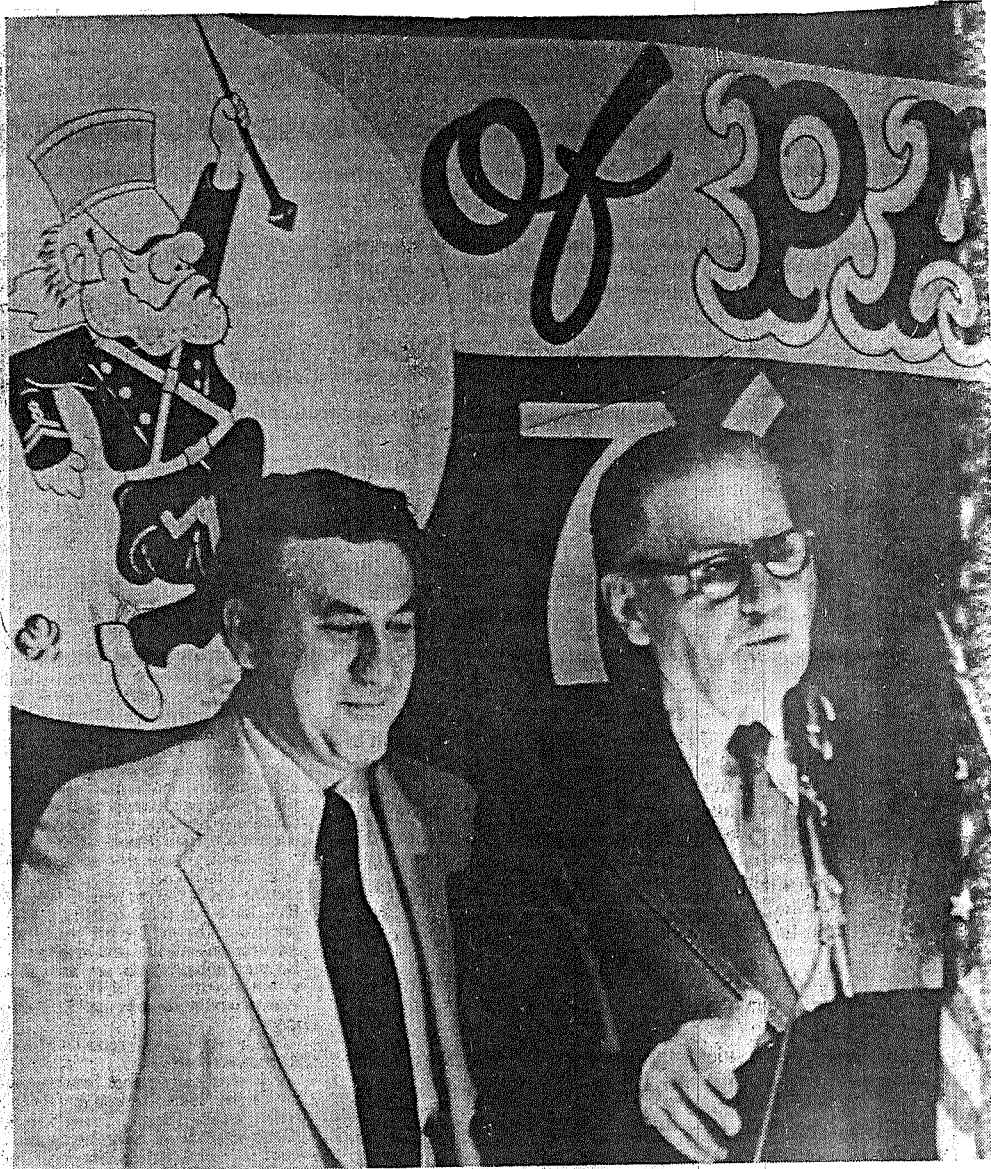
A recording of Paul Harvey's radio program when the commentator featured Pampa was played, and letters from President Gerald Ford and Governor Dolph Briscoe were read.

Phil Cates, Chamber of Commerce manager for Shamrock and state representative, spoke. He was responsible for the Pride of Pampa playing at the Shamrock St. Patrick's Day Celebration which resulted in invitations for the band to play at the state capitol in Austin and in Dublin, Ireland for the 1977 St. Patrick's Day Celebration.

Marsha Holland also was honored as Outstanding Girl for the year. The Outstanding Boy award went to Wesley Jones.

Bob McLane was named Outstanding Marcher for the Pride of Pampa marching band season.

In addition to presenting DiCosimo, the elder, with a plaque, Red Wedgeworth, manager of the Pampa Chamber of Commerce, also presented a plaque of appreciation to the Pride of Pampa Band.



Thanks, Joe DiCosimo

Chamber of Commerce saluted the Pride of Pampa band and junior high school band director Joe DiCosimo at the Saturday evening event. The surprise award to DiCosimo was presented by chamber manager Red Wedgewood.

Band festival honors Joe DiCosimo in Texas

By TONI HANCOCK
Daily News Staff Writer

Nine area bands converged on M. K. Brown Auditorium at Pampa, Texas for the first Joseph DiCosimo Area Band Festival sponsored by Pampa High School Band.

DiCosimo, an accomplished musician, is a native of Mount Union. He is the son of Antoinette DiCosimo of Mount Union and the late Angelo DiCosimo.

Joe graduated from Mount Union Area High School in 1943 and New Mexico University. He served in the Pacific Theater of World War II with the Marine Corps.

The 1988 band festival resulted when local citizens and band parents wanted to do something to honor the former Pampa Middle School band director, DiCosimo, after his retirement at the end of 1987. It is hoped it will become an annual event.

A clarinetist, Joe took private lessons from Professor Joseph Monti in Altoona. He has always been a lover of music and while in school participated in many competitive band events and won

numerous awards.

Joe played in the Mount Union High School band when Mount Union musician J. Richard Burkholder was the band director.

DiCosimo intends to spend several months out of the year in Mount Union with his mother and sister, Marguerite Bellucci and brother Jim and their families, and renew old acquaintances.

His two children reside in Texas: a daughter, Annette in Dallas and son, Vincent in Houston. Joe's wife Ann died in 1987 following an extended illness.

Junior high band wins sweepstakes

May 1976

By winning two first division ratings at Region I University of Interscholastic League (UIL) contest Tuesday in Amarillo, Pampa's junior high school band became the only junior high school band in the region to win a sweepstakes for the year.

A sweepstakes win results when a band gets first division rating in the fall marching contest and in the spring sight

reading and concert competition.

Only one other band in the region, Canyon, won first divisions in both sight reading and concert performance at Tuesday's contest.

Pampa's junior high band is directed by Joe DiCosimo.

UIL competition for Pampa High School's Pride of Pampa Band was set for 3:30 p.m. today at the Amarillo Civic Center.

Miranda running.

PJH band captures sweepstakes

The Pampa Junior High School Band picked up a sweepstakes honor during University Interscholastic League competition Wednesday in Amarillo.

The band, directed by Joe DiCosimo, received one ratings in concert and sight - reading performances. Sweepstakes awards went to four bands which earned ones in each category.

There were 17 junior high school bands from area cities in the competition.

The Pride of Pampa band is in Amarillo today to compete in UIL concert and sight - reading contests. The Pampa High School band is directed by Jeff Doughten and Bill Surface.

AT WEST TEXAS CONTEST

Pampa Band Students Receive High Ratings

Pampa band students received 57 solo ratings and 19 ensemble ratings in the top categories in competition with area students at West Texas State University last Saturday.

Students from Pampa High competed with 52 other schools at the University Interscholastic League contests.

Receiving superior ratings from PHS are soloists Roy Anderson, Jim Duggan, Jeff Hatcher, Carolyn Lindsey, Patsy Kelley and Annette DiCosimo.

Ensembles gaining superior ratings are cornet trio Roy Anderson, Eska Miller and Mark Carter; clarinet trio Teri Dement, Cindy McDonald and Jaquita Thomas; and woodwind quintet Cindy Welch, Debbie Heinritz, Jeff Dunn, Janice Wing and Carolyn Lindsey.

Excellent ratings went to soloists Paul Skoog and Mary Spearman and to French horn quartet Debbie Brewer, Rhonda Dennis, Rick Martin and Paul Skoog.

Pampa Junior High students awarded a superior rating include soloists Suzanne Lowrie, Kellie Jones, Neta Eads, Rhonda Hamrick, Connie Miller, Wayne Whaley, Nita Parsley, Mike Helms, Randy Turner and Bill Farriell.

Ensembles gaining a superior are woodwind quartet Neta Eads, Peggy Lowrie, Bobby McLane, Darrell Thompson and Janice Shults, and cornet trio Nita Parsley, Randall Williams and Darrell Bowers.

Excellent ratings went to soloists Janice Shults, Debbie King, Peggy Lowrie, Pam Mann, Johnnie Greer, Cheryl Hilton, Becky Hilton, Jerry Hall, Pat Brookshire, Tony Tackett, Donnie Lee and Jimmy Pluton.

Gaining an excellent rating in the ensemble division are cornet trio Walter Tyler, Ruelen Garza and Raymond

Cox, and brass quintet Wayne Whaley, Johnny Miller, Leon Brookshire, Randy Turner and Donnie Lee.

Students winning a third division rating from PJHS are soloists Brenda Lee, Randy Ford and Cynthia Hon, and clarinet quartet Carolyn Hoover, Becky Hilton, Debbie Hernandez and Cynthia Hon, and horn quartet Larry Edwards, Darrell Thompson, Aubrey Miller and Joey Reeder.

Soloists from Lee Junior High School awarded superior ratings are Stephanie Secrest, Lisa Dunham, Debbie Lehnick, Vincent DiCosimo, Glenn Blanscet, Kim Morrow, Brenda Been, Mark Dement and Clifford Stephens.

Lee ensembles rated superior are cornet trio Clifford Stephens, Kathy Davis and Brenda Been; trombone quartet Glenn Blanscet, Vincent DiCosimo, James Miller and Ted Brown; clarinet trio Debbie Lehnick, Julie Tyler and Rae Stone; baritone trio Kim Morrow, Marty Scott and Jerry Brazile; and flute trio Stephanie Hills, Jim Sargent and Rebecca Riemer.

Excellent ratings went to soloists Jim Sargent, Rebecca Riemer, Loretta Laffin, Gina Earp, Joyce Elliott, Ted Brown, James Miller, Mike Henson, Kathy Davis, Tim Anderson, Howard Lewis and Stan Williams.

Ensembles rated excellent are cornet quartet Howard Lewis, Tim Anderson, Mark Dement and David Chambliss; clarinet trio Dreka Weatherly, Marsha Holland and Leanna Odell; and clarinet quartet Kathy Carpenter, Rae Stone, Ricky Martin and Rhonda Lawrence.

Awarded a third division rating from Lee are soloists Donna Laffin, Clifford Stephens and Teresa Thomas; and French horn quartet Bill Miller, Craig Sheldon, Jamie Garam and Keith Waterbury.



Movin' on

11-22
That's what the Pampa Junior High Band was doing Monday as they prepared for the annual Thanksgiving-Christmas parade through downtown Pampa. The band

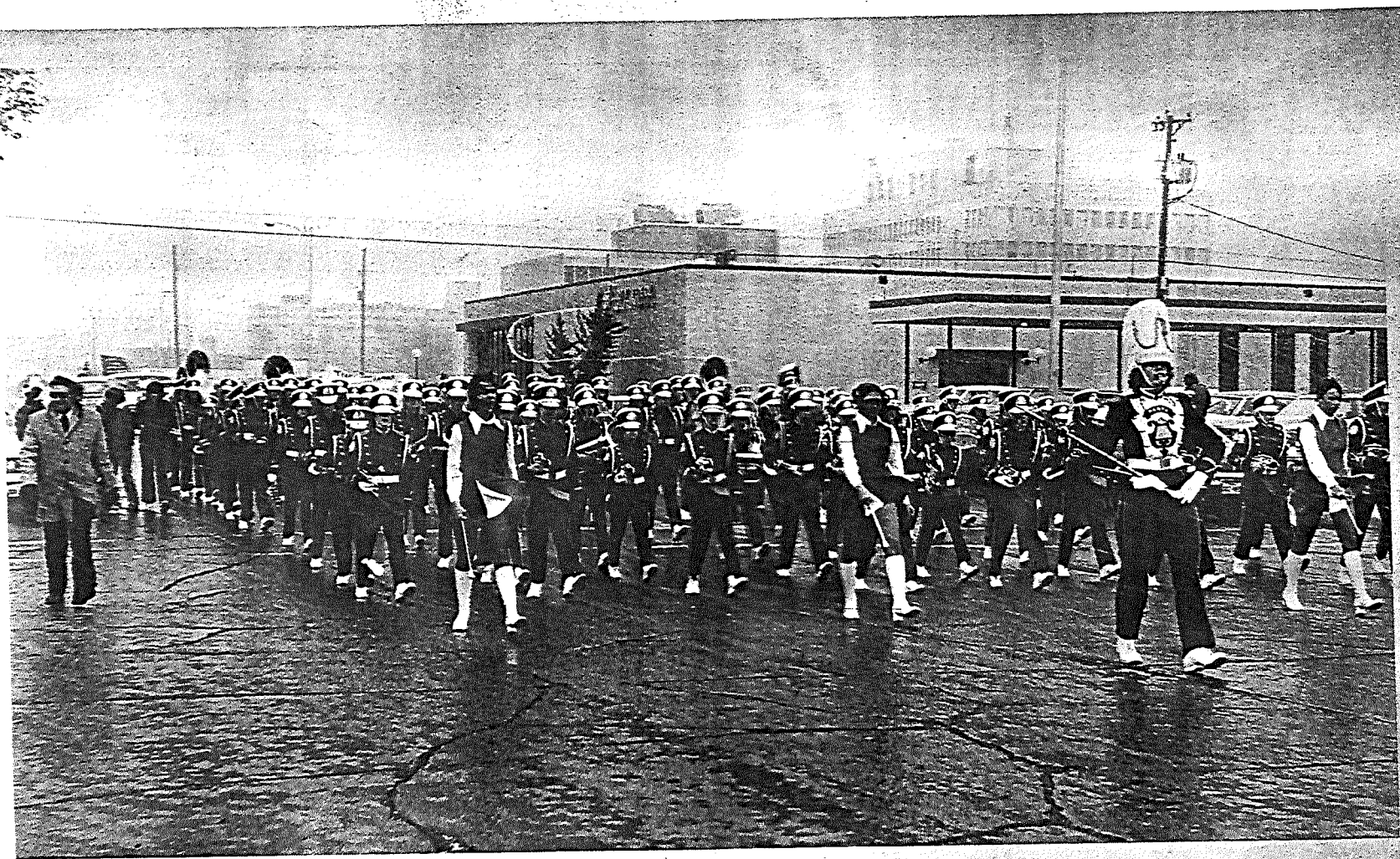
was caught by the Pampa News as it practiced marching down Mary Ellen street near the junior high school.
(Pampa News photo by Ron Ennis)

Sunday, Feb. 27, 1972



AND THE BAND PLAYED ON—Sixth grade band students from the Pampa elementary schools get together to practice for the Cadet Band's performance at the all-city band concert slated for 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at Robert E. Lee Junior High. Conducting the band at the Saturday morning session is Joe DiCosimo, Lee band director. The Pampa High School band and both junior high bands will also perform at the free public concert.

(Staff Photo)



Bands Bring Home Honors From Contests At WTSU

Bands from Pampa High School and the two junior high schools rated 27 soloists and nine ensembles with first division honors in the region one University Interscholastic League solo

and ensemble contests at West Texas State University Saturday.

First division winners qualify for state contest in Austin in June, according to Haris Brinson, PHS band director.

The eight first division soloists of PHS were Linda Sadler, Jane Egerton, Kathy Altman, Sue Shirley, Doug Laramore, Bill Duggan, Tim Stephens and Rusty Reeve.

From Pampa Junior High School, the 10 first division soloists were Phoebe Skelly, Jeannie Goff, Joe Williams, Eugene Taylor, Lynn Green, Keith Jones, Ronnie Stewart, Allan Rowan and Glenn Cates.

Robert E. Lee first division soloists were Annette DiCosimo, Annette Dunham, Lee French, Jan Hart, Patay Kelley, Janell Odell, Rita Russell, Shornette Stephens, Richard Stowers and Steven Waters.

The four first place ensembles from PHS were a flute trio, saxophone quartet, brass sextet, and Woodwind quartet.

From PJHS, a saxophone quartet of Hugh Jones, Joe Williams, Manual Hernandez and Steve Scott placed in first division competition.

Robert E. Lee first division ensemble winners were a flute quartet; three clarinet trios, a clarinet quartet and a coronet quartet.

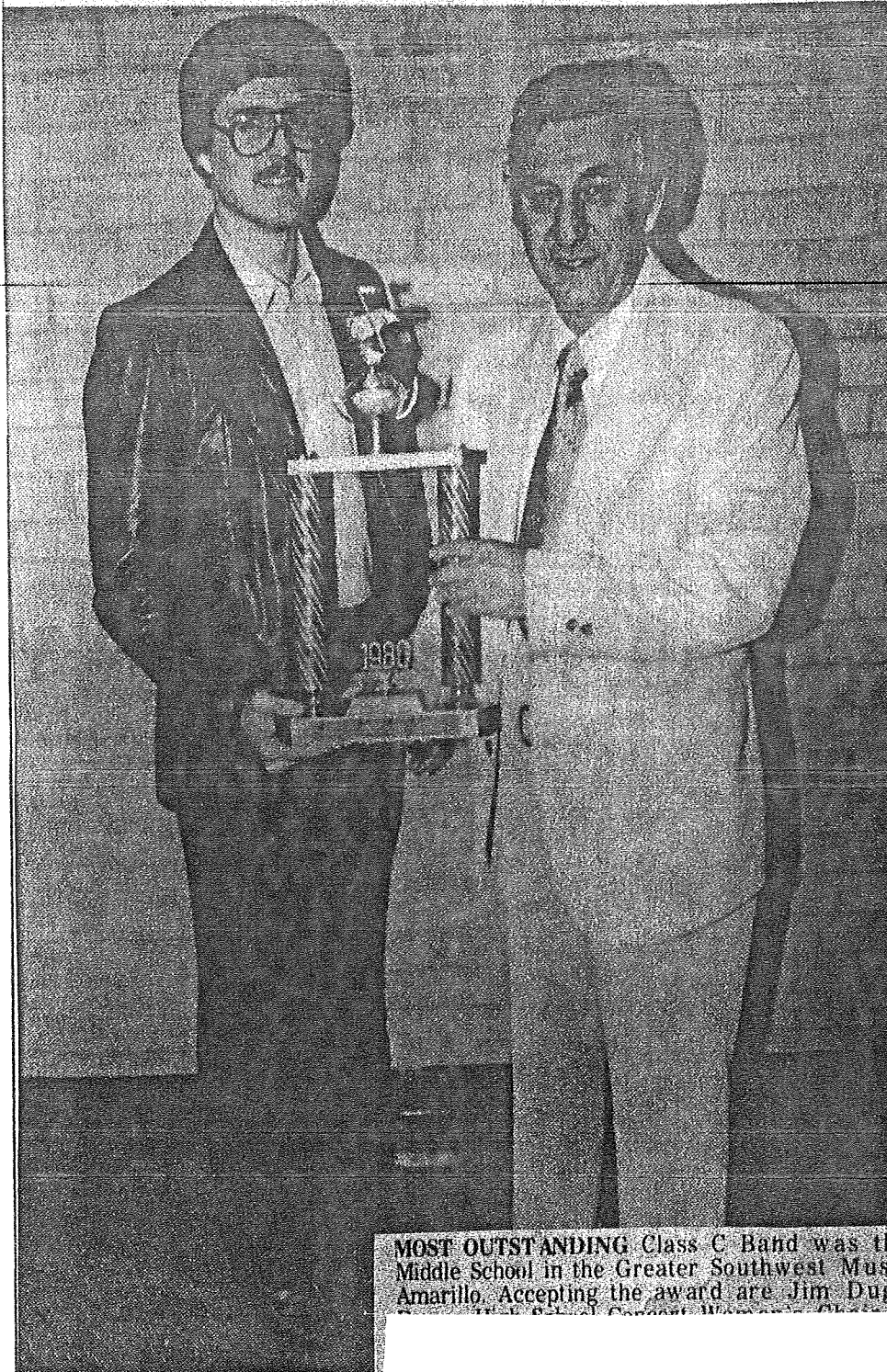
From PHS seven soloists and two ensembles made second division; PJHS, three soloists and five ensembles; second division, and Robert E. Lee, five solos in division II and one in division III.

First division ensemble players of PHS were Judy Tarrant, Bill Felter, Cheri Beckham, flute; Gail Miller, Yvonne Dowdy, Terry Williams, Tommy Francis, (saxophone) Mike Fuff, Bill Duggan, Bobby Bailey, Buzzy Green, Joe Trumm, Mike Collinsworth, (brass) John Merilatt, Theresa Mercer, Bill Felter and Terry Williams, (woodwinds).

First division ensemble players from Lee were Rita Russell, Janell Odell, Janise Wing, Jean Ann Hawkins, (flute); Steven Waters, Mary Hasse, Laura Best, Cindy McDonald, Mike Bradford, Jon Barton, Billie Richardson, Donna Gassaway, Evelyn Cash, Sherry Gray, and Pat Cable, (Clarinet) and Steven Wesley, Jim Duggan and Eska Miller, (coronet).

YOU made the NEWS!

and we want to be the first to congratulate you.



MOST OUTSTANDING Class C Band was the rating won by the Pampa Middle School in the Greater Southwest Music Festival held this week in Amarillo. Accepting the award are Jim Duggan and Joe DeCosimo.



THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK in PAMPA

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Fourth annual Joe DiCosimo Band Festival to begin Thursday

The Fourth Annual Joe DiCosimo Festival is set for April 4, 5, and 6, at the M. K. Brown Auditorium in Pampa. The festival honors Joe DiCosimo, former band director in the Pampa Independent School District for 31 years.

DiCosimo is a graduate of Western New Mexico University where he received a bachelor of music education degree. He taught elementary and high school band in El Paso for four years before coming to Pampa in 1955. He retired from teaching in 1986 but continues to teach private lessons at Pampa High School and Middle School. He also serves as judge, clinician, and teacher at band camps.

There will be 21 area bands performing their U.I.L. contest programs for three clinician-adjudicators, Marion West, Ken Valliant and Scott Taylor.

West is a graduate of Central State University in Edmond, Okla., where she received a bachelor of music education degree. West continued her education at the University of Oklahoma and Central State University receiving a master of music education degree in 1971. She has taught in the Richardson Independent School District for seven years.

Ken Valliant is a native of Richardson and graduate of J. J. Pearce High School. He received a B.M.E. and M.A. from West Texas State University. He is in his eleventh year at Haggard Middle School. He taught in Alamogordo, N. Mex., and Crane, Tex. previously.

Scott Taylor received both his bachelor of music and master of music from the University of Texas at Austin. He is in his 20th year of

teaching in the Richardson Independent School District. For the last eleven years he has been director of band at Richardson High School. Taylor has twice had the honor of conducting a Texas Honor Band, in 1978 with Westwood Junior High School Band and in 1983 with the Richardson High School Symphonic Band. The Richardson High School Symphonic Band has also performed at the Mid West National Band and Orchestra Clinic.

The Joe DiCosimo Festival is open to the public.

The Thursday performance schedule includes the following: Borger Middle School Symphonic Band-warm up 3:30 p.m., performance 4 p.m.; Borger Middle School Honor Band-warm up 4 p.m., performance 4:30 p.m.; Dumas Jr. High-warm up 4:30 p.m.,

performance 5 p.m.; Canadian Middle School Band-warm up 5 p.m., performance 5:30 p.m.; Hereford Middle School-warm up 5:30 p.m., performance 6 p.m.; Hereford High School Concert Band-warm up 6 p.m., performance 6:30 p.m.; Canadian High School-warm up 6:30 p.m., performance 7 p.m.; Hereford High Concert Band-warm up 7 p.m., performance 7:30 p.m.; Hereford High School Symphonic Band-warm up 7:30 p.m., performance 8 p.m.; Dumas High School (second

amburger Station, 665-9131. Adv. ALL SPRING dresses 20%, 30%, and 50% off. New shipment of socks at The Clothes Line. Adv.

MEALS on WHEELS
669-1007, P. O. Box 939. Adv.

group)-warm up 8 p.m., performance 8:30 p.m.; Dumas High School Band-warm up 8:30 p.m., performance 9 p.m.; Borger High School Band-warm up 9 p.m., performance 9:30 p.m.

On Friday, the schedule is Wheeler High School-warm up 1:30 p.m., performance 2 p.m.; Claude High School-warm up 3:30 p.m., performance 4 p.m.; Gruver High School-warm up 4 p.m., performance 4:30; Randall High School II-warm up 4:30 p.m., performance

Glenda Brownlee, 665-0310 or 274-2142. Adv.

WACKY WEDNESDAY Specials at City Limits tonight. Adv.

VFW AUXILIARY business meeting 9 a.m. Thursday, social 26th.

5 p.m.; West Texas Middle School-warm up 5 p.m., performance 5:30.

The Saturday schedule is as follows: Pampa Middle School Concert Band-warm up 8:30 a.m., performance 9 a.m.; Pampa Middle School Patriot Band-warm up 9 a.m., performance 9:30 a.m.; Pampa High School Concert Band-warm up 9:30 a.m., performance 10 a.m.; Pampa High School Symphonic Band-warm up 10 a.m., performance 10:30 a.m.

Plans for Cinco de Mayo to be discussed. Adv.

BODY WORKS in the Coronado Shopping Center is looking for 2 beauticians. First months booth rent free, no commission. Call 669-0527, or come by. Adv.

Weather focus

near 50. South Plains, fair with a warming trend. Highs mid 70s in the 80s. Lows in the 60s. Southeast Texas and the upper Texas

Up close

By LARRY HOLLIS
Staff Writer

Pampa Middle School band director Joe Dicosimo is proud of his students. He enjoys talking about them and the band more than about himself.

"I think we have a fine group of students here; I really do," he said. And he's referring to students he's had for all 29 years of his teaching experience in Pampa, not just about recent students.

"I enjoy teaching very much. I enjoy teaching youngsters of this age group because they're enthusiastic."

Dicosimo came to Pampa in July, 1955, from El Paso, where he had taught in grade school for two years and at Bowie High School in 1954-55. With his 29 years in Pampa, he has taught band for 32 years.

He was born in Mount Union, Penn., and attended schools there. His grandparents lived next door and had children who played in the school bands, one playing the clarinet and another the cornet. He got interested in playing the clarinet and joined the band in his 8th grade year.

Playing in the band was "a carry-over from the grandparents to the grandchildren," he said.

He enjoyed being in band and soon decided he wanted to become a band director.

"I can't ever remember not wanting to be a band director" after the 8th grade, he said.

But after graduating from high school, his band interests had to take a rest for awhile. He entered the U.S. Marine Corps, serving for almost three years during World War II from 1943 to 1946. He served in an artillery battalion in the Pacific for 24 months. Unlike many soldiers in that period, however, he was in no big battles. His outfit was lucky enough to see no action, he said.

After getting out of the Marines, he worked in the post office system for awhile, including a railroad mail terminal at Cleveland for four months.

He went to New Mexico in 1947. He had an uncle who had been stationed in that state during World War II and then lived there to attend college, majoring in music. His uncle talked Dicosimo into coming down.

Dicosimo attended Western New Mexico University at Silver City, getting back to his band interests and graduating in 1952 with a bachelor of arts degree in music. He went to El Paso in January, 1952, just after graduating, to begin his teaching career.

There he met his wife, Ann, an alumna of Pampa High School who had graduated from the University of New Mexico. They have been married 29 years.

When a position for band director opened at Pampa Junior High School in 1955, he applied for it and got it. "So here I am," he said.

He taught at PJHS for three years before moving over to the new Robert E. Lee Junior High School when it opened in 1958. To an outsider, things can get confusing about school in that new building, since it has had three names.

"We've had three different schools here," Dicosimo noted.

It was Lee until 1973, then it became Pampa Junior High School after the other PJHS was closed. Then, following some reshuffling of classes, it became Pampa Middle School in 1978, taking the name of the other PMS which had taken over Sam Houston Elementary School for a couple of years. Grades changed from 7th, 8th and 9th to 7th and 8th, then to 6th, 7th and 8th.

Follow all of that? Whatever, Dicosimo has been at the same building for its 25 years of existence.

not had any previous band experience.

Sixth grade students enter the cadette band, with instruction split into woodwind instruments and brass instruments. The woodwind class is in the morning, followed by the Patriot Marching Band. The brass instruments class meets. After that, the Patriot Concert Band meets, directed for the first time this year by Roberson, with Dicosimo assisting. The marching band also meets sometime in the afternoon after school to prepare for contests.

Both bands participate in All-Region Band, solo and ensemble contests and sight reading contests. The concert band also participates in concert contests, this being the fourth year they have done so as a separate band. The bands also take part in the Nona S. Payne Mid-Winter Band Concert in February and in the All-City Band Concert (the spring band festival) in May.

During his years as band director here, his students have won 16 sweepstakes at University Interscholastic League events, receiving a I rating in all three areas: concert, sight reading and marching.

"So we figure they've done a fine job," Dicosimo said with pride. "They do have quite a record for first divisions."

He's willing to give credit to the students.

"Our kids have always worked hard here in our program. They know they have a job to do and they do it well," he said, explaining the tradition of good bands in the Pampa school system over the years as coming as much from the students as from the directors.

He said the methods of instruction have not changed much over the years. "We're doing pretty much the same" as in previous years, he commented.

The strongest point is sight reading, he said, stressing the fundamentals. His eyes light up as he notes that his students have received only one II rating in sight reading in his years here, all the rest being I's.

"We're very happy with that part," he said.

He also stresses the basic fundamentals of marching.

"We try to prepare them so that when they go to high school, they have all the fundamentals" - instrument techniques, basic steps, memorization abilities. "We prepare them for future years."

"We hope (our instruction) helps" to ensure the success of the PHS Harvester Band, but he feels his main work "is with the students here. We do hope there will be a carry-over."

He has no definite idea of how many students he has taught in his 32 years of band instruction. "I've thought about it. I wouldn't know where to begin." He finally estimated there has been about 2,000. "Could be more, could be less. Well, certainly not less," he said, chuckling and smiling.

He takes pride in the facilities at the school building, showing this reporter all the rooms and equipment, noting the changes that have occurred over the years. And since this reporter attended Lee from 1959 to 1962, we reminisce about former teachers and students and discuss the changes in the building and programs over the years, both having fond memories of the school.

While band is obviously his major interest, he does have other activities he enjoys.

"I enjoy working in the yard. And woodworking. When I have the time." He likes to work mainly with shrubs and flowers in the garden, he noted. And he likes to build cabinets. "I built my own cabinets for my stereo set." He also made toys for his children.

He and his wife Ann have two children, Ann and Bob.



Band director Joe Discosimo has spent 25 years here

75 years behind the baton

Longtime Pampa band directors announce retirements

By CATHY SPAULDING
Staff Writer

After amassing more than 75 years of school band directing between them, Joe DiCosimo and Sam Watson are ready to hang up their batons.

DiCosimo has directed Pampa pre-teens for more than 31 years as band director of the Pampa Junior High School and later the Pampa Middle School. Watson taught band beginners for 13 years at Pampa elementary schools and before that, led high school bands at Spearman, Springlake, Wildorado and Phillips to top division ratings. Watson's wife Helen, an aide at the Middle School, is also retiring.

A reception for the Watson's will be held at 2 p.m. today at the Pampa High School Band Room.

To DiCosimo, the decision to retire came almost at the last minute, after Watson's reception had already been planned. Several band boosters who attended the annual band banquet Friday expressed surprise at his decision.

"I felt it was time I retired," he said. "I've been teaching for 35 years, and I decided I wanted to take more time to be with my family."

Pampa High School Band Director Charles Johnson called DiCosimo "the master teacher," and said that many music teachers in the area would agree.

DiCosimo started directing school bands almost as soon as he finished serving in the South Pacific during World War II, where he noted he had very little time for music.

He spent four years teaching

music and directing bands at elementary schools and high schools in El Paso for four years. Then he came to Pampa to teach junior high school students and he's been a fixture here ever since.

Some of the parents of current sixth, seventh and eighth graders were under his direction. That was back when the junior high school was located at the corner of Cuyler and Foster — where the First National Bank is now. He continued leading the young musicians when the school was moved to 2401 N. Charles and became Robert E. Lee school in the mid 1950s and when it became Pampa Middle School in 1978.

Although the locations, musical styles and fashions have changed, the size, reputation and temperament of the

young Pampa bands have remained the same over the years since he came to Pampa in 1955. The red Patriot uniforms the band kids wear date to the time when the school was still known as Robert E. Lee school.

There have been changes from the "block" style of marching to precision marching, but, he said, "we try to enforce the fundamentals."

DiCosimo is the transition between the beginners who first pick up horns in Watson's fifth-grade music classes and Johnson's top-ranked Pride of Pampa high school band. His bands have produced 67 First Division, or superior, ratings in district marching, concert and sight-reading contests, but DiCosimo doesn't recall



See BAND, Page two

Watson, left, and DiCosimo retire their batons.

Band directors

Continued from Page one

exactly which years. Nor would he say which bands have been the best.

Still, the middle school band director has depended on Watson to supply him with a good stock of sixth-grade musicians, usually from 90 to 110 per year from the six elementary schools.

"I've always admired Sam," DiCosimo said, adding that he's known Watson when he taught high school bands in the area. "He always had excel-

lent bands. He's won a lot of Sweepstakes awards."

Watson admitted that after 13 years of teaching at the six schools, he's getting tired. Arthritis makes it painful for him to get around, he added.

But there's another reason Watson is retiring this year — he's tired of the "reforms" of House Bill 72.

"The emphasis of HB 72 is against extracurricular activities," he said. "The kids area afraid to become in-

volved because they're afraid of flunking."

Watson has no definite plans for his retirement. He said he'll do some boating and travelling.

Like DiCosimo, Watson began teaching shortly after serving in World War II. But his tour of duty did enable him to keep up with his music. This was during the height of the Big Band era when his instruments, clarinet and saxophone, were popular.

"I played in service bands, and when we had a layover, we'd find some kind of work," he said.

"I started in piano, but I didn't take to piano, so I learned the clarinet," he added. "And I never wanted to teach anything else."

Watson said that with almost no exceptions the children he's taught here have never played a musical instrument before. Although the elementary students do not go to contests, high school bands under Watson's direction have earned more than 20 sweepstakes awards.

Watson praised the way DiCosimo works with his kids to prepare them for the high school band.

"It's been nice working with Joe," he said. "He's a very entertaining person to be around. He's a fine person and he does a fine job."

DiCosimo returns the compliment.

"Sam does a real fine job teaching the kids the fundamentals and basics," he said. "Each grade level gets more advanced."



- 4:30 PAMPA HIGH SCHOOL Directed by Charles Johnson**
Children's March-Grainger, Enigma Variations-Elgar Var. I, II, V
Masquerade For Band-Persichetti
- 5:00 PAMPA MIDDLE SCHOOL CONCERT BAND Directed by Brent Colwell**
The English Guard March-Williams, Amazing Grace-Edmondson
Modal Overture-O'Reilly
- 5:30 PAMPA MIDDLE SCHOOL PATRIOT BAND Directed by Bruce Collins**
Marche des Para Chutistes Belges-Leemans, Silver Jubilee Overture-
Edmondson, Variations on a Korean Folk Song-Chance
- 6:00 WHITE DEER HIGH SCHOOL Directed by Dana Reynard**
March of the Irish Guard-Ployhar, Amberwood Overture-McGinty
North Point Fantasy-Swearington
- 6:30 BORGER HIGH SCHOOL 2nd GROUP Directed by Phill LaRocque**
La Fiesta Brava-Edmondson, Westridge Overture-Barnes
Richland Overture-O'Reilly
- 7:00 BORGER MIDDLE SCHOOL 2nd GROUP Directed by Tony Culmer**
Amberwood Overture-McGinty, Winchester March-Edmondson
Excellentia Overture-Shaffer
- 7:30-8:00 BREAK**
- 8:00 VEGA HIGH SCHOOL Directed by Christine Roath**
Highlander Regiment-Ployhar, Yorkshire Ballad-Barnes
Royal Heritage Suite-Gordon, 3 Movements-King James II March,
Pavanne, Wolsey's Wild
- 8:30 BORGER MIDDLE SCHOOL 1st GROUP Directed by Phill LaRocque**
Royal Airforce March Post-Arr. Unknown, Gore, Silver Jubilee
Overture-Edmondson, Concert Variations-Smith
- 9:00 BORGER HIGH SCHOOL 1st GROUP Directed by Roger Edwards**
Valdres-Annsen/Bainum, Variations on a Shaker Melody-Copland
Armenian Dances Part I-Reed