

# TBANOTES

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## Bandmaster of the Year

by Mike Olson, President

**B**ill Woods is a native Texan graduating from high school in Plainview, Texas in 1950. He received his Bachelor's and Master's Degrees from Hardin Simmons and Texas Tech Universities.

Mr. Wood's musical career has spanned some 37 years and has included many varied activities. During his early years he played clarinet, tenor sax, and tuba. He also spent time studying piano. His high school director was "Chief" Davidson—Bandmaster of the Year in 1957. In high school Bill was a student conductor for the *A Cappella* Choir, President of the student body, and he won seventh place at the VFW National Twirling Contest. He was also drum major and student conductor of the band.

At Hardin Simmons, Bill continued in *A Cappella* Choir and was a member of the University Men's Quartet. He was drum major and piano soloist with the Cowboy Band. Band activities were under the direction of Marion B. McClure—Bandmaster of the Year in 1971. Prior to completing college Bill obtained an emergency certificate and began teaching in Seagraves. After completion of his degree he taught in Levelland.

Beginning in 1969, and for the next twenty years, Bill worked diligently with the band program in Seagraves. During his tenure, the band grew to become one of the largest in its class. It



reached membership of 140 out of a student body of 210. His bands at Levelland and Seagraves received 24 sweepstakes ratings, were named Best in Class four times and were awarded first divisions at the Six Flags, Tri-State, Greater Southwest, and Mountain State Festivals. They also had the honor of appearing at the State Fair, the 1965

Cotton Bowl pre-game, and the Battle of Flowers marching show. During these years, Dean Killion asked Bill to serve as an assistant camp director for the Texas Tech Band

Camp—Mr. Killion was a Bandmaster of the Year in 1992. During the next twelve years the student ranks swelled from 280 to 1500 at the summer camp.

The next several years found Mr. Woods back at his *alma mater* directing the Cowboy Band. The band appeared

at the Hollywood Celebrities Christmas Parade, the Cotton Bowl, and at the Olympic Fundraiser in Los Angeles as guests of Neiman Marcus. In 1984, the band toured Europe for 18 days playing concerts in England, France, Germany, and Switzerland. Bill missed the high school band world and completed his career accepting a job at Merkel. While there the band earned Best in Class at Greater Southwest three times and finished with a First Division rating at Corpus Christi.

Bill married his childhood sweetheart, Myrna, in 1951, and they have two sons. Bruce is a banker in Brownfield and Brad coaches in Garland. Both sons played in their Dad's band. There are four grandchildren; Brian, Brent, Brittany, and Brady.

Many former students became teachers, administrators, board members, but more importantly, band parents. One of the strange feelings is to see the child of a former student graduate from school.

"Band is such an important thing. It prepares students to be better citizens, parents, and people. Music cleanses the brain, instills a sense and appreciation of beauty and the recognition of the responsibility owed to the people they have surrounding them. I thank the Texas Bandmasters Association for this greatest of honors. I appreciate being named Bandmaster of the Year. I am only a representative of thousands who toil each day and night to help students experience and appreciate music. I especially want to thank Earl and LaVerne Ray, who took on the task of raising me in the band business. My love and gratitude to them are immeasurable." ■

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—Bill Woods