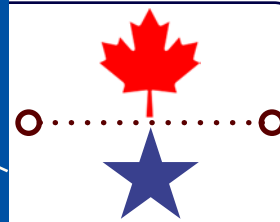




# THE BRASS BAND BRIDGE



ISSUE 104

| The Official Publication of the North American Brass Band Association |

MAY, 2007

## UNDER THE BRIDGE



Douglas Yeo

Editor

With the final chord of *The Blessing*, performed by the USA Southern Territorial Band of the Salvation Army at the gala concert, the NABBA XXV Championships came to a close. From all reports it was a tremendously successful event. With a record 28 competing bands, a record number of vendors and program advertisers and record number of participants, NABBA now looks forward to the beginning of the next 25 years of our Association's history.

Looking over the NABBA history display that greeted all who came into the Ogle Center at Indiana University Southeast during the Championships weekend, one was keenly aware of how NABBA had grown since it was formed in 1983. You could only imagine how NABBA's founders would have responded to the tremendous flow of audience and band members around the Ogle and Student Centers. Every year, each section at the Championships seems to raise the bar by performing more and more challenging repertoire. This is a feast not only for band members who work so hard on the music but for the Championships audiences who are rewarded with a nearly overwhelming choice of superb repertoire played by bands in our uniquely North American style.

In this, NABBA's third Championships that the Association has hosted itself (and the second held at Indiana University Southeast), we all appreciated the hard work of NABBA's board members who worked together to plan, organize and implement the weekend's activities. President Anita Cocker Hunt's column on page two is devoted to thanking many individuals for their particular contributions. Of course, NABBA would not be what it is today but for the hard work of individual band members

who return to rehearsal each week so we can all enjoy such interesting and excellent performances at our Championships.

This year the NABBA Championships proved that the time of the "dynasty" in NABBA's top sections is over - at least for now. The Championship, Honors and Challenge sections all were won by bands that had never won before. All of us at NABBA congratulate the winners in both the band competition and the solo and small ensemble competition. Of course we all sit and analyze the judge's scores and comments, trying to figure out/justify/understand the placings and staying away from the common thought that if your band won, the judges are geniuses and if you did not win, the judges are crazy! This is the beauty of live music: while there are objective criteria that can always be pointed to that are factors in scoring, it is the subjective element, "Did the music move me?", that is the intangible that can never be explained. All NABBA bands that competed at the Championships can be proud of their accomplishments even as their 2006-07 seasons are drawing to a close and we all prepare to build toward next season.

The NABBA Board of Directors will be meeting in September to choose test pieces for the 2008 Championships and work to chart NABBA's course for the coming years. With this in mind, it should be said that Louisville, Kentucky, is facing an unprecedented hotel room crunch during our Championships weekend on March 28-29, 2008. We on NABBA's Board of Directors cannot stress strongly enough how important it is to plan **NOW** and book your hotel rooms for 2008 **NOW**. Visit [nabba.org](http://nabba.org) for continually updated information on hotel room availability.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *The Bridge*; please keep your news coming for all of us to enjoy. ☺

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## ATOP THE BRIDGE



**Anita Cocker Hunt**

**NABBA President**

Greetings NABBA Members,

NABBA just successfully completed its 25th anniversary Championships. What a great weekend it was. After bad weather that caused flight delays, the judges finally arrived on Thursday evening. After a full day of travel and meeting with Contest Controller Tom Scheibner and Associate Controller John de Salme, the historic Brown Hotel was a welcome sight for them. It was especially good to see the return of Tom Palmatier, NABBA President from 1991-2001, and Tim Holtan, Contest Controller from 1996-1998, as judges. At the NABBA membership meeting during the Reading Band session, the NABBA Board awarded Tom a lifetime NABBA membership.

Friday began early with the arrival of exhibitors, food service staff, soloists, Indiana University Southeast staff and volunteers. IUS is under construction at this time so we all had to work around that this year with the promise that next year will be twice as good. The food service staff bent over backwards to make sure that everyone was well fed and they served us with cheerfulness and friendly smiles. We are indebted to IUS for providing the facilities for the competition at no cost to NABBA. Dr. Joanna Goldstein works endless hours to make sure that everything runs smoothly and we owe her a big thanks. The soloists and ensembles arrived along with those who wanted to listen or register for the weekend. The registration table, thanks to Jim Grate, was well organized and went very smoothly.

Last year when we did not have a Reading Band there were requests to bring it back; it returned on Friday night thanks to Ron Holz's efforts but we would have been pleased with more participation from NABBA members. The Gala Band formed the nucleus for this and your suggestions are welcome if we are to continue this. Clinics were requested and provided through the efforts of Dr. Paul Droste. Four of our judges conducted clinics and while

I certainly enjoyed Sheona White's session, we would, again, be happier to see more NABBA members supporting these worthy events.

We had more exhibitors than ever thanks to Paul Droste and his hard work. It is worthwhile to the exhibitors to come to NABBA and they all had positive comments.

Buffet Crampon USA, the major sponsor for our Championships, was such a delight. Meeting these gentlemen was a thrill and they were so involved in the competition week end. I hope to see them again next year. How appreciative we are for their support and enthusiasm for brass banding. Tor Banners had an artistic input and influence on our 25th anniversary. Looking at the stages for the band competi-



**Jon Handley of Tor Banners presents Anita Cocker Hunt with a NABBA Championships stand banner.**

tion was aesthetically appealing and classically attractive. Thank you to Tor Designs for their "in kind" donation of the stand banners and prize banners. This is a top quality banner to be proud of in years to come.

Other offerings during the weekend were a clinic on computer software for writing music, a certificate for Professional Development credit (very classy looking and created by Dr. Joanna Goldstein), and an attractive Championships program (our largest ever), assembled by Douglas Yeo. There was also a history table covering the first 25 years of NABBA, created through the research of Pat and Diana Herak.

Saturday began very early with the band competitions starting at 8:00 A.M. They were well attended with a lot of excitement throughout the whole day. Again, it was a smooth running day with just a few bumps in the road. Of course it is always a mad rush from the end of the competition to the awards ceremony. Tabulating all the results and determining the winners, getting all the awards and banners in

place, etc. This year seemed more hectic than ever, but we made it! Tom Scheibner ran a great competition and we should be grateful to him for all of the work he puts into the week end – more than we know!

The NABBA Board invited the USA Southern Territorial Band of The Salvation Army to present the Gala Concert and they met our expectations. The music was top notch and presented in a professional manner. Sheona White was on target as soloist, even after judging all day and giving a clinic on Friday and judging all day Saturday. She has the most beautiful tenor horn sound and delivers such fluid playing. Jude Gotrich, the vocal soloist, was in her prime with powerful performances. She has such control of the voice. I am a friend of Jude from long ago and I was so happy to see her and thrilled to hear her sing again. Congratulations to the USA Southern Territorial Band and Dr. Richard Holz for presenting a memorable Gala Concert.

As you witnessed over the week end, the NABBA Board members are active and work very hard to make NABBA a successful organization. Thanks to our Board members for their untiring contributions and active involvement in NABBA. Please be assured that NABBA is involved in many other things besides the competition, although that is a major focus for the year. NABBA supports many festivals throughout the country all year long including the Great American Brass Band Festival and the International Music Camp.

As Perry Watson, our founder said, "To see the growth and development of NABBA over these past twenty-five years is awesome and inspiring."

May we continue to grow over the next 25 years, one year at a time!

Thanks to all of you for being a part of NABBA.

Have a great summer. ☀

*Anita Cocker Hunt*

**Achuntband @ aol . com**



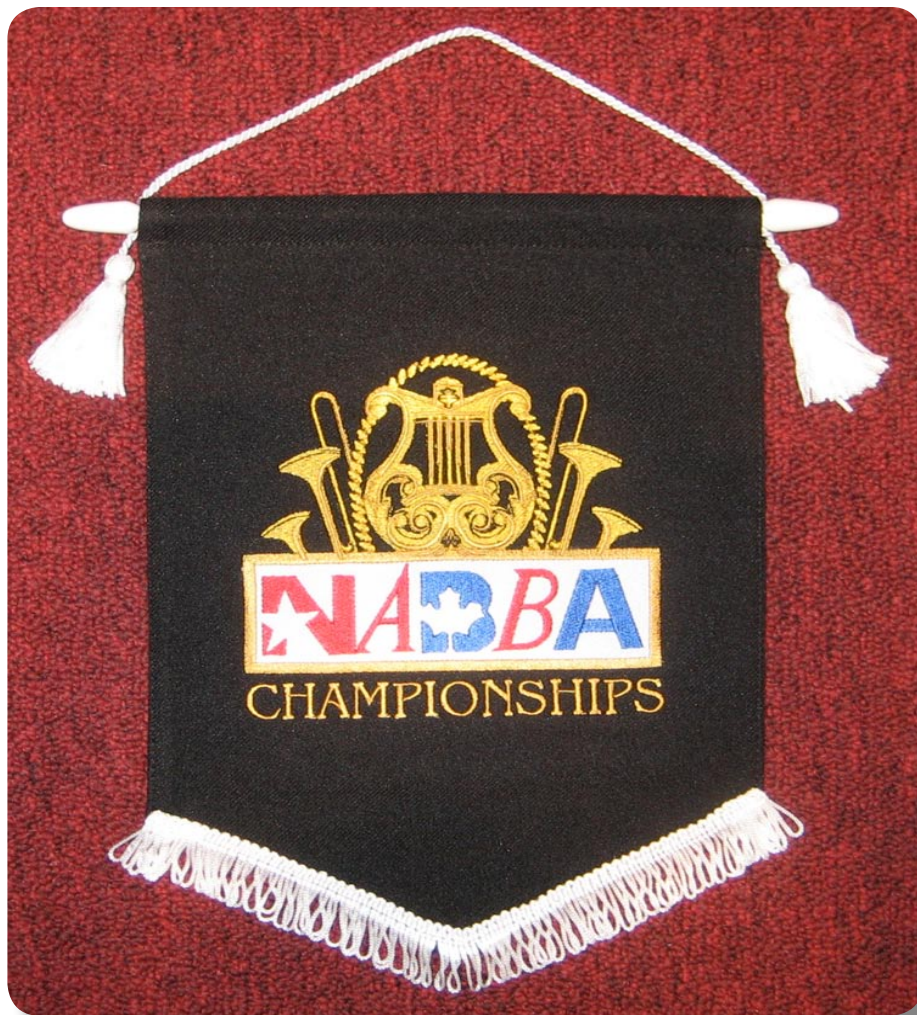
## SUPPORT NABBA WITH THESE REMINDERS OF ITS HISTORY AND THE XXV CHAMPIONSHIPS

The NABBA XXV Championships featured several new items that participants found both interesting and attractive.

NABBA board member and historian Diana Herak has written an 89 page book on the history of NABBA's first 25 years, from the first Championships in 1983 to the present. The book includes photos and information about all of NABBA's presidents, participating bands and Championships winners.

Tor Banners of Leeds, England (torbanners.com), supplied NABBA with new prize banners and music stand banners that were featured in Stem Concert Hall and Robinson Theater throughout the Championships week-end. Tor has also designed a NABBA pennant, made from the same high quality fabric and detailed embroidery as the prize and stand banners. This 11" x 8" pennant is an attractive reminder of your involvement in NABBA.

NABBA also produced a 25th Anniversary commemorative pin. This 1" square enameled pin features the NABBA logo and colophon with "25th Anniversary - 2007" printed underneath. It is a compact reminder of NABBA's 25th Anniversary Championships. Use the form below to order from the limited supply of these items. ★



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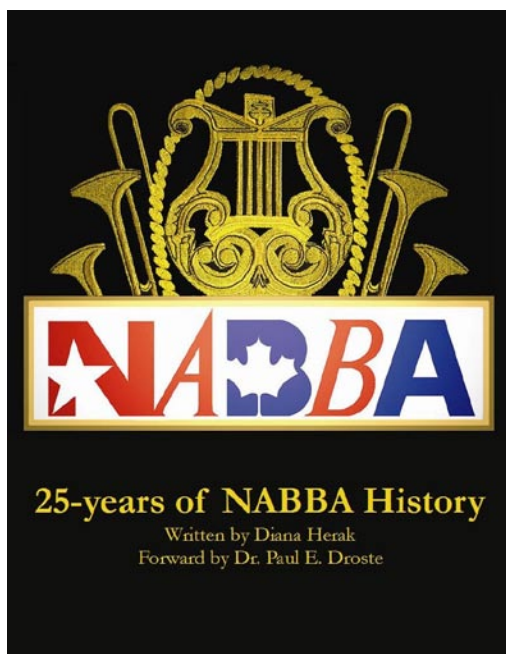
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_____	NABBA Pennant by Tor Banners	\$20.00
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Make your check payable to NABBA and mail to: NABBA, P. O. Box 11336, Charleston, West Virginia 25339 (Please allow up to three weeks for delivery.)



## ACROSS THE BRIDGE

## JUNE 2, 2007

Ashland Brass Band Festival, Ashland Central Park Bandstand, Ashland, Kentucky. Featuring performances by Commonwealth, Central Ohio, Blue and Grey, Central Ohio Salvation Youth and Tri-State Brass Bands. For further information, visit [tri-statebrass.com](http://tri-statebrass.com)

## JUNE 8-10, 2007

Great American Brass Band Festival, Danville, Kentucky. History conference, performances by many brass bands, parade, more. For more information, visit [gabbf.com](http://gabbf.com)

## JUNE 14-17, 2007

Gettysburg Brass Band Festival, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Features Gettysburg Brass Band, Civil War brass bands, many others. Free. For further information, visit [gettysburgbrassbandfestival.org](http://gettysburgbrassbandfestival.org)

## SEPTEMBER 13-15, 2007

NABBA Board of Directors Meeting, Indiana University Southeast. Selection of NABBA XXVI test pieces and other business.

## MARCH 28-29, 2008

NABBA XXVI Championships. Indiana University Southeast and Louisville, Kentucky. **NOTE:** Due to several large conventions in Louisville during the NABBA Championships weekend, hotel rooms should be reserved IMMEDIATELY. For more information about the NABBA XXVI Championships and updated details about hotel room availability, visit [nabba.org](http://nabba.org) and click on "Contest Info 2008." **DO IT NOW!**

## BUILDING BRIDGES: NEWS FROM NABBA BANDS

### LEXINGTON BRASS BAND

The Lexington Brass Band (Ronald W. Holz, Music Director) celebrated the completion of its 15th season with a spectacular anniversary concert, Sunday April 15th, at the Centenary United Methodist Church in Lexington. The featured guest artists included former principal cornet, Terry Everson, former co-conductor Skip Gray, and, making his first appearance with the band, bass trombonist Douglas Yeo. The concert was the culmination of a banner year for the band, including three previous subscription concerts: November – *The Music of Bruce Broughton*, with guest artists Bruce Broughton, conductor and pianist, and Belinda Blunt Broughton, violin; December – *Tis the Season Holiday Concert*, with the Asbury College Collegium Musicum String Ensemble. February – *Baroque Brass and Ensemble Brass*, with the Tates Creek High School Brass Choir.

Representative community service performances within the band's 15th year have included such events as the Kentucky Historical Society's summer celebration (Frankfort), the Mayor of Lexington's Treelighting Ceremony the day after Thanksgiving, guest appearance at the Rotary Club of Lexington in December, and in February, playing before over 1000 guests at the Annual Dinner of the Lexington Chamber of Commerce.

The 15th Anniversary Concert program featured two spectacular new arrangements by David Henderson, principal trombone: a famous wind piece by Giovannini, *Overture in B Flat* and the Nestico-Basie standard *Magic Flea*. Skip Gray composed the scintillating *Night Flight* especially for the occasion. Classic brass band repertoire was represented by a late work by Eric Ball, the appropriately named: *Celebration – Fantasia for Brass Band*, a work that allowed various sections and section leaders a chance to shine. Everson and Yeo were in their element, and gave superb performances both with band accompaniment, and in brief, but demanding unaccompanied pieces. Everson was powerful in *Blessed Assurance* and *Escapade*; the latter piece he last played with the band when they featured at the Midwest Clinic almost 10 years ago. Yeo's gorgeous sound was heard to great advantage on several rich works,



Skip Gray (tuba), Terry Everson (trumpet), Douglas Yeo (bass trombone), Ronald Holz (conductor) at the Lexington Brass Bands' 15th Anniversary Concert



but he also provided some sparkle and fun, along with the band, on big-band style works like *In the Hall of the Mountain King*, pieces he first recorded with Black Dyke Band. The concert came to a fitting conclusion with Yeo conducting *Stars and Stripes Forever*. Everson and Gray 'traded fours' on the famous piccolo excerpt. On top of all that the band was able to salute the members of the Lexington Brass Ensemble that placed in the winners' circle at the recent NABBA Adult Brass Ensemble Contest. (submitted by Ronald Holz)

## LANCASTER BRASS BAND

On April 27 and April 28, the Lancaster (Pennsylvania) British Brass Band presented two performances of a challenging, varied, and audience pleasing concert. The first performance was held at the brand new Lampeter-Strasburg Performing Arts Center on Friday evening, followed by an identical concert presented at the First Presbyterian Church of Lancaster on Saturday evening. The Lancaster British Brass Band is now in its third season. Since the group's premier concert in the Spring of 2005, the band has continued to expand its schedule and attract an ever growing audience. This year's Spring concerts welcomed over 1,200 enthusiastic audience members.

The program included a special tribute to the late trombonist, Glenn Dodson. Glenn led a long and varied musical career, including twenty years as Principal Trombone of the Philadelphia Orchestra, from which he retired in 1995. Following his retirement from the



Lancaster (Pennsylvania) British Brass Band, Walter Blackburn, conductor

orchestra, Glenn continued to perform and teach. When the Lancaster British Brass Band was forming, Glenn was invited to join the group as principal trombone. He accepted, and was one of the band's most faithful and enthusiastic members. Glenn passed away very unexpectedly on April 7. Tim Soberick, one of Glenn's former students and also a member of the band, spoke briefly about Glenn Dodson the trombonist, and Glenn Dodson the person. Tim is from the same hometown as Glenn, Berwick Pennsylvania, and had studied with him at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. The attendees were treated to some of the stories

that Glenn had shared with Tim through their many years of association. Following Tim's tribute, the band performed *Nimrod*, from Elgar's *Enigma Variations*. Glenn was a lover of beautiful melodic lines, and this particular piece was a favorite of his. Glenn will be missed by all who knew him.

The Lancaster British Brass Band's next set of concerts will be held in July 2007. Please check the band's website at [www.lancasterbbb.org](http://www.lancasterbbb.org) for further information. (submitted by Rick Staherski)

**N** EWS ABOUT YOUR  
BAND IS ENJOYED  
BY ALL NABBA  
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YOUR BAND NEWS TO *BRIDGE*  
EDITOR DOUGLAS YEO; HIS  
CONTACT INFORMATION MAY  
BE FOUND ON PAGE 35.



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## CENTRAL OHIO BRASS BAND - OHIO BRASS ARTS FESTIVAL

The inaugural "Ohio Brass Arts Festival" was held this past April 1 at Westerville South High School, a suburb of Columbus, Ohio. Hosted by the Central Ohio Brass Band, this festival highlighted the area in America that boasts more British-style brass bands than any other.

"Ohio has the highest concentration of brass bands in the United States, so it seemed only natural to have our own annual event here, so people wouldn't have to travel massive distances," said organizer and founder of the Festival, Pat Herak. He continued, "There are 10 brass bands in the city of Columbus alone and about another half dozen (secular bands) around the state. And this doesn't even include the many fine Salvation Army brass bands."

The festival began with a performance by the 75+ member Ohio State University (OSU) Alumni Active Band. Directed by Dr. Paul Droste, this was the group's first concert under its new conductor. However, Droste is not new to the brass band world. In addition to conducting The Ohio State University March-



Helen Tyler, baritone soloist (Fodens Band) performing at the Ohio Brass Arts Festival with the Brass Band of Columbus.

ing Band (the largest all-brass band in the world) from 1970-1984, he also founded the Brass Band of Columbus, arguably the most successful contesting band in the States. Winner of an unprecedented 10 North American Brass Band Association (NABBA) titles, Droste has been a leader of banding in the States for years.

The Alumni Band kicked off the festival with a spirited rendition of *The Star-Spangled Banner*. Other pieces included *Beautiful Ohio March* and the music to the band's incomparable Script Ohio, *Le Regiment de Sambre et Meuse*. The group also debuted a brass band arrangement of *Mirror Lake*, a beautiful spot on the OSU Campus. This piece, originally written for Droste, was performed on baritone horn by his daughter Diana Herak. Written by Edward Montgomery, it was transcribed for brass band by Royal Northern College of Music student Ben Tubb.

The next band to perform were the hosts themselves, the Central Ohio Brass Band, conducted by Jessica Sneeringer. The band played its two contest pieces were featured in the NABBA XXV Championships: *Connotations* by Edward Gregson, and *The King of Elfland's Daughter* by Rodney Newton.

The next group to take the stage was the Pendel Brass and Singers of The Salvation Army from Pennsylvania and Delaware. Each member serves in their local corps church home, and attends Pendel rehearsals and concerts once a month. This multi-talented group performed both sacred and secular works, and is conducted by Dr. Harold Burgmayer.

The Central Ohio Youth Band (COYB), conducted by Dr. Keith Wilkinson, performed several numbers before combining with the Pendel Brass on *I Have Decided to Follow Jesus* (arr. Himes), *My Love Is Like A Red, Red, Rose* (arr. Drury), and *Stateside* (Graham). The COYB is also a ministry of The Salvation Army and, "provides an opportunity for its



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members to perform quality music at a high standard in a Christian environment."

The Scioto Valley Brass and Percussion Company, conducted by Chris Hoch, provided the most interesting visual program of the day. Complete with colorful costumes and props, the band and audience enjoyed their "At the Movies" program which included the favorites *Theme from Blazing Saddles*, *James Bond Collection*, *Star Wars*, *The Pink Panther*, and *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

The Brass Band of Columbus (BBC), conducted by Tim Jameson, featured the two guest clinicians of the day. Dan King, the BBC's principal cornet player, performed the World Premiere of Ben Tubb's *The Big Apple*. Helen Tyler, solo baritone with the Fodens Band (UK), played the first movement of Paul Mealor's *Baritone Concerto*. In addition, the band featured arrangements by two of its members, Brian Steven's *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*, and Tim Jameson's *Robin Hood Prince of Thieves*.

The Festival concluded with Dr. Keith Wilkinson's contesting band, Brass Band of the Western Reserve, which had traveled from Akron to attend the Festival. The band performed its NABBA contest pieces, *Dances and Alleluias* by Philip Sparke, and *Glorifico Aeternum* by Dean Jones. Its rendition of *The Liberty Bell* by Sousa brought the Festival to a wonderful close.

Between performances of the bands, the audience was entertained by small ensembles. The COBB cornet trio, Twisted Steel (euphonium/tuba quartet from the Fountain City Band in Kansas City, Missouri), and BBC 2 (nine-piece brass ensemble) kept the Festival rolling. In addition, master classes were offered by Helen Tyler and Dan King. Adjudicators Paul Droste, Jon Waters, Lee Harrelson, Tom Stine, Dan King and Helen Tyler offered taped comments and oral reviews for the bands and ensembles, which were very helpful and graciously received (as several of the groups will be competing at NABBA shortly). The day was also efficiently (and humorously) run by "the voice of the Ohio Brass Arts Festival," George Zonders, a member of the Brass Band of Columbus.

The first Ohio Brass Arts Festival proved to be an instant success, and will hopefully be the first of many in Columbus, the U.S.A.'s

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"hotspot of brass banding." (submitted by Pat Herak)

### BRASS BAND OF COLUMBUS - GOD AND COUNTRY CONCERT

The 22nd Annual God and Country Concert featuring the Brass Band of Columbus and the Pendel Brass and Singers took place this past March 31 at the Capitol Theatre at the Vern Riffe Center in Columbus, Ohio.

This annual event was started in 1986, and includes the Brass Band of Columbus (BBC) and a Salvation Army (S.A.) Band. Past S.A. Bands have included the Chicago, New York, and Canadian Staff Bands, as well as the National Capital Band, Southern Territorial Band, and the Enfield Citadel Band from England.

This year's guest band, the Pendel Brass and Singers, hails from Pennsylvania and Delaware. All the members serve in their local corp church home, and attend Pendel rehearsals and concerts monthly. They are conducted by Dr. Harold and Priscilla Burgmayer.

The concert started with an Entrance of the Colors to the *633 Squadron*, which was fol-

lowed by *The Star Spangled Banner*. Major Paul Cain offered a Welcome and Prayer. The Pendel Singers performed *Save the People*, and *Floodgates*, complete with a slide show. Then the BBC offered *Esprit* (James Curnow), *An American Elegy*, (Frank Ticheli, arr. Jameson), and *Glorifico Aeternum* (Dean Jones).

After an offering and piano interlude by Bram Rader, the Pendel Brass took over. They performed *I've Decided to Follow Jesus* (William Himes), *Faithful Forever*, (Richard Holz), *Give Me Jesus* (arr. by Burgmayer) and *I Will Follow Him* (arr. Richards). The Pendel Singers then sang the Vocal Trio *Right Now* (Crouch) and *The Prayer of St. Francis* (Eric Ball). The Pendel Brass concluded their portion of the program with *The Triumph of Peace* by Eric Ball.

The Annual God and Country Music Award was then presented to Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr. (Columbus City Attorney), and the Brigadier Arthur B. Hill Memorial Scholarships were given to Meghan Morrison and Linnea Overman.

The BBC and Pendel Brass then united to perform *Spirit of the West* (Dudley Bright), *In Perfect Peace* (Kenneth Downie), *Western Fantasy* (David Mills), and *God Bless America* (arr.

Brian Bowen) which featured vocalist Captain Margaret Davis.

The closing *God be With You* (arr. Kellner/Gordon) proved to be a very moving ending to the concert, with the Pendel Brass members not only singing, but moving out into the audience with their instruments, to surround them with music. It was a fitting close to the 22nd Annual God and Country Concert tradition. (submitted by Pat Herak)

### TRIANGLE YOUTH BRASS BAND AND BRASS ENSEMBLE

The Triangle Youth Brass Band has had a monumental season. Due to the growing enthusiasm for brass bands in the area, we expanded the program to include a second band, the Triangle Youth Brass Ensemble. The new band is formed in the British tradition, but plays on trumpets and French horns for the time being. Early in the season we hosted our annual Brassmas clinic. TYBB and TYBE hosted 135 brass musicians for a clinic with Judith Saxton, Professor of Trumpet at the North Carolina School for the Arts, and a performance of holiday songs with this massed brass ensemble. Two days later, all three bands in the Triangle Brass Band organization performed a Christmas concert, marking the first time the three bands shared the stage, and the inaugural performance of the TYBE.

The Triangle Youth Brass Band partnered up with the Triangle Wind Ensemble and split a concert with this fine local wind band. TYBB hosted local trumpeter Don Eagle as soloist, and combined with the Triangle Wind Ensemble for a hair raising concert finale.

The TYBB and TYBE will perform their final concert of the season on Saturday May 26th at 8 PM in the Meymandi Concert Hall in Raleigh, NC. Featured on this concert will be local Trumpet soloist Dennis DeJong performing the *Post Horn Galop, Adagio* (Rodrigo), and the Curnow *Concertpiece for Cornet and Brass Band*. Other works include DeNardis' *Universal Judgment* and Rodney Newton's *Four Spanish Impressions*, as well as the *Marriage of Figaro Overture* and *Arlington Anthem* by Drew Fennell. Please check our website for more info at [www.trianglebrass.org](http://www.trianglebrass.org). (submitted by Tony Granados) ♣

## NABBA BAND

## CONCERT

## PROGRAMS

**BRASS BAND OF COLUMBUS, TIM JAMESON, CONDUCTOR, BRYAN STEVENS, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PAUL DROSTE, DIRECTOR EMERITUS**

February 9th, 2007, Ohio Music Education Association Convention. *Toccata in D minor* (Farr); *Best Foot Forward* (Tomlinson); *Jerusalem* (Blake/ Perry; Dan King - cornet); *Glorious Venture* (Graham; Dan King - cornet), *Jupiter* (Holst/ Roberts), *Shipston Prelude* (Bulla), *Swing that Door* (Broughton; Jeff Keller - trombone), *Glorifico Aeternum* (Jones), *Cossack Fire Dance* (Graham), *Jubilee* (Drury).

**GEORGIA BRASS BAND, JOE JOHNSON, CONDUCTOR**

April 13, 2007. Christ Church Cathedral, Louisville, Kentucky. *Prelude for an Occasion*

(Edward Gregson), *Old English Dances* (Alan Fernie), *Concertpiece for Cornet* (James Curnow – Paul Poovey, cornet soloist), *The King of Elfland's Daughter* (Rodney Newton), *Resurgam* (Eric Ball), *Marche Militaire Française* (Saint-Saëns, arr. Kenyon), *In Memoriam* (George Lloyd), *Celebration* (Leslie Condon), *A Little Prayer* (Evelyn Glennie, arr. Childs), *Death or Glory* (R.B. Hall).

May 8, 2007. Dozier Centre for the Performing Arts, Kennesaw, Georgia. *Prelude for an Occasion* (Edward Gregson), *The King of Elfland's Daughter* (Rodney Newton), *Resurgam* (Eric Ball), *Amparito Roca* (Jaime Texidor, arr. Winter), *Russian Circus Music* (Ray Woodfield), *Minnie the Moocher* (Cab Calloway, arr. Casey – Brian Talley, bass trombone soloist), *Bohemian Rhapsody* (Freddie Mercury, arr. Barry), *Soul Bossa Nova* (Quincy Jones, arr. Duncan), *William Tell Overture* (Rossini, arr. Goffin).

**JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY BRASS BAND, KEVIN STEES, CONDUCTOR**

February 23, 2007. Wilson Hall Auditorium, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Virginia. *Festive Overture* (Dimitri Shostakov-

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ich, arr. Peter Kitson), *A Celtic Suite* (Philip Sparke), *Dances and Alleluias* (Philip Sparke), *Ravenswood* (William Rimmer), *Hometown Miniatures* (Drew Fennell), *Pines of the Appian Way* (Ottorino Respighi, trans. Howard Snell).

March 30, 2007. Massanutten Presbyterian Church, Penn Laird, Virginia. *Cross of Honour* (William Rimmer), *Concerto for Horn and Band* (Edward Gregson – Richard Sebring, horn soloist), *Dances and Alleluias* (Philip Sparke), *Superman* (John Williams, arr. Ray Farr), *The Piper O'Dundee* (Kenneth Downie – Richard Sebring, horn soloist), *Demelza* (Hugh Nash – Richard Sebring, horn soloist), *Music of the Spheres* (Philip Sparke).

March 31, 2007. Massanutten Presbyterian Church, Penn Laird, Virginia. Philip Sparke, guest conductor. *The Band Wagon* (Philip Sparke), *David of the White Rock* (Philip Sparke), *The Earle of Oxford's March* (William Byrd, arr. Philip Sparke), *Prelude on an Irish Folk Song* (Philip Sparke), *Valerius Variations* (Philip Sparke), *Cornet Rock* (Philip Sparke).

April 11, 2007. Massanutten Presbyterian Church, Penn Laird, Virginia. James Madison University Brass Band and Massanutten Brass Band, Kevin Stees, conductor. *Prelude on 'Tallis'*

(Peter Graham), *Crusade* (Rieks van der Velde), *Coventry Variations* (Bramwell Tovey), *Dances and Alleluias* (Philip Sparke), *Music of the Spheres* (Philip Sparke).

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April 26, 2007. *Fanfare and Flourishes* (James Curnow), *Blessed Assurance* (Stephen Bulla – Josh Reed, flugel horn and trumpet soloist), *A Time for Peace* (Peter Graham – Rachel Hockenberry, horn soloist), *Adagio in g minor* (Tomaso Albinoni – Adam MacBlane, flugel horn soloist), *Brasililia* (Robin Dewhurst

– Niki Lendvay, trombone soloist), *Hymn of the Highlands* (Philip Sparke – David Heinsen, euphonium; Alex Bender, soprano cornet; Josh Reed, cornet; Rachel Hockenberry, horn; Adam MacBlane, flugel horn; Kevin Elkins, baritone).

### LANCASTER BRITISH BRASS BAND, WALTER BLACKBURN, CONDUCTOR

April 28, 2007, First Presbyterian Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. *Intrada "Ein' Feste Burg"* (Ray Farr); *Ravenswood* (William Rimmer); *Mid All the Traffic/Shenandoah* (arr. Leonard Ballantine); *Flowerdale* (Philip Sparke – Douglas L. Albert, soprano cornet soloist); *Daisy Bell* (Harry Dacre, arr. Gordon Langford); *Music for a Festival* (Philip Sparke); *Introduction of Act III of Lohengrin* (Richard Wagner, arr. Denis Wright); *Nimrod from Enigma Variations* (Elgar); *A Mighty Fortress* (Luther, arr. D. Scott Loose); *Blaydon Races* (arr. Gordon Langford – Rick Staherski, euphonium soloist); *American Trilogy* (Goff Richards); *Simoraine* (Clive Barraclough); *Strike Up The Band* (Gershwin, arr. Goff Richards).

### LEXINGTON BRASS BAND, RONALD HOLZ, CONDUCTOR

April 15, 2007, Centenary United Methodist Church, Lexington, Kentucky. *Star Spangled Banner* (arr. Richard Holz); *Overture in B Flat* (Cesar Giovanni, trans. David Henderson); *In the Hall of the Mountain King* (adapted and arranged by Bill Geldard – Douglas Yeo, bass trombone soloist); *Escapade* (Joseph Turrin – Terry Everson, piccolo trumpet soloist); *Soliloquy for Trombone: America the Beautiful* (Stephen Bulla – Douglas Yeo, bass trombone soloist); *Celebration: Fantasia for Brass Band* (Eric Ball); *Blessed Assurance* (arr. Stephen Bulla – Terry Everson, flugelhorn and trumpet soloist); *Stella by Starlight* (arr. Bill Geldard – Douglas Yeo, bass trombone soloist); *Night Flight* (Skip Gray – Skip Gray, guest conductor; Premiere performance); *Cascades: For Unaccompanied Trumpet* (Allen Vizzutti – Terry Everson, trumpet soloist); *Magic Flea* (Sammy Nestico, arr. David Henderson – Solos by David Henderson, trombone; Terry Everson, trumpet, John Willmarth, drums); *The Stars and Stripes Forever March* (John Philip Sousa – Douglas Yeo, guest conductor).

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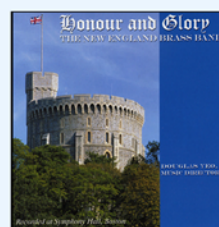
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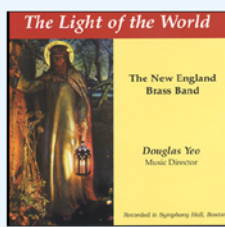
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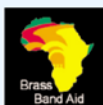


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## MASSANUTTEN BRASS BAND, KEVIN STEES, CONDUCTOR

March 11, 2007. Massanutten Presbyterian Church, Penn Laird, Virginia. *Prelude on 'Tallis'* (Peter Graham), *Punchinello* (William Rimmer), *Suite for Brass* (Stephen Bulla), *Nicaea* (William Himes), *Amparito Roca* (Jaime Texidor), *St. Denio* (James Cheyne), *Hillcrest* (Bruce Broughton), *My Shepherd* (Brenton Broadstock), *Army of the Nile* (Kenneth Alford), *Shine as the Light* (Peter Graham), *Swedish Folk Song* (arr. Peter Graham).

May 6, 2007. Massanutten Presbyterian Church, Penn Laird, Virginia. *March from The Great Escape* (Elmer Bernstein, arr. Martin Ellerby), *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (John Williams, arr. Ray Farr), *Feather Theme from Forest Gump* (Alan Silvestri, arr. Sandy Smith), *A Braveheart Suite* (James Horner, arr. Andrew Duncan), *Chicken Run* (John Powell & Harry Gregson-Williams, arr. Sandy Smith), *Hedwig's Theme* (John Williams, arr. Andrew Duncan), *Fawkes the Phoenix* (John Williams, arr. Andrew Duncan), *Imperial March from The Empire Strikes Back* (John Williams, arr. Sandy Smith), *Gabriel's Oboe from The Mission* (Ennio Morricone, arr. Frank Bernaerts), *James Bond Collection* (arr. Goff Richards).

May 8, 2007. Blue Ridge Community College, Weyers Cave, Virginia. *March from The Great Escape* (Elmer Bernstein, arr. Martin Ellerby), *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (John Williams, arr. Ray Farr), *Feather Theme from Forest Gump* (Alan Silvestri, arr. Sandy Smith), *A Braveheart Suite* (James Horner, arr. Andrew Duncan), *Chicken Run* (John Powell & Harry Gregson-Williams, arr. Sandy Smith), *Hedwig's Theme* (John Williams, arr. Andrew Duncan), *Fawkes the Phoenix* (John Williams, arr. Andrew Duncan), *Imperial March from The Empire Strikes Back* (John Williams, arr. Sandy Smith), *Gabriel's Oboe from The Mission* (Ennio Morricone, arr. Frank Bernaerts), *James Bond Collection* (arr. Goff Richards).

## NEW ENGLAND BRASS BAND, DOUGLAS YEO, MUSIC DIRECTOR

March 24, 2007, Lexington High School, Lexington, Massachusetts. *Fanfare from "Occasion"* (Edward Gregson); *Shenandoah* (arr. Leonard Ballantine); *The King of Elfland's Daughter* (Rodney Newton); *Isaiah 40* (Robert Redhead); *Hymn for Africa* (Peter Meechan);

*Liberty Fanfare* (John Williams, arr. Steve Sykes); *Blessed Assurance* (Stephen Bulla – Terry Everson, flugelhorn and trumpet soloist); *Scherzoid II* (James Mason – Dorathea Kastanas, Riccardo Castillo, Stephen Lee, percussion

trio); *My Lord, What a Morning* (arr. William Gordon – Douglas Yeo, bass trombone soloist; Terry Everson, conductor); *Hometown Miniatures* (Drew Fennell); *March: Rhode Island* (Lloyd Reslow). ★

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# NABBA XXV CHAMPIONSHIPS REVIEW

## INDIANA UNIVERSITY SOUTHEAST AND LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

APRIL 13-14, 2007

### INTRODUCTION

The NABBA XXV 25th Anniversary Championships were held on the campus of Indiana University Southeast (New Albany, Indiana) on April 13-14, 2007. Across the river, in Louisville, Kentucky, most bands found pillows for weary heads and the awards ceremony and gala concert were held.

The reviews below represent a cross section of opinions on nearly every aspect of the NABBA Championships experience. With the Championships being held at IUS for a second consecutive year, participants had a sense of familiarity with the whole Championships environment for the first time in NABBA's history. The Championships are scheduled to be held at IUS again in 2008 so the NABBA Board of Directors will again be working hard to continue enhancing the whole experience for competing bands and audiences.

Each section of the band and solo/small ensemble competition had an announcer who has submitted a review for inclusion in this issue of *The Brass Band Bridge*. Reviews are written in each author's own personal style and represent their own opinion. Remember to visit *The Brass Band Bridge* slideshow for Issue 104 at [nabbabridge.org](http://nabbabridge.org) to see many more photos from the NABBA XXV Championships. ★

### BAND REVIEWS

#### CHAMPIONSHIP SECTION

By Randy Tinnin (RT) and Quentin Sharpstein (QS)

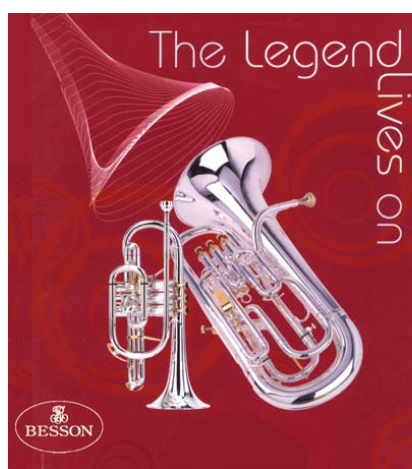
The Illinois Brass Band led by Ryan T. Nelson was the first band to compete in the Championship Section, opening with the test piece Philip Sparke's *Dances and Alleluias*. Though there were some slight pitch problems in the

opening the ensemble gave an exciting performance That was very clean in the technical passages, with excellent ensemble playing throughout. All of the soloists played well with the solo cornet playing brilliantly. Next they gave a spirited rendition of *Journey Into Freedom* by Eric Ball. In this piece as in the *Dances and Alleluias*, Dr. Nelson's conducting was dynamic and graceful. The soloists all delivered excellent performances and the horn and cornet tutti passages were first rate. These things, along with the band's sweeping sense of phrasing and clean technical playing made this a very memorable performance. (RT)

The Chicago Brass Band began with a robust performance of the test piece Philip Sparke's

*Dances and Alleluias*. Dr. Colin Holman's passionate conducting conveyed a dynamic interpretation that was ably communicated by this fine ensemble. Some very slight pitch problems in the opening section were overshadowed by solid ensemble playing and first rate solos. *Tristan Encounters* by Martin Ellerby was a pleasure to listen to. Solo performances were all strong with brilliant work on both Eb and BBb Tubas. Clean technical passages, great phrasing and a wide dynamic range marked this vibrant performance. (RT)

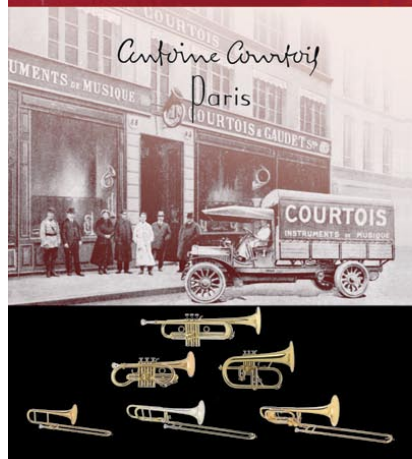
The next band to take the stage was the Brass Band of Central Florida. Michael J. Garasi's conducting was dynamic and expressive and his



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## SNAPSHOTS FROM THE NABBA XXV CHAMPIONSHIPS (WITH THANKS TO PHOTOGRAPHER FRANK WASHBURN, BARITONE HORN, NATURAL STATE BRASS BAND)







Members of the Fountain City Brass Band celebrate their first place Championship Section victory.

confidence was mirrored in the band's performance. From the opening BBCF's performance of *Dances and Arias* by Edward Gregson was crisp and exciting. The group displayed a wide dynamic range, beautiful contrasts in timbre and expansive phrasing. While there were some small pitch problems in the cornets' first slow tutti passage, they played well as an ensemble from top to bottom and the Eb and Bb cornets gave fine solo performances. The test piece *Dances and Alleluias* by Philip Sparke was equally spectacular. The sound and intonation were excellent throughout, all of the solos were first-rate and the technical passages were clean and exciting. (RT)

An all day soaker has descended on the Southern Indiana/Louisville area. It's the same rain system contributing to the dangerous Nor'easter predicted to crawl up the eastern coast. Oh, but what a great day to stay inside and hear the best brass bands in the states! My announcing/ reviewing chores started after the lunch break with the Brass Band of the Western Reserve. Having placed third last year, the band was hoping to move up and perhaps take their first NABBA championship.

Conductor Dr. Keith Wilkinson and his Akron, Ohio group performed the test piece, *Dances and Alleluias* by Philip Sparke, and *Glorifico Aeternum* by Dean Jones as their optional piece. Both pieces were performed at a high level of competence expected from a

championship caliber band. Both pieces were highlighted by outstanding solo work in the low brass and solo cornet. (QS)

The second band to compete on my watch was the Atlantic Brass Band, led by Salvatore Scarpa. The Sparke test piece was highlighted by excellent playing in the solo sections. However, a case of "dry mouth" somewhat marred an otherwise super performance by one soloist. In the ensemble sections, the band was well balanced, intonation secure, and the interpretation made for an exciting presentation. To my ears, the second piece, *Tone Poem: The Holy War* by Ray Steadman-Allen yielded a much more secure performance. A reference to the Martin Luther hymn, *A Mighty Fortress is Our God* (*Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott*), was repeated throughout the piece and served as an anchor between tumultuous sections of martial music. An excellent choice of music played by a seasoned band at the championship level. (QS)

Next to perform on Stem Concert Hall was the James Madison University Brass Band. This band missed winning the 2006 championship by just 2/10ths of a point, placing second to the Brass Band of Columbus. Perhaps this could be the year they win the Championship Section after twice winning the Honors Section (2004, 2005). The opening of *Dances and Alleluias* was most impressive with the tubas playing a piano section followed by a skillfully performed euphonium cadenza. Other notable

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performances were the first trombone solo, accompanied by a shimmering effect by the cornets and the lyrical melody played by the solo cornet. The second piece chosen by Kevin Stees was *Music of The Spheres*, composed by Philip Sparke. Last November I traveled to Sweden and got the chance to hear this piece for the first time. I was dazzled by the performance of the Goteborg Brass Band. It was an emotional performance of this most difficult work. I would compare James Madison's performance on the same level as the Goteborg concert. According to Sparke, composing this piece "took me about as far as I currently could (or wanted to) go in terms of scale and virtuosity". (QS)

Fountain City Brass Band performed next under the direction of Joseph Parisi, Assistant Professor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. This Kansas City area band placed third last year in an impressive performance in the Championship section. The treacherous opening of *Dances and Alleluias* was handled with great confidence by the tubas. Great balance, intonation, and flawless technique were evident in the entire ensemble playing. This performance was punctuated by great solo work by the cornet, euphonium, trombone,

baritone, and tuba.

For their second piece, the band chose *Paganini Variations*, by Philip Wilby. Coincidentally, James Madison performed the same piece in the 2006 Championships. Maestro Parisi chose a blazing tempo to start the theme and continued with a nearly flawless performance of the variations. Of particular note was the flugelhorn, which delivered perhaps the best lyrical solo of the day. Fountain City is barely five years old and already competing successfully for first place in the Championship round. (QS)

#### CHAMPIONSHIP SECTION RESULTS:

1st - Fountain City Brass Band (293.0 points), 2nd - James Madison University Brass Band (289.4 points), 3rd - Illinois Brass Band (282.0 points), 4th - Brass Band of Central Florida (280.0 points), 5th - Atlantic Brass Band (264.1 points), 6th - Chicago Brass Band (260.8 points), 7th - Brass Band of the Western Reserve (256.2 points). ☼



James Madison University Brass Band performing in Stem Concert Hall

#### HONORS SECTION

*By Rusty Morris*

The setting for the Honors Section competition was Robinson Theater in the Ogle Center on the campus of Indiana University Southeast in New Albany, Indiana. The new NABBA Championships stand banners (made by TOR Banners of Leeds, England) elevated the presentation of the competition to a new level. Robinson Theater is a unique venue as the stage juts out into the audience with listeners sitting almost behind the performing bands.

Seven bands were competing in this year's Honors section Championship: last year's winners of the Honors Section (New England Brass Band, Douglas Yeo), last year's winners of the Challenge Section (Georgia Brass Band, Joe Johnson), the 2002 Honors Champions (Prairie Brass Band, Dallas Niermeyer), the 2003 Honors Champions (Cincinnati Brass Band, Anita Cocker Hunt), Central Ohio Brass Band (Jessica Sneeringer), Triangle Brass Band (Robert Hunter), and Princeton Brass Band (Dr. Stephen Allen).

With the three adjudicators (Sheona White, Rodney Newton, and Lt. Col. Timothy Holtan) sitting side by side and squarely in the middle of the venue, the bands were ready to perform.

The test piece for the 25th anniversary of the NABBA Championships was *The King of Elfland's Daughter*. Pressure was added to the bands because the composer was in the judge's box (Rodney Newton). This work was originally commissioned by Robert Childs for

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**NABBA XXIV Championship****Thomas Scheibner, Contest Controller****April 13-14, 2007****Sorted by Score**

<b>Youth Open</b>		<i>Bram Gregson</i>		<i>Stephen Bulla</i>		<i>LTC Thomas Palmatier</i>		Overall
Perf		Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	
B	Triangle Youth BE	91	93	78	76	86.7	82.5	254.0
A	Junior Varsity All-Stars	87	89	72	75	76.7	80.0	239.0
<b>Youth</b>		<i>Bram Gregson</i>		<i>Stephen Bulla</i>		<i>LTC Thomas Palmatier</i>		Overall
Perf		Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	
B	Triangle Youth BB	94	90	84	83	90.0	87.5	265.0
A	Cincinnati Honors BB	90	89	75	75	83.3	82.5	247.6
<b>Explorer</b>		<i>Bram Gregson</i>		<i>Stephen Bulla</i>		<i>LTC Thomas Palmatier</i>		Overall
Perf		Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	
C	BB of the Tri-State	88	88	85	85	91.7	92.5	265.0
A	Bend in the River BB	90	91	80	83	83.3	85.0	255.6
B	All-Star Brass & Percuss	88	87	76	80	86.7	82.5	250.2
<b>Challenge</b>		<i>Sheona White</i>		<i>Rodney Newton</i>		<i>LTC Timothy Holtan</i>		Overall
Perf		Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	
E	Massanutten BB	95	95	91	95	94	93	281.2
B	Natural State BB	92	92	89	85	86	83	264.2
D	Spires BB	85	85	90	90	85	83	259.2
C	Derby City BB	82	80	85	87	87	89	254.8
G	Sunshine BB	78	76	86	85	83	80	244.6
A	Chesapeake BB	85	82	75	75	84	82	242.0
F	Commonwealth BB	72	70	87	79	84	81	237.8
<b>Honors</b>		<i>Sheona White</i>		<i>Rodney Newton</i>		<i>LTC Timothy Holtan</i>		Overall
Perf		Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	
E	BB Central Ohio	91	92	88	90	92	92	272.2
B	Georgia BB	89	90	87	89	91	93	269.0
C	Prairie BB	88	89	90	86	91	89	267.0
D	Cincinnati BB	85	89	79	80	90	90	256.0
A	New England BB	82	82	75	79	93	91	250.8
G	Princeton BB	80	78	83	82	87	84	247.6
F	Triangle BB	84	78	73	75	88	87	243.0
<b>Championship</b>		<i>Bram Gregson</i>		<i>Stephen Bulla</i>		<i>LTC Thomas Palmatier</i>		Overall
Perf		Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	
G	Fountain City BB	99	98	96	97	98.3	97.5	293.0
F	James Madison Univ BB	98	98	94	95	96.7	97.5	289.4
A	Illinois BB	95	94	93	94	95.0	92.5	282.0
C	BB Central Florida	96	95	91	92	93.3	92.5	280.0
E	Atlantic BB	92	96	81.5	84	85.0	92.5	264.1
B	Chicago BB	89	87	86	85	93.3	77.5	260.8
D	BB Western Reserve	92	93	81	83	81.7	82.5	256.2

The overall score is weighted as 60% test piece, 40% remainder of program.

First tiebreaker: The band with the highest test piece scores wins.

Second tiebreaker: The band rated higher on the test piece by 2 of the 3 judges wins.

the Buy As You View Cory Band and used as the set piece for the 2004 National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain (First Section).

The music is taken from the story of the same name, written by Lord Dunsany and published in 1923. Consisting of 13 sections, the music takes the listener on a journey from the kingdom of Erl to Elfland in search of magic, kings, knights, magic swords, witches, and trolls are all elements in this fantasy tale.

The New England Brass Band, under the skillful baton of Douglas Yeo was the first to enter the stage. The NEBB were the defending champions of the Honors Section and were odds on favorites to repeat. In addition to the test item, NEBB performed *Isaiah 40* (Robert Redhead) as the bands closer.

As is always the case, the NEBB is a very well prepared and very musical group. This performance was no different. Throughout its ranks, the NEBB has very strong players. The opening sections of the test item proved tricky for all bands today. While there were occasional tuning slips, the desired effect of setting up the story was well done. Without a doubt, some of the most enjoyable moments occurred whenever principal cornetist Terry Everson was soloing. Soul and passion was very evident in his playing.

One particular section proved to be somewhat of a stumbling block for all of the bands. The troll messenger (beginning with solo baritone horn) was quite a handful. Tempo, dynamics, tricky interval leaps, and precision seemed to affect every band to one degree or another.

It was very interesting to observe the different ways in which the bands approached the muted sections. The larger instruments of the NEBB made use of corrugated foam around their mutes to allow for a very distant, far away effect. This worked very nicely. This also helped to provide a very wide range of tonal colors for the band.

Outside of a few intonation issues and an occasional precision problem, this was an outstanding performance of the test piece.

*Isaiah 40* (Robert Redhead) was the test piece for the NABBA Championships Championship Section in 1999. This shows how far the Honors sections bands have progressed in a

short period of time. An incredibly demanding work for every band member, the NEBB proved to be up to the task. Again, while not technically perfect and not without the occasional tuning lapse, the passion and excitement of this work came through beautifully. There are many difficult solo lines throughout and all soloists are to be commended.

There was no doubt in this listener's mind that after the last huge chord and the resounding three notes by the timpani that this band had left everything on the stage. It is a real joy to hear bands push themselves to their limits. Congratulations on a job well done.

Next on stage was the Georgia Brass Band under the musical direction of Joe Johnson. After their winning performance last year in the Challenge section, there was no doubt in anyone's mind that this band belongs in the upper sections of the NABBA bands. With very strong and confident players in all sections, the GBB had, for this listener, the best

"band" sound of the afternoon. Strong and well prepared inner voices gives this band a very nice richness.

The GBB opened their program with the test piece. A wonderful clarity in the opening bars really set the tone for the entire piece. In the section, "Alveric and Lirazel", the dialogue between the solo cornet and euphonium was very nice. While this is a very difficult duet section, the two principals are to be commended for their preparation and delivery.

Transitions between the many sections were handled quite well. A huge demand is made on all of the conductors to ensure the subtleties of tempo are true to the composer's wishes.

The band finished the piece quite strongly after having just a few accuracy and pitch concerns in the cornets leading up to the ending. In all this was a well prepared interpretation on this test piece.



Central Ohio Brass Band conductor Jessica Sneeringer (right) accepts the first place Honors section banner and trophy from Anita Cocker Hunt and Tom Scheibner.



Music director Johnson chose as his bands choice item, Eric Ball's *Resurgam*. One of the most often performed and best loved musical compositions in the brass band world, this tone poem paints a picture of faith, despair, death, and finally, promise of eternal life. The band's ability to execute the many delicate entrances and the discipline to carry out the long phrases was most impressive. The soloists (cornet and euphonium) both expressed the ideas of deep despair and soaring hope.

With only slight intonation errors in spots, the band's performance was very moving. The principal trombonist is to be congratulated for her ability to hold the last note for what must have felt like an eternity. The pitch and sound quality never wavered as the band ended this wonderful work on a very quiet note of promise. "Resurgam", "I Shall Rise Again".

The third band of the afternoon was the Prairie Brass Band under the musical direction of Dallas Niermeyer. Prairie was back in the NABBA Championships after a year's hiatus. In addition to the NABBA Championships, the PBB also competes in and hosts the US Open Brass Band Championships held in early November of each year. Prairie's program consisted of *Un Vie de Matelot* by Robert Farnon and the test item, *The King of Elfland's Daughter* by Rodney Newton.

*Un Vie de Matelot* is a series of variations on a theme. Using a picture of life on the ocean wave, the soprano is immediately challenged in a brilliant fashion. Showing absolutely no fear, Lev Garbar proved to be one of the strongest and best soloists of the day. While all sections are challenged, as is typical for a theme and variation type of composition, the soprano cornet solo and the solo cornet are the focal points of the work. In addition to Mr. Garbar, Eric Yates (solo cornet) proved to be equally up to the challenge of this rarely performed work. This work is a real test of stamina for the entire band. I'm sure for many listeners in the audience, this was the first time to hear this work (as it was for this listener). Mr. Niermeyer is to be commended for not only stretching his band but also the audience.

Going into the test piece, it should be noted that the band was short its second trombone player. A last minute emergency did not give the band time to fill that spot. While at times the absence was noticeable, the two remain-

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ing trombone players (Steve Howell and Linda Yeo) did great work in minimizing the gaps. The PBB seemed to escape some of the pitfalls that ensnared some of the other bands. The "troll" section seemed less frantic and panicked. The pitch, accuracy of notes, and precision in this section was very well done. Throughout the performance the band exhibited a very calm approach. While their playing was exciting, one never felt like they were distressed. This is to be expected from this group with their contesting history. I think if this band could have done just a bit more with the lower end dynamics, they might have challenged for one of the top spots. All in all, a very demanding program handled extremely well.

Up next was the Cincinnati Brass Band. The CBB is under the direction of Anita Cocker Hunt. The CBB proves year in and year out to be one of the most consistent bands on the contest stage. This year would prove to be no different. The band's program consisted of the test item followed by *Connotations* (Edward Gregson).

The opening was handled very nicely with

some very good playing by the solo and 1st tenor horns. Transitions were handled nicely as Alveric moved through and entered Elfland. A few pitch and accuracy problems cropped up as Alveric met the swords of Elfland, but the band never lost sight of its direction. It should be noted too that throughout this performance the percussion work was outstanding, never overshadowing the band but always a presence. Again, as with most of the bands on the day, the troll section of the music proved to be a bit of a problem. All in all, this was a very credible performance on this test piece.

The CBB was one of two bands on the day to use as their choice piece, *Connotations* (Edward Gregson). This work was written in 1976 and first used as the English Nationals test piece in 1977. It was used as the NABBA Championship section test piece in 1987. There are nine variations based on a short reflective theme. The variations cover a wide range of styles, toccata-like, lyrical, fugal, scherzando, and a series of cadenzas.

The band opened nice and crisply with some

tuning problems in the cornet octaves but with a strong presence in the lower end of the band. Traveling through the many variations and different styles is a huge challenge for any band. While there were slight issues with precision at times, the ideas of the different styles were evident. All soloists (especially in the cadenza section) were on top of their game and performed admirably. The final variation (a restatement of the theme) came off well although I suspect fatigue was setting in on what was a demanding program. This was very nice performance on both items by the CBB.

The fifth band to perform was the Central Ohio Brass Band under the direction of Jessica Sneeringer. The band's program consisted of *Connotations* (Edward Gregson) and the test piece. It was obvious from the outset that COBB would be one of the bands to beat this afternoon. A very energetic opening to *Connotations* led to some very nice lyrical moments with everything having a direction. One of the things that you have to like about Ms. Sneeringer is while on the podium, she always seems to be smiling and having a good time. There is no doubt that her band responds

The bands' performance of the test piece seemed to be the most relaxed of the day. The sections that seemed to cause problems for some of the other groups were less problematic for COBB. The tempo of the troll section was the most aggressive of the day. While there were still a few problems, the players met the challenge that director Sneeringer put forth to them. After a very demanding program, the band had enough left in the tanks for a strong finish ending on a huge, resounding chord. It was quite obvious to this listener that the most improved band from last years competition was COBB. A job well done!

Back into the contest scene was the Triangle Brass Band. The TBB's last NABBA appearance was in 1993. While the band has had a very busy and successful schedule since that time, it is exciting to see them back at the NABBA Championships. The band is under the direction of Robert Hunter. The program for the day consisted of the test piece followed by *Resurgam* (Eric Ball).

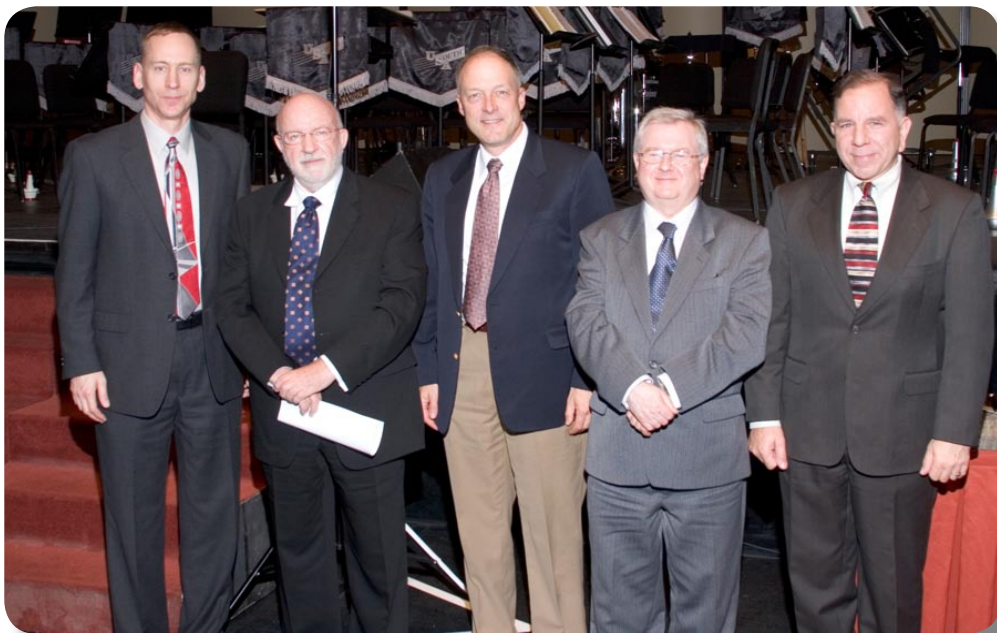
There was no doubt that the band had put in much hard work and was well prepared. Since

and missed attacks can be attributed to a bit of nervousness by all. While many of the solos were well done, some of the principal seats were lacking a bit of strength required for this test item. Many bands enter contests solely looking to win while others enter with the hopes of stretching and improving. There is no question that TBB will be a much better band for their efforts in preparing this test piece.

*Resurgam* was next up for TBB. The band seemed more at ease with their choice item. Their approach was much more confident. While there were some very nice sounds throughout, some tuning issues appeared in spots. This is at times a very transparent work and the tuning is very critical (and difficult). The solo cornet work was well done and conveyed the despair that it represents. The euphonium work was a bright spot as well. Overall, the more reserved nature of *Resurgam* seemed to fit the band better than the test piece. With continued hard work, TBB will be a very formidable band on the contesting scene very soon.

The final band of the afternoon in the Honors Division was the Princeton Brass Band under the direction of Dr. Stephen Allen. The bands' program consisted of the test item and *The Land of the Long White Cloud* (Philip Sparke). The band always plays with a lot of energy and excitement. This, no doubt, comes from the podium and the conducting style of Dr. Allen. At times, the band plays a bit on the bright side and doesn't always explore the lower end dynamics. Their upper end dynamics are very good but less effective because of the lack of contrast. For one final time, the troll section again provided some shaky moments, although the interpretation by the soprano may have been the best of the day. As the band finished, I think the test piece for this year did its job. It challenged and stretched each section of every band and gave the music directors the opportunity to put their stamp on the piece.

Princeton's choice item, also referred to as *Aotearoa*, was written in 1979 by Philip Sparke and was his first major piece commissioned for brass band. It is a descriptive work referring to the land and people of New Zealand. This work is well suited for the band as it fits their energetic approach to playing. As in the test piece, a bit more attention to the lower end dynamics would have made this a much more exciting number. Throughout there was very



#### NABBA XXV Adjudicators

Timothy Holtan, Bram Gregson, Thomas Palmatier, Rodney Newton, Stephen Bulla  
(not shown: Sheona White, who was warming up for her solo performance at the Gala Concert)

very well to her and they seem to have a good time as well. Very fine soloists and a strong low end to the band made this a very enjoyable performance.

the band's last competition, the levels of all NABBA bands has increased significantly. It was going to be difficult today for the band to make a run at the top spots. It is quite possible that some of the miscues such as tuning



fine ensemble playing although at times some of the required double tonguing sections were not exactly together. Occasionally, in the louder sections, the band had a tendency to over blow and the playing wasn't as tidy as it could have been. Some very nice solo playing was evident throughout and the group paints a very expressive picture of New Zealand. With an exciting finish and a big chord, the Princeton Brass Band ended the day's competition in the Honors Section.

Every year, the bands in all sections seem to improve. This year was no different in the Honors section. The Central Ohio Brass Band finished in first place and the Georgia Brass Band was very close behind in second place. On another day, it very easily could be two different bands occupying the top two positions. There is great parity and great competition in the Honors division. This was a terrific day of brass banding and I am already looking forward to next year's competition.

**HONORS SECTION RESULTS:** 1st - Brass Band of Central Ohio (272.2 points), 2nd - Georgia Brass Band (269 points), 3rd - Prairie Brass Band (267.0 points), 4th - Cincinnati Brass Band (256.0 points), 5th - New England Brass Band (250.8 points), 6th - Princeton Brass Band (247.6 points), 7th - Triangle Brass Band (243.0 points). ★

## CHALLENGE SECTION

*By Douglas Yeo (DY) and Susan Henthorn (SH)*

Seven bands competed in the Challenge Section this year and the level of playing was excellent throughout. With one band new to the NABBA Championships (Chesapeake Brass Band) and one band returning after an absence of many years (Sunshine Brass Band) it was a section full of healthy competition. Robinson Theatre had a new configuration this year, with the stage area being greatly expanded since the 2006 Championships. This brought the bands closer to the audience. With the judges seated in a single "box" so they could all hear the bands from the same vantage point, microphones suspended from aloft rather than on stands and the new NABBA music stand banners by Tor Banners glowing with a seeming iridescent light against the black floor and curtain, Robinson Theatre was very audience

friendly this year.

First up was the Chesapeake Brass Band, directed by Charles (Ed) Hockersmith. Drawing first is never an enviable position but the band's program showed them off very well. Eric Ball's *Triumph of Peace* featured some nice blend throughout the band and the soft playing was especially commendable. While lacking a bit in power, it was good to hear this fine work in its first performance at a NABBA Championship. The program continued with *Nimrod* from Elgar's *Enigma Variations*. The band's principal cornetist was very "locked in" with the conductor and the low band's legato was very nice. Again, the lack of power in the band, particularly at the climax, left me wanting more. It is difficult to sustain the line in this piece and the exposure of the band showed both some strengths and a few weaknesses. Finally, the section test piece, Reiks van der Velde's *Crusade* featured some fine solo playing (particularly the solo euphonium) but, again, would have benefited from sharper edges, more passion and, in general, a more involved, dramatic approach. A bands' first time at contest is a tremendous learning experience and Chesapeake surely left

with much to be proud of and much on which they can continue to build. (DY)

The Natural State Brass Band under the baton of Rusty Morris has finished solidly in the middle of the Challenge section pack for several years but after last year's performance, one sensed this band was ready to reach for a higher level. Listeners were not disappointed. They launched into *Crusade* with an immediate impact with excellent dynamic contrast, good energy and some very fine solo playing. It was clear that the band knew the piece well and they presented a wholly successful performance. The program concluded with Kevin Norbury's *Variations on Maccabeus*, another test piece quality selection. There was much sensitive playing in the presentation of the theme but some errant pitch now and then took little away from the very committed performance. The flugel/tenor horn collaboration was excellent and the trombones provided much needed "bite" when called for. The tricky fugue held together well although the tempo might have been just a touch too fast for it to be completely successful. The band was rewarded with a fine ovation and it was no surprise to find



**Bill Posey (right), cornetist with the Massanutten Brass Band, accepting the first place Challenge Section banner and trophy from Tom Scheibner.**

the band on the winner's podium when the results were announced. It seems that Natural State has turned an important corner in terms of contest preparation, program selection and individual performance. Bravo! (DY)

Louisville's own Derby City Brass Band, conducted by John Jones, returned to NABBA for a second straight year. It is good to see this relatively new band continue to make strides. Concentration may have been thrown off a bit when the band realized, just before playing, that they had too many players on stage. With that corrected, they set into a performance of *Crusade*. The tempo seemed a bit slow and there were a few missed entrances but on the whole the band delivered a committed performance. Special kudos are due the band's two percussion players who bravely coped with the parts that in a perfect world required four players. Philip Sparke's *Music for a Festival* concluded the band's program. This had some superb rhythmic energy and featured some fine playing, especially from the band's soprano cornet player and trombone section. While the ensemble sometimes was a bit unglued at times, the performance was quite good, giving Derby City another good, solid NABBA performance. (DY)

The Spires Brass Band under John Slezak is a veteran of NABBA Championships and can always be counted on to give a fine performance. The band has had some personnel changes over the last year and this perhaps was a factor in some of the unsteadiness that was heard in Philip Sparke's march, *The Centurian*. The test piece, *Crusade*, had a tempo that seemed a bit slow and had some moments of dragging. That said, the band dealt well with the technical demands even if sometimes the ensemble didn't seem as tight as it might have been. Pointing cornets into their stands was effective in helping the players with some soft passages although it also resulted in pitch being disrupted a bit. Stephen Bulla's *Firestorm* was a huge challenge after the relentless nature of *Crusade*. The band played this tour de force very well. While I would have liked to hear more passion (and the band has shown it is very capable of committed, dramatic performances), the loud tutti sections were excellent. (DY)

In only their second NABBA competition appearance, Kevin Stees and the Massanutten Brass Band presented a confident and extremely musical program. Their first choice

## Eric Ball's Point of View...

“In any consideration of the present state and possible future development of the brass band movement, it should constantly be borne in mind that true progress means *change*. It is a negative approach to aver, as some are apt to do, that 'things aren't what they were', and are therefore on the downgrade. This gets us precisely nowhere. We have to try to assess the position *today* and build on that.

In the final issue, the progress or otherwise of the brass band movement depends on individual bands and their members and supporters. If we should view at one moment the whole scene of activity, we should see it to be in a state of constant flux – not necessarily deteriorating: for if *your* band is pulling out of a rut and making progress, then the whole body of the movement is by that amount the better for it.”

—Reprinted from “Eric Ball: His Words and His Wisdom” compiled by Peter Cooke. 1992, Egon Publishers. Used with permission.



Natural State Brass Band in performance in Robinson Theater.



piece, *Prelude on Tallis*, showcased the group's solid sound and ensemble feel. Their presentation of the test piece, *Crusade*, impressed this reviewer as one of the most solid of the morning, particularly evidenced by their ability to shift between contrasting tempi and dynamics. Their seemingly easy and quick shift between a brisk, crisp, energetic passage and a slow and soft section while maintaining a rich and full sound was marvelous to experience. Dynamic contrast was also exceptional with fortissimo chords suddenly evaporating to reveal a delicate pianissimo. *Coventry Variations*, their second choice piece, worked as a very good closer for the band. The smoothness of the lyric introduction and theme was followed by variations that displayed their ability to handle vigorous and rhythmic as well as delicate and beautiful passages. Soloistic passages and muted sections were especially excellent. The final section was very energetic and powerful, the final note leaving the hall ringing with the full, warm sound indicative of a band that would win their section by one of the widest margins of the day. (SH)

J. Jerome Amend and Anita Cocker Hunt took

turns at the podium for the Commonwealth Brass Band's two pieces. For the group's first number Associate Director Hunt conducted the test piece, *Crusade*. Most effective in the more quiet passages, the band struggled somewhat with the challenges presented by other sections of the piece. Amend led the group in the choice piece, *The Three Musketeers*. Some of the solo passages and small ensemble work was solid and sections of the performance highlighted some of the band's strengths, including some nice technical work in the higher brass. Marred by some intonation problems and a sense that the group simply had to work too hard, the overall performance fell a bit flat. (SH)

The Sunshine Brass Band, under the direction of Jim Cheyne, began their twelfth NABBA competition appearance with the test piece, *Crusade*. In addition to some nice, fluid passages, especially by the cornet section, the group displayed some exquisite playing in some of the softer passages. The first of two choice pieces was *I Vow to Thee My Country*. Their presentation of the theme was particularly beautiful, smooth, and gentle - stirring without

becoming overly sentimental. The band closed their competition program with *Henry the Fifth*. Some good solid unison passages, especially in the opening section, and generally effective transitions between the various sections provided high points in the band's presentation of this Vaughan Williams work. (SH)

**CHALLENGE SECTION RESULTS:** 1st - Massanutten Brass Band (281.2 points), 2nd - Natural State Brass Band (264.2 points), 3rd - Spires Brass Band (259.2 points), 4th - Derby City Brass Band (254.8 points), 5th - Sunshine Brass Band (244.6 points), 6th - Chesapeake Brass Band (242.0 points), 7th - Commonwealth Brass Band (237.8 points). ⚡

## EXPLORER SECTION

*By Randy Tinnin*

Bend in the River Brass Band, conducted by Mark Kersting, was the first to compete in the Explorer Section. They opened with a solid performance of the test piece, *Chorale and Toccata* by Stephen Bulla, displaying a nice sound and blend and generally good intonation. Their performance of *Florentiner March*, by Julius Fucik/Barsotti was with the exception of some pitch and accuracy issues in the high brass another solid performance. The *Little Suite #2 for Brass Band* by Malcolm Arnold featured fine Eb and Bb Cornet solos. There were, however, pitch problems throughout. All in all a very good performance from a talented ensemble led by a competent director.

Next up in the Explorer Section was All-Star Brass and Percussion under the direction of Eric Aho. *A Celtic Suite* by Philip Sparke, provided an exciting opening. There were pitch problems but they played with a high level of accuracy, with a nice balance and good phrasing. The third movement was particularly musical with nice solos on Bb cornet and euphonium and excellent percussion work. Stephen Bulla's *Chorale and Toccata*, the test piece, featured beautiful muted cornet tutti playing in the chorale. While there were still pitch problems they played with good style on the toccata. Eric Aho's conducting was clear, expressive and passionate. The biggest concern with this fine group of young musicians was pitch. That being said, they gave an exciting and energetic performance with good solos and solid ensemble playing all around.



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Brass Band of the Tri-State, conducted by Gary Clarke, was the third band to compete in the Explorer Section, opening with a very controlled and well executed rendition of *Festival March: Motivation* by William Hines. There were some occasional pitch problems in the cornets but the ensemble had a great sound. Next came the test piece, *Chorale and Toccata*, by Stephen Bulla played with a nicely blended sound and good phrasing, although there were a few pitch issues in the opening. *A Cambrian Suite* by Michael Ball was also well played with nice dynamic contrast, style and a high level of accuracy with beautiful solos throughout. *Concert March: Arsenal* by Jan van der Roost was played energetically and with good style. While there were pitch problems in places the band should be pleased with this fine performance.

**EXPLORER SECTION RESULTS:** 1st - Brass Band of the Tri-State (265.0 points), 2nd - Bend in the River Brass Band (255.6 points), 3rd - All-Star Brass and Percussion (250.2 points). 🌟



Gary Clarke (right) of the Brass Band of the Tri-State accepting the first place Explorer Section banner and trophy from Anita Cocker Hunt and Tom Scheibner.

## YOUTH SECTION

*By Quentin Sharpenstein*

The Cincinnati Honors Brass Band, conducted by A. Greg Mills, was the first of two bands competing in the Youth Section of NABBA XXV. Their selections consisted of *Little Suite for Brass Band*, by Malcolm Arnold; *Shipston Prelude*, by Stephen Bulla; and the test piece, *A Swiss Festival* by Philip Sparke. The *Little Suite* sounded well prepared, with an excellent cornet solo in the second movement. This was followed by a secure performance of Bulla's *Shipston Prelude*. Finally, the *Swiss Festival Overture* exposed intonation problems in the baritone/euphonium section. However, the percussion section was very impressive in their performance on this piece.

The final band to perform in Stem Concert Hall was the Triangle Youth Brass Band from Raleigh, North Carolina. The band performed the test piece in the youth section, *A Swiss Festival Overture*, and the *Finale from Symphony No. 5* by Dmitri Shostakovich. Tony Granados conducted the TYYB. The band sounded well prepared and responded to his leadership with an excellent performance. The Shostakovich Finale was an exciting finish to a day of great brass banding at NABBA XXV. Special recog-

nition goes to the timpani player in the finale of the finale! His explosive performance left me wondering if the timpani would hold up to his steady assault as he led the band to the climax. Bravo! A grand performance!

**YOUTH SECTION RESULTS:** 1st - Triangle Youth Brass Band (265 points), 2nd - Cincinnati Honors Brass Band (247.6 points). 🌟

## YOUTH OPEN SECTION

*By Quentin Sharpenstein*

This was the first year for the "Youth Open" section at NABBA, a new section that allows youth bands with non-standard instrumentation to perform. The first group up was the Junior Varsity All-Star Brass Band. This group, led by Chad McGee, consisted of seventh through tenth grade young musicians from central Ohio. Their first selection was *Little Suite for Brass Band* by Malcolm Arnold, the required piece in the section. The first movement, *Prelude: Allegro ma non troppo* was very secure rhythmically. However significant intonation issues needed attention. The second movement, *Siciliano: Andantino* was highlighted by outstanding playing in the solo cornet. Bravo! The final movement, *Rondo: Allegro Vivace/ Presto*,

was a triumph with the tubas leading the way.

The second piece by this fine group of young musicians was *Diogenes* by Jacob de Haan. In this piece, the group handled the syncopated rhythms securely, while intonation issues in the trombones were somewhat of a distraction. Overall, it was a very pleasing performance by a well-prepared group.

The second band to perform in the Youth Open Section was the Triangle Youth Brass Ensemble. Paul Pietrowski conducted this fine group of forty-eight young musicians with *Little Suite for Brass Band* and *The Seasons* by Philip Wilby. The band is located in Raleigh, North Carolina, and as permitted in the open section, elected to use french horns on their selections. The Malcolm Arnold test piece was well played with kudos to the cornet solo in the second movement. Special mention is in order for the band's balance and intonation in all three movements. *The Seasons* likewise was performed well with a very mature sound in the french horns. The waltz in the second movement displayed the different sections as the melody was passed around with finesse. Special mention should be given to the eight tubas in the third movement. Their sound was balanced with the band and overall it was a most impres-



sive performance for the band's first appearance at NABBA.

After listening to the four performances of the youth bands, I believe the future of brass bands in America is in good hands.

**YOUTH OPEN SECTION RESULTS:** 1st - Triangle Youth Brass Ensemble (254.0 points), 2nd - Junior Varsity All-Stars (239.0 points). ✪

## SOLO AND SMALL ENSEMBLE COMPETITION REVIEWS

### ADULT HIGH BRASS TECHNICAL SOLO

By Kevin Stees

Friday morning's Adult High Brass Technical competition featured 10 soloists performing works ranging from French conservatory test pieces by Balay and Charlier to more traditional cornet features by H.L. Clarke and J.B. Arban. As the announcer for the event I not only had the chance to hear all of the performers, but also enjoyed the opportunity to chat with each competitor backstage prior to his/her presentation.

Coming in third place was Stephen Cross performing a portion of Claude Bollings' *Toot Suite for Trumpet and Jazz Piano*. The only soprano cornetist in the competition, Stephen's performance featured a lovely sound, fluid technique and a good sense of line throughout the piece. It was a very enjoyable performance from start to finish.

Second place was awarded to Alvin Bernard, who performed the little known *Phenomenal* by Frederick Innes. I must admit that this was the first performance of the day that really grabbed my interest. This was someone playing with passion. It may have been a bit rough around the edges at times, but Alvin obviously knew what he wanted musically and went for it! A very enjoyable performance that kept me engaged throughout.

The first place winner was Rachel Rodriguez performing the Winton Marsalis version of *Carnival of Venice*. I was very impressed, as was the audience, with her great sound, easy approach to the instrument and the confident presentation of a technically demanding work. Rachel showcased her complete control of the instrument pushing the tempo of many sections right to the edge.

I spoke with the contest adjudicator, Sheona White, about what factors she felt were most important in a technical solo contest. Already having a good feel for the answer she was about to give, she mentioned that to her the most important quality of all was musicianship. It was great to hear this was confirmed by three very fine winning performances that day.

**ADULT HIGH BRASS TECHNICAL SOLO WINNERS:** 1st - Raquel Rodriguez (cornet, Fountain City Brass Band), 2nd - Alvin Bernard (cornet, Brass Band of Central Florida), 3rd - Stephen Cross (soprano cornet, Natural

State Brass Band). ✪

### ADULT LOW BRASS TECHNICAL SOLO

By Amy Nelson

The low brass technical solo division had a high enrollment with fifteen soloists filling out the afternoon. There was a great variety of literature performed ranging from traditional "theme and variations" to modern unaccompanied pieces. There were many fine performances and adjudicator Steve Bulla had his work cut out for him.

Michael West was the first performer of the day and gave a beautiful rendition of *Danny Boy* on tenor horn. He had a nice vibrato and a musical approach. He made the triplet and 16th note variations sound easy, and the finale gave him a chance to show off facile triple tonguing. His approach was a bit understated



Terri Williams (center) and Jenny Smoak (right) of the Triangle Youth Brass Band accepting the first place Youth Section banner and trophy from Anita Cocker Hunt and Tom Scheibner.

Elena Fleggas (left) and Theo Manickam (right) of the Triangle Youth Brass Ensemble accepting the first place Youth Open Section banner and trophy from Tom Scheibner



Rachael Hockenberry from James Madison performed *Capriccio Brillante* on tenor horn without accompaniment. She began with a confident opening and a beautiful statement of the theme. Her performance demonstrated good use of rubato and was very musical. Rachael had good control over the full range of the instrument and throughout challenging technical sections. The performance occasionally lacked clarity, perhaps due to taking things a touch too quickly in the heat of the moment. It was great to hear a true British vibrato and approach on this beautiful instrument.

Former St Louis solo euphonium Jeff Binns was up next with *Rule Britannia*, which he performed without accompaniment. This great theme and variation piece gave Jeff many opportunities to show off. There was a nice contrast between the legato sections and the technical variations. He delivered every note of the 16th note variation at quick tempo and wrapped up the piece with lightening speed triple tonguing. I would've liked to have heard him play out a bit more and take a few more musical risks. Jeff is the founder and music director of the newly formed Boise Brass Band of Idaho.

and I wished that he had played into the hall more. The accompaniment was a bit uncertain in places and didn't line up with the soloist in the finale.

Clea Will was up next, performing Bruce Broughton's *Sonata* (Allegro Moderato), movement 1, on tuba. This was a challenging choice of literature which requires both power and a light touch. At times the performance lacked clarity, particularly in the upper range of the instrument, and the soloist seemed to struggle to play out. Clea chose to perform the piece without piano accompaniment and demonstrated poise throughout her performance.

Brian Talley performed David Fetter's *Spain* from *Bass Lines* for solo bass trombone. He played with a full sound and great power and "bite" in the low register. The beginning of the piece perhaps started a touch too quickly and lacked clarity. As he settled into the performance however, everything became clear. The piece covered the whole range of the instrument and ended at the top of the range in a very dramatic ending. Brian's calm stage presence was noticeable throughout his performance.

## THE NATURAL STATE BRASS BAND WISHES TO CONGRATULATE ALL OF THE BANDS THAT PARTICIPATED IN THE NABBA XXV CHAMPIONSHIPS.



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Chip Gue from the Brass Band of the TriState performed the *Rondo* from the Concerto in Bb (3rd movement). This great piece gave Chip plenty of opportunity to demonstrate his impressive technique. Unfortunately, some of this was marred by clicking valves which at times covered the sound of his playing completely. Chip made soloing without an accompanist look easy as he confidently presented a performance filled with rubato and musical expression.

Mike Armstrong from Atlantic BB performed *Sonata in F minor* (2nd movement) on tenor trombone with Art Henry accompanying on piano. The large audience turnout for his performance included a large segment of the Atlantic Brass Band. His performance was a bit understated to my ears. The piece gave lots of opportunity to show off technique and was very enjoyable.

Brian Rogers from Chicago performed *Annie Laurie* on tenor trombone, with Steve Marcus accompanying on piano. He had a bold opening with a full sound, and was the first soloist of the day that I felt filled the hall's sound capacity. Unfortunately some of the technique was lost in the fast runs and the sound wasn't always centered and focused. It was a good show piece and a strong final variation made for a dramatic finish.

## COMPLETE RESULTS FOR THE ALL NABBA BAND AND SOLO/SMALL ENSEMBLE COMPETITIONS ARE AVAILABLE AT NABBAMUSIC.ORG

Patrick Herek from the Brass Band of Columbus performed the show piece *FNUGG* on tuba. Certainly the most unusual musical choice of the day, the piece employs multiphonics and "beat box" rhythms, moving from free sections to more structured march-like sections. Also scored with brass band accompaniment, this particular arrangement is for solo tuba, with the soloist essentially "accompanying" himself. This was a very enjoyable performance which was well-received by a large audience.

David Heinson of JMU was up next performing *Devil's Duo* on euphonium, with Alex Bender on piano. He had a beautiful, full sound which was centered and well-controlled.

This arrangement of Paganini's *Caprice No. 24* gave David many opportunities to show off his impressive technique. It seemed that he didn't miss a single note! His solid cadenza also featured multiphonics. This was a very impressive performance and one that set the bar very high for the rest of the soloists.

Brass Band of Columbus music director emeritis Paul Droste performed Simone Mantia's *Original Fantasia* on the double-bell euphonium. This classic of the euphonium literature employs the use of the smaller 2nd bell for echoes, which Mr. Droste performed to great effect. He had a full, confident sound, great dynamic contrasts, and beautiful musical cadenzas. His performance unfortunately ran past the time restriction. Anne Droste provided a solid musical accompaniment on the piano.

Samuel Funkhouser of JMU performed *Fantasia & Variations on The Carnival of Venice* on euphonium. His performance showed off strong technique and a consistent, clear tone. I would've enjoyed hearing more dynamic contrasts, and some musical contrasts of the various repetitive statements of this theme and variation piece. His performance overall was well done and very enjoyable.

Ernest Lightfoot, bass trombone with Atlantic, performed Walter Hartley's *Sonata Breve*. His choice of music provided a break from the traditional theme and variation solos with this modern, unaccompanied solo. Ernest demonstrated great control of the instrument. His performance had good dynamic contrasts and a nice interpretation. It was a solid, well-rounded performance.

T.J. Menges of Fountain City performed *The Piper O' Dundee* on tenor horn with Alex Theo on piano. T.J. played with a beautiful British vibrato and a full, centered, focused tone that was a joy to listen to. His impressive tone and control was evident throughout the entire range of the instrument. He made this challenging piece sound so easy! His performance had the extra sparkle and performance edge that had been missing most of the afternoon. Slight missed notes toward the end were the only thing that I could find to critique in what was overall a great performance.

David Vance of Fountain City gave the final performance of the day with the *Concert-*



Paul (double bell euphonium) and Anne Droste (piano) perform in Robinson Theater, Low Brass Slow Melody Solo Competition.

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*piece for Trombone and Brass Band* – a rather introspective piece. David had a solid full tone that was consistent throughout the range of the horn. He gave great dynamic contrasts but didn't find the opportunity to explore the top end of dynamics. His cadenza was solid. Unfortunately time was called before reaching the end so he and accompanist Alex Theo stopped immediately, creating an abrupt but effective ending!

**ADULT LOW BRASS TECHNICAL SOLO WINNERS:** 1st - David Heinsen (euphonium, James Madison University Brass Band), 2nd - T. J. Menges (alto horn, Fountain City Brass Band), 3rd - Chip Gue (euphonium, Brass Band of the Tri-State). 🌟

## ADULT HIGH BRASS SLOW MELODY SOLO

*By Barbara Burtch*

As a low brass player, I have to admit that listening to the Adult High Brass Slow Melody solo contest was not my first choice of how to

spend two hours on Friday afternoon! However it proved to be a very enjoyable time. All of the soloists played very well, with only one who seemed to struggle a bit. 11 soloists were entered in the competition. Three soloists, David Mayo, Alex Bender (2nd place), and Dee McAfee played soprano cornet solos. I was very impressed by the quality of the sound, all of them played with a beautiful, round, mellow sound that was very pleasant to listen to. The sound of the flugelhorn lends itself naturally to this solo category. The soloist did not let us down, Adam MacBlane, Kevin Maloney (1st Ppace), Jack Deal (3rd place) and Rick Roenne all played well, bringing out the mellow sound of the flugel horn. The competition was rounded out by four cornet soloists, Arthur Myers, Andy Malovance, Andrianna Shultz, and Virginia Hernandez. Again, it was their cornet sound that was impressive. Upon seeing the results, the winners rose above the rest because of their style: using vibrato and dynamics to bring out the music. I'm glad I did not have to judge the contest, that would have been a very difficult task.

**ADULT HIGH BRASS SLOW MELODY**

**SOLO WINNERS:** 1st - Kevin Maloney (flugelhorn, New England Brass Band), 2nd Alex Bender (soprano cornet, James Madison University Brass Band), 3rd - Jack Deal (flugelhorn, Atlantic Brass Band). 🌟

## ADULT LOW BRASS SLOW MELODY SOLO

*By Linda Yeo*

Seventeen contestants took part in NABBA's Adult Low Brass Slow Melody solo competition. Adjudicator Tom Palmatier had the difficult task of sorting out the top three competitors as some excellent performances were presented in this category.

A very diverse collection of works was represented, ranging from a Bach cello suite movement to a Strauss horn concerto movement, movements from several of Eric Ewazen's Concerti and a jazzy number by Baudo. The venue for this part of the competition was the small recital hall on campus which has a nice acoustic and a grand piano.

In 1st place was baritone player Kevin Elkins of James Madison University Brass Band, playing *Concerto for Baritone* movement no. 2, by Andrew Duncan. I don't often think of baritone as a solo instrument in a brass band, but Kevin really made his horn sing. I was especially impressed by his use of dynamic contrast and legato in conveying the different emotions of this piece.

In 2nd place was tenor horn player Roger Menning of Chicago Brass Band, playing Hugh Nash's *Demelza*. I enjoyed Roger's rendition of this piece, especially the fluidity of his high range.

3rd place went to tenor horn player Kevin Cramer of Brass Band of Central Florida, playing his own published arrangement of Strauss' *Horn Concerto No. 1* (op.11), movement no. 2. What a wonderful sound and control he had in the upper range.

All in all, it was an enjoyable presentation for the audience and judge alike of many recognizable and newer works.

**ADULT LOW BRASS SLOW MELODY SOLO WINNERS:** 1st - Kevin Elkins (baritone, James Madison University Brass Band), 2nd - Roger Menning (alto horn, Chicago



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Brass Band), 3rd - Kevin Cramer (alto horn, Brass Band of Central Florida). 🌟

## ADULT PERCUSSION SOLO

*By Rusty Morris*

The adult percussion solo competition was held in Stem Concert Hall of the Ogle Center on the campus of IUS. Adjudicating was Rodney Newton. In addition to Mr. Newton's talent for writing and arranging for a multitude of musical genres, he has been a member of the New BBC Orchestra and the orchestra of Sadler Wells as principal timpanist and percussionist.

The level of talent between the six entrants in this competition was extremely close. There was no weak performance in this category. Of the six performances, four were on marimba, one on xylophone, and one on snare drum.

Finishing in the top spot was Jamieson Carr. Jamieson played a snare drum solo titled *Bolero for Ed* (Chip Webster). Not often will a snare drum solo win a contest such as this, but at the conclusion of his performance, I don't think there was much doubt in anyone's mind as to the outcome. With strong rudiments and exact evenness between the left and right hands, this was an exciting solo. Great dynamic contrasts and a tempo with zero fluctuation added to this offering. I'm not sure who Ed is, but he would have been proud of this performance.

Close behind in 2nd place was Suzie Berndt. Suzie's selection was a marimba solo titled *Astral Dance* (Gordon Stout). Ms. Berndt presented a very confident and musically rewarding performance for both her and the audience. Suzie displayed great four mallet technique over the entire five+ octaves of the marimba. A well prepared and confident performance of which Ms. Berndt should be very pleased with.

Third place went to Jake Brandyberry. Jake performed *Fire* from "Water and Fire" (Daniel Skogg) on marimba. Jake presented a very energetic four mallet performance which aptly represented the title. Jake showed a tremendous dynamic range throughout his performance. His upper end dynamics were as strong as any that I have ever heard on a percussion keyboard. But it was not at the expense of technique or musicality. Again, a very well prepared solo and presentation.

All of the soloists are to be commended for their preparations and a performance in what I am sure was a very difficult afternoon to judge for Mr. Newton.

## ADULT PERCUSSION SOLO WINNERS:

1st - Jamieson Carr (snare drum, James Madison University Brass Band), 2nd - Suzie Berndt (marimba, James Madison University Brass Band), 3rd - Jake Brandyberry (marimba, Cincinnati Brass Band). 🌟

## ADULT & YOUTH BRASS ENSEMBLE

*By Linda Detman*

The brass ensemble competitions at the 25th NABBA displayed the depth and breadth of talent among the members of NABBA. Ten adult brass ensembles and one very fine youth ensemble took to the competition stage on a chilly, overcast Friday at Indiana University Southeast in the Stem Concert Hall. Styles ranged from traditional to avant-garde, with group sizes from trios to 10 piece ensembles. Of note in the adult competition was the piece *Freedom* played by Freedom Quartet (Atlantic Brass Band) composed by its euphonium player, Joel Collier. If NABBA gave an award for best ensemble name, I would have picked Best Little HORN House (Spires Brass Band);

most creative and entertaining performance would go to BBC2 (Brass Band of Columbus) for its Mexican dance hats, hot pepper beads, and mascot, a Big Boy figurine!

Brass ensemble judge Bram Gregson had the toughest job of all, listening to many fine performances and selecting the very best among them—I'm glad I didn't have to do it! Third place in the adult ensemble competition went to the Lexington Brass Ensemble (Lexington Brass Band), a nine-piece ensemble that opened with a restrained and regal rendition of *Rondeau* as part of A Short Baroque Suite, and exhibited tight ensemble playing throughout its program. Second place went to Twisted Steel (Fountain City Brass Band) who proved that coffee has nothing on brass as a stimulant. The entire auditorium bolted upright with the opening fortissimo blasts of two euphoniums and two tubas. They performed *Consequences/Billy Tell*, the latter a rollicking take on the William Tell Overture. They say the best comes last, and this was true in the adult competition. The last competitors, the JMU Ensemble (James Madison University Brass Band), a quartet of two cornets, horn, and euphonium, performed a technically masterful and musically stirring *Divertimento* in their winning performance—an inspiring cap to a strong field of adult brass ensembles.



The lobby of the Ogle Center at Indiana University Southeast was a hive of activity at the NABBA XXV Championships.



In the youth ensemble competition there was just one entry, Triangle Youth Brass Quintet (Triangle Youth Brass Band), whose strong melodious version of *The Marriage of Figaro* would have been a worthy contender in the adult competition. If you closed your eyes while listening, you would never know the group was composed of youth players. Let's hope more of our youth will enter the ensemble contest next year.

All in all, the Friday afternoon brass ensemble competition was a fitting prelude to the next day's band competition. Congratulations to all the ensembles for your fine performances and for sharing your music with us!

**ADULT BRASS ENSEMBLE WINNERS:** 1st - James Madison University (James Madison University Brass Band), 2nd - Twisted Steel (Fountain City Brass Band), 3rd - Lexington Brass Ensemble (Lexington Brass Band).

**YOUTH BRASS ENSEMBLE WINNER:** 1st - Triangle Youth Brass Ensemble (Triangle Youth Brass Band). 🌟

## ADULT & YOUTH PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

*By Joe Johnson*

### ADULT PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

In the Adult Percussion Ensemble competition, the quartet from James Madison University won with a vibrant and energetic performance of Michael Burritt's *Doomsday Machine*. All four members had their hands full covering a wide range of instruments including auto brake drums, hardware, coffee cans, timpani, various bass drums, gongs, and more. Taking second was the trio from New England Brass Band, who played James Moore's fleeting (only about 90 seconds!) *Scherzoid II*. And while their reading was rhythmically taut, it just could not match the precision and panache of JMU's winning performance.

### YOUTH PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

The Triangle Youth Percussion Ensemble took the top prize with an assured performance of Lynn Glasscock's *Layers*. This complex work calls for numerous mallet instruments and they spanned the width of the stage. All members

performed with confidence and vigor en route to their well-earned victory. All Star Percussion's rendering of Kenneth Krause's *Little Suite* was generally solid. And while hampered by some imprecise timpani tuning, their performance was still good enough to claim second place. Rounding out the competition was the Junior Varsity Percussion, who chose Joe Maroni's *Time Out* for their first NABBA appearance. There were a few rhythmically shaky moments that threatened to derail the performance, but the young players managed to hold it together and finish strong.

**ADULT PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE WINNERS:** 1st - JMU Percussion Quartet (James Madison University Brass Band), 2nd - New England Brass Band Percussion Trio (New England Brass Band).

**YOUTH PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE WINNERS:** 1st - Triangle Youth Percussion Ensemble (Triangle Youth Brass Band), 2nd - All-Star Percussion (All-Star Brass and Percussion), 3rd - Junior Varsity Percussion (Junior Varsity All-Star Brass Band). 🌟

## YOUTH BRASS SOLO

*By Eric Aho*

It was and is my privilege to announce and review the NABBA 2007 Youth Solo Competition.

I enjoy this event each year for several reasons:

First, I have dedicated over twenty years to the establishment of brass bands and in particular the advancement of youth bands and enjoy the energy level and spirit that the younger generation brings to music making. That energy is evident in each courageous performance.

Second, The Youth Division presents a wide range of personal, age appropriate, achievement. I waited with great interest to see what the judge, Lt. Col. Timothy Holton, would consider and value in awarding prize and placement. This dynamic allows a collegial observation and evaluation of our adjudicators who strive to make wise decisions.

Third, on a personal note, this year my thirteen year old son, Nick, competed on Euphonium for his first time. After over twenty years of our youth brass band venture my wife Amy and

I experienced the same opportunity we have worked to provide other students, their parents, and school band directors. We are certainly proud of and gratified by Nick's enthusiastic participation. That alone makes our efforts worthwhile.

There were several performances that stood out for their accomplishment. Christopher Crawford, Cornet, Junior-Varsity All-Star Brass Band, set the standard for the competition drawing first position and giving a confident and accurate performance of *Thrice Happy the Monarch*, (Handel/Morris). Nick Aho, Euphonium, Junior-Varsity All-Star Brass Band, persevered through his performance of *Mira* (Vandercook), despite the surprise of a sticky valve. Jason and Joel Collier, Alto Horn and Euphonium, Atlantic City Brass Band, performed on their brass instruments and accompanied each other on piano with more than just a dash of entertaining showmanship.

In the end Lt. Col. Holton awarded 3rd place to Justin Crawford, Cornet, Triangle Youth Band. He performed *Concerto for Trumpet and Strings* (Neruda). Unfortunately, the choice to perform the piece without piano accompaniment made this seem more of a performance of interrupted excerpts. This may have cost Justin a higher placement since his performance was polished, sensitive, and appropriate to the style of the piece and the cornet. This piece being originally written for trumpet and strings makes the lighter and more finesse oriented cornet a wonderful choice of instrument for its performance. Nice work done on this wonderful piece.

Second place went to Joel Collier, Euphonium, Atlantic City Brass Band, who performed *Ransomed* the venerable George Marshall *Euphonium Concerto* out of the rich Salvation Army collection of advanced solo literature. Joel, adeptly accompanied by his twin brother Jason presented a highly spirited performance that included several glissando rips for show and bombast that unfortunately exposed inaccuracies in several technical passages. This was a very contemporary interpretation, of a typical war horse piece reminiscent of the great virtuosic solos of the Sousa era, providing a great moment of showmanship.

Terri Williams, Cornet, Triangle Youth Band, performed Herbert L. Clarke's classic cornet

solo *From the Shores of the Mighty Pacific* and was awarded first place. Terri presented an assertive rendition that tested the limits of her cornet a bit. There were sections where a lighter approach could have provided some stylistic contrast more fitting with the intentions of Clarke, the original soloist and composer. One of the great challenges in brass banding is addressing the differences between the trumpet and cornet. Perhaps this is even more evident in the youth divisions since the students are performing on both instruments more often than the adults. It tests our abilities to shift from one instrument to the other. Congratulations, Terri, on a powerful and winning performance.

Thanks to all who prepared and performed their solos this year. I was impressed with your accomplishments and invigorated by your spirit. We all encourage you to do it again.

**YOUTH BRASS SOLO WINNERS:** 1st - Terri Williams (cornet, Triangle Youth Brass Band), 2nd - Joel Collier (euphonium, Atlantic Brass Band), 3rd - Justin Crawford (cornet, Triangle Youth Brass Band). 🌟

## YOUTH PERCUSSION SOLO

*By Rusty Morris*

In the youth percussion solo, there were three entrants to perform and be critiqued by Rodney Newton. Competing were Matt Adair on marimba, Jenni Morrison on snare drum, and Mark Claffey on timpani.

The top spot in this category went to Matt Adair and his rendition of *Yellow After the Rain* (Mitchell Peters). He demonstrated very nice control in this work requiring 4 mallets. With steady rhythms and a wide range of dynamics, Mr. Adair showed a very mature approach to this particular solo. His confidence and stage presence as well as his musicality no doubt left a very favorable impression on judge Newton.

In the second spot was Mark Claffey. Mark performed *Triptych Motif* (John Beck). *Triptych Motif* is an unaccompanied solo requiring the use of 4 timpani. Mr. Claffey was able to quickly and accurately tune the timpani to the required pitches and proceed with his performance. Mark presented a very confident and obviously well prepared solo. Good, even cross sticking and nice attention to dynamics made

this a very enjoyable presentation.

Taking the third position was Jenni Morrison. Jenni's choice of solo was *Allemande #27* (Anthony Cirone). Jenni appeared just a bit nervous as she entered the stage but is to be commended for committing to and working on a solo. This particular piece is a rhythmic etude requiring a steady tempo and a clearly defined sense of rhythm. Jenni needed just a bit more confidence in her rhythmic expressions and a little more steadiness in her pulse. No doubt Ms. Morrison will return next year a stronger and more confident performer.

Congratulations are in order to all of the youth in this section and all sections that competed this weekend. They are the future of brass banding in the US. I look forward to hearing their improvements next year.

## YOUTH PERCUSSION SOLO WINNERS:

1st - Matt Adair (marimba, All-Star Brass and percussion), 2nd - Mark Claffey (timpani, All-Star Brass and Percussion), 3rd - Jenni Morrison (snare drum, Junior Varsity All-Star Brass Band). 🌟

# CLINICS AND WORKSHOPS AT NABBA XXV

*By Paul Droste*

After an absence of several years, NABBA is recognizing the needs and benefits of having an educational component added to its Championship weekend. This year clinics were offered by four of the adjudicators: Stephen Bulla, Sheona White, Rodney Newton, and Tom Palmatier. I was able to attend two of them.

REHEARSAL PLANNING AND PREPARATION FOR THE BLUE COLLAR BAND DIRECTOR was presented by Lt. Col. Thomas Palmatier. Although the audience was small, the clinic would have benefitted every NABBA band director, plus the many public school directors that play in NABBA bands. Palmatier has brought his impressive military sense of duty and organization to clarifying the



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role of the band director. While many of his major points were very logical and “common sense,” it is still necessary to hear them again, and in a sequence that is efficient, well-organized, and right to the “power point.”

Palmatier started by saying that “the conductor’s job is to empower the musicians, to put them in situations where their very best musicality can be revealed.” Conductors don’t make music, the musicians do. Specific suggestions were offered to cover the areas of: Balance, which is defined as clarity on the musical canvas; Rhythmic Clarity, which is the rhythmic stream; Articulations, which were compared to string bowings; Note and Phrase Shaping, which is the beginning, end, and direction of the musical statement (phrase); Warm-ups, stressing more individual warm-ups than group warm-ups; Tuning, using a consistent source; and Dynamics, using reference points.

Also covered were the visual items of the conductor’s style, the posture and attitude of the players, and the proper method of acknowledging applause. Suggestions were offered on seating arrangements; putting the tubas in the middle of the band and placing the solo (first

chair) players in the middle rather than on the ends. Much time was spent on rehearsal preparation (score study) and the pacing of the rehearsal, which would benefit conductors and bands at all levels.

There are two places where Palmatier’s clinic outline is available. See his article in Issue 101 of *The Bridge*, or go to <http://bands.army.mil> for a more extensive version. Every NABBA conductor should read these articles by Palmatier - and learn from an experienced conductor and a master teacher.

THE VOICE OF THE TENOR HORN was the title of the clinic given by Sheona White, a tenor horn virtuoso from England. One of the most neglected sections in NABBA bands is the tenor horn (or called the alto horn in the USA). Americans do not study the tenor horn, they just play it. There are few role models in the USA, so most of the concepts are learned from recordings.

Sheona gave the overflow crowd a synopsis of her musical life, which culminates in being principal tenor horn in the top brass bands in England, and touring the world as a soloist.

Although she is known primarily as a player, she shows great enthusiasm for teaching and encouraging young players. She opened her clinic by playing *Demelza* by Hugh Nash, and concluded by playing *Nocturno* by Franz Strauss. On both pieces she was sensitively accompanied by Anne Droste on piano. These pieces, and other demonstrations, left the audience awed by the beauty of her sound - at all levels of speed, range, and dynamics. Her clinic could have been called “Hearing Is Believing.”

One of the best parts of her session was the questions and answer portion. She discussed instruments, mouthpieces, tenor horn solos, touring, and brass bands. Often, she was asked to compare the Americans with the British. Her suggestions were practical, and there was something for all levels of players. The large majority of the audience identified themselves as tenor horn players, and they all went away with a new appreciation for their instrument. There should be instant improvement in the tenor horn sections of NABBA bands after hearing Sheona play.

## GALA CONCERT

### REVIEW

*By Anita Cocker Hunt*

Immediately after the NABBA XXV Awards Ceremony, held in Louisville’s Brown Theater, the USA Southern Territorial Band of The Salvation Army, under the direction of Dr. Richard Holz, took the stage. They began with one of my favorites to open a concert, *A Fanfare Of Praise* by Robert Redhead. The cornets and trombones stood behind their normal seated positions for an antiphonal effect. The piece begins softly with the tune, *Fairest Lord Jesus* and soon transforms, with the help of the percussion section, into a fast moving, foot tapping, syncopated version of the same tune. This was a great opener.

The comparé, the band’s bass trombonist, Major Willis Howell, was articulate and informative.

*The King’s Command* by Herbert Rive is a piece not heard often, and it was great to hear this wonderful performance.

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

**DUE TO A LARGE CONVENTION SCHEDULED IN LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY FOR THE SAME WEEKEND AS THE NABBA XXVI CHAMPIONSHIPS (MARCH 28-29, 2008), IT IS IMPORTANT THAT NABBA BANDS INQUIRE ABOUT AND MAKE HOTEL RESERVATIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

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*Capriccio Brillante-Carneval of Naples* was everyone's first opportunity to hear Sheona White on the tenor horn unless you attended her clinic. Sheona performed with fluidity, precision and a beautiful tenor horn sound. This, after an exhausting week end of Friday all day judging, conducting a Friday evening clinic, and judging all day Saturday. Wow!

*To The Chief Musician* was a tribute written by William Himes to Commissioner Richard Holz, the father of Richard and Ron Holz. Singing and narration is incorporated into this composition, and Jude Gotrich was articulate and every word was understood.

*This World Is Not My Home* arr. by Bill Broughton, was Jude's next appearance and my first hearing of this piece. Jude's flexibility and ease of performance (she seemed so natural) was so enjoyable to listen to.

A standard was presented by Sheona and Joshua Crook, *Allegro from Water Music Suite*, which was straightforward and on the money.

*Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* (Bach/Leidzén), was a beautiful piece to listen to, and especially exposed for the Eb soprano who displayed his smooth playing and rock solid accuracy.

A break from the normal routine was a feature on the bass trombone, presented by the announcer, Major Willis Howell, on *All Over God's Heaven* by Bill Broughton. He had a great bass trombone sound and gave a solid performance.

*The Victors* by Bruce Broughton let three cornets shine with their dazzling technique and ensemble demands.

Sheona White returned to render a beautiful performance of James Curnow's *The Depths of His Love*. I was still impressed by Sheona's outstanding performances after the exhausting weekend she had. Cheers to you, Sheona, and for showing us a true tenor horn sound. Thanks for your helpful comments during the clinic and we hope to see you again soon.

As we were nearing the end of the concert, Jude Gotrich returned to sing an arrangement by Ray Steadman-Allen of *How Great Thou Art*. Her performance was powerful, controlled, and captivating. Whether or not you believe in the message of the song, you have to agree that Jude has a wonderful voice, musical presence, and had you on the edge of your seat!



#### NABBA XXV Gala Concert

USA Southern Territorial Band of the Salvation Army; Richard Holz, conductor; Jude Gotrich, vocal soloist.

I have known Jude since we were kids, and I'm so proud of her accomplishments.

*The Blessing* by William Himes completed the Gala Concert with a perfect musical closure. We were treated to an encore, and everyone left exhilarated and in high spirits. Thank you to Richard Holz and the Southern Territorial Band for a great performance and a memorable evening. ☼

## ENTRANCE RAMP: FOCUS ON YOUTH

By Tony Granados

With the recent conclusion of the NABBA XXV Championships, I thought I would give some of the students from participating youth bands the opportunity to tell what the week-end meant to them, as well as what their entire experience is like in their band. NABBA 2007 had five youth bands participating in three different divisions, the largest showing for youth bands in recent memory. The bands participating were the All-Star Brass and Percussion and the Junior Varsity All-Star Brass Band from Columbus, OH, the Cincinnati Honors Brass Band from Ohio, the Triangle Youth Brass Band and Triangle Youth Brass Ensemble from Raleigh, NC. The exciting new addition of the Youth Open Division hopes to attract other youth bands, and possibly entice NABBA bands to start a youth band within their organization. Here are some thoughts by members of our NABBA Youth Bands...

Kristen, a percussionist with All-Star Brass and Percussion found the contest to be invigorat-

ing. Band mate Anne, a tenor horn player, found an incredible sense of achievement, and was honored to share the stage with such talented musicians in her band at the NABBA competition.

Justin, a solo cornet player with the Triangle Youth Brass Band made this comment, "NABBA 07 was most definitely the best musical experience in my life. I was performing for the majority of the time there, but I was able to experience brass banding as a lifestyle, which was truly inspiring. I heard probably the best and most unified brass sound in the world listening to the Fountain City Brass Band. Also, the outpouring of emotion when we played Shostakovich was truly inspiring and I felt it during the performance, and that feeling lasts to this day."

Madison, a baritone player in the Junior Varsity All Star Brass Band, is learning how much time it takes to prepare for a competition, and is enjoying helping out trumpet players at school with her newly gained skill reading treble clef.

Mark, a percussionist in the All-Star Brass and Percussion, had this to say; "I just joined All-Star Brass and Percussion this year and it was an amazing experience. The people in the band are probably the best people out there. They all are there for one thing, to make music. Being in this band expanded my musicality, and also helped me with my intonation skills, and also in general, made me a much better musician."

Maggie, a trombone player with the Cincinnati Honors Youth Brass Band says, "I was a little scared because I'm a 7th grader and the music is much harder than what I play in school. After the first couple of rehearsals I decided I liked it and enjoyed learning new music."

Getting back to a comment made by Anne from All-Star Brass and Percussion, she said, "Brass band has been a wonderful experience. To me, participating in this brass band has meant a tremendous amount. Not only was I able to further my own brass playing skills, but I was also able to play within a group of people who shared the same passion toward music as myself. It built up my confidence when it comes to other performances and auditions because it really tested me to my limits and made me a better brass player." This is a sentiment shared by many, many players.

Each person you ask will give you a different answer, but when you add them all together, you get the same reason. There does not appear to be much of a difference from Ohio to North Carolina, about what the young students in the NABBA Youth Bands are experiencing and pulling out of their respective programs. The kids are inspired to play the literature, and they enjoy getting together and making real music with their student colleagues. They seem to agree that the brass band experience is providing them with their greatest musical outlet of their young lives.

In my experience, the students that come out for an extra curricular brass band experience are not average, they are above average, but they are typical. They grow fond of the activity and they truly love making music in the brass band medium, with their brass band friends. It really is a truly amazing thing to see, and hear. I believe that the success of the NABBA Youth Bands can be reproduced in many areas of the country, and the satisfaction of making it happen will lift your head up high. You can help to create something amazing ... create a youth band! Need help? Feel free to contact me at [youthdirector@trianglebrass.org](mailto:youthdirector@trianglebrass.org). ☺

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## THE YORKSHIRE AREA BRASS BAND CHAMPIONSHIPS

*By Herb Roselle*

The Yorkshire Area Brass Band Championships were held at St. George's Hall in Bradford on March 3rd and 4th. This reviewer attended the

4th section contest and the Championship contest, held on the 4th. Rather than commenting on how well each band did or didn't do, I leave that to the adjudicators, whose results are now a matter of public record. I will restrict my review to the test pieces themselves, and the problems they presented to the band.

The 4th section test piece was *The Seasons*, by Dr. Philip Wilby. Wilby is justly famous for his body of work in brass banding, especially the brilliant test pieces he has composed for championship level bands. This piece is not as well known and that's a pity because it displays Wilby's superb musical craft, and also his consideration of the needs of band and audience alike.

This piece was commissioned by Ian Thompson, of Keighley, a devotee of brass banding and a member of the Trustees of the Black Dyke Band. He is ably supported in his efforts by his wife Jan, a native of Queensbury. Thompson asked for the piece as a dedication to his first wife, Myra, who passed away in 1992. The request included "...we would like the music to be both reflective and happy, to celebrate her life be representative of the lovely hamlet where we live and be written so it can be played regularly in brass band performances. Wilby completed this work in 1999 and it has been used in the US and in Great Britain as a test piece.

The music is quite accessible to audience and band alike, but that is not to say that it is simplistic. Wilby uses deceptively simple themes, but cleverly embellishes them with chromatic interest, semitone displacement, and novel use of texture and balance to create interest for each part. Players are asked to show they can play the 2-3 valve combination in tune and trombonists are asked to find the awkward 5th position. Soloists are challenged to lead by example, but are not sent to the very front lines of skill and technique at this level. Wilby's goal is to invite the player's interest, not terror.

One other nice feature of this music needs comment. Each of the movements stands nicely as a piece for any concert program. Many test pieces go back in the library after the contest. This piece should remain in the folder for performance. A bands' audience with thank them for it.

The Championship contest featured the now famous *Isaiah 40* by Robert Redhead. This

piece is justly renowned for being symbolic of the healing of the division between Salvation Army bands and the British brass bands. Redhead is a Salvationist and this piece has been adopted as the test piece by national contests in Britain and the US.

Bandsmen are divided on the merits of the piece. Those who endorse it enthusiastically point to its powerful statements of the gorgeous theme, the brilliant coloration of the arrangement, and the variety of styles within the piece. Its detractors point to the episodic nature of the piece, i.e. its seeming lack of cohesion. Others question the "double ending" which concludes the piece. In the end, it will be the judgment of the individual listener, but it must be noted that some of the finest conductors in the brass band movement are very favorable toward the music.

It certainly does provide a test, and there are many sections that will separate the bands. The tutti passages let the overall quality of the sound be heard, while nervous little filigrees dart tenderly in other sections, exposing the nerves and skill of the solo chairs. Still other sections make extreme technical demands, and rhythmic intricacies pose problems. One brief section is unplayable, at least by the finest bands of today. No section or solo chair is left unattended, and as it happened on the day, no band could negotiate the problems unscathed.

As to the results, the successful bands were effusive in their praise of the judges' insightful listening, while others reacted with consternation and incredulity. Ah, contesting. However, this reviewer was reminded that contesting creates the environment for higher standards of play, and perhaps even more important, provides the outlet for the presentation of the wonderful music of masters like Philip Wilby and Robert Redhead. ☺



## EXIT RAMP



The Official Publication of the North American Brass Band Association

Douglas Yeo, Editor

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Materials for inclusion in *The Brass Band Bridge* must be submitted as Microsoft Word documents and photos must be submitted as JPEG files (300 ppi [pixels per inch] resolution). Materials may be edited for content. A style sheet for *Bridge* submissions may be found at [nabbabridge.org](http://nabbabridge.org). Address all materials for publication (including queries about advertising rates and sizes) to: Douglas Yeo (email: [bridge@yeodoug.com](mailto:bridge@yeodoug.com)), 9 Freemont Street, Lexington, MA 02421.

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New music for review should be sent to: Colin Holman, 31 Joseph Lane, Glendale Heights, IL 60139.

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## IN FOCUS

ARTHUR J. RAVENEL, JR. BRIDGE  
OVER THE COOPER RIVER AT  
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

Issue 104 of *The Brass Band Bridge* features the Arthur J. Ravenel, Jr. Bridge which spans the Cooper River, connecting Charleston and Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina. It is the longest cable-stayed bridge in the Western Hemisphere with a main span length of 1,546 feet.

The first bridge to cross the Cooper River was built in 1929. The John P. Grace Memorial Bridge (a double cantilever truss bridge) was followed by the Silas N. Pearman Bridge in 1966; both bridges came collectively to be called the "Cooper River Bridges."

By 1979, both bridges were showing signs of deterioration. Also important was the fact that the Grace and Pearman bridges were not high enough to allow modern ships to service several of Charleston's shipping terminals. The bridges limited the traffic that Charleston, the United States' fourth largest container port, could handle.

While the need for a new bridge to replace the Grace and Pearman Bridges was clear, politics and finances delayed action on its design and construction. It was not until 1995, when the Grace Bridge was given a score of 4 out of 100 for safety and structural integrity that state and local officials began to move to make the new bridge a reality.

Opened on July 16, 2005, the Ravenel Bridge was constructed to withstand hurricane winds of over 300 mph and an earthquake of magnitude 7.4. The photo of the Ravenel Bridge in this issue of *The Brass Band Bridge* shows the Grace and Pearman Bridges in the background in the process of being dismantled. ☼

