

fanfare

Vol. 39 No. 1

PORT AUTHORITY: THE SOUL OF THE NAVY BAND
COUNTRY CURRENT TURNS 45
SPOTLIGHT ON MASTER CHIEF MUSICIAN KEVIN DINES



THE UNITED STATES
NAVY BAND
WASHINGTON, D.C.

AMERICA'S
NAVY™



It's been an incredibly productive and rewarding couple of months for the Navy Band and Navy Music to kick off 2018. The Concert Band toured 12 states, performing in 21 cities and covering nearly 5,000 miles. The Sea Chanters wowed audiences in three states on their national tour. Already we've had Navy bands connecting with people all over the world, including a historic visit by the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson with the U.S. 7th Fleet Band to Da Nang, Vietnam. It's awe inspiring to witness the great work our musicians do each and every day telling our Navy's story.

Our Music in the Schools program is headed in an exciting new direction. In this issue, Chief Musician Randy Johnson talks about our first adventure taking our educational outreach programs into schools around the world, thanks to a partnership with Defense Media Activity. Reaching out to young people and showing them the benefits of hard work and dedication is always a highlight for us.

In May, we'll be celebrating the 45th anniversary of Country Current with a special concert featuring former members of the group at Schlesinger Hall in Alexandria, Virginia. Country Current, always a crowd favorite, mixes flawless country and bluegrass playing with a down-to-earth performance style that never ceases to impress. We're all looking forward to this opportunity to celebrate the decades of service this group has given our Navy.

Finally, on behalf of everyone in Navy Music, I want to thank you! My favorite part of every show is meeting with members of the audience and hearing your stories. And especially for those of you who have served our great nation, it's important for us to let you know how much we appreciate your service. You've built the great military we have today, and we will continue to honor and recognize your contributions at each and every concert.

Thank you for your support, and we look forward to seeing you at a Navy Band performance in the future!

Kenneth C. Collins, Captain, USN
Commanding Officer

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Front cover: BAKERSFIELD, Calif. (Feb. 28, 2018) Chief Musician William Edwards dances with an audience member during a performance by the U.S. Navy Band Sea Chanters at the Fox Theater in Bakersfield, California. (U.S. Navy photo by Senior Chief Musician Melissa Bishop/Released)

Inside front cover: ELKO, Nev. (Feb. 24, 2018) Commanding Officer Capt. Kenneth Collins meets with audience members following a U.S. Navy Band performance at the Elko Convention Center in Elko, Nevada. The Navy Band performed in 12 states during its 21-city, 5,000-mile tour, connecting communities across the nation to their Navy. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Musician Adam Grimm/Released)



Album cover from Port Authority's 1973 album "Together"

PORT AUTHORITY

THE SOUL OF THE NAVY BAND

by Senior Chief Musician Melissa Bishop

“Hard driving ROCK....the sound of the NEW, NOW, NAVY! Great show for young people of all ages. Don't miss it!” This comes from the June 1972 issue of *Fanfare* above a listing of the summer concert schedule for the Navy Band's Port Authority. Chief Musician Jim Allen had just taken the reins as the new leader of the band's popular music group which had only been in existence for two years. During that time, Port Authority had been a 12-piece dance band specializing in jazz-rock (like the groups Chase, Chicago or Blood, Sweat & Tears) until Allen turned it into a smaller, edgier, soul-rock band (more like Earth, Wind & Fire or Sly & the Family Stone) which would appeal to a younger, more diverse crowd. In the words of retired Chief Musician Mike Beegle, tenor saxophone player and, later, director of Port Authority from 1973-78, the Navy Band “...was the first of the official military bands to recognize the importance of representing contemporary popular music, not only in the context of...adaptations of pop songs for concert band and big bands, but through the medium of small groups made up of players experienced at popular musical styles.”

Port Authority got its start during a period of growth and



Port Authority 1974 - from left to right, Jim Allen, Mike Vaccaro, Rose Lewis, Don Letbetter, Phil Vitali, Ed Walters, Roy Grundstrom and Emmett "Mac" Wright

change for the Navy Band. Cmdr. Donald Stauffer, officer in charge from 1968-1973, expanded the ensembles and musical offerings of the band by creating a separate Ceremonial Band in 1968, the Commodores jazz ensemble in 1969, Port Authority in 1970 and a country/bluegrass group called Country Current in 1973. In addition, the new chief of naval operations Adm. Elmo Zumwalt issued a directive to recruit more minorities into the Navy. Zumwalt knew Allen, who often performed at his quarters as a cocktail pianist. On Zumwalt's recommendation, Allen became the new leader of Port Authority. Several other musicians from the Navy School of Music joined the group in what became known as the U.S. Navy Band's official soul/rock band. Zumwalt had an effective recruiting tool.

Retired Senior Chief Musician Leonard Cuddy, the original drummer of the group from 1970-71, says, "We played the music kids wanted to hear. We saw ourselves as a new direction for the Navy." Because Port Authority was used heavily for recruiting efforts, much of the money it received for touring came from Navy Recruiting Command, which meant many of the group's performances were scheduled by NRC. They found themselves traveling across the country performing in high schools and colleges, as well as visiting military bases around the world on USO-like tours, known officially as "Morale Tours," as many of these bases were considered deprived of entertainment. These trips also served to quell racial unrest at a

time when, during the Vietnam War, serving in the military could be unpleasant and unpopular. Port Authority performed on tours to remote bases in Scotland, Iceland, Europe, North Africa, East Asia, the Philippines, western Australia and Diego Garcia.

A big hit with young people, Port Authority would go into high schools or colleges to change minds about the Navy. Phil Vitali, a drummer in the group from 1974-75, says students at these school concerts would be pleasantly surprised when what they thought was going to be a military band concert of Sousa marches and patriotic music turned out to be a performance by a hard-charging soul band. The group rarely performed in uniform, making most appearances in groovy civilian clothes with longer hair and more relaxed grooming standards. Mike Vaccaro, the group's guitar player from 1972-74, says the message to young people was: "Join the Navy and be like these guys." School concerts proved to be very popular. Retired Chief Musician Emmett "Mac" Wright, Port Authority's trombonist from 1970-74, remembers setting up on stage in high school auditoriums which, at first, would have less than a third of the seats filled. Once the band would start and the students heard what type of music was being played, the auditorium would quickly fill to capacity with a standing room-only crowd that included both students and teachers dancing in the aisles.

In 1973, Port Authority went to New York City to record an album called "Together" at A&R

Recording with the legendary recording engineer Phil Ramone. Beegle had come on board only three days before as the new tenor saxophone player. He remembers learning the charts in a hotel room the night before the session. The album, one of five recorded by the group, was used for recruiting and retention, but like all Navy Band recordings, was never for sale, despite its popularity. It remains a collector's item in Europe and many of its tracks can now be found online.

Former members of Port Authority have many unique stories to tell about their time in the group. Vitali recalls a fistfight that broke out between audience members during a show in a hanger in Scotland. The melee started in the corner farthest from the band, but as it got closer and closer, the band members grabbed their gear and left quickly. Vaccaro describes setting up for a performance one sweltering afternoon on a pool deck, drenched in sweat. His bandmate Vitali left his drum set just before they were about to start the show, jumped in the pool, climbed right back out and sat down to play.

After Port Authority's golden years of the 1970s, most of the Navy's fleet bands had each formed a small rock group that enabled them to handle public performances and recruiting efforts for their own regions. The Navy began using other media, including TV ads, to enhance recruitment. Thus, the need for airplane travel and extensive long-distance tours for Port Authority came to an end. Shorter tours and big vans driven by band members became the norm. Another change: the group was more likely to perform in uniform.

By the 1980s, Port Authority had become a something of a jazz-fusion band, mostly performing original material along with a few covers of popular songs and a foray into music videos. Some saw the group as a smaller version of the Commodores jazz ensemble, interesting to sophisticated jazz audiences, but with less appeal to younger audiences of recruiting age. Port Authority was eventually disbanded in 1986 by Cmdr. Allen Beck, the Navy Band's officer in charge at that time.

Port Authority July 1975 - back row from left to right, Musician 1st Class Norm Clark, Musician 1st Class David Carradine, Musician 3rd Class Gary Welsh, Musician 1st Class Rose Lewis, Musician 1st Class Scott Ragsdale, Musician 1st Class Leonard Liberman, and Musician 1st Class Richie Reddick, front row from left to right, Chief Musician James Allen and Chief Musician Mike Beegle



Each of the members of the group interviewed for this article spoke of how important their time in Port Authority was to them. Vaccaro says, "It was a great part of my life, performing with such excellent musicians and having fun while we did it." Vitali says, "It was like a tight-knit family. Being in Port Authority was magic...the highlight of my time in the Navy." Rose (Lewis) Williams, the vocalist from 1972-76, remembers that, as the group's only woman, "...I was surrounded by wonderful, kind guys who always treated me so well. We were one family." She goes on to say, "Being in Port Authority was the basis for who I am today." Retired Musician 1st Class Diane (Horner) Beegle, the group's vocalist from 1976-79, says, "It set me on a course to sing for the Navy for 20 years," in a multi-faceted career in the fleet music program. Wright says, "It is important to remember what Port Authority did, the success it had in performing and the value it brought to the Navy. Our work is something the Navy Band should be proud of."

Although Port Authority did not last into the present day, its legacy at the Navy Band can be found in the dynamic popular music ensemble known as the Cruisers, formed in 1998 just as Lt. Cmdr. John Pastin retired and Capt. Ralph Gambone took the helm as leader. The talented members of the Cruisers put on a high-energy show which connects Americans to their Navy through music. Past members of Port Authority are enthusiastic in their praise for the Cruisers, and proud that it continues the tradition of entertaining audiences with the latest popular music.

For more photos, please check out our Port Authority album on our flickr page www.flickr.com/photos/usnavyband/albums. For recordings, visit www.navyband.navy.mil/sounds.html. *ff*

Port Authority 1977 - from left to right, Musician 1st Class Jim Savage, Chief Musician Don Letbetter, Musician 1st Class Diane Beegle, Chief Musician Mike Beegle, Musician 1st Class Dick Glass, Musician 1st Class Matt McErlean, kneeling, Musician 1st Class George Walker and Musician 1st Class Mike Husky



TAKING EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH TO THE NEXT LEVEL

MUSIC IN THE SCHOOLS INAUGURAL WEBCAST

By Chief Musician Randy Johnson



FT. MEADE, Md. (Jan. 29, 2018) Members of the U.S. Navy Band Brass Quintet perform in studio at Defense Media Activity in Ft. Meade, Md. (U.S. Navy photo by Senior Chief Musician Melissa Bishop/Released)

U.S. Navy Band Music in the Schools programs are designed to inspire, educate and entertain while connecting the youth of America with the Navy. Navy Band ensembles have a long tradition of presenting these programs in the Washington area. In the fall of 2017 alone, Navy Band musicians worked with more than 8,000 students and teachers in 17 local elementary, middle and high schools. Educational performances, clinics and masterclasses are also presented during national tours. However, opportunities can be limited due to operational commitments and extensive travel.

How could the band further expand Music in the Schools around the country? The answer quickly became apparent – harness the power of the internet and livestream programs to students.

AN OPPORTUNITY PRESENTS ITSELF

In August 2017, Andrew Miller, senior producer at Defense Media Activity, held discussions with Cmdr. John Gay, director of public affairs at Naval Installations Command, and Lt. Cmdr. Mark Corbliss, Navy Band executive officer, regarding an idea he was developing. With their input, Miller outlined the concept in a one-page document. The Navy Band would present a 50-minute educational program from DMA studios for both an in-studio audience

and a livestreaming audience. With help from CNIC, the program could be broadcast to Department of Defense Educational Activity schools around the world.

“I thought it was natural to apply the creative skills of the DMA staff and the technological tools at our disposal to augment existing outreach programs like what the Navy Band does with local schools, said Miller. Our mission includes finding ways to leverage and augment existing programs at minimal or no cost to our constituency.”

COORDINATION AND PLANNING

It was time to transform this idea into reality. Communication between the Navy Band, DMA, CNIC and many others was an essential element of the planning process. A visit to DMA was needed to become familiar with production practices and to determine which Navy Band ensembles would be well-suited to the studio environment.

The Brass Quintet, a frequent participant in Music in the Schools and known for high-visibility engagements from the White House to broadcast television, was selected to perform. Also chosen for the program was audio production engineer Musician 1st Class Steven Van Dyne, an expert in recording classical music live on location.

Using the DMA’s facilities and the distribution of the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service, the program would be available to anyone instantaneously through livestream, and shortly after the program’s completion via download or streaming.

The first Department of Defense Educational Activity livestream audience was identified: W.T. Sampson Elementary School at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba! Students from Centennial

Lane Elementary in Ellicott City, Maryland, were chosen for the in-studio audience with assistance from the Maryland Music Educators Association.

The Brass Quintet had previously developed a Music in the Schools program for older elementary students. After some adjustments due to copyright restrictions, their overall plan was in place. Van Dyne and Chief Musician Brandon Almagro connected with DMA staff and worked out all technical and logistical details. Finally, a rehearsal was held in the Sail Loft with webcast producer Miller in attendance.

JAN. 29, WEBCAST #1

Instrument, camera, lighting and audio preparations were complete. When 54 band students, their director and parent chaperones arrived, the excitement in the studio was apparent. Third through fifth grade students and staff from W.T. Sampson Elementary tuned in to the webcast. At 10:30 a.m., the cue was given and the Brass Quintet played “Slavonic Dance No. 8” by Antonin Dvorak. The quintet alternated between musical selections and educational segments. An additional portion of the program was dedicated to answering student questions.

“The performances were stunning and inspiring,” said Frank Owens, director of bands at Centennial Lane Elementary School. “The explanation of the

music, the instruments and the life of military musicians was fantastic.”

Jason Kelly, director of digital media engagement for the U.S. Navy, was in attendance and posted video segments from the program on the U.S. Navy’s official Twitter account, showcasing to the public this new avenue for Navy outreach.

IMPACT AND LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

When asked about the impact of this initiative Miller said, “This is a win for everyone . . . Within the Navy public affairs community the response has been positive with interest in producing not only music education webcasts but developing the same outreach for STEM.”

The Music in the Schools webcast series will vary its focus from elementary through high school students. Be sure to look for updates on future presentations through Navy Band social media. In the future, we hope to include musicians from all units of the Navy Band so they can share their talent, knowledge and experience with students far beyond our headquarters in Washington.

To stream or download the Brass Quintet’s live Music in the Schools presentation from DMA visit: www.dvidshub.net/video/581879/music-schools. *ff*

COUNTRY CURRENT TURNS 45

by Musician 1st Class Sarah Blecker

This year marks the 45th anniversary of Country Current, and we’re celebrating with a special concert. The event takes place at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall in Alexandria, Virginia, on Saturday, May 19, at 7 p.m.

Country Current was officially formed in 1973 by direction of Cmdr. Donald Stauffer, the fourth leader of the Navy Band, though its framework began a year earlier. In 1972, musicians Eddie Davidson (lead guitar and emcee), Larry Watts (bass), Dan Meyers (guitar), Bill Kreitner (drum set), Tensel Parker, now Leach (vocals) and Bob Kaufman (fiddle/mandolin) made up the ensemble known as “Country Tide.” During a performance at DAR Constitution Hall, they met Bill Emerson, a well-known banjoist in the country/bluegrass music scene. He expressed interest in joining the Navy, and was recruited specifically to lead the group. It was during this time



Country Tide 1972 - the group that formed Country Current



Country Current 1975 - from left to right, Chief Musician Larry Watts, Chief Musician Bill Emerson, Musician 1st Class Joe Barnes, Musician 1st Class Tensel Parker, Musician 1st Class Ben Winter, Musician 1st Class Bob Kaufman and Musician 1st Class Eddie Davidson

period that Country Current was born. Its purpose as a specialty group was to expand the reach and audiences of the Navy Band, which it did quite successfully. Under Emerson's leadership, the group became an instant hit, making an appearance at the Grand Ole Opry shortly thereafter, and performing for the Academy of Country Music Awards just a few years later. Members of Country Current have been among the top instrumentalists in their field, a tradition that continues to this day.

Since its beginning, Country Current has performed for many presidents, including Jimmy Carter, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama. The group has also performed internationally in Stockholm, Nova Scotia and Beijing; at the New Orleans Saints Super Dome; and at renowned bluegrass festivals across the country. With a fun-filled and family-friendly stage show, Country Current has been delighting its fans with their musical virtuosity and humor.

The last time Country Current held an anniversary concert was in 2003, marking 30 years since its inception. This

upcoming performance has special meaning: it's the first time many of the original members of the ensemble are attending the celebration.

The concert will highlight the great legacy of the ensemble and will feature many notable alumni, including retired Master Chief Musicians Bill Emerson, Wayne Taylor (lead guitar and emcee), Jerry Gilmore (lead guitar and emcee), Bob Snider (drum set), retired Musician 1st Class Larry Watts and former Musician 1st Class Tensel Leach, as well as one of their most recent alumni, retired Senior Chief Musician Keith Arneson (banjo), among others. Each alum will perform a few songs of their choosing, accompanied by other alumni as well as current members of Country Current. There will also

be a meet and greet following the concerts, giving audience members the chance to talk with all of the performers.

The concert is free, with no tickets required. It's sure to be an enjoyable evening, with family-friendly, toe-tapping music performed by some of the greatest names in country and bluegrass. We hope to see you there on May 19! *ff*

(corrected from print edition)



WASHINGTON (Dec. 16, 2017) Country Current performs during the Holiday Concert at DAR Constitution Hall. (U.S. Navy photo by Musician 1st Class Jonathan Barnes/Released)

SPOTLIGHT ON MASTER CHIEF MUSICIAN KEVIN DINES

by Senior Chief Musician Melissa Bishop

Master Chief Musician Kevin Dines, the Navy Band's senior enlisted advisor, retires this summer after 30 years of service.

Please tell us a bit about your early musical education and how you started playing trumpet.

I started playing the trumpet in the school band program when I was nine. Around that time I also started playing in the D.C. Youth Orchestra program at Coolidge High School in Washington, D.C. DCYOP is where I received most of my early instruction on trumpet. I did pretty well my first couple of years until I got braces on my teeth. Between the ages of 10-12, I switched from trumpet to baritone and trombone. I finally switched back to the trumpet in eighth grade and played it from then on. I owe a great deal of my early development to Gilbert Costa, a former Navy Band trumpeter during the Vietnam War era who was my high school band director, and John Buchanan who directed the senior wind ensemble at DCYOP.

When did you know you wanted to be a professional musician? How did you decide to join the Navy Band?

I decided sometime during my freshman year at The Ohio State University that I wanted to play professionally. My trumpet teacher, Dr. Richard Burkart, was by far the major influence in my development into a professional trumpet player. I decided to join the Navy Band after reconnecting with OSU grads Bob Birch and Tim Dickson, members of the Navy Band trumpet section. I owe a great deal to these two men as they encouraged me to take an audition with the Navy Band. Growing up in D.C., I was very familiar with military bands. I remember seeing the Navy Band only once, but I walked away feeling like the band played with great energy and seemed to have fun. This is what stood out compared to the premier service bands from the other branches of the military. There is always talk comparing the pros and cons of each of the premier bands in D.C., however, I've always felt that the Navy Band was by far the best fit for me, and I've never regretted my decision to join.

What are some of the highlights/most memorable moments of your time in the band?

I've especially taken pride in my role as a bugler rendering taps to deceased veterans at Arlington National Cemetery and other cemeteries in the Washington area, as well as playing with the Ceremonial Band in full honors funerals in all kinds of different weather at ANC. All of the overseas performances that we've done were special, including trips to the Sweden International Tattoo in 1992, St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad, Russia, in 1996, Quebec International Tattoo in 1999 and Norway Tattoo in 2004. Other highlights were the state funeral for former President Ford, serving as the bugler for the funeral of former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, playing on seven Great American Races and performing on 11 Concert Band national tours. Of particular note were two performances in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, commemorating the life and achievements of Alton Augustus Adams, the first African-American bandmaster in the U.S. Navy.

You've had many different roles during your 30-year career at the Navy Band, including spending the last seven years as the band's senior enlisted advisor. Can you talk a bit about the positions you've held?

I was a Ceremonial Band leading petty officer, leading chief petty officer, unit leader and department chief-in-charge, with each of those positions having a successively broader scope of responsibility. In all of these jobs, it's been a privilege to lead the many musicians that have come into the band. Hopefully, I have been a positive influence in helping to shape their careers. Since 2005, I've had significant involvement in the CPO [chief petty officer] induction cycle each year. I led the program for three years and advised for four more, before taking over as the command's senior enlisted advisor

and ultimately being responsible for the overall tone of CPO development for the last seven years.

Do you have any advice for someone just starting their career in the Navy Band?

There are opportunities for everyone to have long and highly successful careers in the Navy Band. You have to execute your craft well, and you have to buy into and support the culture of rules and structure which guide the U.S. Navy. It's also important to know that situations can change quickly in the Navy Band; you always have to be ready to step up and into opportunities with more responsibility and leadership even if that means getting out of your

comfort zone. Creativity, rules and structure can mix. The really successful leaders use their skill set to figure out how to weave together these three tenets, while inspiring and influencing those they lead.

What's next for you? How do you plan to spend your retirement?

I'm not too sure. I will continue to work, but I also hope to continue to play. *ff*



HUNTINGTON, W. Va. (March 11, 2018) Master Chief Musician Kevin Dines performs with the U.S. Navy Band during a concert at Huntington City Hall in Huntington, West Virginia. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Musician Adam Grimm/Released)

FLEET BANDS IN ACTION

By Musician 1st Class Alex Ivy, U.S. Navy Fleet Band Activities



LIBREVILLE, Gabon (March 27, 2018) Musician 1st Class Jacob Christian of U.S. Naval Forces Europe Band poses for a selfie with a member of the audience after a performance at the Martin Luther King Jr. bilingual school during Obangame Express 2018 in Libreville, Gabon. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Justin Stumberg/Released)

Every year, fleet band musicians perform in dozens of countries. This year, musicians with the U.S. Fleet Forces Band and the U.S. Pacific Fleet Band have embarked on deployments that focus on building bridges with communities around the world. Both missions involve working with the militaries of partner nations in order to increase cooperation and readiness.

U.S. Fleet Forces Band sent their ensemble, the Navigators, to support Continuing Promise. Continuing Promise 2018 is a training mission to help strengthen regional partnerships while improving the lives of thousands of people in Honduras, Guatemala and Colombia. U.S. military medical personnel, along with the band, are transported to each nation by USNS Spearhead (T-EPF 1) to work with host nation counterparts and aid workers to provide medical and dental care, preventive medicine, and veterinary consulting. The band's contribution to the mission brings music, adding an element which transcends cultures and speaks all languages.

"Being a musician and getting to do this is a dream come true," said Musician 3rd Class Kent Glover, a

saxophonist with the Fleet Forces Band. "To build friendships, relationships and partnerships...to use music to impact lives and build relationships with people from other countries, I feel really lucky to be able to do that."

On the other side of the globe, the U.S. Pacific Fleet Band has sent two groups of their musicians, Deep Six brass band and Pipeline popular music group, to support Pacific Partnership. Similar to Continuing Promise, Pacific Partnership 2018 provides medical, dental, veterinary, public health services, engineering and disaster response to people in Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, from February through June. Navy musicians work alongside more than 800 military and civilian allied and partner nations' personnel from Australia, Canada, France, Japan, Peru, Singapore, South Korea and the United Kingdom.

Your U.S. Navy fleet bands are carrying on the proud tradition of excellence, forging relationships and enhancing the partnerships that are key to our nation. *ff*

U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY BAND

By Musician 1st Class Daniel Arute, U.S. Naval Academy Band

With the academic year in full swing here at the Naval Academy, the Naval Academy Band ramps up its performance season as well. In addition to the band's primary mission of supporting the Brigade of Midshipmen and other official functions on the academy grounds, our ceremonial and chamber groups have maintained a busy schedule playing at civic and sporting events throughout the community, performing public concerts, and providing educational outreach to elementary, high school, and university students through master-classes, clinics and performances.

In October, the ceremonial band provided music for the annual flag-raising ceremony of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society. The ceremony announces the society's upcoming convention, which will take place this year in Annapolis, marking the first time the event has been held near a service academy. Maryland Governor Larry Hogan was on hand to honor the society and its members, which comprises all living recipients of the Medal of Honor.

In December, the Brass Quintet provided preliminary music and the rendering of taps for the annual Wreaths Across America ceremony at the USNA cemetery. Following a ceremony honoring the sacrifice of veterans and the service of active-

duty service members, more than 2,000 wreaths were laid on the tombstones by midshipmen, military and civilian volunteers.

The band continued its musical support of the brigade in January by performing at a USNA Forrestal Lecture, a lecture series established in 1970 to educate midshipmen in social, political and cultural dimensions of the nation and the world. For the first time, the lecture was presented in a panel format, and featured former Vice President Dick Cheney, former Secretary of State Madeleine

Albright and retired Commandant of the Marines Corps Gen. James Conway. The event was moderated by Chuck Todd of NBC's "Meet the Press." In performing at Forrestal Lectures, the band increases future officers' awareness of Navy music and its ability to unite us as a service. At the conclusion of every lecture, the band plays during the traditional singing of the USNA Alma Mater.

In early February, the brass quintet traveled to Hattiesburg, Mississippi, to perform for students at the

University of Southern Mississippi School of Music. The quintet presented a masterclass, coaching a student brass quintet and leading a discussion about chamber music and Navy music. The two-day event culminated in a recital at the Mannoni Performing Arts Center.

The unit leader, Chief Musician Davy DeArmond, reflected after the performance, "It is always fulfilling to speak to, teach and perform for aspiring musicians, and to share with them all the



PHILADELPHIA (Dec. 9, 2017) Chief Musician Jim Hurd, drum major for the U.S. Naval Academy Band, leads the band during Navy's entrance into the 118th Army-Navy Game in Philadelphia, Dec. 9, 2017. (DoD photo by EJ Hersom)



ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Feb. 23, 2018) The U.S. Naval Academy Band performs for the 77th Brigade Boxing Championship at Alumni Hall. (U.S. Navy photo/Released)

opportunities available through the Navy music program.”

Later that same month, our Superintendent’s Combo joined efforts with the Naval Academy’s community relations program, the Midshipman Action Group, to take music into the schools through a dynamic educational outreach program. This program, which has been performed at 11 schools throughout the Annapolis and Baltimore areas this year, introduces children to the origins and history of America’s music: jazz.

Chief Musician Colin Renick, the group’s unit leader and saxophonist, talked about the importance of this type of outreach. “By combining the selfless volunteer service of the midshipmen in the Midshipman Action Group and the world-class musicianship of the USNA Band’s Superintendent’s Combo, this program offers students in community schools the opportunity to interact with the Navy, and specifically, the Naval Academy, in a unique and energizing forum.”

At the Naval Academy, the physical development of midshipmen is highly prioritized through a sports program that is one of the broadest in the nation. The Naval Academy Band provides musical support for many of these sporting events throughout

the year. In addition to high-profile events such as the Army-Navy game, the band performed music for swimming and diving meets, varsity basketball games, and the annual Brigade Boxing Championship.

In March, the band performed at the National Hockey League’s 2018 Stadium Series, which featured a matchup between the Washington Capitals and the Toronto Maple Leafs, and which was held this year at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium in Annapolis. In front of a sold-out crowd, members of our brass section played the national anthem during a pre-game show that was filled with plenty of patriotic and military pageantry. Our friends from the Stadacona Band of the Royal Canadian Navy performed the Canadian national anthem and the two bands joined forces for a special intermission performance. It was an honor and a pleasure for our members to meet and collaborate with our colleagues from Halifax, Nova Scotia. Music truly does cross all boundaries!

For more information about the Naval Academy Band and to see our upcoming concerts and learn more about what we do, please visit our Facebook page as well as our website (www.usna.edu/usnaband). *ff*

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

SEA CHANTERS

My husband and I had the pleasure of attending the Sea Chanters performance in Yuma, Arizona last evening. What a magnificent performance it was! Every single person in the group performed to such a high level of ability. They were also very enthusiastic and showed how much they enjoy what they do. They are a true asset to the Navy and very proud Americans. Thank you so much for providing this wonderful evening of entertainment.

Richard and Valerie K., Yuma, Ariz.

COUNTRY CURRENT

My wife and I attended tonight's performance of Country Current. They were absolutely wonderful. The talent in this band is beyond great. The lead singer could sing as well and better than most country/bluegrass singers we know. All the musicians represented our country and their fellow soldiers in arms around the world with great dignity.

Jim and Lynn W., Petersburg, W.Va.

SEA CHANTERS

We were in awe of the talented young men and women who performed at this concert. The effort and enthusiasm that was shown by every member of the Sea Chanters was outstanding and so much appreciated. If every member of our military serves with such dedication we are indeed blessed and in good hands. You are the best of the best! Thank you so much for a wonderful evening.

Jim and Sherrill Z., Las Vegas, Nev.

COUNTRY CURRENT

This evening we saw the Country Current perform at Mason District Park in Fairfax County. They are fantastic! We and the entire audience thoroughly enjoyed every moment of their performance. What terrific musicians and representatives of our country and military.

Nancy V. and John Q., Fairfax, Va.

SEA CHANTERS

Wow! I entered the Civic Center and was blown away by the performance of these professionals! Thank you for coming to this outpost of civilization and

putting on a show worthy of a much larger city! I'll support your performances here and be the richer in spirit for doing so! These singers lifted me up!

Penelope C., Yuma, Ariz.

CRUISERS

I cannot thank you enough for coming to our town! The Cruisers are extremely talented, upbeat, personable, enjoyable, and their strong sense of patriotism is evident in their performance and love of the US NAVY! They represent NAVY extremely well!....THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE and please return....soon!

Randall and Jane L., Wichita Falls, Texas

COMMODORES

I just heard the Commodores perform a wonderful jazz concert in Denison TX. What talented musicians! I was really proud to see that the Navy has musicians who perform all over the country. I hope they will come again someday.

Pamela F., Denison, Texas

CONCERT BAND

My husband and I took my father (a proud Navy vet) and stepmom to your concert in Grand Junction on February 28. We just wanted to take a moment to let you know how very much we enjoyed the entire performance! We all commented how we had never seen a band so professionally prepared, so totally rehearsed, and so well led (by Capt. Kenneth Collins)... we THANK YOU again for offering a free and highly enjoyable evening that made us all proud to be Americans and was especially meaningful to my 89 year old dad as one of your own. We look forward to seeing/hearing you again sometime in the future!

Cheryl and Ron H., Grand Junction, Co.

CONCERT BAND

I had the privilege of attending your concert last night in Reno, NV. Outstanding! As a retired Navy CPO I have to say you men and woman made me very proud. Thank You! Thank you very much.

Cliff B., Reno, Nev., Facebook comment

NAVY BAND

More than awesome, they are absolutely fantastic - and the most talented people who give their ALL that I've ever seen! Keep up the good work, and thank you for your service, every one of you!!!!

Cyndi B., Facebook comment

COMMODORES

Went to concert in Blacksburg, VA. So good and I thought what was as good as the jazz music was watching the band members enjoying it. Especially the spokesperson. Loved it all

Nancy P., Facebook comment

BRASS QUINTET MUSIC IN THE SCHOOLS IN-STUDIO AND LIVESTREAM

Thanks so much to you and everyone else who put this together for my musicians and all who were watching.... The programming was spot on. The explanation of the music, the instruments and the life of military musicians was fantastic. The performances were stunning and inspiring....I was so glad my musicians could experience just how great military personnel really are. Please keep this project going. There are only upsides.

Frank Owens, band director, Centennial Lane ES, Ellicott City, Md.

COUNTRY CURRENT

What a treat to hear classic songs played by an amazing team of world-class musicians. I was lucky to see opening night on the current tour. I saw for myself the spirit and camaraderie this group enjoys on the road. I will be on the front row next year.

Dan A., Facebook comment

COMMODORES

I was blown away by the talent of the musicians and singer in this jazz ensemble. Worth going to see in your area. Hope they return to Lafayette, LA. Proud of our military and Navy Band.

Steve C., Facebook Comment

fanfare

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