

The Herald

Pitt Band Alumni Council Newsletter



Spring
2007

Alumni Band Day 2006

The Pitt Band Alumni Council in conjunction with the University of Pittsburgh Varsity Marching Band held its annual Band Alumni Day on September 23, 2006. The Panthers squared off against the Citadel and won 51-6. The event was a fun filled day enjoyed by the fans, families and most importantly the Band Alumni. As usual, the day began with the most crucial segment of Alumni Band Day: the tailgate. Food, cake and tasty beverages were had by all. Thanks to the Pitt Alumni Association, the Pitt Athletic Department and the Welsh family for help with the tailgate. The Band Alumni then warmed up the crowd for the Varsity Band's game day concert. The Alumni then proceeded to PNC Park to prepare for the "March to Victory". Many of our alumni enjoyed the walk up to PNC Park more than anything, stopping and playing for multiple tailgate parties. The alumni then marched to victory following the Varsity Band. The alumni once again sat within the Varsity Band and were given the opportunity to play during TV timeouts. Finally we marched with the Varsity Band at halftime playing *In The Mood*. Thanks again to everyone who made 2006 Alumni Band Day a success.



Alumni enjoy the tailgate before the game.

Thank you for your participation and continuing support!

Hail to Pitt!!

Andrew Deao ENGR '04
Events Committee Chair

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Things to remember:

- If you know someone who did not receive this newsletter, share it with them.
- Be on the look out for our summer newsletter with registration forms for Alumni Band Day and to renew your dues.
- Check the website for updates:

www.pbac.net



Our 2006 – 2007
Scholarship
Donors:

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President's Corner

Greetings Pitt Band Alumni!

Planning is underway for next year's Alumni Band Day on September 1, 2007, when the Pittsburgh Panthers take on Eastern Michigan in the home and season opener. Look for details about Alumni Band Day later this summer.

The Pitt Band Alumni Council owes much of its success to its affiliation as an affinity council of the Pitt Alumni Association. The PAA provides the PBAC executive committee with a gorgeous board room to meet in, assists the PBAC with events such as Alumni Band Day and the post-Spring Concert reception, maintains mailing lists (both traditional and electronic) for us and coordinates our scholarship with the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid. In return, the PAA looks to us to promote its programs and serve as volunteers. As an incentive, the PAA annually bestows "Banner Awards" on those Pitt Clubs and alumni societies, associations and councils under its aegis who excel at furthering the mission of the PAA.

I am proud to say that the Pitt Band Alumni Council has been a Banner Award recipient every year since the program's inception in 1996. However, achieving Banner status was becoming too easy, and last year the requirements were modified. The result has two tiers: Blue Banner Awards and Gold Banner Awards. Gold Banner status is the more difficult to attain, but the for 2006–07 fiscal year, we pulled it off. This year, the PAA has raised the bar again. The PAA is striving to become financially independent of the University of Pittsburgh; that is, it is working to create an endowment that would allow it to operate without drawing on the fiscal resources of the greater University. However, the PAA's programs must be paid for, and its staff cannot work for free. Many of its Banner goals have been modified to support this endeavor.

What can we do to help?

- Join the PAA. Membership in the PAA has many benefits. Visit www.alumni.pitt.edu for more details on them, but the most important of which is the warm feeling from contributing to the success of the University.
- Donate generously to the University. Certainly you've heard that Pitt is engaged in a \$2 billion endowment campaign? With each increase in the endowment the University rises higher in the ranks of the elite universities and the worth of your degree increases.
- Join the Pitt Career Network. Looking for a job? Looking to hire? The Career Network may be able to help you use your ties to the University and its alumni to aid in your search. More information can be found at www.alumni.pitt.edu/networking/.
- If you are close enough and have some free time, consider becoming involved in the PBAC's executive committee. We meet once a month in Oakland for about an hour. Email me for more information if interested.

In the upcoming school year we are hoping to hold several Pitt Band-Pitt Band Alumni career networking events, à la the PAA's Pathways to Professions networking event. Keep and eye out for news about them.

Hail to Pitt!
Ryan Minster
President, PBAC
CAS '98, SIS '03G

Who's Who at the Pitt Band Alumni Council?

Anthony Roscoe

Name/Nickname in Band: Wedge

When did you graduate from Pitt? What degree did you obtain? BS in Health Information Management from the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences in 1999. Master of Studies in Law from the School of Law in 2006.

Where do you live? What is your occupation? I recently moved to Kennedy Township and I am an application architect at Highmark, Inc.

When were you in band and what instrument did you play? I spent 5 years in marching band and played trumpet. I also played trumpet and baritone in pep band for three years and French horn in the symphonic band for 3 years.

How do you continue to serve the Pitt Band as an alumni? Indirectly, by staying involved in the PBAC and Pitt Alumni Association. I directly continue to serve the Pitt Band on the game-day operations staff where I do just about anything (within reason) that Lou asks me to do. I also serve as sponsor of the Alpha Omega Chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi.

What offices do you hold in PBAC? Right now I'm more of an ex officio officer as the immediate past president, but I have served as both vice president and president.

What is your favorite Pitt Band memory? There are really so many fond memories that it's hard to pick just one. Everyone remembers their first time out of the hole and some trumpet players have the honor to remember their first time on the field as a herald trumpet, but I also remember the very last time out of the hole that occurred in 1999 before Pitt Stadium was razed to make way for the Peterson Events Center. That last time out of the hole is a tough memory in many ways, but also signifies one of the largest bands ever to march a Pitt game. With roughly 350 alumni and 250 varsity band members, I remember being one immense unit that day with the Panthers beat the Fighting Irish and the students tore down the goal posts before the game was over.

What do you like to do in your free time? Free time? What's that? Besides work and Pitt Band, I am also involved with the martial art of Judo on the state and national level in forms, referee and teaching. I also enjoy reading and photography. Lately, I've had too much free time and have started entertaining thoughts of a doctoral degree from Pitt. What not make it a hat trick?

Our 2005 – 2006
Scholarship
Donors
(cont'd from p 2)

Fern M. Moskowitz
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Richard Obrycki
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James Sczepanski
James Semple
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Hank Swank
Jenn Tompkins
Karen & William Turcan
Wendi Wiley
Mark Willoughby
George Witkovich
John Yohe

Altogether, \$2.870 was raised last year for the scholarship fund.

Many thanks to all of our donors!

This list includes only those who have donated directly to the Pitt Band Alumni Council Scholarship that is given in partnership with the PAA and the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid. Donors to other Pitt Band Scholarships coordinated through the Office of Institutional Advancement or the Department of Athletics are recognized in their respective publications. In the future, the PBAC Executive Committee hopes to be able to recognize those donors in *The Herald* as well.



Video Archiving Update

Building the video archives for the Pitt Band is still an on going process. Currently, we are in the process of transferring old 35 mm reel-to-reel film onto digital format. This is taking some time, as the process for transferring film is not as straightforward as the process for transferring VHS media to digital format. The film in the Pitt Band archives spans from 1931 to the mid 1970's. Music of the film we have viewed is still in good condition considering the ages of these films.

Special thanks to Eric Gernert and William Patton, both of whom responded to a request made in the previous newsletter for items of historical interest to the Pitt Band. Eric sent a VHS tape of various Pitt Band performances in the late 1970's and early 1980's. William submitted an audio recording of the 1955 Pitt Symphonic Band Stadium Review. Both items are of significant value to the Pitt Band history archives. Thank you very much!

We are still looking for any materials pertaining to Pitt Band history, including but not limited to video and audio recordings. Anyone who has any materials to contribute to the Pitt Band history archives please email: eighthammer87@yahoo.com

Jen Costello ENGR '05
Pitt Band Videographer

Scholarship Winner – Elizabeth Wyman

Hometown: Kingwood, Texas

Year in school/Major: Sophomore; Anthropology, Chinese, Asian Studies Certificate, French Minor

Years in band/section: 2 years in band, trumpets

What instrument(s) do you play: Trumpet, Double/ Electric Bass, Piano

What other activities do you do other than marching band?

Pep Band, University Orchestra, Women's Choral Ensemble, TBS MC, Hooligan Soccer Club, Intramural Soccer, Point Prevention Needle Exchange (volunteer), Outdoors Club

What is your favorite Pitt band moment so far?

It is hard to pick just one because there have been so many great moments with Pitt Band from meeting all the amazing people to the exciting performances and the great times watching athletes perform to the best of their capabilities. I cannot really pick my favorite moment, but I will give you one of them: the Big East Tournament in New York City last spring break. After beating Villa Nova, West Virginia, and one other team (I forget which) we actually made it to the final. The loss to Syracuse was not great but the amazing times during the day with friends in the city and the wave of happy emotion after beating Villa Nova and our arch rival are the things that I will remember most from that trip. I love being a part of the band and bringing the spirit of the games alive through our music and enthusiasm.

What do you do in your spare time?

I love to play any sport (but especially soccer), see the cool sites of Pittsburgh, hang out with friends, read books, play video games, write, draw, photography, exercise, travel, . . .

Drum Major Reflections

The Pitt Band has had a very successful and busy past two seasons, and I have been incredibly fortunate to be at forefront of a group of very talented and hard working individuals. Reflecting on my past five years brings back a whirlwind of memories that make me realize how lucky I am to have went to Pitt and joined the band.

I can still remember entering the band room the morning of the first day of band camp, where there were countless numbers of people introducing themselves to wide-eyed freshmen like myself. The initial shock of being part of such a large band is startling at first, but I soon found refuge in getting to know my section, the trombones, with a much more manageable head count of around twenty. Little did I know that the people I was just starting to become acquainted with would be my family for the next five years.

My sophomore year in Pitt Band came with the added responsibility of being a squad leader, which started me on the path to understanding how a group of almost 250 students can come together and accomplish so much in such a short amount of time. Through my involvement in Mu Kappa Upsilon and Iota Beta Kappa I got to know most of the student leaders in the band, including the Drum Major at the time, Jason Donovan. After talking with him about what it was like to be Drum Major, he insisted that I try out for Assistant Drum Major. Jason helped me practice for the tryouts, which resulted in me having the privilege of being Assistant Drum Major for my Junior year in Pitt Band. As Assistant, I was able to understand more of the operations of the band and get to know the staff better. Jason and Geoff White helped ready me for the job by sharing their expertise on conducting, mace twirling, back bending, and strutting. With the staff's tremendous help along with the support of my friends I trained for a chance at the gold pants.

To say that I went into Drum Major tryouts with apprehension would be an understatement; after all, the thought of commanding a Division I college band can seem quite daunting to a person whose last Drum Majoring experience was leading a small central Pennsylvanian high school band of 60 marchers. Through my involvement with the band as assistant Drum Major I knew that even with the challenges that wearing the gold pants presented, I would have a strong group of dedicated staff members and great friends to help me along the way.

After learning that I had been chosen to be the next Drum Major, time went quickly leading up to band camp. Being in front of the entire band block for the first time is an experience like no other and can have unexpected surprises, even after an entire summer of practicing and training. In my case, the surprise came with the absence of the Long Ranger microphone/speaker set that the Drum Major usually uses to instruct the band. The nervousness of shouting my first set of rudiments was soon offset by the frustration of losing my voice on the first day of band camp. The band performed admirably, not missing a beat nor cracking a smile as they followed the rudiments given by the new Drum Major with a cracking voice. Again, I had the support of the Pitt Band staff every step of the way; Jack was the first to offer me a cough drop, and Bill Gernert and Dan Boyd ensured the Long Ranger was there for me for the rest of camp. I was extremely fortunate to have a great group of section leaders that helped make the 2005 season a success. Past Drum Majors have told me that the most important part of leading a band is to ensure improvement from year to year. The most vulnerable points that can harm this continuing progress come at times of transition, and I am happy to say that the student leaders helped keep the band's spirits up and marching sharp.

The rocky road that is the first year of being Drum Major led to the first game of the 2005 season against Notre Dame. The showdown of two new head coaches drew a standing room only crowd of over 65,000 people, an intimidating turnout for the first game of a new Drum Major. As the band played Victory Fanfare, I strutted out to the 50-yard line to do the signature backbend. I stepped into position, started leaning back, and just as I thought I was going to get it I lost my balance and fell backwards. The sound of 65,000 people letting out a collective sigh of disappointment directed at you does two things: builds character, and makes you determined not to be the cause of that sound again. The staff and my friends were quick to offer kind words and encouragement, and Jason mentioned that even he fell once during his first year. After the miss of the backbend and loss to Notre Dame, and the hitting of the backbend and shutout of Youngstown State at the next home game, a group of fans insisted the outcome of the football game was determined by the touching of my plume to the field. I truly wish this was the case – Pitt would have been undefeated this past season!

I'd like to finish with a story from the band's most recent visit to the Carrier Dome to face the Syracuse Orange. After we won the game, the band played for the fans in the parking lot, and a man approached me to thank us for playing and said, "I go to all of the Pitt games, and last year, the Drum Major tried to do the backbend – and he fell! You have done a lot better job than that guy." Needless to say he was surprised to find out that it was my second year as Drum Major. People remember our failures, and so should we. The ability to remember our past struggles allows us to see how we have progressed as people. Knowing that we have the ability to improve ourselves and change for the better is extremely valuable, but the realization that friends have enabled us each step of the way is beyond price. I am lucky to have had such great friends, and even luckier to have a vast majority of them come from Pitt Band. So many key steps in my college career and early adult life have been influenced by one key factor. I owe this all to deciding to come to Pitt, and joining the University of Pittsburgh Varsity Marching Band. Thank you Jack Anderson, the Pitt Band staff, my brothers, friends and family, and all of the alumni for making the past five years a very rewarding and life changing adventure.

Hail to Pitt!
Jeremy Herrman ENGR '06
Drum Major 2005–2006