
ON THE STARTING LINE
FROM CHICAGO, SKOKIE, AND DES PLAINES, ILLINOIS ...
THE VANGUARD!

THE VOICE OF **THE VANGUARD**

www.DesPlainesVanguard.com

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Upcoming Activities –

Bill O'Connell's Chicago Skyliners Big Band takes the suburbs by storm! Be sure to visit Bill and his band at the following gigs. More information can be found on the band website:

www.chicagoskylinersbigband.com.

Sun., July 10th – 6PM. The Skyliners appear at Fitzgerald's in Berwyn. Fitzgerald's is considered by many professional musicians as one of the best venues in town because of near perfect acoustics. Information on the club can be found at www.fitzgeraldsnightclub.com.

Tues., July 12th – 7PM. Fishel Park in Downers Grove.

Tues., July 19th – 7:30PM. Northbrook Park Fest.

Sun., July 24th – 4:30. Lord's Park Pavilion in Elgin.

Wed., July 27th – 7PM. Glenview.

Thurs., July 28th – 7:30PM. Oak Brook.

Wed., August 3rd – 7P. Fox Valley Park.

Thurs., August 4th – 7P. Franklin Park.

Thurs., August 11th – 7P. Lake Forest.

In next month's issue....

We'll hear from **Bogie Reeves**.

Glory Daze

Kudos to **Jay McGuffin** and all those responsible for the rousing success of the Glory Daze reunion. In spite of the ungodly heat and humidity, spirits were very high. It was great seeing our Vanguard friends and joining together with alumni of the other corps who were responsible for making the '50s, '60s, and '70s truly the glory days of drum corps. *If any one took pictures at this event and would like them printed here, please scan and send to*

Vanguard_Voice@wowway.com.



Vanguard alumni (and one Royal Air!) enjoy the Skyliners at Fitzgerald's on June 12th. (Photo courtesy of **Mike Deane**.) From left: Ray Smith, Art Marks, Don Pesceone, Toni O'Kelley Pope, Bob Mujica (of Royal Air fame), Joann Kerhlikar, Paul Pope, Bill O'Connell, Craig Rennack, Mike Deane (kneeling), Cathy O'Connell Letourneau, Marcia Sky.)

Too Many Drums...

By **Ron Green**

1962-1969

Soprano/Baritone

There were nine years in my life when I did not know what a drum & bugle corps was. Sometime during the tenth year of my planetary stroll, a now *faceless and nameless* kid came up to me in the playground at school in Chicago and asked, "Do you wanna' play a drum?" "What kind of drum?" I asked. "It hangs in front of ya' and ya' get two sticks with it!" he replied.

What a salesman! I wanted to leave for practice instantly. However I waited two more days with great anticipation that I was about to give a drum the beating of its life! As soon as we hopped off the CTA bus at the Columbus Park field house...I could hear the pounding, the clashing and the blating of my first look at a drum & bugle corps. It was the winter of 1960 and I was about to pay my first *twenty-five cents* dues to the Windy City Cadets. Drum Corps had entered my bloodstream and was invading all five of my senses in an incurable, life-long attack.

Within the first five minutes, I was informed that they already had 22 kids signed up for drums and that I would have to play the bugle. I felt dizzy, confused, my life was passing before me; I had nothing more to live for if a drum was not available! Then someone gave me a black case...I opened it and there it was ...shiny, silver-plated and sleek, a soprano bugle...one valve, no rotary, not even a slide, but the key to my new persona.

This was the object to which I would cling tighter and longer than a thin jacket at a cold wintry bus-stop. This horn was to take me to new friendships, far-away places and to parade routes lined with envious kids wanting to be me. This horn was my escape from the neighborhood bullies, my dad's alcoholism, and my shy insecurities, all in one glorious velvet-lined case. The drum dream was quickly forgotten...the bugle was coming home!

We spent most of the evening learning how to get the *spit* out of the horn, and then how to get *sound* out of the horn. Needless to say, we got a lot more of one out of the horn than the other! The drummers sounded better than us buglers because you couldn't tell when they were playing a wrong note, but sometimes they missed the head of the drum and hit the rims...we knew that was the equivalent of a wrong note!!

John DeVito was one of the older kids there that night (probably 12 yrs old) and I liked the way he played and marched. He was my first drum corps role model and we stayed in B Corps together as Windy City became the Chessmen and we all got better with time, practice and leadership from some kind and dedicated instructors and parents who instilled pride as they walked alongside us in dozens of parades.

We B Corps kids were the life-line for the great competition corps of the near future. We were trained to get better. It was our goal and vision. So is it any wonder that when a parade came down Chicago Avenue one early evening in 1962 and the Chessmen were all standing outside their VFW post watching the units pass...and suddenly this thundering sound of a well-oiled drum line, led by a color-coordinated guard and rifles, topped off by a horn line playing a sound I had never heard before and wearing the greatest red and black uniforms I'd ever seen...we knew at that moment it was time to move on. We began our slow exodus one by one – **Dan Galorath, Pat Korn, Craig Rennack, Ron Green, Mike and John Krueger, Lenny and Glenda Henderson, John DeVito** and others into the Vanguard...into the history of a true Drum Corps legend.

To all my brothers and sisters who have worn the Red and Black and to those who chose Royal Blue, Green or the Maroon and Gold or simply gave it a *season* out of your life: I thank you for sharing that magical time with me...for making me a better person for having known you. And to that kid who came up to me in the playground that day so long ago...thank you...I don't even remember your name...but I will never forget what you introduced me to that cold winter's night at Columbus Park when there were too many drummers.

Editor's Note: Thank you, Ron, for that poignant memory. We salute those people in our lives who were responsible for bringing us all to the doors of Vanguard Hall. Keep the memories coming! Also, let us know what you've been up to recently by responding to this email. Professional and personal accomplishments are encouraged!