

# Ole!



**The Newsletter of the  
Hawthorne Caballeros  
Alumni Association/  
Drum & Bugle Corps**

**Volume 3, Issue 2**

**March/April 2022**

## **1966: A Strange and Different Season of Change**

By John Smith

From the start, the 1966 season began as one of change for the Caballeros. For the first time since 1958, the corps was not the defending American Legion National Champions, having lost to the Rochester Crusaders in Portland in 1965. After the '65 season, the corps also had joined the Drum Corps Associates, following a two-year absence from that organization. In an effort to regain their Legion Title and stature in the senior drum corps world, and to bring a new sound to the Caballeros in their 20th Anniversary year, Truman Crawford was hired as the music arranger. One immediate noticeable change at early stage exhibitions was the absence of the "Rumps" to open or close the show for the first time in many years. Instead, the OTL of "Malaguena" began with a

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## **Caballeros: A Band Of Drum Corps Brothers**

By Mike DelVecchio

How did the Hawthorne Caballeros become the greatest drum and bugle corps in this country and for 75 years continue to entertain the crowd and eventually become known around the world?

My name is Michael J Del Vecchio and I first joined the Caballeros in September of 1952. I went in as a French horn player and then in February of 1953, I was moved into the 1st soprano section. I was awed by the way the members treated every new man that came into the corps. They would help them whenever it was needed. It was like they were a band of drum

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.....1966:

## Season Of Change

conducted, concertized fanfare and it was reprised at the end.

Only the color presentation of "Valencia" was retained from the previous year. "Granada" was the new concert number. Other music choices that some deemed questionable were, "Chim-Chim-Cheree" (from *Mary Poppins*), George Gershwin's "I've Got Plenty of Nothing" from *Porgy and Bess*, and an exit medley of "Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out" and "Second Hand Rose," both from the musical, *Funny Girl*. These were not your typical Caballero music selections! How would fans react to this new sound, and how would the corps fare with this new repertoire?

Competing now in DCA, the corps would face DCA's "big three:" the Hurricanes, Skyliners and Buccaneers, as well as the other DCA members for the first time since 1964. It would prove to be a bit of a "roller coaster season" from the beginning. In Stratford CT, the Cabs placed a solid second to the Hurricanes. After the first show, subtle adjustments were being made to the music program almost weekly. The corps won in Toronto

against the Rochester Crusaders, but dropped to third behind the Hurcs and Sky at Mission Drums, the first meeting with the three top DCA corps. By the fourth contest in Syracuse, the "Rumps" were back, and the corps returned to the winner's circle over the Sunrisers. More music changes were made as the season wore on, with adjustments to the start of "Valencia," and the biggest one of all, scrapping the exit in mid-season. The medley of *Funny Girl* tunes was out, and "Strangers In the Night," a more traditional Hawthorne -type of exit number replaced them.

Despite music changes and drill execution improvement, the corps struggled in July and into August with a fourth place in Baltimore, then three consecutive seconds and a fourth place at the Dream. However, even with just two first place wins, during the season the corps had in fact beaten every other major DCA corps at least once, with the exception of the New York Skyliners who beat them the three times they met. Things were not looking particularly good heading into late August

and the Legion Nationals in Washington D.C., but Jimmy Costello continued his typical relentless pursuit of excellence and morale was still high. The goal was to go to the Nationals and as Jimmy would often say: "Do a job so good that they CAN'T take it away from us!" So, it was on to D.C. to attempt to regain the title.

The big story of 1966 was the American Legion Nationals in Washington, D.C. The corps was told to arrive in Washington on Friday, August 26, before the contest weekend, determined to do whatever we could to give our best performance of the season. The Preliminaries were scheduled for Saturday, so the corps was instructed to be in D.C. in time for a Friday evening rehearsal. The evening rehearsal turned into a near all-nighter as we drilled and worked music until past midnight. If we didn't win this National Championship, at least we would know we did everything in our power to do the best we could.

We boarded the buses for the Prelims on Saturday morning, with a quiet confidence about the task ahead. The preliminary contest was held at a high school field in rural Vir-

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## .....1966: Season Of Change

ginia outside of D.C. Following inspection, the corps took the field and did the best job of the season. When the dust settled (literally!), we emerged as the winners with a score of 81.60 over the Hurricanes in second with 80.53 and the Skyliners in third with 79.95. They were followed by the Rochester Crusaders, Yankee Rebels and Sunrisers (the Buccaneers were not a Legion corps). We had accomplished the first step in our mission!

There was no celebration just yet. Jimmy Cos wouldn't let down now, with another National Championship within our grasp. He reminded us that we would "get no gifts" from the judges, and would have to do an even better job in the finals on Sunday night if we were going to win it all. In true Caballero (and Costello) fashion, virtually all of Saturday until nearly midnight, and most of Sunday was devoted to drill rehearsal and a final music rehearsal Sunday afternoon to work the concert. We boarded the buses for the ride to the Finals at D.C. Stadium, and then stopped at a field for one final non-playing drill run-through! Jimmy was leaving nothing to chance and no op-

portunity missed. Someone later claimed the corps rehearsed over 25 hours between Friday and Sunday night.

The result was the Caballeros won a narrow victory in the Finals by just .117 over the Hurricanes, and regained the American Legion National Championship. The Skyliners dropped to fourth behind the Crusaders. This was the eleventh American Legion Title for the Caballeros. The retreat was a "roller coaster" story of its own. The Skyliners and Hurricanes in particular were upset with the results. The traditional "Pass in Review" for the junior corps champion Chicago Cavaliers went off without any problems. The senior portion was far different. Sky marched off in protest to a drum tap, without playing, and carrying their shakos. Drumsticks were hurled in the direction of the judges and Legion officials. The Hurricanes were a bit more dignified in their protest as they marched off and then played their entire show routine at the end of the field, blocking our exit, although their high horn trophy was smashed on the field.

The season was all but over after the Nationals. The DCA Championship was held in Bridgeport on September

24th. That night, the corps did a terrific job, as good as, if not better than the Legion performance. We had no illusions of winning that show, but few could have predicted the outcome: fifth – our worst placement of the entire season. The Skyliners won, followed by the Hurricanes, Buccaneers, and even the Sunrisers, who defeated the Caballeros that night for the first time ever in their history. 1966 was indeed, a strange season!

### American Legion National Championship Contest August 27-28 1966

#### Preliminaries

1. Caballeros	81.60
2. Hurricanes	80.53
3. Skyliners	79.95
4. Crusaders	79.75
5. Yankee Rebels	78.10
6. Sunrisers	78.00

#### Finals

1. Caballeros	83.650
2. Hurricanes	83.533
3. Crusaders	80.450
4. Skyliners	80.316
5. Yankee Rebels	78.033



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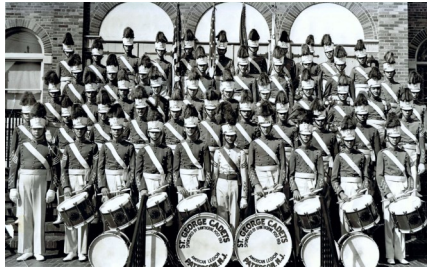
## .....Band Of

### Brothers

corps brothers. This perhaps was the result of their military training. They had to work with their buddies and each watch out for the other when in combat, also the way they worked on their music and on drill night, how they worked to perfect their marching. I was indeed proud to be a member of such a drum and bugle corps. After 11 years marching and playing with the Caballeros I had to leave.

I often thought and wondered how this comradery between members came about. As the St. George's Jr. Drum Corps, they were a top contender and at contests the toughest corps to beat was The Grand Street Boys from New York. So these young boys knew what was needed to become a winner. They were also sponsored by the Hawthorne Post 199, and when you look at the photo of them together on

the steps of St George's Church, you can see a group of boys who are proud of their corps.



WWII started and eventually these boys left to serve their country in the armed forces of the U S.

It is now 1946, and most all the members who survived the war have returned home and are now thinking about drum corps. So it would be that they would gather to form a Sr. drum and bugle corps. That they did, and at the home of the Costello family, a meeting was held and they formed a drum and bugle corps. Their first name was American Legion Post 199 Sr. Drum and Bugle Corps. They knew this was only temporary. As more former St. George's men returned from the armed service and found out their former Corps mates were forming a drum corps, they came to the post to join. They marched in their service uniforms, but they knew

that soon they would decide on a uniform and name for their new drum corps.



In my first year, I tried to find out why their actions toward new members was so friendly and why they were eager to become friends and help you with your music and drill. After 11 years I often had thoughts about my experience with the Caballeros. It was one of the dominant reasons that helped the Caballeros become a dynasty in the drum and bugle corps world. I mean in my 11 years we won 8 American Legion National titles, and 11 New Jersey Legion titles. Actually, the Caballeros won the first state title in 1949 by beating the Jersey Joes who were the Legion National Champs for that year.

What would keep any man who came to the Caballe-

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## .....Band Of Brothers

ros from another senior corps after marching with that corps for 6 years and stay with the Caballeros for 35 years. Many men spent almost as much time before leaving and did not go to another corps other than going to teaching junior corps.

It appears my first statement in the early part of this page was correct. They were "A drum corps band of brothers." They were a family and every new member was greeted as another member of the family known as the Hawthorne Caballeros. They made a statement in 1946 that stunned the Sr. Drum corps world by not being a cadet style corps but to be a totally uniquely different and independent thinking drum corps. They all voted to wear a Spanish style uniform, play Spanish style music and call themselves CABALLEROS. They reinforced this feeling by winning the N J State title in 1949. They won their first Legion Na-

tional in 1951 and by the mid 50's, let it be known that the Caballeros were not only for real but were out to beat every corps they competed against. In my mind this all resulted in being a "DRUM CORPS BAND OF BROTHERS" to the end.

## Remember When

### Nineteen Years Ago 2003 Kingston, NY

1	<b>Caballeros</b>	<b>90.33</b>
2	<b>Empire Statesmen</b>	<b>88.81</b>
3	<b>Buccaneers</b>	<b>87.97</b>
4	<b>Bushwackers</b>	<b>86.17</b>
5	<b>Crusaders</b>	<b>81.05</b>
6	<b>Grenadiers</b>	<b>77.95</b>
7	<b>Hurricanes</b>	<b>77.67</b>
8	<b>Skyliners</b>	<b>74.92</b>

#### OFFICERS

**Alumni Assn. President**

**Larry Mastroberardino**

**Alumni Corps Director**

**Paul Bongiovi**

**Alumni Corps Asst. Dir.**

**Steve Raclowski**

**Post Commander**

**Doug Tenis**

**Ole! Newsletter Editor**

**Chris Sortino**

## Trivia Answer

### Volume 3 Issue 1

**Q: How many years did the Caballeros play "Johnny One Note?"**

**A: 3. 1963, 1964 & 1965.**

## Trivia Question

**What two songs did the Caballeros play for exit numbers in 1958?**

## Just A Reminder

\$10.00 Annual Dues 2022

If you haven't paid your 2022 Alumni Association dues yet, you still have time.

**Mail Payment To:**

**P.O. Box 484**

**Hawthorne, NJ 07507**

Or give to:

**Greg McNeff**

Or

**Larry Mastroberardino**

## Alumni 2022 Rehearsal Schedule

**Sunday, March 6 \***

Music Rehearsal 12-5  
Post 199

**Sunday, March 20 \***

Music Rehearsal 12-5  
Post 199

**Sunday, April 3 \***

Music Rehearsal 12-5  
Elks Lodge Mt. Arlington

**Sunday, May 1 \***

Drill Rehearsal 12-5  
Rutgers Bubble

**Saturday, May 14 \***

**Sunday, May 15 \***

Camp Weekend  
J.P. Stevens H.S.  
Edison

**Sunday, May 22 \***

Drill Rehearsal 12-5  
Rutgers Bubble

**Sunday, June 12 \***

Drill Rehearsal 12-5  
Rutgers Field

**Saturday, August 27 \***

If no show, rehearsal  
Next day.

If show, no rehearsal  
Next day.

**Sunday, August 28 \***

T.B.D.

**Sunday, September 25 \***

Music Rehearsal 12-5  
Elks Lodge Mt. Arlington

**Sunday, October 9 \***

Music Rehearsal 12-5  
Elks Lodge Mt. Arlington

**Sunday, October 23 \***

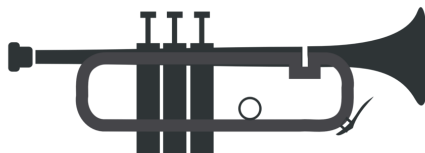
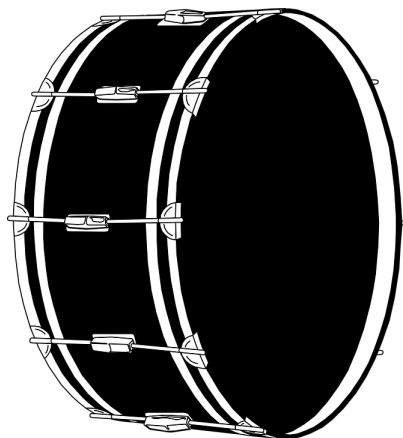
Music Rehearsal 12-5  
T.B.D.

**Sunday, November 13 \***

Music Rehearsal 12-5  
Post 199

**Saturday, December 3 \***

Music Rehearsal  
Post 199



## Letter From The Editor

By Chris Sortino

Well, it's Spring and things are looking up. Believe me. They really are. Just look at the Alumni Corps' 2022 schedule. It almost looks normal. You remember normal, like back in 2019.

We are actually going to do stage shows, field shows, parades, drill rehearsals, you remember those, don't you?

Personally, I just can't wait. I want to shake the rust off. I want to show the drum corps starved audiences how good we can be. I want to hear the crowd roar when we come off the line and when we power forward in the Flamenco company front. I want to smell the grass on the field. It may sound silly but this hobby or habit we have is a very special activity that can jolt all our senses at once.

Enjoy the hell out of 2022. I'm sure I will.

Stay safe and stay well!

God bless!

## Alumni 2022 Event Schedule

**Saturday, April 6 \***

Lancers-Stage Show

York, PA

**Monday, May 30 \***

Parade

Hawthorne

**Saturday, June 4 \***

Elk's Parade

Wildwood

**Saturday, June 25 \***

Parade

Lewisburg, PA

**Saturday, July 9 \***

Grand Prix-Field Show

T.B.D.

**Saturday, July 16 \***

Buccaneers-Field Show

Landisville, PA

**Saturday, July 23 \***

Sunrisers-Field Show

T.B.D.

**Saturday, July 30 \***

AL Nationals-Field Show

Williamsport, PA

**Saturday, August 6 \***

Field Show

Kingston, NY

**Saturday, August 20 \***

White Sabres

Stage Show

Turbotville, PA

**Saturday, August 27 \***

If no show, rehearsal

Next day.

If show, no rehearsal

Next day.

**Sunday, August 28 \***

T.B.D.

**Saturday, Sept. 3 \***

DCA (I&E) Exhibition

Rochester, NY

**Sunday, Sept. 4 \***

Alumni Spectacular

Field Show

Rochester, NY

**Sunday, Sept. 4 \***

DCA Finals

Field Show

Rochester, NY

**Sunday, November 6 \***

Parade

Clifton

**Saturday, Nov. 19 \***

Parade

Stage Show

Plymouth, MA

**Saturday, December 3 \***

Parade

Hawthorne

Ole! is published every other month.

Next issue: May/June



## March Birthdays

Pepe Algarin  
 Donna Cetani  
 T.J. LoPorto  
 Brad DeWaal  
 J. Oliver Plunkett  
 Nick Stefano  
 Nick Carlson  
 Rick Solow  
 Arlene Black  
 Caballeros Corps  
 Bob Cook  
 Elaine Daye  
 Glenn Kubacki  
 Chris Menear  
 Curt Hawkins  
 Frankie Salati  
 Caballeros Alumni  
 Corps  
 Lisa Velez Yocum  
 Pat Chadwick  
 Beth McGarril  
 Mike Del Vecchio

## Pics From The Past



## April Birthdays

Larry Coleman  
 Michelle D'Andrea  
 Tom LoPorto  
 Dave Chadwick  
 Rich DePinto  
 Fran Lauritano  
 Bruce Ziegler  
 Linda Gathen  
 Brenda Cotton  
 Kenny Clancy  
 Mike Maiuri  
 Jack Zampella



Happy Birthday!





## HALF NOTES...

Condolences to the family of **Pam Turner** who passed away on April 20th. She was a member of the Alumni Corps color guard for many years as well as a member of the competing corps from 1998 to 2002. One wonderful trait she possessed was sending beautiful photos of animals, flowers, sunsets and all kinds of what I call "feel good" pictures over the internet to many of us in the corps. She was the nicest and kindest person I ever met. She was truly a beautiful person, inside and out..

.....that's all for now!

### A "Bit of Wit" from the Quill of Charlie Bratton...

What did the Navy Dentist put on his license plate? TOP GUM.

The seven ages of man: spills, drills, thrills, bills, ills, pills, and wills.



A sergeant walked into the barracks and asked his men if anyone knew shorthand. Looking for easy work, several recruits raised their hands. "Great," the sergeant said. "They're shorthand-ed in the mess hall."

The consensus after the most recent elections that 100% of Americans think 50% of Americans have lost their minds.

I'm no doctor, but I know adding cheese to anything makes it an antidepressant.

If you can't remember my name just say "Doughnuts." I'll turn around and look.

I threw away my can opener. It was more of a can't opener.

What did the drummer call his two daughters? Anna one, Anna two...

I arrived early at a restaurant last night. "Do you mind waiting for a few minutes?" the manager asked. "Not at all" I replied. "Good. Take these drinks to table 9."



## HELP WANTED!

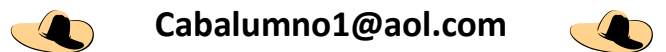
The Alumni Corps has openings in ALL SECTIONS, especially Contra in the Horn line, Color Guard and openings for Bass, Cymbal and Double Tenor in the Drum Line.



### Articles for the OLE!



The OLE! welcomes all impressions/expressions.



Send your input/articles to

Cabalumno1@aol.com

