



**we are  
family**

**tops in blue priors' newsletter**

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The process is simple. Contestants submit a TIB Application, a Letter of Commitment, a Letter of Intent (signed by their commander) and a 5-minute video of their act to Air Force Entertainment. The tape must be a solo performance as if performing in front of an audience. Showmanship, enthusiasm, appearance of confidence, etc., are all part of the selection process. Musical accompaniment or background music may be live or prerecorded. Applications, letters and additional information can either be obtained on-line at the Air Force Tops In Blue website: [www.afsv.af.mil/TIB](http://www.afsv.af.mil/TIB). Submission packages must be received by Air Force Entertainment not later than **22 February 2002**. Keep in mind, the Worldwide competition is not solely for entertainers; staging/audio technicians, staff, and drivers are also part of the competition. Don't overlook these talented individuals. Details on their submission requirements are also available on the AF TIB website.

This year's contest promises to be another phenomenal success one that will provide a rewarding experience for the contests, lead to the selection of another talented cast for Tops In Blue, and continue the proud legacy of which we are all a part. As TIB priors, let's do whatever we can to ensure that promise is fulfilled.

# IT'S SHOWTIME!

## 2002 AF Worldwide Talent Contest Is Set for 17-25 March at Lackland Air Force Base

Air Force Entertainment (AFE) has announced that 2002 Air Force Worldwide Talent Contest is scheduled to be held **17-25 March** at **Lackland Air Force Base** in San Antonio, Texas. As much as this being a call for contestants, it is also a call for our TIB priors to once again take an active roll in the program. As we are all well aware, it takes a lot to produce a successful contest and there are numerous ways in which we, as priors, can contribute.

Volunteers are always needed for the contest staff. Responsibilities vary from assisting as talent team leaders and coaches, to administrative, logistics, and operations functions. In addition, there are always positions that need to be filled on the production and technical staff. If you can assist in any of these areas, you are encouraged to contact Air Force Entertainment at **(210) 652-6566** as soon as possible.

Another way in which you can contribute is by contacting the community activities center at a nearby base and offering your assistance in their efforts to submit qualified contestants to this year's contest. With our knowledge of the program and experience as participants at the highest level, we can provide a tremendous amount of valuable information. Most center directors and staff who might not have attended or participated in a worldwide competition, would welcome the insight you could provide; not to mention what you could share with the contestants themselves.

Knowing what it takes to succeed, you can offer you help in coaching contestants; giving them vital guidance in presenting their acts. You can also enlighten them on what Tops In Blue is really all about; ensuring that they understand the mission and the expectations. You can also let them know how to prepare themselves for Worldwide should they be selected.

In most cases, the community activities center will have an information package from AFE that outlines the procedure for contestant submissions. However it would behoove you to be aware of the basics as well, as contestants may submit their requests for consideration on an individual basis.

## TOPS IN BLUE 2001 TOUR EXTENDED

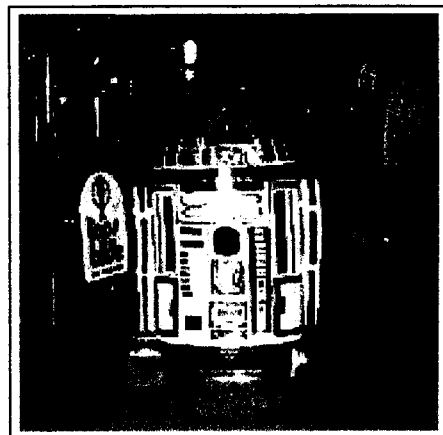
The Tops In Blue 2001 tour was recently extended through 16 March, to complete the European segment that was interrupted in September and stateside bases which had not yet received the show:

- |        |                     |        |                      |
|--------|---------------------|--------|----------------------|
| 10 Feb | RAF Fairford        | 02 Mar | Grand Forks AFB, ND. |
| 11 Feb | RAF Croughton       | 03 Mar | Ellsworth AFB, SD    |
| 12 Feb | RAF Molesworth      | 06 Mar | Minot AFB, ND        |
| 14 Feb | RAF Lakenheath      | 08 Mar | McConnell AFB, KS    |
| 17 Feb | Daytona 500, FL     | 09 Mar | Vance AFB, OK        |
| 20 Feb | Keesler AFB, MS     | 10 Mar | Altus AFB, OK        |
| 21 Feb | Barksdale AFB, MS   | 12 Mar | Goodfellow AFB, TX   |
| 25 Feb | Little Rock AFB, AR | 13 Mar | Randolph AFB, TX     |
| 26 Feb | Offutt AFB, NE      | 15 Mar | Lackland AFB, TX     |
| 27 Feb | Whiteman AFB, MO    | 16 Mar | Lackland AFB, TX     |



(Photo by: SSGt Vernon Cohrs, MacDill Public Affairs)

# FLASHBACK: TOPS IN BLUE 1978 - "STAR WARS"



*Tops In Blue '78's Venerable "Host" R4D4*

## TIB marked Talent Program's 25th anniversary with a blast to the past

"... Good evening humanoids, this is your captain, R4D4, and on behalf of our fully automated crew welcome aboard Galactic Spaceways flight TIB 1 non-stop to Jupiter!" With that greeting, Tops In Blue 1978 took flight, carrying its audiences on a whirlwind journey through 25 years of TIB favorites.. "Star Wars" was the hottest movie of the year and TIB followed the trend with a spaceship-themed show that celebrated the Air Force Talent Program's 25th Anniversary. The show's little electronic host, R4D4, assured the audience that he had everything under control. But shortly after "takeoff" with the opening fanfare of *Gonna Fly Now*, the cast's hyperspace version of *Come and Go With Me*, and a galaxy of popular hits (*You Can't Turn Me Off*, *Back In Love Again*, *Wishing on a Star*, *Don't it Make My Brown Eyes Blue*), something suddenly went amiss. An alien intruder was discovered on board and his explosive dance routine (*Yow-sah, Yow-sah, Yow-sah*), sent the spaceship spinning off course, crashing through the "celestial time barrier," and landing in the year 1953. From there it was entertainment adventure as the audience made its way back to 1978, enjoying some of TIB's most popular numbers along the way. Between the 50s and 60's they enjoyed hits by Bill Haley & the Comets, The Chordettes, Brook Benton, Doris Day, and Nat King Cole. Then there was "Paul Harvey News" with an update on the lost spaceship and the intruder. Next we drifted into the 60's with The Drifters, The Coasters, Little Richard, Ray Charles, Sam Cooke, and "The Maestro," a hilarious bit which featured Artie Boughan playing the *William Tell Overture*...on his face! (Boughan would return later to dazzle the audience with a sensational juggling routine in which he juggled an axe, a bowling ball, and a flaming baseball bat!) Later in the 60's, Dionne Warwick, John Denver, and Little Stevie Wonder made their appearances along with "Howard Cosell" & "Muhammad Ali" (two of T.A. Burrows' many characters) as well as a colorful group of overgrown cartoon characters including, Bert & Ernie, Cookie Monster, Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, and Alley Oop! Then, with the 70's looming just over the horizon, the audience was treated to performances by The Beatles, and TIB's legendary versions of The Supremes, Temptations, and O'Jays. By then we were nearly home. Only one thing remained, the elimination of the illusive intruder. No worry, "Lieutenant Columbo", was on the case and while he habitually mistook base commanders for the alien, he finally located him. The intruder was finally jettisoned by the cast and everyone headed for home amidst a spectacular light saber show performed to themes of *Star Wars*, *Close Encounters*, and *Star Trek*. TIB I finally touched down at it's home base to the tune of Earth Wind & Fire's "Fantasy."

## Where Are They Now?

### **BILL HENNESSEY - Trumpet - Tops In Blue 1983**

Married with two children, Bill is currently living in Ohio, working at Sears selling washers and dryers, as he says- "doing 'Brand Central Comedy'" Bill also says he's writing a best seller: "Life's a Pitch and Then You Buy" (or a lesser known novel: "Chicken Soup for Sales," or "Soupy Sales"). These days he's known for asking customers, "Would you like an appliance with that warranty?" He says he's still waiting for the next big break in music and that he never got Tops In Blue out of his system.

### **LUIS SANTIAGO - Keyboards - Tops In Blue 1983 and 1986**

Luis currently lives in Daytona Beach, Florida, where he's working in Real Estate Time Share Sales. He's married and has two step children (ages 23 and 20) Luis says, "Everything has been okay, except that I haven't touched my keyboards in three years (shame on me!) I have been too busy having fun....But I still love music....forever!"

### **TOM ROSE - Vocalist - Tops In Blue 1982**

Now living in Brooklyn, New York, Tom is composing and performing locally. He has recently co-written a single for the doo-wop group "Vito and the Salutations." The song, which is dedicated to the victims of 9/11 is entitled "Together We Stand." Tom is also active in a local community theatre group. In addition, he will be releasing a single soon titled "Judgment Day" and hopefully an album titled "How Ya Doin?" All in all he says he's doing okat, keeping the dream alive and is always happy to think over old times with Big Blue!

### **DONOVAN FRANCIS - Bass Player - Tops In Blue 1990**

Donovan was activated from reserves due to the events of 11Sept. He says he'll have his Aeronautics Degree completed this year. After his activation is over, he plans to work for the Federal Aviation Administration. He says he's still looking for my princess. Wish him luck! He's studying with a classical/jazz bass instructor to keep his chops and reading fresh and he's got his eye on the Musicians Institute in Hollywood. He adds, "Who knows? Maybe I'll see another TIB tour!"

## TIB "Blue Notes"

We Are Family is published by  
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A FE is proud to welcome **Earl Hassan** as the newest member of its staff. Earl was formerly in the Air Force Band and also assisted with TIB's tour through USAFE. Kudos to **Derek Wright**, **Percy Lewis**, and **Lane McCray** for their outstanding performances at Colonel (and Golden Roger Recipient) **Gary Smith's** promotion ceremony in Las Vegas in December. Congratulations to **Lorenzo Sandman Sands** who got a gig with the legendary **Patti LaBelle!** He just recently finished up a weekend in Atlantic City and will be heading to Las Vegas and then Florida. That's all the scoop for now. Catch you on the flip side of Worldwide! - Peace, T.A.