



**we are
family**

tops in blue priors' newsletter

Vol. 10 No 1.

January 2003

REUNION SET FOR 5-12 JULY IN S.A.

Tom Edwards has announced the official dates for the Tops In Blue 50th Anniversary Reunion. The reunion will take place 5-12 July 2003 in San Antonio, Texas. In announcing the dates, Mr. Edwards had this to say:



"We need to get the word out...and everyone needs to start making plans immediately! Needless to say, this is one celebration you don't want to miss!

This will be bigger than the millennium celebrations!" Here are just some of the festivities planned:

- TOPS IN BLUE 2003 will perform an outdoor concert
- There will be Comedy, Karaoke, and Ladies Nights
- An ALL-STAR Band...probably 2 or 3
- Big Banquet and Historical Performances by TIB priors
- Trips to Sea World, Fiesta Texas, Alamo, and a night-time party on the River Walk.

Many priors have volunteered to help and Air Force Entertainment (AFE) is in the process of constructing committees now. Carol Sudy has been selected as the chairperson for the Reunion. She and AFE are going to need input from all of us to make this a success. If you can help, please contact Carol via e-mail at Carol.Sudy@afsv.af.mil or by phone at 210-652-4945, or you can contact Air Force Entertainment at 210-652-6566. Remember it's our reunion and it's up to us to make it happen!

More and more details will be made available as the reunion draws near and for updates, check out "Newswatch" at <http://www.tibpriors.org/50th.htm> Make your plans now because as Tom stated, "We need you there...The entire family...This may be the last time...Come and represent...After all, wasn't your show the best?"

TAKING IT TO THE TOP

Priors Making Their Mark in Showbiz

Michael Noche is proud to announce his first CD *My Dream*. He wrote, produced, arranged and performed all of the songs on the CD and also mixed and engineered that project. The CD also features priors Donell Woodard on bass and Traci Noche on vocals. Eric Smith is currently a music producer in Las Vegas and currently has four products on the market including Smidi's Beat Market Jazz Project check it out at www.mp3.com/eric_d_smith Naybu Fullman is working on his very own solo project, tentatively titled, "I Just Wanna Say....Thank You" and expects to have it completed by the time we get to the 50th Anniversary Reunion. Yours truly, T.A. Burrows will be bringing his original musical-comedy *The Man in the Mirror* to the enlisted club at Holloman AFB, NM on Feb 8 and to the O'Club at Randolph AFB, TX on March 7th

TOPS IN BLUE 2003 "THE SPIRIT OF AMERICA" ROLLING ALONG

TIB 2003, "The Spirit of America" continues to receive rave reviews on its World Tour. Here's the remainder of the tour schedule:

28 Jan Nellis AFB, NV	4 Feb Kirtland AFB, NM	23 Feb Tyndall AFB, FL	1 Mar Columbus AFB, MS
29 Jan Luke AFB, AZ	5 Feb Sheppard AFB, NM	25 Feb MacDill AFB, FL	3 Mar TBA
31 Jan D-Monthan AFB, AZ	6 Feb Randolph AFB, TX*	26 Feb Patrick AFB, FL	4 Mar Barksdale AFB, LA
2 Feb Holloman AFB, NM	20 Feb Keesler AFB, MS	27 Feb Moody AFB, GA	7 Mar Lackland AFB, TX

LOOKING FOR OPPORTUNITIES? SHEILA DAVIS SAYS CONSIDER BRANSON, MISSOURI

If you're looking for professional opportunities for singing, dancing, or comedy, TIB prior Sheila Davis recommends Branson, MO. Sheila says that since she moved there she's worked with the Osmond Brothers, Bobby Vinton, and country recording artist Johnny Lee and recorded background vocals for Roy Clark's Christmas album. "I get quite a bit of studio work and there are all kinds of theaters here," she says. "It's a very small town but some of the companies here have theaters in Las Vegas, as well as Georgia, Florida, and Michigan." She states that there's a wide variety of shows from Legends Theater, featuring impersonators of The Blues Brothers, Shania Twain, Britney Spears, Madonna, Charlie Daniels, and others to Country Tonite where Johnny Lee performs. Producers are also putting in some 70's shows as well and Jimmy Osmond recently produced a 50's through 80's show. Sheila says most of the entertainers are between the ages of 19 and 35 and that the best way to find out when auditions are held is to call the theaters because many don't advertise in the paper and the headliner openings are generally word of mouth. She adds that the basic starting pay for a background singers is usually at least \$50 per show with most shows running six days, two shows per day. Some companies can afford to pay more than others and obviously if you are a feature act you can make quite a bit more. Of course for the newcomers there may be some hardships, like when the theaters close during January, February and sometimes March. But that's just part of the business that you have to get used to, like she did. The bottom line is that for Sheila Branson has been the land of opportunity. Who knows, maybe it will be for you too!

FLASHBACK: TOPS IN BLUE '80 – THE MUSIC OF AMERICA



Rodney Fair, Sue Williams, Mary Ferns and John Marston in TIB '80's Broadway finale

"All Aboard the Musical Express!" exclaimed Old Man Blue (comic Jim Dale), and with that *Tops In Blue 1980* hit the rails, taking its audience on a music-filled journey across America. The show, entitled "The Music of America" featured a variety of music from New

some Dixieland jazz, highlighted by *Alexander's Ragtime Band*, a rousing rendition of *When the Saints Go Marching In*, and Burrows and Dale's hilarious *Dueling Preachers* sketch. Then it was off to Detroit for the *Motown Story*, featuring the Supremes, Jackson Five, Gladys Knight and Pips, Smokey Robinson; and the Temptations. Nashville followed with the Oak Ridge Boys, Statler Brothers and The King himself, Elvis (as played by Bill Parks) taking center stage. After a "Magical Stop" featuring illusionist Dave Tanner, the route continued on to New York for a magnificent Broadway finale which included such memorable show tunes as *Climb Every Mountain*, *Swanee, Tonight*, *76 Trombones*, *Oklahoma*, *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, and culminated with a patriotic flag-waving version of *Grand Old Flag* and the ever-entertaining *No Business Like Show Business*.
CAST: Tour Director – Jim Walker; Vocalists – Mary Ferns, Dorothy Motley, Mischelle Walden, Cynthia Warren, Sue Williams, Purvis Coley, Dan Daulton, Rodney Fair, John Marston, Bill Parks; Michael Sellars; Band – Rick Custudio, Ken Davis, Richard Jackson, Stuart Jewett, Jeff Senna, William Serano, Fred Singeltary, Rich Tennant; Comedians – T.A. Burrows, Jim Dale; Magician – Dave Tanner; Technicians – John Harrington, Mickey Holland.

Orleans, Detroit, Nashville, and New York. The high-energy opening began with such songs as *Dance Wit' Me*, *Gotta Keep Dancing*, *Blame it On the Boogie*, *Music Box*, and chronology of dances such as the ol' soft shoe, the Mexican hat dance, the jitterbug, the twist, the bump, and the hustle and others. After a *Paul Harvey News* update, courtesy of impressionist T.A. Burrows, it was on to New Orleans for

Where Are They Now?

DOUG JORDAN – *Tops In Blue 1986* – Vocalist

After more than 20 years of military service, Doug retired from the military having toured with TIB and also having performed with the USAF Band, Washington, DC as the vocalist with the Airmen of Note. These days, he still lives in the DC area. He is involved in real estate with buildings in Washington and Dayton, OH and he owns *FOODBAR DC*, a prestigious full service restaurant in Washington which was recently listed in the *Washington Post* as the third best place to visit in Dupont Circle. Last year July, he surpassed the \$1 million mark in sales. Doug says has been great and he invites all to drop in for a visit to his establishment.

PURVIS COLEY – *Tops In Blue 1980* – Vocalist

Purvis Coley retired in October after 28 years in the Air Force, including 11 years as a First Sergeant. He says he's currently working as a GS type, waiting for the VA! Purvis is married and he and his wife Pamela have three son's, Purvis Jr., who is currently serving the Air Force as a Security Forces warrior; Brandon, a 4th grader who is an honor student 4 years running, and also quite a gifted basketball player; and Myles, a 3rd grader who is quite the artist in the family. Purvis is also a licensed minister in the AME Church in his second year of studies and he is still singing and making a joyful noise for the Lord.

BOB ANDERSON – *Tops In Blue 1982* – Mime

Bob toured as a mime and actor on the *Tops In Blue* winter tour in 1982. While stationed in Europe, he continued performing as an actor in various community theaters where, according to him, he was "discovered" and landed a role in a German movie-made-for-TV movie entitled, "Fraulein." After rotating back to the states, he changed jobs, cross-trained into computers and finally separated from Air Force in 1988. Bob currently lives in California with his wife and two children. These days he is a business manager for a high-tech company in Calabasas, California and yes, he still loves performing in local theaters.

TIB "Blue Notes"

Welcome back, **Mark Swart** TIB '73 bass and trumpet player. Mark says he and three friends formed an instrumental combo at Shu Lin Kou Air Station in '73 and entered the AF Talent Contest, mostly for something to do, as they didn't figure they would ever get very far. But they won at the base level, won at regionals in Taiwan and at command in Philippines. They wound up in Texas for the Worldwide Competition. And they won Worldwide! Mark says he still cannot believe it to this day and can still remember the feeling he had when he was handed that beautiful trophy. Then to top it all off, his was the first name to be called when then-SSgt Tom Edwards read the list of selectees for TIB '73. He says it was a great memory and he's glad to be back in the fold. **Denise Guyote Broussard** is now the Pastoral Minister at St. Pius X Catholic Community in Beaumont, TX. Along with forming new ministries and assisting the pastor, she directs a wonderful choir of youth and adults. Congrats to **Tamara Moler** and her husband John are expecting a baby **Vandilyn (Brock) Lewis** and **Naybu Fullman** are trying to get a TIB priors group going in the Atlanta area. Interested? E-mail Van at vandilyn_blue@yahoo.com. *That's all folks! Adios – T.A.*

"We Are Family" is published by
 T.A. Burrows
 The Entertainer & Associates
 Phone: 623-486-4500
 E-mail: ta@taburrows.com