



we are family

tops in blue priors' newsletter

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WORLDWIDE TALENT CONTEST NOW SET FOR MARCH 14-22

Contestants, Technicians, and Contest Staff Needed



Air Force Entertainment (AFE) has announced that the 2004 Air Force Worldwide Talent Contest will now be held **March 14-22** at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas. To ensure the success of this year's contest the Chief and his AFE staff need our assistance in a variety of areas. As always, talent contestants are being sought as well as technicians. Contestants must submit an application and 4-minute video-tape to AFE no later than 10 February, while technicians need to submit their applications and resumes to AFE immediately. Application forms and additional information can be obtained by contacting Jennifer or Terri at AFE by phone at 210-652-6566, by mail at 10100 Reunion Place, Suite 403 San Antonio, TX 78216, or e-mail: web.TIB@agency.afsv.af.mil

AF ENTERTAINMENT SEEKING A NEW TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Application deadline is 21 Jan

In March, Air Force Entertainment will bid a fond farewell to its longtime Technical Director Derek Sinclair as he departs to pursue personal interests. We certainly wish Derek the very best in his future endeavors. In the meantime, Air Force Entertainment is seeking a new Technical Director for Tom's staff. Prospective candidates should have a strong background in all aspects of show production, to include lighting, audio, video, and staging. Previous experience with Tops In Blue or the Air Force Talent Program is a plus. If you or anyone you know would be interested in filling this vital full-time staff position, please contact AFE by telephone at 210-652-6566, or via e-mail at web.TIB@agency.afsv.af.mil. Immediately as all applications must be submitted to Randolph AFB no later than 21 Jan.

In addition to contestants and technicians, Tom is also looking for priors who can fill critical positions on the contest staff. Areas include administration, logistics, transportation, technical assistance, and various other areas of support. Once again this is an opportunity to give something back to the program. If you can help, please be sure to contact Jennifer or Terri at AFE right away.



TOPS IN BLUE '03 MAKING HISTORY WORLDWIDE

Tops In Blue 2003 continues to make history with its outstanding show, "Soaring With Eagles." As previously reported, the group has received phenomenal reviews around the world. But certainly among their most memorable performances had to be a challenging stretch of 12 shows in 12 days touring the Middle East this fall. They not only performed in Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates, but also did three shows for our military members in Iraq, including a show in Baghdad. Most recently the group completed its Pacific tour and will be in the U.S. until late February when they head for Iceland, Greenland, Cuba, and a historical trip to Puerto Rico, marking the first time TIB has performed there in 25 years.

15-Jan-04	Davis Monthan AFB AZ	06-Feb-04	Sheppard AFB TX	24-Feb-04	Keflavik AS, Iceland
17-Jan-04	Luke AFB AZ	08-Feb-04	McConnell AFB KS	26-Feb-04	Thule AB, Greenland
20-Jan-04	Mtn. Home AFB ID	11-Feb-04	Offutt AFB NE	28-Feb-04	Andrews AFB, MD
21-Jan-04	Hill AFB UT	12-Feb-04	Whiteman AFB MO	29-Feb-04	Andrews AFB, MD
24-Jan-04	Minot ND	14-Feb-04	Vance AFB OK	03-Mar-04	McGuire AFB, NJ
25-Jan-04	Ellsworth AFB SD	16-Feb-04	Dyess AFB TX	05-Mar-04	Pope AFB, NC
27-Jan-04	Fe Warren AFB WY	17-Feb-04	Goodfellow AFB TX	07-Mar-04	Honduras
30-Jan-04	Sno-Fest Col. Springs CO	18-Feb-04	Laughlin AFB, TX	09-Mar-04	Cuba
31-Jan-04	Sno-Fest Col. Springs CO	19-Feb-04	Randolph AFB, TX	10-Mar-04	Cuba
03-Feb-04	Kirtland AFB NM	23-Feb-04	Keflavik AS, Iceland	14-Mar-04	Worldwide Talent Contest

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?**Charlie Johnson – Saxophone - Tops In Blue 1982**

Charlie retired from the Air Force as a CMSgt, worked 10 years in Civil Service and retired as a GS-13. These days he lives in Durham, NC with his wife Marva, daughter Angi and three-year-old grandson Lewis. He works part time as a consultant for a for Universal Electronics in Nashville. But he is also fulfilling his lifelong dream of traveling as a member of a professional band having recently joined a high-energy group called "The Brotherhood." Charlie, who has played behind such greats as Etta James, Al Green, Z.Z. Hill, Denise LaSalle, and Johnny Taylor still says that the highlight of his first career was touring with Tops In Blue. You can check him out on his group's website at: www.thebrotherhood.net

Eric "Smidi" Smith – Guitar – Tops In Blue 1983

Today, "Smidi" calls 'Vegas home. And it's there that he's making a serious name for himself in the music industry. Formerly a guitarist, today he's creating MIDI music with computers and midi equipment and he's parlayed his talents into a career as a music producer. This year alone, he has produced six major projects from Gospel to Hip Hop. He has produced music for a few platinum artists such as Leon Haywood, Spice 1, Club Nouveau, New Birth, Clay Hammond, and Green Eyez to name a few. He had his R&B song "Imitation Tears" performed by DeWayne McCoy placed in the movie "Love Beat The Hell Outta Me" which was shown on HBO. He also had his music heard on "Saturday Night Live," and earlier this year he received a royalty check from ASCAP. Smidi says his goal in is to be the first music producer to produce a hit record in multiple genres.

Rick Giraudy – Technician – Tops In Blue 1992

Rick retired in 1998, but not before receiving his undergraduate and a graduate degree in Computer Information Systems from Regis University in Colorado Springs Colorado. Currently, he lives in Atlanta, GA where he manages systems and people at Hewitt Associates, serves as a member of the Technology Leadership Team and an executive council member of BAHA (Black Associates at Hewitt Associates). This November, he was elected National Vice President of Finance 2004-2006 for the prestigious National Black Data Processing Associates (BDPA).

BLUE NOTES**IN MEMORIAM - JOHN BRANDON BARNES - TIB '56**

It is with great sadness that we acknowledge the recent passing of one of our Tops In Blue family members - John "Brandon" Barnes, who was the 1956 TIB project and escort officer. Many of you will remember John at the 50th Anniversary Reunions held this summer both at Lackland and at the Air Force Academy. He passed away in his sleep on December 7th. Our thoughts and prayers go out from the hearts of our family to his.

Air Force Entertainment is looking for anyone who might be interested in designing and/or building the stage for Tops In Blue 2004. If you're interested, contact Jennifer or Terri at the office (phone: 210-652-6566, mail: 10100 Reunion Place, Suite 403 San Antonio, TX 78216, e-mail: web.TIB@agency.afsv.af.mil) **James Waller III** ('01) and his wife had a baby boy **James C. Waller IV** on November 13, 2003 he was 8.7 lbs and 22 inches long. He's healthy and reportedly has his dad's lungs! **Mark Preston** ('75) sends greetings to all TIB priors and especially all those he traveled with in '75.

His entertainment schedule continues to be full for 2004 with dates already coming in for 2005. (Visit his website at www.markprestonsinger.com) He encourages everyone to keep that TIB tradition rolling along and says, "It is a source of pride for me every day to know I was/am a part of the program." **Shammara Laster** ('99) has a new CD, "Country Girl," which was released in November, You can check it out at <http://www.cafeshops.com/cp/tf.aspx?tf=63034> **Charles "Brad" Reynolds** ('83, '86, '92) is currently working in Iraq as a civilian doing Information Technology and Communications for KBR in support of the coalition forces. He is contracted to be there until September of 2004 and will probably sign another contract when this one is up. He says he is enjoying the brotherhood of life in an overseas environment once again. **Don Maroncelli** ('55, '56) says he has had many visitors from TIB since July and hopes for more. He wants everyone to know that if they get to central Florida he can come up with a couple of tickets to Universal Studios where he works doing voice-overs among other things. He still performs in plays and just finished a month long production of "A Christmas Carol," playing the Ghost of Christmas Present. He also plays in jazz groups around Orlando. Don says that **Roy Caldwell** ('56) has run down a couple more priors from 1956 and he will have more information on several more soon. And if anyone has any knowledge of the where a bouts of Don Fitzpatrick, Dick Miller or others from the early days, please let Don know. You can contact him via e-mail at hireactor42@msn.com or by phone at 407-835-8047. Please keep **Faith Sullivan** ('75, 81) in your prayers as she battles with some personal health challenges. **Walter Campbell** ('01) continues to find entertainment success, having recently opened for both Sinbad and Frankie Beverly & Maze in San Antonio. That's all the news for now. Next edition will be in early April with results from WWTC '04. *Ciao!*

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