The official newsletter of th Volume 47 *Number* 1

HIGHTY TIGHTY

Highty-Tighty Alumni, In Summer 2023

NOTES

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE

The Highty-Tighties Continue to GROW !

Editor's Note

As many of you are aware, our president underwent triple bypass surgery on June 19, 2023. That procedure went well and Chuck is recovering nicely at his home in Riner, Virginia. The article below was written in January of this year. We are looking forward to and fully anticipate his complete recovery and return to his critical roll leading our organization and supporting our beloved Highty-Tighties!



In creating this new fund it

n the last issue of the H T Notes I shared that we had the largest freshman class in decades. We are now pleased to let you know that 89% of them are still here performing in the band.

We also will again this coming summer help the current band staff a group of Highty-Tighty recruiters at the three week July Corps Orientation event. Our Annual Giving Fund helps pay for these cadets to be on campus to assist in recruiting band members.

This has been traditionally when we "recruit " as many as half of our incoming freshmen. Our new knowledge and the actions of our monthly HT alumni and Corps staff meetings have helped us learn many things that have helped us improve how we reach future band members.

We again have expectations of 60+ incoming freshmen. If we can continue this trend in the near future we expect to grow the marching band to 150 plus active members.

The Band has been extremely busy this school year and has had 59 performances so far. The Spring semester Highty-Tighty Commander, Cadet Luke Schauber and his team are taking the Band to the New York City Macy's St. Patrick's Day parade in mid-March.

During our January 21st Winter full Highty-Tighty Alumni board meeting we had a motion, seconded and passed to create a new endowment for the future of the Band. It will be named the Highty-Tighty Excellence Fund. When it is established we plan to "seed" it with \$100,000 from our H T Annual Giving Fund(877055). will allow us to award 2 more cadet scholarships most years. It will also allow us a second fund for the Director to use for needed funds from the income created by the fund.

We have set an ambitious goal of reaching over \$1 million dollars in this fund. We hope you will consider helping us.

Over the past year we have been having many discussions about improving the Highty-Tighty practice field. I am happy to report that we have met with Facilities and Athletic Department representatives and have an agreement that they will be upgrading the practice field with significant improvements. We hope to have band practice there at Homecoming 2023.

Homecoming each fall continues to be a special time for the alumni and the current Band. We hope you will consider returning to join in the fun this year. We especially hope that many of the Highty-Tighty Class of 1973 alumni will plan to be with us so we can recognize you at our Homecoming meal in Dietrick Hall that Saturday.

Have a wonderful spring and summer of 2023. I hope you and family are healthy and doing well.

See you at Homecoming October 15th.

Chuck Rowell President, HTA





A nother successful year has come to a close and although extremely busy, I was very proud of the HT's and their positive

outlook throughout the year. Our freshmen band class was of record breaking size at 65 students and the upperclassmen have done a fantastic job bringing them up to speed. Once again, we were able to replace many instruments, thanks to the donations from former Highty-Tighties and past Corps graduates. As always, these donations are much appreciated and are necessary to sustain our group. Please keep them coming as our numbers for this year may extend our supplies!

Highlights from this year include our participation and support of the women's basketball team and their first ACC championship, marching in the New York City St. Patrick's Day parade, performing for the President of Botswana during his visit to Virginia Tech, and the NACSAR Cup Series Championship in Martinsville. All three afforded us much exposure to both spectators and television viewing audiences.

This coming year should prove to be another exciting one. We will be performing the halftime show at the military appreciation football game and will collaborate with athletic marketing and the Marching Virginians while they unfurl a giant American flag. Additionally, we will be taking part in the Inaugural Metallica Marching Band Competition, "For Whom the Band Tolls." Although designed for "corps" style marching bands, competing with our military marching style may be out of the box enough to garner a second look. This competition is in video format and requires the show to be done with one of Metallica's songs. One challenge for this year will be our annual spring trip. Money is tight for the times and many of the usual opportunities conflict with scheduled Corps of Cadet /ROTC events. More to follow on this later.

DIRECTOR'S DOWNBEAT

Another Successful Year

Drum major auditions this year were extremely competitive. All three seniors that tried-out were more than qualified to lead the band with the mace. Navy cadet Paul Dragan finished on top and I'm sure he will prove to be an exceptional leader. Paul is a "legacy" HT that brings with him exceptional musical talent and confident leadership. He has already worked on ideas to improve musical performance and marching. The band commander for the upcoming season is another highly-qualified cadet who continually demonstrates his value to the band and Corps. Navy cadet Joseph Vocaturo has been an active member of the HTs and jazz band since freshmen year and brings with him many diverse talents and previous leadership roles such as the band's Sergeant Major. He has also performed as a tenor soloist with the jazz band and guitarist with the basketball pep band.

Once again, I want to thank everyone's support to not only the organization but to me as well. Our group continues to flourish because of your continued encouragement and efforts. Thanks to Highty-Tighties, past and present. You make our group the most special organization on campus.

James M. Bean, Senior Chief, USN (ret.)



FROM THE COMMANDER

Cadet Major Joseph Vocaturo

would first like to state how excited I am to serve as the HT Commander for the Fall '23 semester. So many outstanding individuals have stood in this position before me, and I am excited to leave my mark and learn through this experience. The Highty-Tighties are preparing for the football season and another year of excellence in 2023-24, and I cannot wait to see what the year holds for us.

Some goals I have set for myself and the band this year are the memorization of our most important marches and songs, a re-introduction of more technical and entertaining marching drill, outstanding company performance on inspections and corps events, and the successful training of the Freshmen class through the end of the year. With the largest band in several years, we Highty-Tighties have a unique opportunity to continue to build on the progress of the band's rebuilding, and my peers and I are looking forward to continuing the upward trajectory we are on. Drum Major, Paul Dragan, and his team are preparing progressive practice plans that will help us accomplish these goals and instill a sense of pride from the hard work we will devote to our craft. However, our motto is deeds not words, so you will just have to wait and see what this year holds for the Highty-Tighties at the homecoming game in October!

Last year, the Highty-Tighties admitted the largest class of freshman in recent memory, and this year are expecting nearly 50 new recruits to join our ranks, many of whom have previous musical/marching experience and will no doubt make great contributions to the band in their time. The successful training of this class is paramount to the overall success of the HTs, and is one of the top priorities of this year's leadership team.

I would like to thank each and every one of you for your ongoing support of the HTs in all our endeavors. Your dedication to this organization and its members past and present is a testament to how impactful the Highty-Tighties are on its members, and the university as a whole. I cannotwait to see what the future holds for the Band this year and beyond, and I will be sure to share with you our activities so we may celebrate these achievements together.



Facta Non Verba,

Joseph Vocaturo Cadet Major, VTCC Fall 2023 Highty-Tighties Commander



Dirk McComsey discovers that it's true - we do shrink as we age!



From the Alumni Office

Celebrating a VTCC Milestone

riting to you surrounded by moving boxes in Ol' Barracks #1. Lane Hall is a building that prior to becoming administrative offices was last considered "home" by members of the Regimental Band. Why the moving boxes? Well, we are moving into the new Corps Leadership and Military Science building. And while the folks that built the new structure are packing up their tools and

cleaning up the dust, we are right on their heels to get our offices and supplies settled just in time for the return of the students and the rapidly approaching Fall alumni themed events.

This summer, we are putting the final touches on the planning for a very exciting 2023-24 school year. We are extremely excited and proud that we will be honoring our Corps on its 50th anniversary of incorporating women into our ranks! All women were placed in Lima Company when women were authorized for the 1973-74 school

year and it was in 1975 when Marilyn Helmeyer '77 became the first female Highty-Tighty. It was the female HTs that proved that the Corps didn't have to have different style uniforms for men and women. Lori Keck '92 served as the first female Drum Major and it is always fun to watch her lead the HT Alumni Band during the Homecoming Parade and during the Homecoming combined Pre Game performance. Throughout the year, we will look for opportunities to celebrate the accomplishments and milestones of our Female cadets over the past 50 years. We were the first Corps of Cadets to embark on a Coed system (even before the Service Academies) and this is something we are very proud of! Additionally this next year, we will be celebrating the opening of our Corps Leadership and Military Science Building on the Friday of Corps Reunion (8 Sep) and we will be celebrating the Class of 1973 on their 50th and entry into the "Old Guard" during a Pass in Review at Homecoming on Friday, 13 October. And, of course, Homecoming weekend is also our HT Reunion weekend.

50 YEARS OF WOMEN

I was asked recently what I was most proud of from the 2022-23 school year. It only took me half a second to answer... From 2022-23, I am most proud of our Alums... YOU! Our alums have answered the call at every turn. From achieving top 10 in every competitive category during Giving Day 2023 to your participation in all of our in-person and virtual events this past In fact, in our vear. Corps of Cadets specific Company Challenge during Giving Day, the Highty-Tighties as a collective (current students. Alums, and Families)

had the highest participation rate across the Corps. Our current cadets can see the example that you all are setting in terms of your professional accomplishments, your embodiment of "Ut Prosim" in all that you do, and your commitment to remain engaged and connected.

Besides your continued participation in our events and support that you provide to the Corps through volunteerism and philanthropy, I would like to specifically ask this audience to develop an insatiable appetite for recruiting. It sounds crazy.... But, we are still our country's best kept secret... and it will take all of us shouting from the hills, prairies, cities, and towns to get the word out that we have a Corps

Alumni Director Nate Brown

Still Our Country's Best Kept Secret

and we have a Regimental Band! Go to your local High School musical directors, talk to young men and women in the Grocery store line.... Let them know of Virginia Tech, the Corps of Cadets, and one of the oldest college bands in the nation... the HIGHTY-TIGHTIES! We have a world class program within the Corps here at Virginia Tech... and those that you send our way will thank you for doing so.

As we prepare the celebrate the 50th for the Class of 1973, the 50th Year of Women, and the 130th birthday of the Regimental Band (officially formed as a separate unit in September 1893), I would like to emphasize how proud I am to have worked with you all this past year in Corps Alumni and HT Alumni focused events – and how much I look forward to continue this partnership this next school year. It remains my commitment to you to ensure that your Hokie Experience did not end at graduation, and to provide quality programs and events that allow you to continue to enjoy the camaraderie, school spirit, and connections that we all deserve and have earned through our common experience as Cadets.

> Ut Prosim, Nate Brown '98 nhbrown@vt.edu



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Lori Keck Beach HT '92 leads the Highty-Tighties with great enthusiasm and skill year after year. Her leadership is much appreciated by those who march in the Highty-Tighty Alumni Band.







Note from President Emeritus

History In The Making

he Highty-Tighties have a proud and amazing history dating back 130 years to

1893. Since 2008, I have written several history articles for the "Highty-Tighty Notes" about the band from when it was formed up through World War II. But for this issue, I want to talk about the history that has been written the past three school years and which will continue to be written this coming year. It is truly history in the making.

The pandemic that swept across our nation and around the world starting in early 2020 created great challenges for the band that no classes had ever experienced before since the pandemic of 1918. The senior class of 2024, that will lead the regimental band this coming school year, never marched in Lane Stadium for a football game as freshmen, and they were severely restricted from participating in other events that year and into their sophomore year. They had to march in open files, and the bells of most wind instruments had to be covered. The campus was closed for much of the year with classes being held online rather than in person. These, and the other restrictions that the pandemic placed on the band, the corps, and the entire university, took a toll that reduced numbers and made it difficult for all concerned. Band cadets were not able to have the full Highty-Tighty experience that is important in forming bonds and pride in the organization that Highty-Tighty cadets have known for decades.

The Highty-Tighty classes of 2021, 2022, and 2023 did a remarkable job of meeting challenges and dealing with the issues caused by the pandemic. In spite of the limitations placed on practices and performances during their years of leadership, these classes maintained a high level of spirit and pride in the organization and did an amazing job of minimizing the effects that the pandemic could have caused. While numbers did decrease and experiences were lost, these effects on the morale and excellence of the regimental band would have been far worse without the excellent job these classes did

throughout the pandemic. The history of the Highty-Tighties that was written these past three years by these classes is one of successfully meeting and rising above adversity and challenges in a manner that all Highty-Tighty alumni can be very proud of. The actions taken by the cadets in these classes have maintained a strong foundation that will allow the coming school year to be one in which the band completes the final step of moving out of the pandemic era and putting it entirely in the past. When the Highty-Tighty Class of 2024 graduates next May, the last cadets that had to deal with the pandemic will join the ranks of the alumni.

The issues that this year's senior class of 2024 faced in their freshman and sophomore years did reduce their numbers, but far less than might have been reasonably expected. Those that remain to lead the band in the coming school year are strong, and they have great pride in the history and traditions of the band. They are determined to lead the band in an outstanding manner and with a pride that will produce performances of excellence that have been the hallmark of the Highty-Tighties for decades.



Summer 2023

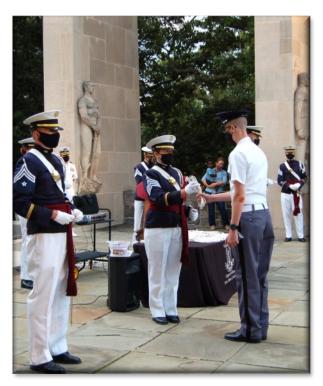
Bert Kinzey HT '68



Maintaining the Tradition of Excellence

Highty-Tighty alumni need to be aware of the pages the recent classes have written and added to the long history of the regimental band. While these past three years have been far different than any in the past, what has been accomplished by these cadets in dealing with the issues of the pandemic is as important to the history and the traditions of excellence and pride in the organization as any years and accomplishments of the past. Whatever comes in the future will take place because of their perseverance in meeting considerable challenges in a manner that has maintained the traditions of excellence and pride in the organization though tough times. These classes have endured challenges and met them in true Highty-Tighty fashion. In writing their Highty-Tighty history, they have lived up to their motto "DEEDS, NOT WORDS!"

> Bert Kinzey, HT '68 President Emeritus/Historian, HTA



Photos above and below by Bert Kinzey remind us of the conditions the band has been dealing with during the pandemic.





Homecoming 2022

Homecoming Parade Friday Night

The Homecoming Parade was Friday evening for the second year in a row. Everything went smoothly for the active Highty-Tighties as well as the alumni as shown below. One of the best parts of the whole weekend for HT alumni is being welcomed onto the drill field

by the active Highty-Tighties as we finish up yet another homecoming parade. The time of fellowship after the parade is always a treat as greetings, memories and "war stories" are shared by all



On the Drill Field Post Parade

Photos by Chuck Kneyse HT 69 & 70



Summer 2023

Homecoming 2022



Band Practice and Pre-Game Show





Pride is a major element of our pregame festivities. It shows in the faces of those marching in practice and at pregame. It shows in the music that is played and you can see it in the picture below where you can see the Highty-Tighty drum heads, the VT symbols on the players uniforms, the Virginia state flag and Old Glory, all representing things we are intensely proud of.





Alumni Relations Update

Dirk McComsey HT '92

ur alumni have had a busy year and are gearing up for some fun activities to close out 2023 and start 2024. If you have not already done so, please join the Highty-Tighty Alumni Facebook group and register to receive the Half-Notes emails. Events and activities for the alumni are posted to the Facebook group and also mentioned in the Half-Notes.

In August, alumni assisted with new cadet move-in, meeting parents, handing out water and answering questions. This year the band was in Pearson Halls, and alumni were there to greet them and assist during their arrival at the dorms. Parents consistently express their thanks that alumni are there to make move-in less stressful.

The annual picnic after the Spring HTA Board meeting went off without a hitch. Many members of the current Highty-Tighties joined several alumni and commandant for a late-afternoon cookout at the Blacksburg Municipal Shelter on Turner Street. Thanks to all the alumni who attended and helped by purchasing picnic items, bringing grills and cooking. All alumni and bandsmen are invited to this picnic to socialize and relax before the cadets need to focus on exams. GunnyFest was another success. The catered food from the hotel hit the spot after the evening parade. Thank you to those alumni who contributed to help make it happen. A few of you, once again, exceeded expectations. The party couldn't have happened without some of those heavyhitters.

Coming up at the end of August is the Cape Charles HTA Getaway! Join fellow Highty-Tighty Alumni in Cape Charles, VA for a weekend of fun! See the opposite page for more details.

Plans are currently in the works for another HTA getaway at the end January or early February of 2024. More details will be announced soon as they are worked out.

This fall, join us for every home football game to tailgate in Lot 8 next to Wallace Hall. Menus will vary from game to game, but there will always be something to eat and drink and stories to be told. A map is shown below with a red pin marking the tailgate location. If you haven't joined us in this location before, please contact Dirk McComsey at dirk@mccomsey.com for more detailed directions.



Upcoming Events

- New Cadet Move-In August 10, 2023 Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA. Please email Nate Brown at vtccalumni@vt.edu, if you can help with new cadet move-in.
- Corps Reunion September 8 9, 2023 Registration is open at: https://aimsbbis.vt.edu/CorpsReunion2023
- **GunnyFest Friday October 13, 2023** Hilton Garden Inn, Blacksburg, VA. Following the Homecoming parade. We are working with the hotel to cater using their services once again. I will get more information out through the Half-Notes and the HTA Facebook Group as we get reservations nailed down.
- **Highty-Tighty Alumni Cape Charles Getaway August 24-27, 2023** Cape Charles, VA. Join fellow Highty-Tighty Alumni on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Events include kayaking and biking around the Eastern Shore National Wildlife Refuge and Kiptopeke State Park, boating, fishing, swimming, and beach activities. Social events will include visits to Chatham Vineyards, the Cape Charles Distillery and dining at Cape Charles Brewing Company and the Shanty, among others. Accommodations are on your own, but please reach out to Dirk McComsey at dirk@mccomsey.com if you are interested in attending.

Homecoming (Reunion) 2023

Details are coming together for our Reunion festivities for 2023. This will be our game against the Demon Deacons of Wake Forest on October 14th. We will continue with our new schedule that features the homecoming parade on Friday night rather than Saturday morning along with practice being moved from Friday night to Saturday morning on the Drillfield. The annual meeting of the HTA Inc. along with our great feast of a lunch will follow practice. The specific times for all of these events won't be finalized until two Sundays before Reunion. (Sept 24)

So mark your calendars for **October 13-14**. Also note that registration is now up and ready to go. You can register for the reunion which is free, the lunch before the game which is just \$16 and a great spread of food in Dietrick Dining Hall. In addition, you can reserve and pay for your new Highty-Tighty Alumni hat which is \$10. Then of course there are game tickets at \$50 — come and get 'em! Homecoming is always a treat and this year should be no exception. October 13-14 is usually a great time in Blacksburg weather-wise with fall colors busting out all over providing a great setting for all of the pageantry that is Homecoming. Get yourself registered at <u>https://aimsbbis.vt.edu/HTReunion23</u> or just google it like everything else you need to know.



2023 Football Schedule

2 Sept 8 PM	ODU
9 Sept Noon	Purdue - Corps Reunion
16 Sept 3:30	@ Rutgers
23 Sept TBA	@ Marshall
30 Sept TBA	Pitt
7 Oct TBA	@ Florida State
14 Oct TBA	Wake Forest - Homecoming
26 Oct 7:30 pm	Syracuse
4 Nov TBA	@ Louisville
11 Nov TBA	@ Boston College
18 Nov TBA	NC State
25 Nov TBA	@ UVA
2 Dec 8 pm	ACC Championship



Alumni Recruiting

Sometimes We Are the Fourth Troopers

or Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets and Regimental Band alumni recruiters, spring is a time of wait and see. College fairs are at the same time both way behind us and way ahead of us on the calendar. Students have made their choices on which colleges to apply to, and now admissions personnel are working to make decisions on those applications. At this point we wait and prepare for the time when offers of admission are made and we can make an effort to influence and retain incoming cadets. While we wait we need to remember to continue to network and get ahead of the calendar by finding those high school juniors with musical backgrounds and reaching out to them. Fall will be here before we know it, and speaking of time....

In the age of horse cavalry Army cavalry units would have troopers count off by fours. Every fourth trooper was designated to hold the horses if the unit was required to dismount and fight on foot. At this time of year, we recruiters are like those fourth troopers. We wait and are not directly involved in the action. Do not be discouraged by this and know that even in the most active recruiting months there will be times when we find ourselves holding the horses. This past year I volunteered to the Virginia Tech admissions staff to assist in any college fair in Virginia they needed help with -I was called on to support two college fairs. They were big events and successful, but I spent much of the fall as the fourth trooper while hoping to get into action.

Take heart, any contributions of time or resources we make to the Regimental Band are valuable. Opportunities to support the Band come in many forms: reaching out to organize your classmates; participating in Highty-Tighty Homecoming at Tech in the fall; helping with the mentoring program; volunteering to help with college fairs; writing notes or making phone calls in the late spring to incoming Highty-Tighties; contributing to any of the Virginia Tech Foundation funds that have been established to specifically support the Regimental Band; and as always, looking for opportunities to talk with students in high school band programs about the exceptional Highty-Tighty experience.

> Ut Prosim Dave Williams HT '79 VP for Recruiting Retention & Marketing



Combined Bands on the field at Homecoming 2022

Summer 2023

Development Update



Highty-Tighty Fundraising Update - June 2023

Tighties busy with on-campus performances, as well as a trip to New York City for the St. Patrick's Day Parade. The band has continued to represent themselves as you would expect, with decorum and professionalism. With over 20 Highty-Tighty specific Scholarships in the Corps, and HT Endowment values increased for FY23, despite there being some ups and downs in the market.

The Schaeffer Endowment Fund continues to need funds in order to maintain the \$1,000 stipend that each incoming band freshmen and sophomores receive. This fund is attractive to prospective band members, so there is always a need to maintain this great asset.

The Highty-Tighty Annual Giving Fund (Fund # 877055) continues to grow quite a bit yet again. This fairly new fund has allowed for the band to have additional money available should there be a specific need that is not endowment related, such as allocating funding to get the practice space on the drillfield re-done to better suit the band's needs for a real practice area. The Brick Program is the perfect way to contribute to the Annual Giving Fund. When an individual gives to an operating fund in the amount of \$2,500 (that is not part of an endowment). They get their name on a brick style plaque that will go into the new Corps Leadership and Military Science (CLMS) building. This donation can be given all at once, or broken up over a five year

period. Please contact Scott Lyman if you are interested in taking part in this, and having your name in the CLMS just like you signed your name in the bricks on Lane Hall when you graduated.

With our support these current and future band members can continue to strive and understand what it means to be a Highty-Tighty. If you are interested in providing financial support, please contact Scott Lyman (at rlyman@vt.edu). It truly does make a difference!

Once again thank you all who have been supportive, and we look forward to another great upcoming fall season of being Highty-Tighty Alumni, seeing the Corps of Cadets grow into their new facilities, excel in the classroom and ROTC, and see Upper Quad take a much more prominent role within the university.

> Scott D. Beman HT '01 HTA, Inc. Vice President for Development



The image above shows the plaque mentioned in the article which is created from an image of a Lane Hall brick.

Highty-Tighty Alumni, Inc 141 Lane Hall, Virginia Tech 280 Alumni Mall Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

Non-Profit U.S. Postage **PAID** Bedford, Va Permit No. 3

REQUESTS TO ALUMNI Very Important!

There are three things all Highty-Tighty Alumni need to do to help ensure you get the newsletter and stay connected with Virginia Tech and the Highty-Tighty Alumni, Inc.

- Be sure that your address and other contact information are up to date with Virginia Tech. You can update your information by sending an email to alumnidata@vt.edu. Use this address if you have a change to your email or mailing address. Please do not provide your contact information or changes of address to the newsletter editor.
- Everyone needs to go to the Highty-Tighty Alumni website and check their contact information in the database. Go to www.hightytightyalumni.org and click on Database. The site provides a way for you to provide and request an update of your address, phone number, and email address.
- If you know of any Highty-Tighty Alumni who are not receiving the *Highty-Tighty Notes* newsletter or the *Highty-Tighty Half-Notes* email updates, please pass this information on to them.

HIGHTY-TIGHTY HALF-NOTES Subscribe Today

The *Highty-Tighty Half-Notes* are periodic emails sent to Highty-Tighty alumni and friends of the Regimental Band. They are intended to supplement the news included in the *Highty-Tighty Notes* newsletter, which only comes out twice a year. These email updates include both photographs and information about the present Band and Alumni. Early information about the reunion and other items of interest to alumni are often subjects of *Half-Notes*. If you would like to receive these occasional emails with photographs and updates about the Band's activities, as well as information about alumni, please send your email address and your request to receive the *Half-Notes* to: bertkinzey@gmail.com

You may have your name removed at any time.

Please forward any Alumni notes, articles, or other materials for the *Highty-Tighty Notes* to:

George McMichael, Editor

2333 Idavere Rd. SW

Roanoke, VA. 24015



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For more information on the Highty-Tighty Alumni, Inc visit our website at www.hightytightyalumni.org For more information on the present Highty-Tighties visit their website http://www.vtcc.vt.edu/band