

Harold E. Wilmoth – 2010



For over 25 years **Harold E. “Duck” Wilmoth** held the position of band director. A native of Cookeville, Tennessee, Harold served four years in the United States Air Force during the Korean Conflict (1950-54). Upon his return to the states he attended Tennessee Polytechnic Institute where he was a member of the marching and concert bands under the prestigious direction of Dr. W.J. Julian. He toured and played string bass as a member of the Tech Troubadours. He was a member Phi Beta Mu National Honorary Fraternity for Band Directors. Harold earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education in 1957 from Tennessee Tech. He also took graduate courses at VanderCook College of Music in Chicago, Illinois.

Harold began his conducting career at Covington High School in Covington, Tennessee in 1956. From 1957-63 Harold conducted the Rhea Central High School Band program in Dayton, Tennessee winning numerous awards including the annual Bristol Marching Band Festival in Bristol, Tennessee. In the fall of 1963 he moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee where he conducted band programs in the Hamilton County and Chattanooga City School systems with the majority of his tenure at Tyner Junior and Senior High Schools.

During Harold’s years as conductor of the Tyner “Hilltopper” Marching, Concerts and Swing Bands, his ensembles were recognized with both local and international awards. Including wins at The University of Tennessee Band Festival, University of Chattanooga Marching Band Festival, Hamilton County Marching Band Festival, Memphis Cotton Carnival, Dayton Strawberry Festival, Washington D.C. Cherry Blossom Festival, Fort Myers Thomas Edison Band Festival and the 1973 Mexican International Band Festival. His bands performed numerous times at Disney World and half-times at the Gator Bowl. Over the years, he had numerous students who were selected for ETSBOA All East Bands and Tennessee All State Band.

During his teaching career Harold was a member and President (1966-69) of the East Tennessee Band and Orchestra Association. He was an ETSBOA Honorary Life Member. He adjudicated numerous competitions throughout the Southeast and was selected as adjudicator for the 1974 Annual Mexican International Band Festival in Mexico City. He retired from teaching in 1982.

After retirement, Harold was a member of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Retired Teachers Association serving as President and Vice-President. He also served as a volunteer lobbyist for the Chattanooga – Hamilton County Retired Teachers Association. He established and conducted the Metro Musician's Community Band, volunteer at the Tennessee Aquarium, served as president of the Bal Harbor Neighborhood Association and worked with the Alexian Brothers-Senior Neighbors RSVP program. Harold also owned and operated Boots & Jeans clothing store and was co-owner of Shallowford Plaza Business Center.

Harold was dedicated and passionate about music education. He was demanding of his band members to ensure they achieved their highest potential both as musicians and as people. Many of his former students have gone on to become award winning band directors.

Harold was married forty-nine years to Wanda DeFord Wilmoth. He had two daughters, Kathy Wilmoth Goforth and Denise Wilmoth Woody; four grand-daughters Katherine "Katie" Goforth, Kristin Goforth, Jessica Woody and Rebecca "Becky" Woody. Wanda and Kathy continue to play in the Metro Musicians Community Band that was established by Harold. Two of his granddaughters have continued Harold's music and teaching legacy. Katie, is a Board Certified Music Therapist with a Masters Degree in Music – Music Therapy from Florida State University and Jessica holds a Bachelor of Arts in Education from Tusculum College.

Harold E. "Duck" Wilmoth passed away on Saturday, June 10, 2006 at the age of 75 resulting from an automobile accident in Orlando, Florida. The 2007 Chattanooga-Cleveland Charity Horse Show was dedicated in his memory and Harold was inducted posthumously February 6, 2010 into the ETSBOA Hall of Fame.