Janice “Jan” Deaver

Cyclone Marching Band Oral History Project

Interviewed by Michael Belding

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Time stamps reference the video recording.

**JD:** Jan Deaver

**MB:** Michael Belding

[00:00:00]

**MB:** This is Michael Belding, an interviewer for the Iowa State University Special Collections and University Archives Varsity Marching Band Oral History Project. Today is Thursday, April 27, 2023. I'm interviewing Jan Deaver in person in a podcasting studio in this studio in the Student Innovation Center on the ISU campus. Jan, thank you for joining me this morning.

[00:00:31]

**JD:** You're welcome. Glad I could be here.

[00:00:33]

**MB:** I was wondering if you could begin by telling me a little bit about your early life, things like where you grew up, what your family was like, that sort of thing.

**JD:** Right. I grew up in northwest Iowa on a farm in Hamilton County outside Webster City. Graduated from high school at Webster City High School. I'm the fifth of six children. I'm a lifelong Iowan. I had activities in 4-H [youth development organization], music, church activities, community activities like most people did in small communities at that time. During my middle school years, I started taking private oboe lessons in Fort Dodge from Jan Altimeier. As I got older, I was referred to Kevin Schilling [Associate Professor of Music, Emeritus]. Not yet a professor, but an employee here at Iowa State University, who eventually was Dr. Schilling prior to his retirement. So, I had a connection, even as a youth, to Iowa State and the music department. I took lessons here until I graduated high school. And let's see. Oh, I should also mention my involvement with marching band in high school. Webster City had a very interesting and very successful marching band program. Webster City and Oskaloosa were two very competitive marching bands. The band directors at Webster City was J. Frank Nugent, at Oskaloosa was Paul Brizzi, and they organized with other band masters a competition called the Mid-Iowa Combine. It was a summer competition, and then we would go on to Illinois and Wisconsin for further competitions, and nationals were in Wisconsin, so we were part of that. So, it was part of a drum and bugle corps styled marching band, which was much different from what Iowa State was at that point in time. I guess that's enough of my background, probably.

[00:02:35]

**MB:** Yes. I do have a few follow-up questions, though, just for clarity. Uh. Could you spell a few people's names? Altimeier, Schilling, Brizzi.

**JD:** Yes. Altimeier. A-L-T-I-M-E-I-E-R-. Her husband and she were part of the music programs in Fort Dodge. Jan's husband was the director of the Karl King Band at one point in time. He has since passed, and Jan is elderly. I was there for a birthday a few years ago. J. Nugent, it's the letter J. Frank, F-R-A-N-K, Nugent, N-U-G-E-N-T. And Paul Brizzi. P-A-U-L B-R-I-Z-Z-I. After I graduated from high school, Mr. Nugent moved on to other positions. He eventually was a staff member--I shouldn't say that, he had a position at Simpson College for an extended period of time. He was part of the Iowa Bandmasters Association. So was Paul Brizzi. After Paul Brizzi left Oskaloosa, he ended up at Ankeny High School and was band director there for quite some time. Also part of the bandmasters still.

**MB:** Okay. And then Kevin Schilling's last name?

**JD:** S-C-H-I-L-L-I-N-G.

**MB:** Okay. Thank you. It's really helpful to have those.

[00:04:05]

**MB:** I also wanted to ask at the very end of your answer there, you mentioned something in bugle –

**JD:** Drum and bugle corps style.

[00:04:14]

**MB:** What style is that, and what did Iowa State have, and how are they different?

**JD:** At the time, the most typical marching band style at that time was called the Big Ten style. High knee lifts, block marching formations, and if someone had flags, it was rare--they were rigid, they stood still, or they marched very little movement with the flags. Pompoms and twirlers were the main attraction for anything outside of the block marching of the marching band. Our marching band, drum and bugle corps, came out of Boy Scout organizations and other civic organizations in the country that--they have a long-standing history, much more a stride-based military-style marching that is more of a walking stride. They have flags, they have rifles. They throw them, they toss them, they spin them. They have more curvilinear--that's a word in the jargon--type marching formations. So, it was a transition point. When I was in high school, we had an invitational tournament at our high school with marching bands. And at that time, one of the most successful programs was Valley High School, but they still had a Big Ten-style marching band. And when it was evaluated in that marching competition, there was actually two judges that walked the field, and they would mark what they called tick marks, a 10th of a point off for everybody that was out of line or wasn't consistent, maybe had their uniform disheveled or out of step--anything, you'd get a 10th of a point. And there were twenty points available in that category. And poor Valley lost all those points in the first six minutes of their performance because they were a big band and they marched in a block formation. So, you'd see everybody out of line. You'd see everything, every little thing. Now, their music was lovely, but it's a style and a way to perform that's different than that. They had probably thirty pompom girls and six twirlers or something, and we had a different style.

[00:06:33]

**MB:** I'm curious now, was the use of this curvilinear pattern in marching away to get around the point deductions?

[00:06:44]

**JD:** Of course it was. There's never a straight line. You know, it's not a perfect circle.

**MB:** You’d have to have like a bird's eye view to see if it actually follows the curve.

**JD:** And the general judges up in the booth could see those kind of things and see that, but the judges on the field could not see that. So that's a strategic decision. But the marching bands did more follow-the-leader type of drills and moving different band units in different directions rather than block. Probably the most common block-style marching band was Texas A&M. If you've seen them come, they march on in a big block and they move as a block and they have more geometric patterns. It's more freeform with curvilinear.

[00:07:32]

**MB:** I also wanted to follow up on what you said about your musical education. So, a lot of my mother's side of the family are from Hamilton County and Webster City and Jewell as well. It's why I was a little bit surprised when you said you were from northwest Iowa and then said Webster City. That’s not northwest, it doesn’t take three hours to get anywhere!

**JD:** If you draw a quadrant, it's northwest.

**MB:** Yes. If you take the 80-35 quadrants.

**JD:** Exactly.

**MB:** Uh, so knowing, you know, from my own experience a little bit about the geography of those towns, it, you know, Webster City to Fort Dodge is like half an hour or something, and a Webster City down to Ames is somewhat longer, of course. It just strikes me is knowing what I know about the seventies as well, like gas prices and the way the economy was and the agricultural economy, too, it seems to me like that would have been a considerable investment for your family to undertake or like a considerable commitment.

**JD:** Well, it was a commitment. My mother drove me to Fort Dodge until I was able to drive myself back roads from our home on the west side of Webster City to where I was going on the east side of Fort Dodge was less than a half hour trip over and back. But yes, it was certainly a lot of time commitment, but the mid-70s were actually a good time for farmers in that part of the state. Later in the 70s, it probably became more difficult and obviously the eighties were tough. But my family didn't have –

**MB:** And not to assume of course –

**JD:** My family didn't have a lot of outlay for a lot of expensive equipment. My father had one son with allergies and five daughters, so he farmed most of it himself with his father until his father passed. And then he had another helper at--various different people at different times that would help. But we didn't invest in extremely huge equipment and didn't have that kind of overhead. So, my parents were very supportive of our getting an education and doing things that were positive for the community, for ourselves. So, 4-H was always part of what we did because they had been 4-H-ers in the lean years of – my parents were born in 1919 and 1924, so they went through the Depression and the war years and 4-H was a big part of that.

**MB:** Okay, great. Thank you. Thank you for those digressions. I'm in the Department of History myself and I'm an agricultural and environmental historian--and I focus on the 19th century as well—but the broadly familiar with some things about the 20th and the remark you made about having a son with allergies and five daughters and so that's kind of it for farming in the family is really interesting. I have bad allergies myself and I've always wondered how people in the past used to cope with it. So, I may have to look into it a little more. Maybe a lot of the men who left the farm and pursued a career somewhere else were not, you know, maybe it wasn't totally an economic thing. Maybe it was partly a health thing as well.

**JD:** Yes. Yes. I mean, there's many reasons.

**MB:** Sorry. And sorry to the audience as well. 9 a.m. digressions.

[00:10:55]

**MB:** So, when were you at Iowa State, and how did you come to be at the university?

**JD:** Okay. When I graduated from high school in spring of ‘78, I initially enrolled at Mount Mercy College in Cedar Rapids because I wanted to be in a nursing program. I was there for a year. While I was there, I still continued doing music. I was in the Coe College Wind Ensemble and performed with them and traveled with them, but that was a sharing arrangement those two schools had. I took a class on the J-term they had in parasitology – and found out that I needed a bigger challenge than I was going to get in the nursing program. So, I transferred back to Iowa State in the fall of 1979 and started in the microbiology department, at that point called the bacteriology department. We were on the quarter system. I was on the quarter system for two years, and then I took one final semester and graduated in December of 1981. So, I was in college for three and a half years. I was trying desperately to get out in three, but I had some classes that needed to be taken in succession, so that worked out great. Even back then, we tried to get out quicker. A lot of us did. It wasn't as typical as it is now with the kind of classes people can take in high school to get extra credit. But I had a full load and then some, so as soon as I came back to Iowa State, I enrolled in music lessons with Kevin Schilling again as a course. I got college credit for that. I also was part of the wind ensemble. That was prior to the music building getting built. So pretty much right here where we are, were dairy barns, that was the music building. That's where the wind ensemble practiced until the music building was built over by Memorial Hall– Memorial Union– Alumni Hall. My boyfriend in college was an Alumni Hall resident. They used to have a men's residence in that building, so I was right next door. Yes.

**MB:** Wow.

**JD:** There's plenty of history there. Yes. If you ever want to explore the history of that, it was a YMCA, YWCA building on the lower level, but the upper level was a non-Greek fraternity, essentially, and that's where he lived, right on campus. So super.

[00:13:25]

**MB:** That's cool. That's a lovely building. I entered Iowa State as a freshman in fall of 2008. And my--I think summer of that year is when they changed the name, so people who were in the freshman class of ’08, I think, were some of the last to go there as Alumni Hall. That's just what it is in my head, yeah. Student Enrollment--like what is what is that?

**JD:** It needs a name. I’m sorry. [laughs]

**MB: L**ike the road leading up to campus from the highway, University Boulevard, that's will always be Elwood Drive in my head. You know, things like that.

**JD:** I understand those feelings and have some of them myself.

[00:14:07]

**MB:** Right. So you mentioned taking the oboe as a course. You mentioned being in the wind ensemble. What bands altogether were you involved with?

**JD:** I played in the wind ensemble. I played in the Iowa State Orchestra. I played in pit orchestras. I played the *Jesus Christ Superstar* orchestra in a pit that was elevated in the Memorial Union. They did *Jesus Christ Superstar* there in the round, essentially. I did lots of small gigs in the Ames community, at churches. I played in the orchestra to the “Messiah” singalong at the Des Moines Civic Center on stage while the audience sang “The Messiah.” It was fabulous. I played lots and lots of concerts at C.Y. Stephens, of course. I was in lots of small groups. Duets, trios, quintets. I played juries every term, which is what the music majors have to, but that was what Dr. Schilling wanted me to do, so I, as a non-major, played juries on my oboe just like everyone else and got evaluated.

I came to connect with a marching band through wind ensemble. One of the clarinet players was Geoff Schive [Music (Curriculum), (1978-1982)], who was a drum major, and he asked me that initial fall that I enrolled at Iowa State, and it was in wind ensemble, Why I wasn't in the marching band. I said, “Oh, well, I don't march like you guys.”

And he says, “Well, what do you do, do you play the bells? You know, oboes don't march. You play the bells? You play another instrument?”

I said, “No, I was a flag captain.”

“Oh. What did you do?” And I explained what I did. And as a flag captain in high school, I wrote the routine and I taught the routine, and was responsible. Our units were set up in high school much like the military are. Our band director was prior army band, so he had us very organized and taught a lot of leadership skills, which was super. Anyway, Geoff went back to the band directors and said, We need this. We need to change our flag line because at that time the flag line were people that—women--that marched around carrying pennants of the Big Eight schools. There were sixteen, and so one would carry a flag that was cardinal and gold--actually two, when they were sixteen. Others would carry Missouri's black and gold colors. Others would carry cream and crimson for Oklahoma, etc. So, the band didn't have any flags that performed anything other than pretty much standing there. They're fairly stationary. So, he got me the job. By fall we had new equipment. We auditioned, got sixteen girls. Ended up being eighteen because two didn't show up to the audition and they were good. So, we went to eighteen, with two alternates. The teaching process was interesting. It was new for them. We got new clothing because they wore very short skirts, not conducive to moving around much in. So put them in shiny gold blouses and red skirts that weren't long, but they weren’t short--better than the very, very short skirts they were at that time. I taught them how to do all the basics of a flag routine. That's how I got involved with the marching band. When the band directors and I met in the fall, they would each week give me the chart, sometime on Monday, when they finished putting where the marching band would be, and say, Here, put in the twirlers and the flags.

**MB:**  Make it work.

**JD:** Figure it out. Make it fit, and practice is this afternoon at three. We practiced from three to six every afternoon. So you know, I would--back in the day, cassette tape, all the music as the band played through it, and so I'd know where the beat was, I’d break it down into all the counts, and I would write all the movements of the flags throughout the charting on the field and then all their flag movements as well, and got that taught by the end of the week. Some weeks I was lucky. You know, there were out-of-town games. We didn't travel to games that frequently, so I'd have two weeks, but sometimes it was a week, and it went real fast. But, you know, it's amazing what you can do with a broom in your dorm room because that's pretty much what I had to do because I couldn’t come up to the building and work here at that time. So yes, it was it was fun. It was a challenge. But I had written drill all through high school and I had helped with the Ames High School. I had helped with Colo-NESCO High School, too, at that time. Yes.

[00:19:15]

**MB:** Did you ever knock anything around in the dorm room with the –

**JD:** With the broom?

**MB:** Yes. Because a broom is –

**JD:** Well, it wasn't a full length. It wasn't a full length. It was a whisk broom. But you need something with a little weight so you can tell what is--but yes. Interesting. I never thought of it that way, but yes. But I could use some of the material that--I could glean stuff from material I used in high school as long as it wasn't too complicated. By the second season--so that would have been the fall of ’80 that I did that--and then the fall of ’81, I had some more experienced girls come into the group because they'd seen what we were doing and more interested in it. We went up to twenty-four flags at that time with two alternates. You know, eighteen and twenty-four are good numbers because you divide it by two, you can divide it by three, so you can do different mixes on the field, and you can have different groupings, and it makes the flag line more interesting.

When I first was learning to be [in] color guard, which is what you call flag lines, I was taught that flags are percussion, were to emphasize that part of the music. So visually, percussion. Visual percussion. So, that's what I aimed for, was to give the band that general effect of something new and different. So, technically, I was the first color guard instructor here. [The] first color guard started under me. We had some interesting routines. We had fun songs. Back in the late ’70s was around the time that I think “Urban Cowboy” came out. There were cowboy hats. There were yellow cowboy hats that you had around campus all the time. And we broke the group up. And some of the girls in the flag line had been part of a dance group. We did a little routine to “Elvira.” The band was playing “Elvira,” eight of the flags are in the back doing another flag related routine, and we have the others up front doing this “Elvira” thing with their hat. It was very, very cool. But yes, that was what we did.

**MB:** Okay. Um. Thank you. All right. Um, let me just gather my question here, because –

**JD:** I covered a lot of material. I'm sorry.

**MB:** No, it's wonderful. It's wonderful to interview someone who can be asked something and just talk. The only difficulty that it presents is that there's so much to follow up on and I want to follow up on so much. First things first, though. Geoff Schive, can you spell his name?

**JD:** I think it's S-C-H-I-V-E. He and there were there were multiple drum majors and there still are multiple drum majors of the marching bands. Jon Neal was the other one. J-O-N N-E-A-L. Jon and Geoff were the primary ones while I was part of the marching band. Geoff was spelled G-E-O-F-F.

[00:22:34]

**MB:** All right. So, he [Geoff Schive] was one of the drum majors and also a student?

**JD:** Yes. Geoff was a clarinet player in the wind ensemble. Jon Neal [Jonathan Neal, Music (Curriculum), (1978-1982)] played in the bands too, but I don't recall--he didn't sit as close to me in the band, so I don't remember what instrument he played, mostly I just remember him as a really good drum major.

[00:22:53]

**MB:** Okay. So, you were in the color guard section of the band then?

**JD:** I actually was on the sidelines teaching the whole time. I wasn't one of those.

**MB:** You never performed?

**JD:** Only once when somebody got sick unexpectedly. No, I was their teacher. I was part of the staff.

**MB:** All right. While you were a student?

**JD:** While I was a student.

[talking over each other, inaudible]

[00:23:30]

**MB:** So how did your--you mentioned this being a transitional time for the band in styles of marching and in what the color guard are doing or not doing. Was that a transition time for other university college marching bands as well, or was Iowa State unique in this regard?

**JD:** I think it was coming in other places of the country as well. I still think that the predominant style was that Big Ten style for the next period of time, and I can't even put a number to it exactly, but I saw more and more change because that's what the high schoolers found to be interesting. So, if that's what the high schools are doing and there's a critical mass of students coming in that can perform, it's good to move with the times, I guess. And obviously, what you see now with Iowa State is much more that way. But we were changing directors. Jimmie Reynolds [Jimmie Howard Reynolds, Director of Bands (1973-1980)] was the director of bands that fall when I first arrived, but he went on sabbatical to Israel the next year and he didn't return. So, the temporary sabbatical became a semi-permanent position. Joe Christensen [Joseph Christensen, Director of Bands (1980-1998)] became the director of bands at Iowa State. Jim McKinney [James McKinney, Marching Band Director (1972-1983)] was the marching band director at that time, but they worked together hand-in-hand all the time. There was another gentleman that came to join the staff during my tenure was Dan Phillips, and he did a lot of the music arrangement. There was a lot of energy around making the band more fluid, moving in different patterns, more--not being stationary too much. The pregame would be more block formation walking on in the straight lines, a more traditional. But the halftime shows became more of a show, a three-ring circus I heard them say more than once. So, they were looking at activities in different points. So, twirlers on one side, the flags here doing this and that, so we had tuba dances. We had percussion solo things that were very interesting and fun. And I think that was that was super cool. It was really good. The band was made up predominantly of engineers and non-music majors. It wasn't music majors. We marched right across the street by the design center. It was our practice field, yeah, the whole time I was here.

[00:26:00]

**MB:** It's interesting also that you talk about the style of marching the band is doing changing with what incoming students are interested in doing or able to do or have been trained by high school to do. It's kind of a positive version of “kids these days,” [laughs] like nowadays in the 21st century, you hear it about like not knowing, not being taught cursive or something like that. This seems rather more positive.

**JD:** People always look at gaps, you know. I was taught to be a lifelong learner. I was very fortunate. My parents were older parents for the generation of– that I grew up in. But they were nontraditional in that my parents didn't ask if we were going to school, it was, Where are you going, and what will your major be? There was certainly a lot of people that belong to a cohort that would not have said that. They would have said, Oh, you only have one son, only one to educate, the other five don't need an education because they're girls. But that wasn't the space I grew up in. It wasn't the environment I grew up in. I was blessed. I never thought of it as a problem to be a girl wanting an education. All six of us got our college degrees and worked.

[00:27:30]

**MB:** Okay. What was the culture of the band when you were involved?

**JD:** Oh, fun. Lots and lots of fun. We worked hard. People really strive to be good at their music, good at their--the performances were joyous. You know, they had a great time. We had a lot of contemporary music we played. Queen, we played, you know, lots of different kinds of songs. We didn't just play traditional marching band music. They did a nice job with that. The student directors were in charge of one show every year, and they always had their own little tilt to what we did, you know, I think we did a lot of different routines that would be considered nontraditional. But we played jazz, we had--like we played “Birdland,” that was a very common song because Manhattan Transfer had sung that, but that's a jazz standard, so it's really--it was very good music. People knew each other. They socialized outside of the band. Yes, it was very nice.

[00:28:47]

**MB:** Did you receive any especially memorable advice from fellow band members or people involved with the band?

**JD:** From the marching band or just band in general?

**MB:** Either one.

**JD:** From the marching band, I think I learned how to work with people in a different way. In high school, you grew up in that space, you develop talents, people see what you're doing. You're moving through your life. And, you know, if you aspire to be in a leadership role, they kind of see it coming. I came in cold. Nobody knew who I was. The people who had been part of that organization before were like, Huh? She's going to tell us what to do? But then they were excited. Once they got started, they were excited to learn something new. I think most people at that particular stage in their life don't want to be bored. I think it went really well. I think communicating my interest in them as people was the one thing that I learned from that, that I needed to have them believe that I didn't look at them as widgets that I was putting through a routine or--that I cared about them as individuals. And that's good. That was a good lesson. And I don't know exactly how I learned that. I think it was by doing and experiencing. I'm not sure somebody told me that directly, but I think I found that to be a very useful life lesson too. Any time that you're in a leadership position, you need to know that the people there as individuals and not as a group, or not the left side, not the right side. All the people there. Dr. Schilling pushed me to be better, even though I was essentially an undeclared minor in music. I didn't have a desire to be a music major, I didn't want that, but I loved the experience of playing in the ensembles, and he just told me to never stop playing. And to this day, I still play. So, my oboe is part of my life even now. And I'm certainly not twenty anymore.

[00:31:04]

**MB:** Is there any key advice that you were able to pass on?

**JD:** Yes. There was another student that took over the position that I had when I graduated. She was from Oskaloosa, had been their color guard captain there. And her name was Tricia Lenarz. She was stepping into my shoes. I gave her some of the advice that I had about how the drill is written and how to get prepared, how quickly you have to turn it around, and how that would work. And it was getting better and more fluid, you know, there was more space allowed in the formations for moving people through. The longer we worked together, we all became more of a team. I know that things moved on and progressed from when she took over. To this day, the color guard's gotten larger. They've obviously changed with the times. They do a lot more--less being percussion, more performing dances, and more performing stylized routines that are more, you would say, more modern dance as opposed to the style that we did at that time. Nothing wrong with that, but it's just what happens with time. Things evolve.

[00:32:29]

**MB:** Are there any especially memorable shows or routines that you developed and gave?

**JD:** We did the bottle dance from *Fiddler on the Roof*. And we had seen another band perform--or actually a drum and bugle corps perform, something like that--where, yes, that was that was very fun. That's a very strong song. And the two drum majors and I actually got on the field that day and I did the bottle dance. We didn't put bottles on our head, but we did that. So that was great. The band did, like I said, I remember “Birdland” right away. I remember “Elvira.” I remember “Another One Bites the Dust.” I remember, “Hey, Jude.” Many songs, you know, obviously we rewrote when I came in, in some sort of more active way to perform the fight song, those kinds of things. I think that's stuck for a while. We had one that they could do in a parade formation, in a tight formation, and one they could do when they were out on the field with more space around them. I guess those are the ones that I would remember.

[00:33:45]

**MB:** Okay. Hearing you describe this more, it sounds like a lot of your role was choreographic, essentially.

**JD:** Oh, yes, definitely.

**MB:** Where did you take inspiration from as you were planning all of these routines?

**JD:** If you're a musician, then you know phrasing, and you know rhythm. You know what needs to be accented and what needs not to be accented. In “Birdland,” I remember a sixteen-count that I picked up from another marching band that was here. If you've ever been on Iowa State's football field, especially in those days, there was no blocking the wind from the north or the south. It was a wind tunnel. So, we certainly wouldn't have wanted to throw our flags. They wouldn't have gone where we wanted them to go. And you needed to have strong control, especially in that first year when the girls hadn't had a lot of experience whipping a flag around. They weren't maybe as muscular as they needed to be to control the flag. So, the sixteen-count I picked up from the other school, you never took your hands off the flag. You moved it around in various combinations, but you were sturdy and strong. Need arises, you find a way to make it work in that space, as fall progresses and the winds get more dominant, you have to make sure to do that. My high school marching band had actually marched my senior year of high school at Iowa State's football game, their last football game that year because the students were on quarter break. Quarter breaks were in November and February. We had come down to march and it was so windy that day that it actually, you know, some of our lighter people holding flags would actually be physically moved a few inches down the field when they would try to hold still. I was aware of that before I got out on the field, and I knew that would be a challenge. Keep two hands on the flagpole as much as possible and find ways to be powerful and strong, on the beat, accent the music. Be interesting. Moving in in short bursts or pops does different things to the flag material, so it creates different environment. You can keep two hands on, and you can spin, so you can make sweeping motions. You can keep motions while you're moving. Draws the eye to a different point. So, you're coming in--well, maybe the band's repositioning to something else. It's something I learned, I acquired over time through high school, so it seems second nature by the time I got here. It was part of my tool belt.

[00:36:32]

**MB:** Okay. Are there any especially memorable traditions from the band that you want to talk about?

**JD:** Traditions. Running around in little circles around the flag. They made their little cyclones around them, and the flags were back-to-back, and then they'd spin out from whatever cyclone they were making into a formation. I think they all loved that. Everybody enjoyed being part of that energy. Our Saturday morning practices were crazy. Everybody came in crazy clothes. Worked hard, but they kind of tried to outdo themselves by being silly. That was fun. Our trip to Oklahoma. We marched at an away football game at the University of Oklahoma in the fall of ’81. Four charter buses leaving at four in the morning full of students behaving and misbehaving. I remember getting halfway there and they stopped and let us out at a McDonald's, I think, and the lawn was covered with people. Pretty tired. But we marched at a high school when we got there that Friday night, and then Saturday we performed at the University of Oklahoma's football game. That was the one time that I got questioned. They didn't think I belonged there, the security guards. I had come in with the marching band, but they wanted me out because I wasn't dressed like the band directors. They had men's blazers and pants. I had--sign of the times--a diagonal shirt, gold and cardinal, and black pants, so that I made the shirt myself. Anyway, it was stylish and appropriate and would look fine on the field. I had to, you know, grab the band director and bring him over so I wasn't going to kicked out before halftime because they really didn't think I belonged there. I made it a point to get out on the field and do several things during halftime on the sidelines to make sure that they were fully aware that I belonged there. But that was the only time I'd ever been questioned about whether or not I physically belonged with the organization while I was there, but the trip to Oklahoma was great. Everybody had a good time. That was the game that--well, Alex Gifford was the football player kicker, and he missed a field goal that--we ended up tying and we should have won that game. Oklahoma fans came over and told us, I'm so sorry you lost. So that's memorable. If you ask for a memory, that's one that I had.

**MB:** Okay. Just looking at the clock here.

[00:39:27]

**MB:** I wanted to ask also, since you mentioned traveling, did you have any other travels with the band?

**JD:** We went to Iowa City. We marched over there. Again, we'd march at a high school Friday night and then get up Saturday and do a routine there. Yes. I don’t remember it being nearly as long a trip. Obviously, it was a short trip to Iowa City, so that wasn't as remarkable. But it was a good environment, I mean, by the time you've spent that many hours, every day, three to six in the afternoon with the band, you all get to know each other very well. I recall, though, I was in an elevated platform--we'd climb up this platform and stand up there and you could watch over the band and make sure everything was going because it was flat ground over here--I knew all their faces. They knew my face. I was one of ten up here, but there were like three hundred out there. So, when I was on campus, I'd pass people and I just got used to smiling at everybody that said hi to me because I knew that face. I didn't know their name because there were so many of them in the band as a whole. But yes, I –

[00:40:48]

**MB:** Okay. Before I ask you my big open-ended last question, I wanted to ask also, why the oboe?

**JD:** When I was in elementary school and they had the day that we were supposed to be picking out instruments, I conveniently broke my pinky finger playing kickball. And I was gone. So, I wasn't there to try the instruments. But I had two older sisters. One played the flute, and one played the oboe. And somebody said, all right, so--excuse me, let me back up, one played the flute, one played the clarinet. Somebody said, “Why don't you play the oboe? It looks like it's halfway in between.” So, I never started on one of the standard instruments. I immediately started on oboe in fifth grade when everybody else was starting trumpet, trombone, clarinet, flute, drums, saxophone. Pretty much that was the available instruments at the time. I was very studious child, and I guess I was musically inclined, so once I got past the stage of sounding like a duck, I enjoyed it, and people enjoyed me playing, so I kept doing it. You know, you get positive feedback, you keep doing what you're doing, and I wasn't one of those kids that needed to lean on somebody else to learn my part or to feel comfortable playing. I know people that feel more comfortable playing in an ensemble. Oboes always play their own line and carry their own space, so that's how I started on the oboe.

[00:42:35]

**MB:** Okay. And I remember, before we move to the end, so what is your involvement been with the Alumni Marching band? Since that's how we came to be in contact with –

**JD:** The Alumni Marching Band, I haven't marched with. For many years I had work, young children. I have friends that do it every year and I have friends that interact with it. I am friends with Jay Chapman and his wife Karen through my involvement with the Greater Des Moines Cyclone Club. We used to be board directors, board officers together, so I know a lot about what's going on. I see the Alumni Pep Band all the time, and I know people in that, but oboes don't fit into the pep band very well. Oboes don't fit into the marching band very well. I've tried a couple of times to poke people to see if we can get a flag or color guard kind of reunion going. It hasn't happened yet. That doesn't mean it won't. I was here for the 40th anniversary that they had. My senior year--or my last year at Iowa State--was the first year there was an Alumni Marching band. So that's my involvement with it was helping them get that gig going and getting them on the field and performing at halftime with the Iowa State Marching Band. So, the Alumni Band came that came together that year, and they marched on the field with us and performed. And they've been coming together ever since.

[00:43:56]

**MB:** When was the 40th anniversary? 1980?

**JD:** ’21. So, ‘81 to ‘21. So, I came up here. They had a large gathering that Friday night. I interacted with a lot of people that night. Got to see people I hadn't seen in a long time, but, yes, I would love to have a reunion of the color guard people and get together with some of them before people aren't able to get together anymore. I stay very active. My husband and I run a martial arts school, and my part-time gig is at Target doing fulfillment, so I walk all day long and so I'm active. Not everybody is. That's my age. So, the thought of them getting out and marching again is probably--I wouldn't put that on them, but I'd like to see them all. It's been a lot of fun. I've made a lot of friends. I keep in touch. I'm in the Facebook group for a reason. It's just harder for me to step back out onto the field and have them assume that I'm their director. I'm not, you know, they don't think of me in that cohort the same way, so yes.

[00:45:07]

**MB:** Right. Is there anything you'd like to add to your interview? Anything I should have asked about, but didn't? You mentioned having brought a few photos.

**JD:** Sure, sure. I have a copy of the charts they used to send me.

**MB:** Oh, my.

**JD:** This is the marching band charts.

**MB:** Is it okay if we hold one of these up?

**JD:** Yes. There's a marching band chart there. And another. And I even have one--

**MB:** *X*s and *O*s, It kind of looks like one of those football charts.

**JD:** Lots of *X*s and *O*s, yes. This one--I go by Jani. Can you read that from there?

**MB:** Here's the show. Flag placement is just a suggestion.

**JD:** Yes. Yes, so that's how we communicated and that's how things were back in the non-digital days.

**MB:** How do you how do you read this?

**JD:**  How do I read this?

**MB:** Yes. How is this kind of document read?

**JD:** Well, this shows the field. It shows [which end, there's a press box on this side, so we're coming in from that direction. All these little *X*s are placements of ranks and they've got them marked on as to who's responsible for which rank. Everybody has an *A, B, C, D* designation. It used to be in the marching band room there was a wall that had pegs, and it actually had little tags with each person's name on it, so they knew who belonged to which rank. And so, the saxophones were here, and the mellophones were here, and the trumpets were there, and –

**MB:** It’s like a battleship grid or something kind of like that, war room kind of situation.

**JD:** To be honest, yes. It's so different than things are now that you can do everything digitally, but that's how that was all explained. So those are here, and then it talks about where they're going to move to. Then there's guides. There's certain people that are going to be point people in the next picture. So, it's marked there. And there they are down the field. It was all graphed out, all graphed out. So very, very interesting. The flags were called banners before I got there. This is a shirt they made for themselves the first year I was there. I got one too. ISU banners with Cy holding a flag.

[00:47:50]

**MB:** That's really cool.

**JD:** Yes. I was surprised I still had this, but I knew I'd tucked it away somewhere. I didn't know I had the drill. I was actually looking for photographs the other day in an old box of relics from my youth and came across that and thought, Well, how timely.

**MB:** That shirt is that nice, like postwar retro cream, [laughs] you know, collegiate cream kind of –

**JD:** I think it's faded some. This is what the band used to look like prior to my arrival. This is a picture from prior to my arrival. That's what they wore. Really short sailor-type uniforms.

**MB:** Mini skirt.

**JD:** Oh, yes. Mini skirts coming out of the seventies. But this is the one--there it is. That's the marching band's place that was in the football program at that time. And you'll see my picture there. It says, “Flag Coach.”

**MB:** Down here in the lower left.

**JD:** But you'll see the band directors, the student directors, and the names of the two drum majors that we talked about earlier.

[00:49:07]

**MB:** Very cool.

**JD:** So, it was a great organization at that time, and like I said, since they were taking over from somebody--Jimmie Reynolds was a really strong personality, and he'd had management of that organization for a long time. So they needed to find a new personality at that time. And so a lot of things changed, and we were forming and storming, and all those things had happened, so it was great. I loved it.

[00:49:36]

**MB:** Great. Jan Deaver, thank you so much for joining me this morning.

**JD:** I'm glad this worked out. Glad to talk with you.