



Band Bios

Tim Brechbill - Band Leader / Alto & Tenor Sax



Tim has a Master of Music in Saxophone Performance from the University of Southern California (USC) where he studied with world renown classical saxophonist, Harvey Pittel, and a Bachelor of Music in Saxophone Performance from University of Nebraska Omaha (UNO). He also has a MA in Math and Computer Science from UNO. He was an Adjunct Saxophone Instructor at UNO for nearly 20 years, and recently retired from Union Pacific Railroad where he worked for nearly 30 years in the I.T. Department.

Tim was the Omaha Symphony saxophonist "on call" for many years and can be heard on the Omaha Symphony's premier compact disc, "Take Flight". He has been a featured soloist with the UNO Wind Symphony multiple times and is also an accomplished composer.

Tim and his wife of over 40 years, Diane, are blessed to have two children and three grandchildren, all living in the Omaha area.

Joel Edwards - Trumpet / Vocals



Joel has a BA in music education and received a MS in Audiology and Doctoral Degree Au.D. from ATSU in Phoenix Arizona. Joel is currently an audiologist for Boys Town National Research Hospital West Hospital and serves as a coordinator. Joel taught hearing science and was an adjunct professor a UNO Department of Communicative Disorders and taught 10 years.

Joel's trumpet teachers include Jim Hill, recording jingle artist for the Minneapolis and Omaha areas in the early 70's, Gene Badgett (Trumpet Omaha Symphony in 1973-77), Dennis Schneider (University of Nebraska-Lincoln) 1980-83, John Henes, Chicago Metropolitan Opera trumpet section (Alexander technique for trumpet) 1995.

He performs with various groups in the area that include Finest Hour, the Blue House and the Rent-to-Own Horns for over 20 years, Solid Brass Quartet, Omaha Brassworks, Omaha Trumpet Ensemble, Lincoln Trumpet Ensemble, Omaha Big Band, local Omaha blues band, Resurrected Swing Big Band, and Gooch's Las Vegas Jazz band that performs in Omaha regularly.

Joel has performed with Ray Charles, Temptations, Four Tops, The Mighty Sam McClain, Johnny Mathis, Omaha Symphony Pops Orchestra and has played trumpet on many Broadway shows coming through the Omaha Metro that include Grease, Cinderella, Annie, Sound of Music, Damn Yankees, Crazy For You, Dream Girls (Dianna Ross Story), How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying, Fiddler on the Roof, Spamalot to mention a few. Also listed to his credit is the longest running locally-produced professional show called Bee Hive, music review of the 50's and 60's rock era.

Joel was also one of the MacNasty members with Tim, and Gery.

Gery Illgner - Keyboards / Lead Vocals



Gery, keyboards, began playing piano/organ and drums in Omaha while in grade school. Growing up in a musical family, he was surrounded by singing & harmonies, and at the age of 9 began piano lessons with the nuns in Catholic grade school. Drum lessons were added to the mix... playing rock'n'roll and at church continued throughout grade school, high school, college, and beyond.

Gery played in numerous bands throughout school, and his first early gigs included neighborhood parties & carnivals, and playing for grade school parties (including his own grade school graduation party). Some of the bands styles were rock'n'roll (Credence Clearwater Revival, Allman Brothers, the Doors, the Beatles, Steppenwolf), and Gery also played with bands in Omaha's inner city / near north side.

Gery studied music while enrolled in the College of Music at the University of Nebraska-Omaha (UNO); classical music, jazz bands, and also trained with Tony Gulizia. Enjoying all styles of music, it financed his college education, especially when the gigs were steady (Omaha agents Subby Anzaldo and Eddy Haddad kept his band "Now & Then" playing on a steady basis in the clubs in the Nebraska - Iowa region). By the time Gery received an offer to play on cruise ships in the Caribbean, he had changed his major from Music and had his Business Degree at UNO.

A few years later Gery retired from music, and did not return to the stage for 15 years. When a surprise birthday party needed a band - friends from his old bands (Fat Dog Boogie Band & MacNasty) travelled to Kansas City from Omaha, Chicago, and New York to create a Blues Brothers style band. He is also currently a member of One Night Stand in KC.

Gery was also one of the MacNasty members with Tim, and Joel.

Nick Fili - Drums / Percussion



"It's all about the passion..."

If there's anything 50 years of living on planet Earth has taught Nick, it is simply this; if there's no passion, there's no point. There has never been a time in his life when he was not passionate about music, and most especially drumming. "I truly believe that God weaved that passion into my fiber while I was still in the womb. My mom agrees."

Nick's parents bought him his first drum kit when he was 9 years old, more as a measure to prevent him from destroying any more furniture by drumming on it than anything else. They didn't have much money, so he never had the opportunity to study with a teacher until he could pay for lessons himself. Nonetheless, he had great teachers growing up - guys like Steve Gadd, Tris Imboden, Stewart Copeland, Airtio Moriera, Steve Smith, Peter Erskine and Vinnie Colaiuta... He became a student of all the drummers, on all the records he could get his hands on, and became a

master mimic.

After high school, Nick began to study with Luigi Waites, a brilliant jazz drummer and vibraphonist, and found out that being a mimic isn't enough - "a mimic can only recreate, only a musician can create music". Studying with Luigi inspired him to pursue his passion in a way that he had not previously considered, and in 1989, he entered the Jazz Studies program at the University of North Texas, where he was blessed to study with Henry Okstel, and along side of guys like Keith Carlock, Jim White, Jim Riley and Rich Redmond.

After nearly 30 years of playing sessions and teaching in the Dallas/Fort Worth market, with such incredible musicians as Christian Schultz, Tony Palos, Russ Hewitt, Thomas Brownlee, John DeBellevue and many, many others, Nick has returned to Omaha, bringing his passion, and experience, home to play.

Chris Johnson - Lead Guitar / Lead Vocals



Chris, originally from Wahoo, NE, comes from a musical family and was in his first band by age 13. His parents were a part-time choir director and church organist. He plays guitar, harmonica, keyboards, and sings

Some of his previous bands include Teez, The Young Executives, Look Ma!, Average Joe Band, Digital Paradise, Nextgen and Silver Moon Band. He is also the Contemporary Worship Leader and Arranger at St Thomas Lutheran Church in Omaha.

Chris has a BS-Civil Engineering from the University of Nebraska and is currently the President of Gurney and Associates, a manufacturer's rep firm for water and wastewater treatment equipment.

Chris and his wife of over 25 years, Catherine, are blessed with two sons.

Tim Miklas - Guitar / Lead Vocals



Music was a big influence for Tim Miklas his entire life. His mother was a big band lead vocalist in the 1940's, with numerous big bands, including the Eddy Haddad band. She always loved to sing at home, and so did all her children.

Tim started playing guitar at Catholic church masses with family and friends, then continued to pursue music in college and to this day. His previous bands include Nightshift, 'Ncognito, The Pharomoans, Rough Cut and many more. He has written and recorded many original songs including a 6 song CD for The Pharomoans.

Tim has 30 plus years of musical entertainment experience including solo and duo acoustic acts, as well as wedding ceremonies. Some of his musical influences are Kenny Loggins, James Taylor, Toto, Foo

Fighters, CNSY, Joni Mitchell, and Boston.

"Music lives in us all, find your music and play it like you feel."

Rich Felt - Bari & Tenor Sax



Rich is a Omaha North High graduate, he has his B.S. in ELED-Mathematics Specialization from UNO. While in high school and college, Rich worked as a night and weekend manager at Kelley's North Bowl. After college, he taught at Ft Calhoun elementary for 6 months serving in the role of "replacement" while the regular teacher was on leave. After leaving his brief stint as an elementary teacher, he worked at Mutual of Omaha for 5 years in the Mutual Actuarial Department. In 1989, he was about to welcome his daughter, Allyson, into this world and joined First National Bank of Omaha.

While at FNBO, Rich has launched several departments and has worked as an individual contributor. His career has involved managing departments from 3 to over 300 people for the bank. He has had many rewarding positions at the bank in various capacities and is currently the Director of Strategic and Business Planning for the largest division, Consumer Banking Group. Rich just celebrated his 29th anniversary at the bank in July 2018.

While mostly self-taught, Rich cherishes in the fact that one of his saxophone teachers was Loyson "Skeets" Mahoney. In college, Rich quit his managing job at Kelley's North Bowl to pursue music full time. He played full time with Resurrected Swing, Paul Morehead and his Orchestra and as many musicians did during that time, sub'd for several "tenor bands" in the mid-west. Later after college, he played and continued to sub for several of our local bands. During the 90's he played in all but one of the ten "Alive" concerts that supported the Good News Jail & Prison Ministries. In the 2000's Rich played with Dave Nabity's in his "Band of Hope" that served as a primary fund raising mechanism for the Hope Center for Kids in North Omaha. Most recently, Rich has been a sub for Mike Girciullo's Las Vegas Big Band and from time to time plays at his church, First Christian Church in Council Bluffs.

Music has always been his passion since 7th grade. He has been blessed with playing with some of the best bands in the Midwest and is now continuing that blessing with Heartland Boogie Band.

Larry Garnett - Bass



Larry was born and raised in New Orleans. His Dad was a guitarist and singer and his cousin played trumpet in Qunicy Jones' orchestra. He spent 10 years in the U.S. Air Force as an intelligence analyst and has a Master of Public Administration degree from Bellevue University. Although, his first major in college was vocal music.

He has played in multiple bands in multiple genres around Omaha from alternative rock to smooth jazz. He is also a songwriter and hopes to get some of his songs in front of the general public.

Larry loves making sweet sounds with HBB!