

**WINDJAMMERS SELECT 2013 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES:
CHARLES H. BENNETT, JR. – WJU #1**

Presented at the 2013 Windjammers Annual Convention Banquet by Charles Conrad

Tonight a member who was instrumental in the founding of the Windjammers' organization will receive our Hall of Fame Award. During our nominee's college days, in 1970, Merle Evans invited our nominee to form a circus performance band in Delavan, Wisconsin. It was then that our nominee realized that the existence of seasoned musicians for circus shows would soon be a non-entity.

Our nominee was invited to compose a series of six articles for the *Little Circus Wagon*, the publication of the Circus Model Builders, an organization his father founded. This article put him in communication with Arthur Stensvad in North Platte, Nebraska to find that Stensvad was not only a circus music fan but also a railroad locomotive engineer and train buff. Our nominee was also a railroad employee!

The first Windjammers' President and the first Secretary-Treasurer, together, through many tireless hours, established a memorable legacy for Windjammers Unlimited, Inc.

Numerous articles were submitted to various circus magazines, therein expanding the membership. By its first year, the Windjammers' boasted over 70 members!

Our nominee edited our *Circus Fanfare* magazine for four years. He befriended a multitude of circus musicians while on a venture to New England in 1972 with Windjammer member Bob Harrison. These circus musicians later became Windjammer members.

Upon taking a train to New York City in 1972, he observed the Clyde Beatty-Cole Brothers Circus in its opening performance. In so doing, he recorded such things as the performance of the musicians, the number of musicians, the acts that were performed, and the titles of music performed. Returning on the Pennsylvania railroad's Broadway Limited in his private compartment, he composed the first of a number of articles appearing in the *Circus Fanfare*.

In addition, our nominee was instrumental in putting together a circus music recording group called "Circus Music in the Woods" which was active in the Ottumwa, Iowa region for five years. It was an opulent location at a grand park area with roaring log fireplaces surrounding the rooms. Although unofficially, they met four days each year at this beautiful lodge in the fall, and the meetings served as profound experiences.

For the last ten years, our nominee has contributed a column in *Circus Fanfare*. He has travelled to many circuses and obtained many pages of notes on circus bands, big and small. Many of his notations have been published in various other circus publications.

Your Board of Directors is proud to announce the 2013 induction into the Windjammers Hall of Fame- from Wichita Falls, Kansas - CHARLES H. BENNETT, JR., WJU #1

Written by Robert P. Hills, Jr.