



Another fall season nears an end

Antonio Gutierrez, 2008 Band Directors

As we near the end of our 37th fall season as the LGB&D and my 21st year, it's nice to think back at countless memories we've had together, with our customers and audiences, the sum total of our experiences we share with gusto and Gemutlichkeit.

We'd like to think our organization with 70 members runs flawlessly like clockwork, moving with military-like precision from one performance to another. Every once in a while there's that one unexpected event that throws a monkey wrench into our best laid plans. Our trip to Julia's in Columbia was one such adventure. Luckily it only happens on very rare occasions. Our member's safety is always our top priority, however, travelling with the LGB&D can be a real adventure at times.

Adventures in van driving

Jim Wagner, Tuba, Baritone, & Excellent Van Driver

It started out as pretty much like any other band trip. Chien-hsin and I picked up the van at local rent a car place and were sort of pleased that they gave us a brand new van. It only had 3 miles on the odometer. It doesn't get much newer than that. What we didn't know was that this trip was going to start going bad quite soon.

On the way to the Super Wal-Mart in Garner we managed to get lost. Turns out that we had gotten caught up in the general confusion and were looking for the new Wal-Mart on 70 instead of 401. While we were driving around looking for the Wal-Mart the dashboard lit up with warnings to get the "traction control unit serviced soon". The ABS light lit up, too. The van was driving ok, just the lights to show there was a problem.

I called John Barnum, who told me that the Wal-Mart was on 401, not 70. We also discussed me taking the van back to rental place, but the warning lights went out and stayed out. We were actually pretty close to meeting time and if I had to take the van back we would have been maybe 30 minutes late getting away. If we had been leaving from the University Club instead of Garner I probably would have decided differently.

The week before I had driven a van that had faulty tire warning lights, and I had taken it back. The rental company said it was a false alarm and to just ignore it. So with that in mind and no warnings showing I decided that we should probably just go on. We loaded up and hit the road.

All was fine until we got on I95.

Then the cruise control started acting up. We'd be moving along nicely at the posted speed limit (70) and all of the sudden there'd a "thunk" and we'd drop out of cruise control. It almost felt like the brakes had tried to apply themselves. (Remember the traction control and ABS lights earlier?)

This happened 3 or 4 times and I decided just to not use the cruise control.

Just before we got to Fayetteville, while doing 70 in the left lane, the van behaved strangely. We were traveling in a straight line at the time. I didn't see any signs of wind in the trees. I thought that we must be having a flat, so I warned everyone as I pulled into the right lane, slowing down in preparation to stopping on the shoulder. But everything stabilized so I kept going (slowly) while I tried to figure out what had just happened. Within a mile we came to a rest area, so I stopped there to check the tires.

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LGB&D Board of Directors Meeting

Our next LGB&D board of directors meeting will be Tuesday November 4th, Election Day, from 7:30 pm — 9:00 pm at Doug & Genny Walker's home. All members are invited to attend. Please contact Doug.



Above — Cyril relaxes as he plays Trumpeten Echo at Julia's German Stammtisch, Columbia SC.

Below—Dick enjoys a moment with Kindergruppe members at Regency Oktoberfest.



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We couldn't see anything at all wrong with the tires. They all looked full and felt the same when we pushed against them. Not having an air gauge that was the best we could do. John was in the truck right behind us and saw us fish tail a little. He said that he had felt a wind gust in the truck about the same time. Since I had looked and hadn't seen any tree movements I had my reservations, but also had been pretty busy maintaining control. It could have been wind.

So, off we went again. Although somewhat warily. About 3 miles later all hell broke loose.

Once again we running about 70 when the dash lit up like a Christmas tree, the van felt like it shifted into neutral and the brakes started applying themselves on random wheels.

The key light was the transmission failure light, indicating we'd lost the transmission. Sure enough I could give it gas with no effect except for the tachometer showing that I was changing the engine rpm. The ABS light was on and that was what was applying the brakes randomly. I maintained control and got us safely off onto the right hand shoulder where I pronounced the van dead.

I called rental car company back in Raleigh, explained the situation and determined that they had an office in Fayetteville and we should be able to get a replacement van sent to us from there and get back on the road. Over the next hour I was on the phone repeatedly with them working through what and when they'd get something to us. They also said they were sending a tow truck for the van and that I should just leave the keys in the sun visor and the van unlocked.

At about the hour fifteen mark a tow truck arrived and proceeded to hook up. I asked him for a receipt, which he oddly seemed reluctant to give me. While he was writing up the receipt, people from rental car company finally showed up with another 15 passenger van, a chase car, and.... a Tow Truck.

They promptly got into it with the first tow truck driver. Turns out the first tow truck had not been called. He was basically a gypsy and had misrepresented himself to me as being from the "rental agency". Damn good thing I was asking him for a receipt. 5 minutes later, if the rental car company hadn't showed up when they did we would have been standing beside the interstate without our van trying to explain where their van was.

While they dealt with the tow situation we piled into the replacement van, one with a now safe sounding 15,000 miles on it, and hit the road again.

From your van driver's perspective the rest of the trip was uneventful, even if we cut it very close. We lost 90 minutes because of the breakdown, but there was just enough slack in the schedule for us to essentially start on time.

It was a good job, but you'll understand that getting there will probably be what I remember most about that trip.



Thanks LGB&D for Julia's!!

Leslie Deak, Dancer

I was again lucky to join the LGB&D for an out of state gig. Doug and Tony were responsible for recruiting me, and Cyril and Amy were responsible for driving me. So blame them. :)

Despite the unscheduled delay, the band made it in just enough time to get started. While the crowd was a bit slow to warm up, Julia was a wonderful hostess--mm, schnitzel! While the early march around in the first set was, um, sparse, I was able to lead a more enthusiastic crowd by the third set. I was lucky to meet up with some good friends in Columbia, and I convinced them to not only march around, but to dance Anton, which was a hit with the crowd.

Thanks again to all the wonderful band members who made my visit possible, and all those who welcomed me on site and put me to work--made me feel like a real, live performer!

Lower left — Phillip conducts the band at Julia' German Stammtisch, Columbia SC.

Below—Dick enjoys a moment with Kindergruppe members at Regency Oktoberfest.

Doug's memories & another verse to the Goat Song

Doug Walker, 2008 Music Director, Conductor, Trumpet, Drums, & Singer

Saturday, October 25 dawned rainy and wet in Raleigh, but the forecast was for decent weather as we headed south to Columbia for the Julia's German Stammtisch Oktoberfest. Jim Wagner picked up a brand-new Ford van with 3 miles on it. We departed on time at 10:00 am from the Super Wal-Mart in Garner with eight passengers, plus John and Mara Barnum in the truck.

Everything went smoothly until we got to Fayetteville. Then all of a sudden the whole van shook like it had been hit to the side. Jim pulled over at a convenient rest area and we checked it over for a blown tire; no problems could be found. So we cautiously resumed our trip.

Less than five minutes later, the "check engine" light came on and the van went completely out of gear – no transmission. We pulled over to the side of I-95, a lovely garden spot which we were to become very familiar with over the next 90 minutes. (If you want to check it out yourself, just get on I-95 South and pull over when you can first see the sign for Exit 44, Fayetteville Regional Airport.)

Fortunately, van rental company has a Fayetteville office. Their office was about 25 minutes away from where we broke down. Jim called the Raleigh office, who contacted Fayetteville. They said they had no vans available, but they would send someone out to pick us up and bring us to their office. It was unclear how all of us could get to their office, but at least someone was on the case. Of course, when Jim called back a half-hour later to check, the lady he talked to was out to lunch and he had to start from scratch explaining our situation to the new guy.

So, with less than full confidence in rental company, we started burning up the cell phone airways. Anthony Burgess, Cyril Sagan, and Connie Varner were known to be on the road to Julia's – could they stop and help? We contacted them and told them where we were. Leslie Deak was riding with Cyril and was also prepared to go pick my van up and bring it if necessary.

About 75 minutes into the drama, a tow truck showed up for the van and hooked it up, ready to go. We were truly about to be roadside vagabonds.

A brief 90 minutes after the breakdown – we hardly noticed the time passing, we were having so much fun – a replacement van and a car showed up. Hooray! All the cell phone car drivers, of course, had to be re-contacted and informed of the update.

As we were taking care of paperwork, a second tow truck showed for the van. Turns out the first guy was just driving down the interstate and was trying to jump the claim of the second guy. We thought it might come to a duel with tire irons by the side of the interstate, but we were disappointed – the first guy left empty-trucked.

So we were back on the road, in a working van, a mere 100 minutes behind schedule. The original plan called for setup starting at 4pm. We pulled into the Days Inn in Columbia at around 3:40 pm. That's when I discovered that, although I was listed as Business Representative, I had no rooming list and no instructions for how to pay or what to pay for the rooms. Although that slowed us down a bit, by 4:00 I had everyone situation in rooms and by about 4:07 we managed to pull out heading towards Julia's.

Arrival at Julia's was at 4:35 pm. We had a full audio setup to do, using 13 mikes, and we needed lights set up as well. Mara did a fantastic job with the audio – remember, she doesn't do this twice a weekend like Jere! - and we managed to start only 7 minutes late, with a leader mike. The band came online just a few minutes later. Our first song was "Auf der Autobahn", which Phillip stopped abruptly halfway through in honor of our trip.

So after all that, how was the gig? There was a pretty good crowd there, about 50% of which was standing in line for food for the first two sets. The line was about 90 minutes long at one point. Julia insists on FRESH SCHNITZEL, period, and yu vill WAIT if you vant it!

By fourth set, though, they were pretty well into the party and having a great time. We got to enjoy the great schnitzel during the second and third breaks. All in all a very good fest.

And, the obligatory Goat Song Verses:

*We broke down while travelling I-95, I-95, I-95
Julia's was waiting for us to arrive, ai-yi-yi-YI-yi-yi!*

*Sitting at roadside is not so much fun, not so much fun, not so much fun
We had to check in and get dressed on the run, ai-yi-yi-YI-yi-yi!*

*We made it to Julia's and started to play, started to play, started to play
Just 7 minutes, though, that was OK, ai-yi-yi-YI-yi-yi!*
