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Cal Poly Collegians Alumni Big Band To Play Aug. 27 at Madonna Inn

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Just as the swallows return to San Juan Capistrano in March, the Cal Poly Collegians Alumni Band members return to San Luis Obispo in August to entertain Central Coast music and dance lovers.

This year, the group will come home to roost Saturday, Aug. 27, and will perform big-band jazz and swing classics from 7 to 11 p.m. in the Madonna Inn Ballroom.

"Once a year these old guys polish up their horns, pack their bags, and return to Cal Poly," said band member Bob Alberti. The Cal Poly Collegians Alumni Big Band, one of the longest-running acts anywhere, has been performing on and off since the 1940s.

About 20 members of the group return to San Luis Obispo every year to remember the 'good old days' and play hits from Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Les Brown and other big bands of the 1940s, '50s and '60s, as well as arrangements from more contemporary big bands.

The Collegians Alumni Big Band was founded at Cal Poly in 1937 by longtime Music Department Head Harold P. Davidson. The band performed at dances and concerts in San Luis Obispo and toured throughout California until the early 1970s.

Members of the group from about 1950 to 1963 are now part of the alumni band. They come from throughout California, Arizona, Oregon, and at least one from as far away as Massachusetts since the mid-60s. Local members hail from Arroyo Grande, Atascadero, Pismo Beach and San Luis Obispo.

Trumpeter Michael Joiner, student winner of Cal Poly's 2005 Collegians Jazz Scholarship, will join the band for this year's performance.

In 1999 Alex Madonna personally invited the group to make the Madonna Inn the venue for their annual reunion performance, and the inn has renewed the invitation every year since.

Admission to the dance concert is free, though voluntary contributions for the Collegians' jazz scholarship at Cal Poly are welcome. For more information about the Cal Poly Collegians Alumni Big Band, call or e-mail Alberti at 461-5993 or rea@bibliotherapy.com, or visit the Collegians' Web site at www.calpoly.edu/~mu/collegians/Collegians.html.

For information about this and other Saturday night dances at the Madonna Inn, call 543-3000.

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http://www.calpolynews.calpoly.edu/news_releases/2005/aug_05/col...