



Welcome Roots in Blue to the USAF Band of Mid-America

By Airman First Class Bryan Andrews

The USAF Band of Mid-America has a new band at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, Roots in Blue. This six-piece ensemble has a diverse set of instruments that includes a banjo, an accordion, and a jaw harp to name a few, and has been busy rehearsing for upcoming tours. With their acoustic sound and folk/country flavor, the members of Roots in Blue bring a new sound to songs we all know and love. Formed in October 2014 under the direction of Master Sergeant David Vittetoe, the groups Non-Commissioned Officer In Charge, and Technical Sergeant Ryan Janus, the groups Music Director, the members of the band quickly came together around their unique sound.

When asked to describe Roots in Blue, MSgt Vittetoe said, “we’re taking the music of yesterday and today and giving it a more rootsy sound.”

The group recently returned from a tour to Louisville, Kentucky. Playing at high schools in the Louisville area, Roots in Blue brought the Band of Mid-Americas’ mission to life through their music and interactions with hundreds of high school students. “It’s a great time,” said Airman First Class Denver Murphy, the bands vocalist. “Seeing the kids involved is the best.”

The members of Roots in Blue are: MSgt David Vittetoe, bowron and drums; TSgt Ryan Janus, accordion, keys, and background vocals; Staff Sergeant Shauna Keubler, whistle, ukulele, and background vocals; SSgt Andrew Minns, banjo and guitar; A1C Denver Murphy, the bands’ lead vocalist; and A1C Bryan Andrews, acoustic bass and background vocals.

Roots in Blue is busy preparing new tunes, and eagerly awaits the opportunity to bring a piece of the USAF Band of Mid-America to new communities around the country. Their next performance will be with the Concert Band on their tour to Arkansas in March.