

From the Board

Gary Robbins, 2008-09 TBA President

Another school year has begun. I started my teaching career in 1979. Little did I realize I would still be teaching during the 2008-09 school year. This will be my 30th year to teach bands in Texas and only my SECOND job. I have been blessed to only work in two school districts. I did retire and get rehired by my school to work only one half of a day. What is most exciting about that is I do not have to get on the yellow buses and ride to football games. I really admire those of you who have taught several more years than I and you still ride the yellow buses. Whatever your individual job situation is, I hope you put forth your best effort and enjoy molding the lives of the students you teach. Have a great 2008-09 school year.

I applaud Cody Myers for putting together a fantastic '08 convention. Cody, as well as the TBA Board, worked hard to bring to you, our membership, a convention that would meet your teaching needs. The clinics and clinicians are to be commended for their efforts in providing materials that are useful in our teaching careers.

The concerts at the convention were phenomenal! I especially enjoyed the Lone Star Wind

Symphony and the composition they played in tribute to Al Sturchio. Al had no idea the TBA Board had commissioned Christopher Tucker to write a piece and debut it at the '08 convention. I would also like to thank Al's wife, Janice, for keeping it a secret.



I must take time to thank our exhibitors. They have done a wonderful job supporting our convention. It is always so much fun walking aisle after aisle seeing

the “new” ideas they bring to our members. It takes a lot of time and effort on their part to bring their goods and services to display. I hope each and every one of you takes the time to thank them for their support; and more importantly, support them by buying something or planning future business with them. Some of these exhibitors helped sponsor our clinics too. Even with rising fuel prices and a hurricane hitting the southern part of our state, we had a great turn out for the convention. Our TBA exhibitors are the best.

Congratulations again to all of the award winners. To see us honor our own is the highlight of most conventions for me. The meritorious

award winners and bandmaster of the year are truly deserving of their recognition. I always learn new aspects of the history of our great profession during their speeches. It was especially exciting for me this year to see my high school band director, Mr. Val Rose, be inducted into the Phi Beta Mu Hall of Fame. Mr. Rose—as I still call him—was such a big influence on my life as well as my career. He taught me values while teaching band. He taught me confidence and hard work. I hope all of us as educators can teach our students life lessons as well as music lessons like Mr. Rose did.

The 2008 TBA Convention/Clinic was sad as well as special this year. We had to say goodbye to our long term Executive Director, Al Sturchio. Al, along with his wife Janice, has been such an outstanding part of TBA for most of my teaching career. They have dedicated over two decades of their lives to TBA, and will truly be missed. The board of directors of TBA tried to make the '08 convention special for them. As I mentioned, we had a song commissioned in his honor. There was also a time set aside for those who knew Al to go by and recognize him at a reception. Brian Merrill did a great job organizing and getting people to speak at the reception. The board could not

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pass on the opportunity to present both of them with engraved rocking chairs for their retirement. Thanks again Al and Janice for your love and service to TBA!

Mike Brashear is ready and willing to start his position as the new Executive Director of TBA. He has been working side by side with Al since the first of July and the Board has asked Al to continue work as a consultant.

Mike is ready to take on the task of leading TBA into the future. I personally look forward to working with him. Mike officially took the position of TBA Executive Director on September 7th. The TBA Board looks forward to working with Mike for many years to come.

The TBA Board and staff are actively preparing the 2008-09 Professional Development Outreach Program. The schedule can be seen on the inside front cover. Clinics will be offered throughout the state to provide our members (and non-members) with CPE credit hours. Please visit our web site at www.texasbandmasters.org for more information. If you would be interested in teaching or hosting one in your part of the state, contact your Region Representative for more information.

I hope you are looking forward to another great year. Make every effort to get to know your students and their parents. Please take time to make a positive contact with the parents. They enjoy hearing the “good” things about their children too. If there is anything we can help you with, please do not hesitate contacting a member of the TBA board. Thank you for all you do to make our profession and our state an “exemplary” state when it comes to teaching band!
Gary Robbins

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