

# TBA News

**Mike Brashear, TBA Executive Director**

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Greetings from the Texas Bandmasters Association! I hope you have had a productive fall semester. Whether your focus is on producing and teaching your marching band, developing your middle school band program, or teaching beginners, I know how hard you have been working to meet your goals. We at TBA are committed to helping in every way possible. Your Board of Directors, under the leadership of President Gary Robbins, has already begun work with our office staff to prepare another outstanding Convention/Clinic next summer—July 26-29, 2009.

In addition to our annual convention, TBA is proud to offer several professional development outreach clinics this school year. A special thanks to our fall clinicians Marion West, Charlotte Royall, Jeff King, and Brian Merrill. This spring we offer five more sessions which will prove to be of great assistance to band directors. If you have ideas for a future outreach session in your area of the state, please contact your Region Representative, TBA Board member, or our office.

I am pleased to report that TBA continues to be the largest state band director organization in the country and is in a healthy financial

state due to great leadership of past boards and retired Executive Director Al Sturchio. We continue to enjoy strong support of our Business/Sustaining Members and count on them each summer for their presence at our convention.

Our membership attendance has shown steady growth through the past several years and we look forward to having even more new members join this summer. Please check our web site next spring for information concerning the 2009 Clinic/Convention. You will be able to renew your membership and pre-register for the convention beginning in January through our web site.

In an effort to provide the best convention experience possible while at the same time provide the best “bang for your buck”, I am pleased to announce that there will be no increase in membership or convention fees this year. Also, we have been able to negotiate with TBA hotels to hold yearly increases in room rates to no more than 1 to 2 percent each year over the next several years. Hopefully these steps will prove to be beneficial to our members and benefit TBA as we continue to grow.

Outside of our “band world”, the news on the national and state level has been more negative than positive this fall. From the damage resulting from Hurricanes Gustav and Ike, to the economic crisis, the crash of the stock market, job layoffs, and now a Recession, this has been a very stressful time in our history. In times like these, how wonderful it is to be a band director and be involved in something that is positive and uplifting for our students and their parents. For me, attending the first “concert” performed by the beginning band in December was always a highlight of my year. Seeing the excitement on the faces of these young students kept me grounded and reminded me why I chose to become a band director in the first place. Performing *Sleigh Ride* for the umpteenth time on the high school band’s holiday concert and observing parents leaving the concert whistling a happy tune reminded me of how band directors have the opportunity to create an uplifting moment for students and audience members alike. I hope that in the midst of correcting wrong notes, fixing rhythms, tuning all those chords, and selling band candy, we remember the real reason for making music and teaching young people—to provide them with a positive experience in band and to enjoy the beauty of making music. You really do have the opportunity to change lives in a positive way.

