

From the Board

Tom Harrington, 2009-10 TBA Vice President

Inspiration! There are times when I surely need some because winter can be a hectic time of the year: region auditions and clinics, holiday concerts, preparing for solo and ensemble contests, and well, you know the list. To help inspire you through these busy times take the opportunity to learn from the people

whom you respect in your area. Since there are so many great band directors in the state, it's a good bet there is someone close to home that would love to help you. Be aware that another



band director will be just as busy as you are and may not be able to clinic your band. Instead, take some time to "pick their brain" for ideas while you are both at your region clinic. Many college band directors make great clinicians as well. Even though they are quite busy, they are often happy to get out in front of future students. Also, consider asking a retired band director to come and clinic your band. Their years of experience should not be wasted and you might gain a genuine mentor. Be sure to take some time to enjoy your kids and the literature you are preparing, and I also hope you get some rest and a much deserved winter vacation.

My thanks to those who volunteer for All-Region auditions and clinics. I can't imagine the average audience member realizes the time and effort put into one

All-Region band concert. Hosting auditions, hiring judges, and organizing the clinic and concert are thankless jobs, but you are helping to provide the students in that band with a great experience. This is the first year that one of my own sons will be participating at All-Region, so there will be at least one parent in the audience that is aware of your efforts. I am very grateful to the directors of his region who are giving up their time to organize the event.

Congratulations to the bands that earned a place in the state marching contest. I am continually amazed at the number of outstanding programs across our state. Also, my congratulations goes out to all who earned that first division at region as well as anyone who can tell their students "we worked hard and we improved" regardless of the rating.

As the past TBA treasurer, I have had quite an education about how non-profit organizations work and the hard work put in at the TBA office. We are so very fortunate to have such a dedicated team lead by Executive Director Mike Brashear. At our September TBA board meeting we had an update from our accountant. She spent the better part of an hour covering new tax laws and procedures placed on non-profits by the IRS. She was very pleased to report that TBA is very compliant with IRS regulations and is on solid financial ground. She related TBA to a family that

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Texas Bandmasters Association 2009-10 Board of Directors

Brian Merrill
President

Meadows School of the Arts
Southern Methodist University
P.O. Box 750356
Dallas, TX 75275
214-850-7814
bgmerrill@sbcgobal.net

Don T. Haynes, Jr.
President Elect

LBJ High School
7309 Lazy Creek Drive
Austin, TX 78724
512-414-7032
donhaynes2@aol.com

Tom Harrington
Vice President

Spillane Middle School
17500 Jarvis Road
Cypress, TX 77429
281-352-3086
thomas.harrington@cfisd.net

Alfredo Vélez III
Treasurer

Sam Houston State University
School of Music
P.O. Box 2208
Huntsville, TX 77341
936-294-4009
email@alfredovelez.com

Richard Herrera
Secretary

Brandeis High School
13011 Kyle Seals Pkwy.
San Antonio, TX 78249
210-397-8300
richard.herrera@nisd.net

Bruce Beach
Sergeant at Arms
Franklin High School
900 N. Resler
El Paso, TX 79912
915-832-6608
beachbeachmus@aol.com

Gary Robbins
Past President
Rusk High School
800 Salem Road
Rusk, TX 75785
903-683-5533
gary.robbs@ruskisd.net

Michael Brashear
Executive Director
Texas Bandmasters Association
14501 Blanco Road
San Antonio, TX 78216
210-492-8878
mbrashear@texasbandmasters.org

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has its house paid for, all bills paid, no debt, and money in the bank.

TBA would like to begin raising additional funds for the Malcolm Helm Scholarship. As I'm sure you know, this is an endowed scholarship so the award comes partially from the interest earned. If you have a band parent or a member of your community with ties to local businesses who would like to contribute to the endowment, please contact Mike Brashear at the TBA office for information about making a tax-deductible donation to the fund.

Consider attending one of the professional development workshops in January. They are listed on the inside front cover. These are great opportunities to get some new ideas and network with other directors. This year we have a complete geographical representation across Texas. There have been workshops added in the valley as well as El Paso and Lubbock. Remember, the best ideas come from you. Be sure to

pass along any ideas for future workshops to your TBA region representative or a member of the Board.

I invite you all to attend this summer's TBA Convention/Clinic. Encourage young teachers who have never attended the convention to go. So many of us, and especially younger teachers, have become so accustomed to the internet being able to answer all our questions that we forget that sometimes the best way to learn about music is to hear it from the master teachers in person. Even though it is a great tool, when was the last time you were truly inspired while browsing the internet? Don't forget that in addition to the valuable clinics for both middle and high school teachers, the fellowship and networking is also an important part of the convention. I made the contacts for my first job at the TBA convention. There is no better place to get ready for the school year and absorb new information about teaching band. That healthy dose of inspiration will last the whole school year.