

From the Board “Who & What is TBA”

Richard Herrera, 2009-10 TBA Secretary

I want to thank the leadership of TMEA for the fabulous 2010 Clinic/Convention. In spite of the on-going renovations of Lila Cockrell Theatre, kudos to TMEA for their hard work in hosting all of the concerts. I have always enjoyed the all-state concerts, clinics, exhibits, and fellowship that Texas music educators take part in each year. TMEA has a rich and unique tradition that allows students to audition and be selected to perform at the convention. It is a pleasure and an honor to watch the all-state students and clinicians rehearse and prepare for their performances. Another highlight of the TMEA convention is the Honor Band concerts that showcase the best Texas has to offer. John Morrison, a good friend and colleague, said it best, “We come to TMEA to see the fruits of our labor with student performances. We go to TBA to learn how it’s done.” His statement provided the inspiration to write this article.

What is the purpose of TBA? To find the answers, one must first reflect on the TBA Mission Statement which states the purpose of the Texas Bandmasters Association, Inc.:

- Continually assist its membership in achieving the highest standards of instrumental music education.
- Promote the place and value of music education in our society and the important role instrumental music plays in our cultural, intellectual, and social lives.
- Foster goodwill, fellowship and a collegial, fraternal spirit among its members
- Provide its membership with an annual Convention/Clinic which introduces new music, tried and proven teaching

methods and materials as well as instruments and equipment.

- Provide Educational Publications of instructional methods and materials for TBA members and aid them with their personal development and leadership.
- Provide pertinent information for the university music student preparing to become a band director.

TBA offers many opportunities for band directors to receive continuing education, hone their craft, and connect with other directors. Most importantly, we learn how to get our students to the level of being able to perform at TMEA. Let’s face it, what other professional organization gives you a chance to learn from the guy that beat you at contest by presenting a clinic on how to do so? What a great collegial and fraternal spirit!

Who should attend the TBA Convention/Clinic? The answer is simple—every band director regardless of age, teaching experience or demographics. Take a minute and reflect on your first TBA convention. How did you find out about it? Who brought you?

I remember attending my very first TBA Convention/Clinic twenty-seven years ago. I completed my last summer session at West Texas State University and was on my way to Rankin, Texas to be assistant band director to Gordon Shultz. On the way to San Antonio, Gordon and I picked up Lucky Floyd in Iraan. Wow, talk about on the job training!

Two of the best band directors in Texas were talking “shop” and I was learning—the way TBA intended for band directors to learn. Gordon and Lucky introduced me to many band directors at that convention.



Veteran band directors need to encourage young band directors to attend the TBA Convention/Clinic. Young men and women will learn their craft as well as experience goodwill, fellowship and professional unity. As teachers and mentors, it is vital to communicate with former students who are interested in becoming band directors. Show them that TBA offers a wealth of knowledge for university students.

Finally, the veteran director should attend the convention to learn new and effective teaching strategies for today’s “digital” student learner.

TBA President Brian Merrill and the Board of Directors are planning a wonderful convention for this summer. The clinics will feature the latest teaching methods presented by prominent Texas band directors as well as nationally renowned clinicians, teachers, and performers.

As you make plans to attend the TBA Convention/Clinic, ask yourself these two questions: **Who can I bring to the convention?** **What do I need to learn there?**