

From the Board

John Morrison, 2013-14 TBA Sergeant-at-Arms

Friends! It is not possible to measure my enthusiasm for the opportunity to serve you on the Board of Directors for TBA. I have always been a fan of the Texas Bandmasters Association as a professional teacher training organization, but equally as enthusiastic about the opportunity the organization provides to network and reconnect with colleagues and friends at its annual meeting.



The bar for the TBA convention keeps climbing year after year and one thing is for sure, Fred and Heidi Vélez put on a great convention for us this past July. The concept of the shared convention space and relationship with TODA and TCDA is a win-win situation for us all. We can't thank our TBA Executive Director Mike Brashear and his wife Priscilla enough for seeing to it that the shared convention was such a success and still maintained our unique TBA "feel".

Having just completed eight years as the TMEA Region Band Chairman for my region, I completely understand what it means to serve our profession. Many great opportunities and fond relationships were built during that time and my respect for our state's musical leaders Richard Floyd with

UIL, Robert Floyd with TMEA, and Mike Brashear with TBA, is only amplified now with this most recent opportunity.

It was only when I truly became more involved in the service side of our profession that I began to understand what our organizations really did for our profession. Yes, I actually started reading the *Southwestern*

Musician, *The Leaguer*, and the *Bandmasters Review* publications. Who knew that those could be so helpful to us as teachers. My hope is that if you are reading this, you might be inspired to find a colleague that doesn't know about the wealth of information, answers to questions, and simple resources for teaching found in these publications and share that knowledge you have about our state musical organizations' publications.

One aspect you cannot escape in our profession is San Antonio. Many of your vehicles can plot an auto pilot course to San Antonio for the many events that city has hosted for our profession. The thing I can tell you about that drive for me personally is that each year, the drive to San Antonio gets shorter and the drive home gets longer. Honestly, the enthusiasm for reconnecting with

colleagues in San Antonio and then the return to our normal routines is what likely fuels those differences in travel perception. I am certain that I can't be the only person that feels this way.

TBA has proven year after year to be a great venue for providing that kick-start to everyone's school year. Now when I say kick-start, I refer mostly to the direct application of professional training at a time where things can be put into motion just in time for the start of school. It might be a beginner instrument "how to" clinic or maybe a curriculum "model" panel discussion. Generally shared at a time in the summer when discussions with colleagues or administrators before school starts allows for meaningful implementation of new strategies or change in your programs. Who can argue that dialogue with colleagues outside of the classroom can't be included in our professional development? We know that the great clinics provide for a wealth of information but the exhibit floor is no stranger to professional development either. I walked into a conversation on the exhibit floor between Peter Zaffos from Westlake HS and Brian Eisemann from The Woodlands HS on techniques used to evaluate efficient wind instrument embouchures. I listened in for about ten minutes and certainly took away some things to implement right away at my own school. What a

great venue to provide for that kind of conversation and professional growth.

I presume that if you are reading this that you may also fit a profile similar to mine of the lifelong learner and musical servant. I ask you to find one colleague that you know hasn't been attending our convention, due to challenges we all face, and find a way to get them to San Antonio. Sometimes we have to be creative in our conversations with our colleagues about troubleshooting the reasons for not attending. Sharing ideas like ride sharing, hotel room sharing, meals that are included like the BBQ and business meeting luncheon, etc., are certainly how many of us ever got to San Antonio at some point in our career.

How many professional organizations include families in the annual planning for their conventions?

My family has always enjoyed coming with me to the convention. While I'm in workshops they are able to enjoy the family activities. Childcare for the little ones is also included...what a deal! Sam Pugh, a colleague of mine from Houston, and his family scored big by winning "Family 4 Packs" of tickets to Fiesta Texas AND Schlitterbahn-New Braunfels, at two separate spouse and family events sponsored by TBA. Additionally, I saw many colleagues with friends and families enjoying the free river boat ride at the BBQ. Who can beat that for total convention planning?

My challenge for you is to find that colleague that you know could benefit from attending OUR convention, and make sure they get there. My wife Dena and I, along with our kids Brandon and Rebecca, look forward to serving you and your families.