

# Bandmasters Review



An Educational Publication of the Texas Bandmasters Association



*Celebrating the Season*



December 2014 • Volume 16, Issue 2



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# Bandmasters Review

An Educational Publication of the Texas Bandmasters Association

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*TBA publishes these educational articles for your use in the classroom and rehearsal hall and to share with your students as you wish. The opinions and teaching methods are those of the authors and not necessarily shared by all members of the TBA staff and Board of Directors.*

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# From the Board

## Steven Moore, 2014-15 TBA President Elect

Well it's December and that means football playoffs, All Region tryouts, Christmas parades, Christmas concerts and the end of the third six weeks. I get tired just typing all of this. Don't you just love that question that you get from people, "What are you gonna do now that marching season is over?" As we all know, we are just getting started when we put the Sousaphones away.

I hope that your fall semester was rewarding and that you were able to accomplish the goals you set before you began. I was able to attend the State Marching Contest this year and would like to congratulate all who participated. It was an amazing exhibition of the quality of music education that exists in the great state of Texas. Every group in attendance was full of talented, hard-working students and teachers who were committed to doing their best and it showed in their performances on the field. That was also evident all over the state at Area and Region Marching Contests and the numerous other contests held throughout October. So as you wind down and evaluate your marching season, be sure to look at more than how you did at contest or where you placed at Area or State. Ask yourself: did we get better? Did we get close to or even reach our potential? Did we enjoy the process as much as the product? Remember that there are many ways to measure success; be sure to look for them and use them to build your program.



As I mentioned earlier, it's December and the year sure is flying by. Before you know it, the school year will be over and the TBA Convention/Clinic will be here. President Bruce Beach, the TBA Board, and TBA staff are hard at work to bring you an outstanding convention this coming summer. Make your plans to attend and be sure to bring your family. The dates are Thursday-Sunday, July 23-26 and I hope to see you there.

This past summer at the convention, I was headed to an 8:00 a.m. clinic on Wednesday morning (the last day of the convention) and was following a crowd of people headed to do the same. I thought, "Wow, how great it is that our band directors are up and headed to 8:00 a.m. clinics on the last day of convention." As I continued walking, I began to notice that many of our clinicians who had presented earlier in the convention were on their way to **ATTEND CLINICS**. I thought that this is why Texas has the greatest band programs. We have educators committed to developing and improving their craft each and every day.

As I close this article, I hope that your concerts and performances are a fitting end to your semester. Be sure to enjoy the upcoming holidays and take time to relax with family and friends. God Bless and Merry Christmas to all!

# Cancer Blows!

Jeff King, 2014-15 TBA Vice President

On October 23, 2012 I had the privilege of having Ryan Anthony (Dallas Symphony Orchestra Principal Trumpet) come out to Duncanville High School to present a master class for our trumpet students. Wow, what an experience for us all. This is when I got to know Ryan Anthony a little and discovered that we both had a connection and relationship with my former trumpet teacher, James Darling (Cleveland Symphony Orchestra).



Over the past couple of years, we have kept up through Facebook.

The following month, November 2012, Ryan Anthony had just completed a guest appearance with his old group the Canadian Brass and wasn't feeling well. Recent chronic aches sent the 43-year old to multiple doctors searching for the cause. Blood tests revealed abnormalities, but the doctors reassured him "It can't be cancer." Fortunately, one doctor decided to test "just in case". The day after the Canadian Brass concert, Ryan got a call that no one is prepared for. Ryan had been diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma, a terminal cancer of the bone marrow that most often appears in patients 70 years and older. Ryan immediately began intensive treatment including chemotherapy and a stem cell transplant in Dallas at Baylor Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center.

During his transplant, Ryan was overwhelmed with phone calls from trumpet players all over the world. Everyone asked what they could do to help. Ryan jokingly started saying, "We'll

play a concert when I am healthy again, and we'll call it *Cancer Blows*." As the weeks went by, the joke solidified into a real event with an impressive guest list. Soon Ryan realized the event could be used to raise awareness and money to further the

research that has helped give his family and others hope for the future.

Ryan returned back to work with the Dallas Symphony in fall of 2013. While currently in remission he continues active treatments every other week to battle this disease.

Just ten years ago, Multiple Myeloma was a death sentence with a life span of 3-5 years. While the cancer is still considered incurable and terminal, recent, rapid advances in research have greatly extended the life span of newly diagnosed patients and hope for a cure is a real possibility.

Cancer Blows™ is a once-in-a-lifetime musical event bringing together legendary trumpet players in a special concert on March 4, 2015. Trumpeters including Doc Severinsen, Arturo Sandoval, Lee Loughnane (from the band Chicago), former trumpet players from the Canadian Brass and more will join members of the

## Mission Statement

The purpose of the Texas Bandmasters Association, Inc. is to:

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 information for the university music student preparing to become a band director.

## From the Board, Jeff King

Dallas Symphony Orchestra. The concert will be conducted by Jeff Tyzik and the UNT One O'Clock Lab Band in the Meyerson Symphony Center to honor Ryan Anthony while raising money for cancer research. Other artists currently scheduled to perform include Jens Lindemann, Ronald Romm, Joe Burgstaller, Allen Vizzutti, Vince DiMartino, Byron Stripling, Wycliffe Gordon, Chris Jaudes, Anthony DiLorenzo and Marvin Stamm.

In addition to the main event on March 4, "Meet the Principals" is scheduled for Monday, March 2, 2015, in the Dallas Arts District.

This day-long event will include principal trumpet players representing ten of the top symphony orchestras in a panel discussion at Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing Arts. The discussion will be followed by a concert and recording session at the Dallas City Performance Hall.

A partial list of artists currently scheduled to perform at "Meet the Principals" includes Phil Smith, Michael Sachs, Chris Martin, Dave Bilger, David Krauss, Manny Laureno, Matthew Ernst, Mark Hughes, Mike Walk and the members of the Dallas Symphony trumpet section.

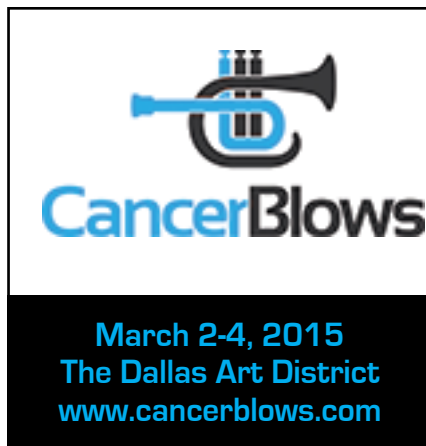
Also, on Tuesday, March 3, 2015, select artists will appear at Southern Methodist University's Meadows School of the Arts for Master Classes and Clinics for students and the public.

For tickets, please contact [www.TicketDFW.com](http://www.TicketDFW.com); 214-871-5000.

For additional information on Cancer Blows™ and all events, visit

[www.CancerBlows.com](http://www.CancerBlows.com), contact [info@CancerBlows.com](mailto:info@CancerBlows.com), or call 972-203-2393.

Donations made to: The Ryan Anthony Foundation. From there we will give 100% of the proceeds divided between Baylor Health Care System Foundation and Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation.



The TBA Convention/Clinic is held at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center on the banks of the Riverwalk in beautiful downtown San Antonio.

**Texas Bandmasters Association  
Convention/Clinic  
Thursday - Sunday, July 23-26, 2015  
Registration opens online  
February 9, 2015  
[www.texasbandmasters.org](http://www.texasbandmasters.org)**

# From the Board

Chico Portillo, 2014-15 TBA Treasurer

**“The Man Who Does Not Read Has No Advantage Over the Man Who Cannot Read.”** – Mark Twain

I recently came across this quote at one of our middle schools. It is printed on a poster and hangs in the main hallway of the school. Although the quote is from 1914, it is new to me. Seeing it made me stop and wonder about the responsibility we have to insure literacy in our schools and how it applies to music education. Are we doing a good job of teaching our music students how to read quality literature? How well are we doing in teaching them how to write and/or notate music?

I feel great about the answer to the first question. We teach music performance very well. We continue to raise the level of expectation with regard to the literature our students

ultimately perform. The assessment and feedback that we receive in the UIL sightreading room indicate the ability at which our students can demonstrate an understanding of how to read and perform music. Keep up the outstanding work!

The second question regarding writing music is an area where I have no idea how we are doing. Writing music is not outwardly assessed like the reading component. We must teach these writing skills, as it is a part of our state curriculum. The ability for students to demonstrate

comprehension through written notation is a valuable tool for a teacher. It is a window into the student’s mind allowing us to see what they understand and can communicate. Let’s keep up the effort in teaching the elements of writing music, and share ideas with each other as to the many approaches that are used in teaching these valuable skills.

I look forward to seeing you soon, and hope that you have a wonderful Holiday Season!



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# TBA News

## Michael Brashear, TBA Executive Director

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Greetings from the TBA office! Congratulations on the many successful fall and winter concerts, pep rallies, football game performances, marching contests, All District and Region Band auditions, and the many other band activities from the fall semester. As you look forward to some relaxation during the holidays, I hope you reflect on the positive impact you have had on your students. Enjoy your time off with family and friends and recharge your batteries for an exciting spring semester.

I am pleased to recognize the bands that advanced to the UIL State Marching Contests. (See page 28.) What a thrill it was to sit in the press box and observe the outstanding performances of these many bands. The quality and artistry of the music and show design continues to reach new heights each year! Congratulations also to the winners of the 2014 National Association of Military Marching Band Contest listed on page 26.

For the first time, TBA will have a booth at The Midwest Clinic to advertise our convention and invite Midwest attendees to attend the TBA Convention/Clinic. If you are at Midwest this year, stop by our booth and help us spread the TBA word! Congratulations to the seventeen different schools and universities presenting concerts at Midwest. (See page 27.) Good luck to those groups as they travel to Chicago to share their talents with attendees from all over the world. Music education is definitely alive and well in Texas!!



I am excited that in 2015 TBA will feature five different community bands at our convention. The lineup includes:

***Carrollton Wind Symphony***

Jim McDaniel, conductor

***El Paso Wind Symphony***

Dr. Ron Hufstader, conductor

***Lone Star Symphonic Band***

Bob Bryant, conductor

***Naperville, Illinois Municipal Band***

Ron Keller, conductor

***The Woodlands Concert Band***

Paul Worosello, conductor.

With the number of community bands on the rise, more and more musicians (both amateur as well as professional) are now able to enjoy performing throughout their lifetime. This opportunity to be a lifelong musician is the natural result and culmination of great music education in band programs today. We look forward to hosting over 400 members of community bands in addition to the band directors, spouses and families, band boosters, and student day attendees at our 2015 Convention/Clinic.

I hope you enjoy reading the educational articles in this edition of the TBA *Bandmasters Review*. The material presented by these outstanding contributors provides a wealth of information for us as band directors. To you and your family, have a safe and restful holiday season!!



# Start With The End in Mind!

**Randy T. Gilmore, Owner/President, Marching Show Concepts, Inc.**



What if you suddenly arrived at the place you've wished for, or dreamed about, or worked so hard to get to... Would you recognize it? Do you know what it looks like?

Have you taken the time to really see it in your mind? If not, what would keep you from going right past it? Or even missing an opportunity to end up there?

In *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey, Perhaps the most practical, maybe even the most powerful, of those habits is Dr. Covey's advice to "Begin with THE END in mind." Success, by design. Whether a blueprint for your next year's marching band program or a recruitment plan for building your instrumentation. It works. Begin with THE END in mind. That's how to arrive at any destination you desire. It's been said many different ways over the years...Start any project or goal by thinking about where you want to end up.

Epictetus (like Shakespeare, but older) got the ball rolling toward THE END in the second century when he wrote, "First say to

yourself what you would be, then do what you have to do." That is beginning with THE END in mind. "I choose...THIS!" Now how can I become that? Or how can I get there? Or how can we make it happen? The answers are in the questions and in knowing what success looks like when you arrive there. Ask yourself what your program might look like and then begin the process to arrive there one day. It takes hard personal work on yourself, your strengths, your skills, your values and how you can bring that value to your students until you arrive at THE END you have in mind.

If today is the first day of the rest of your life...how will you begin it? How will you begin your list of new beginnings? Beginning can be easy to do. Like... Beginning to write hand-written notes to say thank you. Beginning new students on instruments that you are going to

be short on in two years. Beginning to learn about new teaching techniques or reviewing techniques from someone (you consider successful) has recommended.

Beginning to write down your goals. Beginning your new teaching techniques.

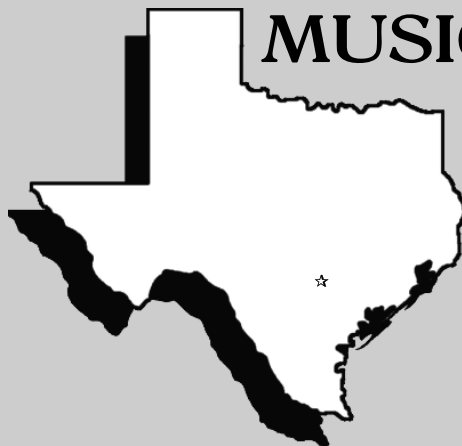
Begin with something new in mind... The End... the who or what, the someone or something you want to become.

Beginning with THE END in mind is a major key in discovering your success. Understanding when you do, that the real payoff (the arriving) is in THE BECOMING. What you will become on your way to THE END.

Successful directors and successful programs know it lies in our personal commitment to go there...All the way to THE END.

Here's to great Endings!

**Ask yourself what your program might look like and then begin the process to arrive there one day.**



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## CONCERT and FESTIVAL WORKS

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# Cooperation Creates Victory

Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser

---

We are a society that thrives on *competition*. We *compete* in school for grades, we *compete* in our professional lives to achieve positions and titles, and we *compete* in our daily life-patterns for everything from a faster lane on the freeway to a winning number in the local lottery. We like to win, to get ahead, and to maneuver ourselves to a better vantage point. Perhaps Darwin's proposed theory in his popular writing, *Survival of the Fittest* clearly evidences our competitive spirit—our ongoing, ever-present, striving to get to the front of the pack. It is powerful motivational fuel for the human, but like any energy force, *competition* can be used in a positive and/or negative fashion. The athletic community has very successfully embraced competition as a traditional outgrowth of the physical education curriculum. Football games, basketball tournaments, track and field meets, etc. have become mainstays of every institution. School themes are built around a string-of-victories or a state championship; the winning team often becomes the flagship of community pride. Though it is a gross generalization, we see winning as good and not-winning as not-so-good.

Observing the positive enthusiasm generated by

*competition*, other disciplines have quickly jumped on the bandwagon. Our schools now have science fairs, 4-H shows, debate clubs, essay contests, and music festivals recognizing the achievements of an array of talents ranging from a flute solo to a 400-piece marching band.

The good news is that all of these organized competitive forums have created much excitement; however, we must be clearly aware there can be a downside to the win-at-all-costs attitude. As educators, the cautionary responsibility rests directly on our shoulders. Take heed, for the instant gratification of first place can become a haunting detriment when it alone is the measure of accomplishment.

When we ask students to “go the extra mile” by committing their valuable time to the art of making music, we must focus on the *intrinsic benefits* they will gain as a result of their investment, rather than the *extrinsic rewards* that come as a by-product of their dedication. If “getting first place” is more important than the joy of

an inspired performance (whatever the adjudication outcome), then it is time to do some philosophical re-prioritizing. Is the goal to add more trophies of achievement to the shelves in the rehearsal room or to stretch the students to a new level of artistic communication? The musical growth of the students **must** stand as the top priority in every instance.

Over the years the ongoing debate about the value-of-competition (in our musical world) has caused many music educators to avoid any aspect of adjudication/evaluation. Much like the ostrich with its head in the sand, this may be an over-reaction or escape. It may also be an unrealistic approach to preparing our students to address the realities of life. At the same time, if everything from chair placement to a solo audition is couched in a competitive framework, the need to beat the fellow musician takes precedence over the personal growth and development gained by a solid program of healthy self-discipline. The key to a successful balance is achieved through the careful guidance of the teacher.

**Instead of dangling the proverbial competitive carrot in front of the student/s, we might be better served if we reward and recognize their success-habits/patterns.**

## Cooperation Creates Victory

Instead of dangling the proverbial competitive carrot in front of the student/s, we might be better served if we reward and recognize their success-habits/patterns. For example:

**1. Resolving a problem.** Many students are quick to recognize or identify problems, but there are few who will come up with a resolution. Those who do should be put in the spotlight and given responsibilities within the program.

**2. Being a quiet, innovative student leader.** Identify those silent few who are always finding ways to make things better. Discover the student who, without a hint of fanfare, is willing to help others and requires little or no personal attention for his/her efforts. This is a role model worth his/her weight in gold.

**3. Making decisions and taking action.** There are many who “wait to be told what to do,” then do it remarkably well. Look for those who go one step beyond and are willing to take a stand, make a choice, and follow-through on their decisions; herein lies the leader of tomorrow.

**4. Loyalty.** In today’s world loyalty is a treasured attribute. Competition is the test of one’s loyalty, not when we win, but when we lose. To avoid the, “If we can’t win, I quit!” attitude, reinforce the character strength of loyalty. **Together we stand, divided we fall.**

**5. Cooperation.** Nothing is impossible when a group of individuals chooses to make cooperation the theme of their working atmosphere. Alternatively, it is almost impossible to move any group forward when they are constantly competing to gain the upper hand on their fellow performers.

It is apparent we needn’t beat another person or persons to WIN. We simply need to improve ourselves to experience the intrinsic victory that is a result of learning, growing, *becoming*. To this end, let us continue to support one another in the ongoing exploration of artistic expression and realize the value of competition is merely a stepping stone for our students to witness others who share a similar passion. When all is said and done, we must *band together* if we ever hope to attain true victory.

*Tim Lautzenheiser is a trusted friend to anyone interested in working with young people in developing a desire for excellence and a passion for high level achievement. His career involves ten years of successful college band directing at Northern Michigan University, the University of Missouri, and New Mexico State University. Following his tenure at the university level, he spent three years with McCormick’s Enterprises working as Executive Director of Bands of America. In 1981, Tim created Attitude Concepts for Today, Inc., an organization designed to manage the many requests for workshops, seminars, and convention speaking engagements focusing on the area of positive attitude and effective leadership training. Over two million students have experienced his acclaimed student leadership workshops over the last three decades. He presently serves as Vice President of Education for Conn-Selmer, Inc. In addition, he continues his rigorous travel schedule touting the importance of arts education for every child.*

*His books, produced by G.I.A. Publications, Inc., continue to be bestsellers in the educational world. He is also co-author of popular band method Essential Elements and is the Senior Educational Consultant for Hal Leonard, Inc. Tim is the Senior Educational Advisor for Music for All and NAMM (The International Music Products Association).*

*Tim holds degrees from Ball State University and the University of Alabama. In 1995 he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the VanderCook College of Music. He is presently an adjunct faculty member at Ball State University (Earl Dunn Distinguished Lecturer), Indiana-Purdue/Ft. Wayne University, and Butler University. In addition, he serves on The Midwest Clinic Board of Directors and the Western International Band Clinic/American Band College Board of Directors.*



# Forming a Single Lip Clarinet Embouchure

Phillip O. Paglialonga, D.M.A.

Learning how to correctly form an embouchure is an often-overlooked skill for clarinetists. This skill is important not only for learning how to become a more effective teacher, but also for increasing understanding of the mechanics of the instrument.

The goal of any clarinet embouchure is simply to allow maximum control of a reed vibrating to its full potential. Generally speaking a reed vibrating to its full potential will offer the most resonant sound possible, and consequently allow for the most musically expressive potential.

The embouchure should always be formed around the musculature of the face and should require a minimum amount of conscious manipulation while playing. Unless playing in an extremely high register or using an extended technique, the embouchure should remain essentially still.

Oftentimes people over estimate the amount of manipulation required. To demonstrate how little manipulation is required, turn the mouthpiece around on the instrument so that one person can blow and another can finger. It is often striking to realize that all of the notes come out just fine when someone else is doing

all of the fingerings. Every note in the Chalumeau register (those notes played without the register key) and the Clarion register (those notes played with the register key; from B4 to C6) should speak easily without any conscious embouchure or tongue manipulation.

## Forming an embouchure:

### 1. Line up your teeth:

Line up your front, top, and bottom teeth. I generally use my index finger as a guide to ensure that they are lined up correctly.

### 2. Open as wide as your finger:

Open your teeth as wide as your index finger being sure to keep your teeth lined up. (Do not worry about variations in people's finger sizes.)

### 3. Roll to the color change:

Roll your bottom lip in over your teeth so that the color change is roughly lined up with the edge of your bottom teeth. I define the color

change as the line on your lip where the red part of your lip turns to skin. Be careful not to roll in too much lip. The pressure point will be where your bottom lip will contact the reed. You can check to

see if you have rolled in too much lip by pressing your index finger against your pressure point. If you can press hard on your pressure point with your finger without discomfort, you are likely rolling in the correct amount

of lower lip. If you feel discomfort when pressing on the pressure point, be sure that you have not rolled in too much lower lip. (Note: Depending on the exact type of sound you would like to achieve you may roll in even less lower lip than is suggested here. If you prefer to play with a more vibrant sound like Robert Marcellus, you may find you need to roll in even less lower lip. Generally speaking the less lower lip you roll in, the more vibrations of the reed you will



## Forming a Single Lip Clarinet Embouchure

allow. Conversely, rolling only to the color change will produce a sound more mellow—more like the sound of Larry Combs. For my taste I generally like to have 3/4 of the red part of my lip rolled over my teeth. In any case, you should never roll beyond the color change as this will dampen the reed considerably.)

### **4. Place the mouthpiece against your top teeth only:**

Insert the clarinet mouthpiece in your mouth so it rests against your top teeth only. Do not move anything else in your face during this operation. You should be able to hold the clarinet in place this way only holding the clarinet with your right thumb on the thumb rest. The clarinet should balance nicely with roughly the correct amount of mouthpiece in the mouth. Be sure not to move your lips or to change the position of your teeth during this step.

### **5. Move your bottom jaw forward and bring your corners in to make a seal:**

Move your bottom jaw forward (parallel to the floor) until it meets the reed. At this point your bottom teeth should be slightly in front of your top teeth. Then bring the corners of your embouchure in towards the mouthpiece to make a seal. Be careful not to allow the position of your bottom lip to change as you make a seal.

**6. Blow-- “Shh!”:** Without moving anything, blow “Shh!” as if you are telling someone to be quiet.

It is not difficult to form an embouchure following these six simple steps once they are understood. The difficulty is holding on to each step once it is formed as you play.

I have started beginners this way and they almost always have little trouble making a well-formed embouchure quickly. College students who have developed issues with some aspect of their embouchure, however, find maintaining this new embouchure incredibly difficult. I usually like to remind my students that if you want to get a lot better you need to do something a lot different. It is possible to fix a troubled embouchure after years of incorrect habits if you are committed to the change and to the necessity of the change.

## Further Refinement

As a teacher I firmly believe in what I refer to as “positive teaching”. I feel that the teacher should try to show students a constructive direction to move forward, and resist the temptation to teach through a series of corrections. When teaching through corrections students get immediate results, but usually are left feeling lost and ultimately struggle to eventually know how to teach the same things to their students.

When you tell a student a correction they also tend to go too far in that direction and ultimately end up with the opposite problem. Furthermore, they have a difficult time articulating their pedagogical beliefs.

Once students have been taught to form an embouchure in the manner outlined above you can continue to refer back to these simple underlying principles to further refine their mechanics.

(See the chart on the following page.)

## Forming a Single Lip Clarinet Embouchure

Audible Issue	Probable Cause	Embouchure Step(s) to Review
High notes don't speak easily	Not enough of the reed is in the mouth. The bottom teeth need to be in front of the top teeth at all times.	1. Line up your teeth 5. Move your bottom jaw forward and bring your corners in to make a seal
Undertone audible when playing extremely soft	Not enough of the reed is in the mouth. The bottom teeth need to be in front of the top teeth at all times.	1. Line up your teeth 5. Move your bottom jaw forward and bring your corners in to make a seal
Sound is pinched or extremely thin	Either too much lip is rolled over the lower teeth or the jaw is collapsing.	2. Open as wide as your finger 3. Roll to the color change
Sound seems to lack color and is dull	Likely too much lip is rolled over the lower teeth, but biting could be contributing to this as well.	2. Open as wide as your finger 3. Roll to the color change
Sound is small, but the quality is good	Not enough mouthpiece is in the mouth.	4. Place the mouthpiece
Uncontrollable speak	Too much mouthpiece is in the mouth.	4. Place the mouthpiece against the top teeth only
Quality of the sound is spread	Tongue is too low in the mouth.	6. Blow "Shh!"

Clarinetist Phillip O. Paglialonga teaches at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia. He is a founding member of the PEN Trio ([www.PENtrio.com](http://www.PENtrio.com)) which regularly tours throughout the United States and is represented by Price Rubin & Partners. In the summer months Dr. Paglialonga is on the faculty at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Michigan. More information about Dr. Paglialonga is available on his website ([www.thefirstgissilent.com](http://www.thefirstgissilent.com)).

# Conducting Master Class Website

## Announcing an Exciting New Resource for Band Directors

**Richard Floyd**

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So, how would you like to hear tuba performing artist Sam Pilafian, French Horn virtuoso J.D. Shaw and University of New Mexico Director of Bands Eric Rombach-Kendall discuss performance and tempo considerations in the *Holst Suite in Eb*?

What about Allan McMurray Former Director of Bands at the University of Colorado talking about how to “Listening for the Heart Beat in the Music?”

Or, Frank Ticheli at the piano presenting an in-depth interview addressing all aspects of *Fortress* which was one of his first works for winds?

Perhaps you would be interested in a session with Dr. Mark Spede at Clemson University talking about “Time and the Conductor.”

How about rehearsal demonstrations on Sousa’s *The Gallant Seventh*, Ticheli’s *Cajun Folk Songs*, Vaughan Williams’ *Rhosymedre*, or Ron Nelson’s *Courtly Airs and Dances*? The list goes on and on.

Maybe a discussion of the Past, Present and Future of Music Education by Frank Battisti, one of the icons of our profession, would be more to your liking.

Does all of the above sound like a commercial for The Midwest Clinic? After all, where else would you find all of those artist teachers accessible and presenting in the same place and at the same time?

In reality for decades the only resource for these kinds of presentations remained state, regional and national conferences. You, as a band director/music educator, would have to invest time and money to travel to the fountainhead of such resources and once there frantically move from session to session to reap the benefit of such collective knowledge. But thanks to current technology I am pleased to tell you there is a new resource that you can access from your band hall or your home and at your convenience that gives you entrée to video productions of all the above and much, much more. At present there are a collection

of 49 such video resources with countless more in production.

Where?

**[www.conductingmasterclass.com](http://www.conductingmasterclass.com)**

The Conducting Master Class website, launched November 1, 2014 is an exciting collaboration between the College Band Directors National Association and [www.banddirector.com](http://www.banddirector.com). The long-term objective for this initiative is to create a bountiful resource of concise videos created by collegiate band conductors addressing topics of interest and educational value to high school, middle school band director music educators and their students. Over time it is the vision of the College Band Directors National Association to include ever expanding presentations on repertoire, rehearsal strategies, instrumental pedagogy and other topics relevant to middle school and high school band programs.

Each video is designed to be 10 minutes or less in length addressing a specific, concise topic. In some cases topics of larger scope will be expanded to accommodate content over multiple segments. In every case it is the intention of the project to provide valuable, meaningful information formatted so a busy director can grab a cup of coffee, sit down, select a video of interest and 10 minutes later possess new or expanded relevant knowledge. Some videos addressing specific works will have meaningful content for student viewing as well.

You might think of this new resource as *Ted Talks* for band conductors and music educators.

How much is a subscription? Nothing. The resource is totally free. I encourage you to go to the site and check it out. Over time it will provide an abundant educational resource for you and your students.



# Guiding Students to Intonation Independence

Jason Schayot

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My band and I are on a quest. It is a year-long endeavor, including highs and lows that will culminate one day in late spring when I stand on the podium, and the band finally, majestically, plays in tune! The quest starts over each and every year, and it's never the same quest twice. Following are the philosophies, strategies and techniques I use to guide my musicians on this journey to intonation independence!

Students play in tune with each other when they:

1. Play with quality sound
2. Understand how to manipulate notes purposefully sharp or flat without sacrificing tone quality
3. Know what chord they are playing and can properly adjust their tuning responsibilities (in real time as the chord shifts around their individual parts)

Teaching with this three-part philosophy creates an ensemble of players who listens for their own sound, and the way their sound fits with the sound around them. They listen because they know what to listen for. Each type of chord, major, minor or otherwise, inherently possesses a certain feel. Great players are great listeners who maneuver and mold their sounds within the chords being played until everything resonates correctly.

The specific processes involved in teaching these three responsibilities utilize technology available to students that meets them where they are. My students in 2014 rely on visual learning far more than students did even ten years ago. We are now starting to see students in our bands that have grown up with access to multiple hand-held computers at home on a daily basis.

Here's an example of the society in which these children have grown up. Recently, my youngest daughter asked to take my wife's iPhone to school. When asked why, she explained that her teacher requested that each student bring a baby picture to school for a class project. My daughter assumed the only way to transport a photo to school was to take it there on an iPhone. It did not even occur to her that we could print a photo on paper!

With this reality in mind, and the amazing capabilities of these electronic devices, I work to capitalize on my students' fascination with, and ubiquitous access, to smart phones and tablet computers. My goal is to utilize visual reinforcement of the desired aural result: playing in tune with others.

## First Things First

It is extremely important that the band director clearly define intonation routines and expectations for the students from day one. We must determine ahead of time how the students will tune their instruments and how they will manipulate individual pitches. The specific methodologies will often differ from instrument to instrument. The first days of the school year are vital to establishing a pattern that will lead to success; whether you are in a newly created band position, a recently vacated band position or a brand new band program. I find intonation training is most successful in a small group setting—usually beginning with sectionals in summer band and continuing in band sectionals throughout the year. The most important thing to remember at the beginning of the year is that students must make characteristic sounds on their instruments first in order to tune those sounds.

## Tuners

Each student in the ensemble has a personal tuner with contact microphone, although these tuners are used within specific parameters. Band instruments are built to play in tune at operating temperature. Before each rehearsal, the students

# Guiding Students to Intonation Independence

are instructed to “warm up” the instrument – literally – to operating temperature for at least two minutes before ever turning on their tuners. In addition, students are explicitly banned from looking at their tuners as they start a tuning note. Instead, the student is told to hold the note until they locate the core, resonant sound while looking away from their tuner. They should always play notes down the center of their horns. Once the characteristic sound is achieved, the student can glance at the tuner, and adjust the instrument to bring it in tune.

## The Harmony Director

The year-long journey begins as described above. The next step in the process, however, occurs throughout the year. I play pure major and pure minor chords for the students using the Yamaha Harmony Director while they rehearse together in sectionals. While I play the chord, the students refer to their individual tuners in real time. We all use the same model of tuner, the Korg TM-50, so that we can reference that the third of any major chord lands at “the dot within the wedge” on the left, which is 13.7 cents flat on the Harmony Director in pure temperament. Likewise, we all adjust our third of the minor chord to “the wedge” on the right, which is 15.6 cents sharp on the Harmony Director.

This produces (for the students) a marriage of:

1. Aural input from the Harmony Director, and
2. Visual positive reinforcement from the Korg TM-50 tuner.

For those of you who are tuning buffs, the Korg TM-50 tuner does not register “2 cents sharp” when you isolate the fifth in pure temperament using the Harmony Director. Additionally, there are multiple findings that suggest that the human ear can only pick up a harmonic adjustment of 5 to 8 cents. (This includes UIL judges!) As a result, I have made

the conscious choice not to concern myself with adjustments to pure fifths in my ensembles.

I tend to look at all harmony as centered around either a major chord or minor chord. Thus, I approach an added 9<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> as a “color tone,” coloring the base chord and (in the case of a dominant seven chord) sometimes giving it harmonic motion. This leads the listener towards the next key center. As a result, I do not concern myself with harmonic adjustments to color tones. I have experimented with this for years and have been quite pleased with the resonance of the band once I finally made the commitment to only adjust thirds and look upon all other added 7<sup>ths</sup>, 9<sup>ths</sup>, 4<sup>ths</sup> and 6<sup>ths</sup> as color tones played without adjustment.

Once students consistently demonstrate the ability to navigate successfully the varied chordal responsibilities detailed above, I move that expectation out of the section rehearsal and into the band hall.

## Score study!

Great teachers and mentors in my life have always insisted that score study be completed before introducing a piece in sectionals, and I have heeded their advice to great benefit. Once I have my score study completed, I dedicate two to three sectionals on a piece (or movement) before moving it into the band rehearsal. This methodology allows me to infuse appropriate style, articulation, dynamic range and chordal responsibilities into a new piece in a small-group setting. Tuning is also best approached first in a small group, where there is less to listen through. I have learned from these very wise mentors to look at every musical phrase as utilizing either vertical tuning or horizontal tuning

- Horizontal tuning (equal temperament) - a musical line that does not interact “chordally” with other voices sounding at the same time. Often this is an ostinato, motif, sequence, or independent melodic line / counter

# Guiding Students to Intonation Independence

line. I have learned to look at this line in the score as a “horizontal” moment, as we read the independent line from left to right. All players that are in unison or octave who share a horizontal phrase would perform the line in equal temperament.

- Vertical tuning (pure temperament) - a moment in the score where multiple voices in the ensemble combine vertically across the height of the score to create a chord that would necessitate pure temperament adjustments from specific players.

Like their director, students are expected to write the chord analysis in their music. This is a very time-consuming process and must be done in sectionals. As we come upon a “vertical” moment, we stop and isolate the chord. I always play the chord on the Harmony Director while the students sustain their notes. The typical result is a very uncomfortable musical moment—a sustained chord with multiple flutters and beats around the room as students struggle to place their notes properly inside the chord being played by the Harmony Director. I then ask the section to make a couple of decisions aloud. Is this chord major or minor? What is the root of the chord? The entire process does take time at first, but by the end of the year, the students can often figure chords out by ear and it goes more quickly.

Once we have answered the key questions, I ask the students to write this information into their music. Students with the third circle the note. This is our shorthand for “adjustment needed.” They raise their pitch for minor and lower it for major. The fun part comes once we play the same phrase again and stop on the vertical moment. On the second try, with their chordal responsibilities written in, the students make the appropriate changes in their playing, and voila! A beautifully in-tune chord (or, at least, noticeably better) that they took responsibility for making.

## Tonal Energy Tuner

I keep the *Tonal Energy Tuner* app open and active during each sectional on an iPad. I use the *Analysis* tab exclusively to record students down the row. We band directors have grown up playing for our own teachers “down the row”—receiving short feedback after our performance before he/she moves on to the next student. I go about it in much the same way, however I use the *Analysis* tab to record the students down the row and play the recording back for them instantaneously. I pair the iPad with a Bluetooth speaker during the sectional so that I can stay mobile and show the students the spectral analysis and wave form of the performance as he/she listens to the playback.

There are a few logistical components involved in going down the row using the *Tonal Energy Tuner*. I keep an audible metronome clicking continuously throughout the recording for all students to hear. I ask each player in the section to wait 8 clicks (sometimes 12 to 16 depending on the current tempo) after the student preceding them finishes his/her excerpt. The student then performs his/her excerpt without interruption while maintaining a steady tempo. Once I have gone down the row and each player has performed, I stop the recording, save it, and immediately begin playback. The students are reminded to watch carefully the visual analysis while critically listening to the performance. They are expected to give a short and constructive comment aloud immediately following playback. Their comments must fit within the recorded beats of rest between players. This keeps rehearsal pace moving.

I hold the iPad in front of each student and press play . . . moving down the row once each player gives his/her self-assessment. With a little coaching, the students become very adept at focusing their comments on one thing that can make their performance better

# Guiding Students to Intonation Independence

in the future, rather than picking apart each mistake made in the past. This activity utilizes technology to capitalize on the students' cultural dependence on visual reinforcement and empowers them to interpret and analyze more readily what their ears are hearing in terms of intonation, tone, articulation, air flow and overall body of sound (overtones).

## Taking off the training wheels

By Pre-UIL in the spring, the students are so much more adept at adjusting their chords that tuning becomes almost second nature. By now, the individual tuner on each stand gets in the way of the students' musicianship. We keep the tuners on the stand for independent warm-up and tuning at the beginning of rehearsals and concerts, but turn them off once we are working on the music. It is amazing to hear the difference between a band at this stage playing with their tuners up and running, and the same band playing the same music with their tuners off. If the band has been working toward intonation independence all year, they will be ready to tune independent of the machine. The students move their performance to a level above all the individual pitches and the technological gadgets. They make music together infused with their intellect, passion and energy. The quest has reached its objective, and this is the moment of triumph... for this year!

## Join the quest!

I welcome any questions that you may have regarding your own journey as we guide our students towards intonation independence: [jason.schayot@risd.org](mailto:jason.schayot@risd.org).

## Acknowledgements

Every idea revealed in this article has been learned from many amazing educators in my life who inspired me to synthesize their information into something that worked for me. Thank you to Beth Bronk, Mary Ellen Cavitt and Rob Myers for all of your fantastic clinics at TBA and TMEA regarding intonation and the Yamaha Harmony Director. Much of what I teach grew out of your body of work! Rodney Klett was my mentor in Georgetown, and helped me understand how to analyze a score and break it down for the students. He is an amazing educator and musician, and I learned so much from him. Lynne Jackson is a dear friend and colleague at Berkner who has been a driving force for the documentation of my intonation work by inviting me to SMU to give clinics to her graduate classes for the past three years. I owe much to Andrew Weak and Chris Pineda who lead our two fantastic feeder junior highs—Apollo JH and Liberty JH. Their attention to fundamentals, quality of sound and articulation empowers the high school directors to take the students to the highest level. Finally, so much credit and gratitude goes to Frank Troyka who has been a guiding light for me and all of Team Berkner as we have developed many of these techniques in the Mighty Ram Band Hall.

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# What's Going On Back There?!

## Teaching Beginning Euphonium and Tuba

**Dr. Matthew Mireles**

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Students want to learn how to play euphoniums and tubas because it looks and sounds like a lot of fun. The more we can build on these initial passions for making music, the more the students will have an enjoyable long-term journey of development and fulfillment. As music educators, it is important that we engage euphonium and tuba players in fun and enjoyable environments to build on their enthusiasm. Also help them understand how important their part is to the ensemble. Think about how your ensemble would sound if no one were playing the tuba or euphonium. If the students understand how important their part is, they will be more invested in the ensemble.

While making music is a lot of fun, making good music is even better. Students want to play well, and be part of a good sounding ensemble. This article will focus mainly on teaching the proper fundamentals of euphonium and tuba playing to give the beginning students the right tools to build facility on their instrument. Once the students have a grasp of the proper fundamentals, they will have more success and fun playing. Then you can give them more interesting music, and the music-making environment will be the

most fulfilling. There is no trick or secret to playing a euphonium or tuba. People have been playing these instruments for generations. The important thing is to instill good fundamentals, and insist that the students do everything the right way from the start. Being a stickler about the fundamentals early will pay off in the long run.

### **The Embouchure**

When I am showing people how to make their first sound on a low brass instrument, I find that they understand the technique the best when I demonstrate a buzz for them. If you are not a low brass musician, make it a project of yours to learn these instruments. Your students will understand the techniques easier by watching and listening to you demonstrate.

Before we can buzz a sound through the mouthpiece and instrument, it is important to get a feel for the proper shape of the lips that allows them to vibrate efficiently. For euphonium players, start by saying the letter "M." (Pronounced "emmm"). This will put the lips and teeth in a good position to start a buzz. Then blow a thin stream of air through the center of the lips to form the aperture (the opening between the lips that the air moves through). If

you narrow the aperture around the air, the lips will vibrate against each other, and make a buzzing sound. (Buzzing the lips without a mouthpiece or an instrument is called free buzzing.) On the tuba, the aperture will be larger. Use the same procedure, but start by saying the word "too." This will put them in a good starting position.

Whether you are free buzzing, buzzing on the mouthpiece, or playing the instrument, it is important to keep a defined oval-shaped aperture. Do not allow air to escape from anywhere else. Have the students think of a thin piece of string coming straight from their lungs, through their mouth, and into the instrument. This will help them visualize the air being focused and controlled.

When placing the mouthpiece on the face for the first time, have the students place it in the center of their lips and teeth. Most successful players use either even placement between the top and bottom lip inside the mouthpiece, or a little more upper lip in mouthpiece than lower lip, but this can vary player to player. The most important thing is that both lips are inside the mouthpiece and active in the buzz. Some players tend to rest the mouthpiece rim on the lower lip. This doesn't allow the lower lip to

## What's Going On Back There?! Teaching Beginning Euphonium and Tuba

contribute to the buzz, and will lead to problems with their tone quality.

Buzzing on a mouthpiece is great for teaching beginners the technique for brass playing. It develops the embouchure muscles, and builds strength and endurance. Again, be sure to insist on these proper low brass-playing fundamentals from the start.

- The teeth need to be open inside mouth. Some beginners tend to have their teeth closed while buzzing. Open teeth allow the air to move into the instrument properly.

- The tongue should be at the bottom of the mouth. Like saying the word “taw.” Some beginners tend to place their tongues forward against their teeth while buzzing. The tongue out of the way also allows for proper airflow into the instrument.

- If the student has a nasally sound, most likely their teeth are closed, or their tongue is arched toward their teeth.

### ***Common Buzzing Bad Habits***

- Lip puckering results in a fleshy embouchure. It will be difficult to keep the aperture defined and flexible with too much flesh around it. This will result in different contact points for the air to move through, causing a double buzz, or other problems with the sound.

- Puffing cheeks will widen the aperture too much. This will also lead to control and accuracy problems since the aperture is not clear and controlled.

- Smiling lips will thin out the aperture and pull it too much laterally. The aperture needs to be a precise oval, and smiling will cause it to be too long. This will lead to a thin or airy sound, and note accuracy problems.

Teach students how to change the pitch while buzzing. When practicing on the mouthpiece, it is good to produce smooth sirens and glissandos.

- The aperture gets narrower for higher pitches, and wider for lower pitches. This is inner mouthpiece control.

- Have students think of using “aw” and “ee” syllables.

“Aw” for low notes, and “ee” for higher notes. These syllables put the mouth in the right shape to play each register.

- Also think the direction of the air in the mouthpiece for range. While playing, directing the air downward towards the chin can help a player’s high range.

While buzzing on the mouthpiece is great for a player’s development, it is also important to remember to play more on the instrument than on the mouthpiece. They have different resistances, so the feel is different. Our ultimate goal is to have students play better on the instrument, so have them achieve good sounds on the instrument.

Euphonium and tuba students will begin to strengthen their embouchure muscles and get in different habits of playing. So it is very important to start the students off on an efficient path with good fundamentals. Be sure they avoid bad habits that cause inefficiencies. Let the tone quality and pitch accuracy be your guide on when to change things in their embouchure. Making changes early in a student’s development is easier than major embouchure changes later.

### ***THE EMOUCHURE***

- Say the letter “M” to put the lips in place to buzz.
- Avoid lip puckering, puffing cheeks, and smiling lips.
- Keep a defined aperture that is also flexible
- Teeth need to be open inside mouth.
- Place the mouthpiece in the center of the lips and teeth.
- Buzzing on a mouthpiece is great for teaching the technique of brass playing.
- Buzzing develops embouchure muscles, and builds strength and endurance.
- Tongue placement inside the mouth influences tone production.
- The size of the aperture changes the pitch.
- The direction of the air in the mouthpiece, and the shape of the mouth can influence range.

## **What's Going On Back There?! Teaching Beginning Euphonium and Tuba**

### **Posture**

Proper posture allows for efficient breathing and eliminates body tension. To produce quality sounds on the tuba and euphonium, players need to have good posture habits. If you teach the students that their posture contributes to a successful tone production, they will take it more seriously.

When holding the euphonium or tuba, the front of the leadpipe needs to point straight on to the player's face. Think of how a trombone slide is straight on the player's face. On the euphonium and tuba, the leadpipe bends around the bell, but the front is straight on the face. Instruments are made differently, so the position of the euphonium or tuba can look differently from brand to brand. As long as the front of the leadpipe is straight, the student is set up correctly. Here are some helpful posture fundamentals.

- Both feet need to be flat on the floor.
- The upper body should be in the same position as if they are standing up straight.
- The instrument should come to them.
  - o For euphonium players you must monitor whether the instrument rests on their leg, or if they have to hold the instrument up just like they are standing. Don't let students hunch over to get to the mouthpiece. You can place something on their leg to raise the height of the instrument to meet their face.
  - o For tuba players you must monitor the lead pipe height when the student is sitting down. When they are sitting up straight, the mouthpiece may be above or below their face and need some adjustment. You can shift the instrument up and down their legs, or tilt the instrument left or right. They can also rest instrument on the edge of the chair to hold it steady.

### **Hand Placement**

Proper hand placement fundamentals allow for efficient playing technique. Even though the right hand moves the valves, both hands need to have proper placement and technique to achieve the best performance. Both hands should be in a natural relaxed position. They should not feel contorted, or in an awkward shape. There are two styles of euphoniums and tubas though. There are instruments with top action valves, and others front action valves. No matter which style of instrument they have, their right hand needs to be in a "C" shape. Make the shape of a "C" with the fingers and thumb, and place the pads of their fingers on top of the valves. This will keep the fingers from being too flat or too arched. Also, anchor the thumb on the side of the first valve casing. All of this will give the hand the most control over the valves.

For top action valves specifically, the left hand goes across the front of the instrument and grips the outer tubing. For the euphonium, the left arm should be able to hold up the instrument on its own. Many euphonium and tuba beginners also like to grip the lead pipe with their left hand, "The Gorilla Grip!" This doesn't allow the player to stand while playing. It also doesn't allow the body to be free of tension, and tension will disturb the tone. They also need to get in the habit of using a 4th valve on the side of the instrument.

For front action valves, the left hand should grip the outer tubing, with the arm behind the instrument. This will have the least amount of bodily tension. For tuba players, this will also get their left hand in a position that allows them to push and pull valve slides in the future.

## What's Going On Back There?! Teaching Beginning Euphonium and Tuba

### POSTURE AND HAND PLACEMENT

- *The leadpipe needs to point straight on to the player's face.*
- *Both feet flat on the floor.*
- *Upper body in the same position as if the player is standing up straight.*
- *The instrument should come to the player.*
- *Make sure the student positions the instrument where they can sit up comfortably while playing.*
- *For euphonium players, monitor whether the instrument rests on the student's leg, or if they have to hold the instrument up just like they are standing.*
- *For tuba players, monitor the lead pipe height when the student is sitting down. It may be above or below their face, and needing adjustment.*
- *Proper hand placement allows for efficient playing technique.*
- *Both hands should be in a natural relaxed position.*
- *Right hand in "C" shape*
- *Thumb should be anchored on the valve casing.*
- *Place the pads of their fingers on top of the valves. Fingers not too flat or too arched.*

### Breathing

Playing a low brass instrument requires moving large amounts of air through the tubing. In order for this to happen the student also needs to get in the habit of breathing in a large amount of air. A player's tone is a direct result of the quality of air used.

#### Air = Sound

full air = full sound

wimpy air = wimpy sound

forced air = forced sound

For many students, tone quality problems are caused by insufficient amounts of air. Inhaling large amounts of air gives the sound stability and support. Long tone practice with decrescendos and crescendos are also good breath control exercises.

### Tonguing/Articulation

Articulation technique on a brass instrument involves striking of the tongue. To introduce this idea to your students, have them first say "tah." The tongue movement when saying "tah" is the same as when articulating on a brass instrument. The word "tah" also has fast air with it. (Which the student needs to get in the habit of playing with. Students can move to softer articulations later, but "tah" promotes good air habits.)

#### Bad habits to avoid while tonguing

- Tonguing that looks like "chewing" can cause pitch problems, and make it difficult for the student to tongue faster passages.
- There shouldn't be any air sound before the buzz/ tone. We want a clear front to notes. Start students with clear-tongued notes to promote good habits.

### BREATHING, TONGUING/ARTICULATION

- *Playing a brass instrument requires moving large amounts of air.*
- *A player's tone is a direct result of the quality of air used.*
- *Air = Sound*
- *Long tone practice is a good breath control exercise.*
- *Articulation technique on a brass instrument involves striking of the tongue.*
- *The tongue movement when saying "tah" is the same as when articulating on a brass instrument.*
- *The word "tah" also has fast air with it.*
- *Avoid bad habits while tonguing, like chewing, or air before the tongue.*

### Sound Concepts

Brass players are judged greatly on the quality of their sound. Problems in the tone can result from having problems in the embouchure shape, tongue placement, airflow/breathing, lip placement, mouthpiece placement, and body tension. Developing

## What's Going On Back There?! Teaching Beginning Euphonium and Tuba

good fundamentals results in the best tone qualities. Use knowledge of the fundamentals to diagnose problems with the student's sound in any register. Working on the fundamentals will help students achieve pure, round, full, resonant, warm, beautiful, and clear sounds.

### Practice Habits

Brass players need to develop their embouchure muscles along with their playing technique. Insist on students practicing every day for a specified amount of time. Developing good practice habits should start in beginning band. Brass players have exercises, like athletes, to develop their skills. Here are some examples that get the player's embouchure in shape, and develop their technique.

- Lip slurs - Flexibilities
- Long tones
- Tonguing exercises
- Scales
- Arpeggios
- Playing in upper and lower registers/Range building
- Playing melodies

### Listening

Be sure to provide professional recordings for students to hear.

In order for them to produce quality sounds, students must first hear what a superior tone quality sounds like. Here are some soloists and chamber ensembles that your students can hear for great examples of euphonium and tuba playing.

- Euphonium Soloists: Brian Bowman, David Childs, Adam Frey, Steven Mead, Matthew Mireles, Ben Pierce, Demondrae Thurman
- Tuba Soloists: Oystein Baadsvik, Roger Bobo, Pat Sheridan, Roland Szentpali
- Tuba-Euphonium Quartets: Boreas Quartet, Sotto Voce Quartet

*Dr. Matthew Mireles is highly active as a conductor, performer, and educator, with his performances achieving high praise, and his students having success in major competitions. As a euphonium soloist, Dr. Mireles made his professional debut at the 2012 International Tuba Euphonium Conference in Linz, Austria performing with the Military Wind Ensemble of Upper Austria. His successes in major competitions include winning the 2008 Leonard Falcone International Euphonium Competition, the 2007 Mid-Texas Symphony Young Artist Competition, the 2007 University of Alabama Concerto-Aria Competition, the 2008 International Tuba Euphonium Conference Chamber Music Competition, and the Judge's Special Recognition Award at the 2010 Plowman Chamber Music Competition. Dr. Mireles recorded a solo album "Prometheus." He plays first euphonium with the Boreas Quartet and recorded "The Serpent's Kiss" with them. Both albums are released through Potenza Music. Currently, Dr. Matthew Mireles is the Director of Bands and Low Brass at Cameron University in Lawton, Oklahoma. Before joining the faculty at Cameron, Dr. Mireles conducted and taught at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is also on faculty at the Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Twin Lake, MI, where he teaches low brass and conducting. Dr. Mireles earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a Master of Music degree from the University of Alabama, and a Bachelor of Arts Degree with Teacher Certification from St. Mary's University in San Antonio. His major teachers include John Stevens, Dr. Demondrae Thurman, Lee Hipp, Scott Teeple, and Mark Hetzler.*

# Let's Play the Game "Jazz Improvisation"

Dr. Aric Schneller

When asked to write an introductory article based on my recent presentation at the 2014 Texas Bandmasters Association Convention/Clinic, my immediate response was, "Yes, I'll do it!" Like a jazz musician improvising a solo, I responded before I had any time to really think about what I would write down in prose. When thinking about this topic, I am always reminded of how much "fun" it is to improvise in the jazz idiom, but I am also reminded of how intimidating or overwhelming it can be for musicians who are already accomplished in other genres of music, but don't want to sound "bad" learning this skill. Not knowing what to play or worse yet, not having anything to read except

a lead sheet or chord changes, this can be an intimidating venture.

First of all, I am a firm believer that jazz improvisation can be really fun because there are no wrong notes when creating a solo. Melodically and harmonically speaking, there are only consonant and dissonant pitches being played and, for the most part, one is usually only a half or whole step away from consonant

sounding notes. This is especially true when playing or jamming on such great standards as "Take the A-Train", "Autumn Leaves", and "Satin Doll", for example. These tunes exhibit simple yet sound structural forms (e.g., 12-bar blues, AABA 32-bar song form, etc.), lack of modulation into remote keys, and ii-V-I chord progressions in major or minor keys. Of course, there are many great tunes that explore chromatic melodies, altered harmonies, modulations into remote keys and/or bridges, and complex rhythms, but for our purposes we'll focus on the more simple structural forms.

As an illustration, just recently the 2014 World Series of Poker finals took place. It was pretty exciting watching nine individuals, who made it to the final table out of 6000-plus players, play "Texas Hold 'Em Poker" for many hours on live television. Needless to say, I got hooked on the game, even bought a fold-out playing table, chips, cards, and a couple of books and then invited some friends over to play. It was quite simple to learn the basics of the game, and then jump in and start playing. We really had no idea what we were doing, but we all had a lot of fun. There's a wealth of history to the game loaded with communication, technique, strategy, nuance, bluffing, and luck!

Let's use the above analogy to recap the exercises that were discussed and demonstrated at this summer's clinic by playing a cool game called "Jazz Improvisation." First, the object of the game is to have fun. Second, you are the winner if you accomplish the object of the game. In this game everyone who plays and has fun is a winner every time! Third, we must learn the following rules:

**Rule 1:** In reference to the tune in question (i.e. as mentioned earlier with commonly played jazz tunes with simpler forms, harmony, etc.) we must ask before we begin to play, "What key is this in?"



## Let's Play the Game "Jazz Improvisation"

**Rule 2:** Remember, there are no wrong notes when improvising a solo. There are only consonant or dissonant notes and remember that we are only a half-step or whole-step away from a consonant note at any given time on any given tune, so don't panic. Just stay on your dissonant note and then let your ear guide you quickly (in either direction, up or down) to make it sound consonant.

**Rule 3:** During your solo, feel free to play the melody as much as you like. When it's your turn to solo again, try and embellish it a little.

**Rule 4:** Play major scales over a ii-V-I progression in a major key area (e.g., play a C major scale over a Dmi7 – G7 – Cmaj7).

**Rule 5:** Play a harmonic minor scale over a ii7(b5) – V7(b9) – i in a minor key area (e.g., play a C harmonic minor scale over a Dmi7(b5) – G7(b9) – i).

**Rule 6:** Play a blues scale over a minor or major ii-V-I chord progression (e.g., over a C major or minor key center play the following blues scale: C, Eb, F, F#/Gb, G, Bb, C).

**Rule 7:** Play your scales (i.e., or just one note if you like, etc.) with the 4-step rhythm exercise: 1) Play quarter notes on the beat; 2) Play quarter notes off of the beat; 3) Play eighth notes as if combining the on/off quarter notes (which hopefully should now sound like swinging eighth notes); and 4) Play sixteenth notes (i.e., which should sound like double time).

**Rule 8:** Feel free to scat-sing a solo as a break from one's wind instrument or to generate new ideas. Louis Armstrong loved to scat-sing!

**Rule 9:** Choose a leader to play a short idea (i.e., short blues cell or lick), and then everyone else copy

it. This is a "Call and Response" exercise. Be sure to change leaders from time to time.

**Rule 10:** When possible play with a rhythm section (i.e., bass player, drummer, pianist and/or guitarist). However, you can play with any Jamey Aebersold play-along CDs, iReal Pro, or other proprietary programs.

**Rule 11:** In the beginning, if possible, try and learn to play-by-ear before reading chord changes. It will help to focus on listening instead of focusing on reading.

That's all there is to it and you're ready to play! During my presentation at the convention, one of the first things we did was invite a handful of high school band directors, with varying degrees of experience, to play the afore-mentioned exercises on instruments provided for them for this clinic by Yamaha, Inc. I believe that these participants really enjoyed learning these basic techniques. The other clinic attendees also had very positive reactions as well. I encouraged the participants to learn Milt Jackson's, "Bags Groove" by ear and then everyone participated in a call and response scat-singing session with me as the leader.

As a final note, in order to teach beginning jazz improvisation, I believe it's important to experience this process to a degree, so as to be a role model for one's students. One does not have to be totally proficient, but only to have experienced the jazz improvisation process. I find, more often than not, that these types of exercises dispel the fear associated with improvising when there is no written music. My hope is that you get "hooked" by the jazz improvisation bug like I got hooked on "Texas Hold 'Em Poker."

*Dr. Aric Schneller holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in Trombone Performance from the University of North Texas, a Masters of Music in Vocal Performance from Boston University, a Masters in Music in Jazz Studies from the University of North Texas, and a Bachelor of Music in Trombone Performance from the University of Montana. Dr. Schneller is the Director of Jazz Studies at Sam Houston State University and is the Creator and Artistic Director of the annual SHSU Bill Watrous Jazz Festival since 2011. This year, under Dr. Schneller's direction, the SHSU Jazz Ensemble will perform at the 68th Annual Midwest Clinic.*



# 2014 NAMMB Contest Winners

Congratulations to these high school bands who had outstanding performances at the National Association of Military Marching Band Contest.



Class 2A	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Union Grove
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Carlisle
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Harleton
Class 3A	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	New Diana
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	New Boston
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Hemphill
Class 4A	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Spring Hill
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Carthage
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Henderson
Class 5A	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Lufkin
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Lindale
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Vidor
Class 6A	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Atascocita

## Texas Bandmasters Association 2014-15 Region Reps

1..... Britni Nuckols..... Amarillo britni.nuckols@amaisd.org	15.... Eric Donalson ..... Weslaco eric.donalson@mcallenisd.net
2..... Kathy Johnson ..... Flower Mound kjohnson@argyleisd.com	16.... Jerod Hon ..... Lubbock jhon@ropesisd.us
3..... Chris Brown ..... Mesquite CBrown@mesquiteisd.org	17.... Sarah Bennett ..... Friendswood sbennett@fisdk12.net
4..... George Little ..... Longview glittle@ndisd.org	18.... Mark Gurgel ..... Austin mgurgel@austinisd.org
5..... Will Ludlow ..... Mansfield williamludlow@misdmail.org	19.... Ben Gollehon ..... Kingwood bengollehon@gmail.com
6..... Daniel Todd ..... Crane dtodd@craneisd.com	20.... Reagan Brumley ..... Dallas brumler@hpsisd.org
7..... Bryan Wright..... Fort Worth bryan.wright@fwsisd.org	21.... Brent Cannon ..... Hideaway brentcannon@yahoo.com
8..... Jon Sweet ..... College Station jonsweet@me.com	22.... Ruth Allen ..... El Paso raallen@episid.org
9..... Jerralld Dillard ..... Conroe jldillard@conroeisd.net	23.... Rory Davis ..... Katy roryLdavis@katyisd.org
10.... Alex Wells ..... Port Neches awells@pngjisd.org	24.... Paul Schmidt ..... Farmers-Branch Paul.Schmidt@gcisid.net
11.... Daniel Lugo..... San Antonio daniellugo@nisd.net	25.... Jason Tucker ..... Allen jason.tucker@pisd.edu
12.... Mark V. Buley..... San Antonio mbuley@sequin.k12.tx.us	26.... Robert Herrings..... Cedar Park robert.herrings@leanderisd.org
13.... Michael Roberts ..... Houston michael.roberts@fortbendisid.com	27.... Michael Dick ..... Tomball michael.dick@cfisd.net
14.... Chuck Young ..... Portland bandkat1@gmail.com	28...Criselda Marroquin Morrell ..... Los Fresnos cmarroquinmorrell@lfcisd.net

# The Midwest Clinic Performances December 2014

These Texas schools were selected  
to perform at  
The Midwest Clinic in Chicago.

## BANDS

Baylor University  
Wind Ensemble  
J. Eric Wilson  
Waco, TX

Midlothian High School  
Wind Ensemble  
Larry Doran  
Midlothian, TX

Vista Ridge High School  
Wind Ensemble  
Bryan Christian  
Cedar Park, TX

Indian Springs Middle School  
Band  
David Puckett  
Keller, TX

Canyon Ridge Middle School  
Honor Band  
Amy Allison  
Austin, TX

Antoinette Reading Junior High  
Honors Band  
Kevin Cranston  
Richmond, TX

## CHAMBER ENSEMBLES

College Park High School  
Woodwind Choir and Ensembles  
Charlotte Royall  
The Woodlands, TX

Hebron High School  
Chamber Choirs  
Andy Sealy  
Carrollton, TX

Oak Ridge High School  
Percussion Ensemble  
Jeriald Dillard  
Conroe, TX

## JAZZ ENSEMBLES

Sam Houston State University  
Jazz Ensemble  
Aric Schneller  
Huntsville, TX

Indian Ridge Middle School  
Jazz Ensemble  
Nick Flood  
El Paso, TX

## ORCHESTRAS

McKinney Boyd High School  
Honors Chamber Orchestra  
Michael Link  
McKinney, TX

Kingwood High School  
Chamber Strings  
Christopher Reidlinger  
Kingwood, TX

Clements High School  
Symphony Orchestra  
Ginger Wolfe  
Sugar Land, TX

Klein Oak High School  
Symphony Orchestra  
Tanner Ledford  
Spring, TX

Doerre Intermediate  
Symphony Orchestra  
Matthew Fehl  
Klein, TX

McMeans Junior High  
Symphony Orchestra  
Amy Williams  
Katy, TX

# Congratulations to the U.I.L. Marching Contest State Champs

Congratulations to all who qualified to participate in the 2014 U.I.L. State Marching Band Contest. All of the bands who performed at State deserve special recognition. These bands have been practicing since last summer, working hard on their marching program. All have made their schools and community proud!

The U.I.L. marching competition started in October with hundreds of bands competing at the Region level. The top bands were then chosen to compete at the Area level. Finally, the top 4A and 6A bands were chosen to compete for the coveted state title in November. Congratulations to these students and directors for their commitment to excellence.



## Congratulations to all the 4A Bands and Directors who competed in the state competition:

Argyle HS.....Kathy Johnson	King HS.....Rolando Molina	Port Isabel HS.....Scott Hartsfield
Atlanta HS.....Keith Sanders	La Feria HS.....Eddie Benitez	Princeton HS.....Brandon Brewer
Big Spring HS.....Rocky Harris	Little Cypress-Mauriceville HS	Robinson HS.....Robert Vetter
Burnet HS.....Jason Jones	.....Steve Schoppert	Spring Hill HS.....Randall Kiser
Canton HS.....Mike Bartley	Melissa HS.....Michael Reddell	Springtown HS.....Chris McLellan
Fredericksburg HS....John Rauschuber	North Lamar HS.....Randy Jones	Wills Point HS.....John Young
Grulla HS.....Oscar Gonzalez	Pearsall HS.....Bert Sanchez	Wylie HS.....Michael Lunney
Kennedale HS.....Erol K. Oktay	Pecos HS.....Stan Mauldin	



## Congratulations to all the 6A Bands and Directors who competed in the state competition:

Austin HS.....Bob Chreste	Duncanville HS.....David Brandon	North Shore HS.....Shane Goforth
Berkner HS.....Frank Troyka	Edinburg North HS..Chad Dempsey	O'Connor HS.....Roland Sandoval
Bowie HS.....Kimberly Shuttlesworth	Flower Mound HS....Brent W. Biskup	Pearland HS.....Joe Munoz
Cedar Ridge HS.....Mark Calima	Frenship HS.....Tom SoRelle	Reagan HS.....Levi Chavis
Central HS.....Joey Ashbrook	Friendswood HS.....Gregory Dick	Rowlett HS.....Phillip Alvarado
Clark HS.....Kevin Russell	Haltom HS.....Donnie Hull	San Benito HS.....Marc Perea
Clements HS.....Daniel Galloway	Hanna HS.....Dennis Ewing	Spring HS.....Terri Risinger
Coppell HS.....Scott Mason	Harlingen HS.....Ronnie Rios	Taft HS.....Danny Solis
Coronado HS.....Mark Saenz	Hebron HS.....Andy Sealy	The Woodlands HS..Joni Perez
Cy-Fair HS.....Mark Veenstra	Johnson HS.....Jarrett Lipman	Westlake HS.....Kerry Taylor
Cypress Falls HS.....Shawn McAnear	Keller HS.....Mark McGahey	Westwood HS.....Jack Green
Dawson HS.....Ryan Agard	Lopez HS.....George A. Trevino	
Dickinson HS.....Trevor Braselton	Marcus HS.....Amanda Drinkwater	



## Congratulations to the 4A Band State Champion: Argyle High School



Argyle High School Director: Kathy Johnson

Assistants: Michael Lemish, Asa Burk, Evan Fletcher, Bojan Gutic, Emily Shaffer, James McNair

Drum Majors: Madison Gotthardt, Benjamin Roney, Meagan Starteri

Program Title: *Alleluia*

## Congratulations to the 6A Band State Champion: Marcus High School



Marcus High School Director: Amanda Drinkwater

Assistants: Kennan Wylie, David Simon, Chase Howard, John Leonard

Drum Majors: Hannah Hadden, Amanda Elmendorf, Nick Kohn, Beznik Abrashi

Program Title: *Imperial Treasures*

# Bandmasters Review

## Texas Bandmasters Association

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Sam Houston State University Jazz Ensemble

Under the direction of Dr. Aric Schneller, the SHSU Jazz Ensemble is performing at The Midwest Clinic in Chicago this year.