

# Grow Up!

**Jeff King, 2014-15 TBA Vice President**

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It is a cold and snowy day in February as I sit in my home office writing this article. Yes, I have “cabin fever” of sorts. By the printing of this magazine, springtime surely will be upon us. That sentence alone gives me hope. As I finish a weather-affected week of 2 ½ days of teaching, I cannot help myself (once again) to feel a little bit behind in our contest preparation. If I had contest next week like some of my colleagues, I would have considered Skyping a rehearsal with my students.

I was feeling a little down and was listening to some music. I heard Taylor Swift’s song, “Never Grow Up” and it reminded me of the time I spend with my two-year old granddaughter. This immediately got me out of my mood and once again made me realize what is most important in our lives.

The lyrics, “Oh darling, don’t you ever grow up. Don’t you ever grow up, just stay this little.” seemed to resonate with me in my band director world. Whether we teach beginners, middle school or high school students, we all know that we are responsible for helping our students grow up in so many ways. As one of the responsible and caring adults in their lives, we have more influence on our students than you can possibly imagine. Some of you may be the only caring adult in their lives. As band directors, this responsibility is endless even when they “grow up.” My Duncanville colleagues and I recently had a conversation in the band office about some former students who had requested to be friends on Facebook. (Yes, I am on Facebook with former students—get over it!) We laughed at some of the names, saying, “I never

thought I would ‘friend’ so and so.” Despite their adolescent immaturity and lack of producing a decent sound on their

instrument when they were in school, they did grow up and become mature and productive adults. After 30 plus years of teaching I have seen some of my former students become teachers, doctors, lawyers, nurses, policemen, firemen, professional musicians, parents and so on. Yes, what we teach is music, but there is so much more to learn when we “grow up.”

One way for us to “grow up” in our profession is to attend the annual TBA Convention/Clinic (July 23-26). President Bruce Beach, TBA staff and board have put together a spectacular convention filled with great clinics and concerts. Once again, you will have the opportunity to re-charge your musical and emotional batteries. Sitting down with an old friend or meeting someone new for the first time and discovering things you have in common is always refreshing.

As Eddie Green says, “If you are getting bored with your daily drill, then you probably have stopped thinking.” We always need to keep thinking about our profession and the convention is the perfect place for this to happen. I hope to see you all in July and please introduce yourself to me if I have not met you before.

I hope that everyone has a safe and successful end of the school year and that our students, parents and we can all continue to “grow up.”