

Texas Bandmasters Association

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...oh Harvey!

John Morrison, 2017-18 TBA President Elect

As the 2017 school year was beginning for the greater Northwest Houston area, the teachers were ready, the classrooms were ready for the students and the high school bands had completed their August camps and were eagerly anticipating their first football game performances, and then.... Uncle Harvey paid a visit.

Once the water receded from this epic storm, neighbors were busy bailing each other out, literally. Many others that weren't as affected by water were taking care of bigger picture items like the infrastructure of the roads, merchants and schools. It quickly became very clear that our communities were going to feel the impact of this epic storm, in no similar way. Some school campuses were completely destroyed, some sustained minor issues that were resolved within days. Many more communities were reeling as to how the storm affected the individuals and their ability to function in their programs. Were the homes and cars of the teachers compromised? What about the instruments that the students have at home? So many unanswered questions.

I check my email to see that my neighbors Monte Mast, Klein ISD and JD Janda from Tomball ISD, had emailed our Houston Area Music Administrators group and suggested a gathering of those that could, to do some game planning and share ideas for recovery. Within about two days we met at the Tomball ISD administration building, those of us that literally could get there, only to discover that the group of attendees was to include TMEA, TCDA, TODA, TBA, the Houston Symphony, Houston Arts Partners, Conn-Selmer Instruments, Music for All/BOA, Stanbury Uniforms, Fishburn Violins, Lisle Violins, Brook Mays and H&H Music, Music and Arts, and the list continued on. The collective group of industry professionals coupled with our local

district administrators was simply overwhelming. Three hours later TMEA, thanks to Robert Floyd and Frank Coachman, was deemed the

most appropriate venue for a collaboration that would include the affected areas and the industry professional network to help us rebuild. **Help.GoArts.org** was born and a concentrated effort for rebuilding our music programs began.

Fast forward to now and our new normal. One thing is for sure, the power of good is great. So many directors lending helping hands not only in the classroom with encouragement, instrument and supply donations, but in other ways outside of the school, as well. So many colleagues coming to each other's rescue, even today.

The constant that was clear through this epic challenge was, **good teaching is still good teaching**. I wouldn't try and classify the programs in the area, relative to the damage that was sustained, but I did notice something recently. The very best teachers, impacted in some way by the storm, somehow managed to achieve favorable results in marching band and individual all region events. I wondered as the year got underway how many directors would use the challenge that they were presented, as an opportunity to push their teaching skills. Most would agree that the programs and teachers that always manage to grind out and pace others, showed no change in the performance results of their programs and students.

As the region continues to heal, one constant remains, the spirit of neighbors helping neighbors is alive and well. My wish is for you all is to enjoy your time with your family and friends this Holiday Season.

