

Celebrate the Music! 75 Years of Family Ties

Priscilla Brashear, TBA Spouse Liaison

For those relative newcomers to TBA, the Spouse and Family Activities that happen every year at the TBA convention might be something of a novelty. In fact, almost from the very beginning 75 years ago, TBA convention attendees brought their families along to San Antonio at the end of summer to have one last family vacation before school began in the fall. There were plenty of fun things to do—swim at the hotel pool, visit the Alamo and missions, shop for school clothes, or just relax with a good book. Some of those early spouse attendees decided it would be fun to organize some get-togethers with other TBA spouses and voila! —a great idea was born!

Seventy-five years later, we are indebted to the many talented and hard-working individuals through the years who had the foresight to plan and organize our now iconic Spouse activities. We now enjoy a whole community of people who return to TBA year after year to reconnect with friends from all over the state. Many of you are regulars at the Annual Spouses Luncheon, painting parties, excursions, and margarita mixers that have become synonymous with TBA Spouse activities.

I thought it would be fun to look back at the beginnings of Spouse Activities to see how things have changed through the years. I am thankful to the past presidents who wrote a spouse newsletter, aptly named TIES, describing the interesting events for each year. Mary Beth Hagood wrote the very first TIES in 1995, as a “trial run” and we have published one each year ever since. It is the source of most of these anecdotes for the early years. (These articles have been edited for space considerations.)

Luncheons Past and Present – by *Funny Parsons (TIES 1997)*

In the late 1940s and early 1950s very few spouses of the band directors attended the TBA Convention. During those years the conventions were held at Alamo Heights High School. Since few spouses attended, there were no specific activities planned for them.

During the 1950s the headquarters of the convention was moved from Alamo Heights to the Gunter Hotel. In 1961, a “coke party”, planned by Ann Geisler, was a new activity for the spouses. The ladies played card games on the Mezzanine of the Gunter Hotel, and our first baby-sitting service was provided. That same year, 28 wives enjoyed a delicious lunch on the Casa Rio Riverboat. This was the beginning of our, now traditional, TBA Spouses Luncheon. In 1962, the first style show was combined with the luncheon held at the Palacio Del Rio. Frost Brothers provided the fashions. Ann Geisler organized these ladies’ activities for the first two years.

One of the style shows was something of a surprise. The entire fashion show consisted of maternity clothes, and a quite expensive line! Ann Geisler commented that the style show would have been very nice had everyone in attendance been wealthy and pregnant! Ann Rogers remembered when double-knits were introduced as the newest fashion rage. Pant suits were revolutionary!

During the 1970s and early 1980s, the luncheon location was La Villita. The style show was sponsored through the years by Rhodes Department Store, Dillard’s, Sears, La Boutique from Los Patios, Foley’s, and JCPenney. From the middle of the 1980s, the luncheon was held at the Marriott Riverwalk. Our attendance during these years increased from 400 to as many as 600 people.

Touring the Past – by *Shelly Brandenberger (TIES 1997)*

Past tours for the TBA spouses and children have been as varied as the state of Texas—museums, gardens, the zoo, the missions, shopping meccas, and historical points of interest unique to San Antonio. Trips over the past years have included the Witte Museum, the Institute of Texan Cultures, the McNay Art Institute, and the San Antonio Museum of Art.

San Antonio’s colorful history has provided other tour choices for TBA such as the King William Historical district, Ytarri Edmunds Historic Mill, and Brooks Air Force Base. Tours have included shopping tours at Los Patios, Gardenridge Pottery, New Braunfels Mill Store, Scrivener’s Store, Cambridge Square, Central Square, Richmond Oaks, and several malls.

Because TBA is family oriented, the tours are designed to appeal also to the children—the Brackenridge Zoo, Splashtown, Natural Bridge Caverns, and the Hard Rock Café.

Lots has changed in the last 25 years. In 2012, after major renovations at the Convention Center, the Spouse Luncheon and seminars were moved to the elegant Lonesome Dove Room on the banks of the River Walk. Fashion show “seminars” were more intimate with TBA favorite fashionista Donna Muslin showing her finds from local retailers up close and personal. Macy’s from Rivercenter Mall provided the fashions, goody bags, door prizes, and free makeovers for attendees. Donna was a master at knowing her audience and became a trusted friend to those who wanted to be up on the latest fashion trends. When Donna passed away in 2016, she had completed 30 years of friendship and professional association with TBA. She truly was a member of our TBA family.

The first annual Spouses Painting Party was held in 2017. Sixty-five people stayed after the luncheon to paint a unique picture with guidance from Spouse President Leslie King. The Painting Party was such a hit that it became a tradition that continues today.

Other new spouse activities include the Margarita Mixer (2021) where attendees tasted a flight of three margaritas and then chose their favorite recipe for a full-size drink. For the kids, play time and meet and greet at the newly remodeled Yanaguana Park provided an opportunity for

our kids to make friends with other TBA kids. Free paletas were a bonus in 2021. You may also remember these highlights:

- Teen Game Room (2005-2011)
- Garcia Art Glass Demonstration and Raffle (2015)
- The Japanese Tea Garden tour (2015)
- The DoSeum excursion (San Antonio’s children’s museum 2016)
- Tour of the Culinary Institute of America at The Pearl (2017)
- Spouses’ Coffee and Family Bingo (2014)
- John Kline’s Magic Show (2016)

Jim Hagood (TBA President 1995) once wrote “**While in music a tie can make two halves a whole, in TBA the spouses’ activities make our summer convention complete.**” It also seems true that the ties we make with other TBA families across the state make our lives a little more complete. Join us in San Antonio as we celebrate the past 75 years and begin looking forward to strengthening our ties for the next 75! Come—Celebrate the Music!

After 28 years of teaching music in Richardson, Spring Branch and Cy-Fair ISDs, Priscilla retired to the Texas Hill Country north of San Antonio with her husband, Mike. She enjoys volunteering with the TBA spouses board, helping plan the family activities for the annual convention.

Celebrate the Music!

 <p>Welcome Party BBQ WEDNESDAY EVENING, JULY 20</p>	 <p>Spouses Luncheon FRIDAY, JULY 22 (TICKET REQUIRED - INCLUDED IN \$50 REGISTRATION)</p>
 <p>Yanaguana Park and Paletas THURSDAY MORNING, JULY 21</p>	 <p>Painting Party FRIDAY AFTERNOON, JULY 22 <i>Sign up at the Spouse/Family Activities booth.</i></p>
 <p>Margarita Mixer THURSDAY AFTERNOON, JULY 21 (\$20 TICKET REQUIRED)</p>	 <p>Family Excursions to Historic Market Square and Kiddie Park SATURDAY MORNING, JULY 23, 9AM-1PM <i>Sign up to ride the FREE air-conditioned shuttle at the Spouse/Family Activities booth.</i></p>

Spouses must be registered by the TBA Active/Retired or Academy member on their registration form.

\$50 Registration Fee includes: Ticket to Welcome Party BBQ, Spouse Luncheon Ticket, Painting Party, Yanaguana Park and Paletas in the Park, Free shuttle to Market Square and Kiddie Park as well as Convention attendance: clinics, concerts, exhibit hall.

\$35 Discounted Registration Fee includes all the above except Spouse Luncheon Ticket

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