# ATSSB NEWSLETTER



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ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS SMALL SCHOOL BANDS
Beginning our 29th year of service to small school bands in Texas
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# President's Column by Eric Gray

It is hard to believe another year has come and gone and with it the students that came into our lives 7 years ago as beginners in our band programs. What an awesome opportunity we have had to spend that length of time with the best students



in our schools. I get a little emotional thinking that in a few days we are going to hug their necks one more time at graduation and send them off into the real world to make their way. I think of all the great things they have accomplished as a group and as individuals and I know they will be successful in whatever avenue they choose to pursue. It just hurts a little right now...

Another big "Thank You" to all of you out there that volunteer to serve each year to make this organization great for all our students. The number of students from small schools that benefit from this organization is amazing and ATSSB is truly their home! De Ann Hollis

(Continued on Page 2)

(Gray, continued from Page 1):

stated, "the heart of a volunteer is never measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others." Rest assured, the work and time you put in on any level of this organization is making a difference in the lives of students of small schools across the state!

Let me encourage you to take some time this upcoming year and learn about the history of ATSSB. Talk to some of the founding members and really listen to the challenges they faced and the opposition they encountered from almost every angle. I promise it will deepen your appreciation for the organization and for the people that stood their ground and did what they knew in their hearts was correct for students in the small schools. I have had many wonderful opportunities to hear how this organization was founded and it always humbles me and makes me even more appreciative of what we have available to our students. We must never take this for granted and we must always be mindful to stay true to our intent and purpose as we continue to grow as an organization.

Finally, spend some "down time" away from the school with family and friends. Read, relax, exercise, camp, fish... whatever "fills your tank" as we anticipate another great school year. To those of you that have retired or have moved up to larger classifications, please keep in touch and know the work you have done with ATSSB will never be forgotten. I hope to see you at TBA and have a great summer!!!

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The ATSSB Newsletter is the official publication of the Association of Texas Small School Bands. Any correspondence should be addressed to ATSSB; 2117 Morse Street; Houston, TX 77019. You may also contact us on our Web Site (<a href="http://www.atssb.org">http://www.atssb.org</a>) or email the Editor (Kenneth Griffin) at <a href="https://www.atssb.org">atssb@att.net</a> or call 713-874-1151. Letters to the Editor will be published as space permits if signed and verified, although writers may remain anonymous by request.

Advertising is accepted for the ATSSB Quarterly Newsletter. The Newsletter is published online each September, December, March, and June.

See our advertising policy and costs at http://www.atssb.org/execsec/AdPolicy.pdf.

# President-Elect's Column by Matt Knight

It is amazing another school year has come to an end. Festivals, Spring Concerts, graduations-- it has been a blur... Now on to preparing for TSSEC and those after-school band trips. Oh yeah, don't forget band camp. Glad teachers only work nine months a year.

Summer always seems to be a time of transition. Maybe you are taking that new job or, like me, waiting to see how the new superintendent is going to be. Don't be afraid of change; embrace it. I watched my HS Principal retire last year after working together for 19 years. I was not real sure about how the new guy would work. We all know how "doubt" creeps



in. Guess what, it has worked out great. Our new principal, Mr. Chambers, has done an outstanding job. I could not be more proud of him. Did I mention, he is a former trumpet player of mine? Change is never easy, but it does make you grow. Stay positive!

Each year I hear people say "I don't know how we are going to replace this group of seniors." Truth be told, you are not going to replace them. You are just going to grow the next set. Each class that goes through your program will have special gifts. It is your job to cultivate them, guide them and help them grow. By the end of next year, you will be saying the same thing about next year's senior class. It is the circle of life. I think there is a song in there somewhere!

In the Abernathy Band, we talk a lot about putting the "important before the urgent." I know band camp is coming, summer band is just around the corner, and your drill writer needs your music and numbers yesterday, but don't forget to take care of the important. Spend some time not at the band hall. Take time for family and friends! I know I owe my wife and son more than I can ever repay. I need people to remind me to take my own advice!! I am definitely a work in progress. Get away. Recharge your batteries! You will need it in August! Enjoy your summer, and I hope to see everyone at TBA! If there is ever anything I can do for you, please let me know.

# **Immediate Past-President's Column**

by Mike Bartley



It is always amazing to me how fast a school year flies by. It feels as though marching season just ended, but we are already past graduation and preparing for the next marching season. I laugh to myself at the number of people who comment about the break teachers get in the summer. As I write this, my percussion section is already having rehearsals for fall, and I still have a trip to UIL State Solo and Ensemble Contest. Even as we are completing one school year, preparations are underway for the next. It is my hope that we all can find the time to reflect on the good things that have happened in the past year and the ways we can provide meaningful experiences for our students next year while still making some time for ourselves. Even as we prepare for next year, we all need to find time to rest and

time to spend with our families in order to recharge and do this all again next year! At the end of the summer, I look forward to seeing you all at the TBA convention where we can enjoy some clinics, exhibits, and performances that will hopefully inspire us. Good luck to those of you who have entries in the ATSSB OPS and TMEA Honor Band competitions! I hope you all enjoy your summer!

### State Jazz Coordinator's Column

by Brian Donnell



Happy summer, everyone!

In the very near future the new jazz page on the ATSSB website will be up and running. The page will feature information for:

Members – where to purchase the music (www.matteimusicservices. com) and backing tracks, what the cuts are, dates for the various Area listenings, and more

Region coordinators – checklists for getting your region's auditions set up, dates for each of the region auditions and area recordings, links to forms and rules, and more

Area listening panels – the list of members adjudicating, the dates and locations of the listenings, and more

Plus there will be info about clinicians, listening resources for the students who make the all-state jazz band, photos, list of small school jazz festivals happening around the state and, of course, more!

If there's something that is not listed in the above paragraph that you would like to see included, don't hesitate to let me know.

Here's to a restful and relaxing break! All the best!

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# **Executive Secretary's Column**

by Kenneth L. Griffin



Your membership expires on July 31 so if you plan to enter students into jazz auditions which are always early, be sure to join for 2019-20 as soon as you can to avoid errors while entering students. Check the Directory in the left sidebar of the website to see if you are a member for 2019-20. You must have a 2019-20 ATSSB ID to see the Directory (TMEA will not allow you to view the Directory unless you are an ATSSB member for 2019-20). If you are not yet a member for next year, fill out the application online: (http://www.123contactform.com/form-661949/Contact-Form) with the changes (you need only list name and school and any changes - we already have the other posted data in the database) and then send payment when your school budget year begins - or go ahead and send in the check or school

Purchase Order now while you are thinking about it. Dues for Active Members are \$50, but remember that after October 1, the dues increase to \$75 unless you are joining as an Associate Member or College Division Member (everything is the same, you just cannot run for office, vote, or enter students in any ATSSB competition). Retirees who retire as an Active Member retain their Active Membership but dues are reduced to \$25 per year. A cover page showing your ATSSB and TMEA membership card must be sent with the initial entry forms for the first audition entered (ATSSB or TMEA). Don't forget that if you enter students in the Jazz Ensemble competitions that audition deadlines are EARLY, so get your ATSSB and TMEA dues taken care of as soon as possible. I email a copy of your card as soon as I receive payment of dues, so be sure we have an accurate email address for you and that your school does not block mail from this office (attachments trigger spamguards, so make sure we are allowed).

Ann Lowes Mueller, Composition Competition Coordinator, reports that participation looks good at this point. This Newsletter will be published online June 1, the deadline for submitting compositions into this cycle, after which the judging panel will begin reviewing the selections. We are all looking forward to the results being announced in July.

Be sure to check this link to see the region to which your ISD is assigned: http://align.tmea.org/index.php

See the following link to see how ATSSB has organized the 33 regions into 22 regions and five areas: http://www.atssb.org/execsec/ATSSB Area Alignment.pdf.

In your fall region meetings, you need to nominate a Class 2C Representative, a Class 1A/2A Representative and a Class 4A Representative to the State Board of Directors. The election will be held at the General Session tentatively scheduled for Friday, February 14, 2020, at 1:00 p.m. in Room 206 of the Convention Center. After nominees have accepted their nominations, their pictures and biographies (if submitted) will appear in the online December Newsletter, so keep an eye out for that issue. Please get involved in the district, region, and area activities of ATSSB - and seek state office if you would like to serve at that level. It is a lot of work, requires a lot of time and effort, and entails constant contact with fellow officers, but the end results are very worthwhile (and obviously beneficial to our students and ATSSB in general).

The Prescribed Audition List Update (Use Year D) is now available online: http://www.atssb.org/execsec/YearDUpdate.20.pdf.

(Continued on Page 6)

(Griffin, continued from Page 5):

The September Newsletter will be no longer be mailed. We previously mailed it to include a copy of the OPS winners CD as a reference tool for our directors. Each ATSSB member will receive a link to a Permanent Digital Download (PDD) of the 2019 OPS winners' files. All Newsletters are now available online as a pdf file.

This coming year, Eugene Corporon (University of North Texas) will be the clinician for the Symphonic Band. Paul Harshman (University of Washington) will be the clinician for the Jazz Ensemble. Dr. David F. Wilborn (Texas A&M University) will be the Concert Band clinician. The Concert Band will premier the winner of the 2020 ATSSB Composition Competition.

Jennifer Siler from The Village School in Houston has secured instructors for 30-minute clinics regarding the ATSSB audition etudes at TBA. These clinics will be given on Friday, July 26: CC Room 305

Percussion: Jesús Pacheco, Strake Jesuit College Preparatory
Flute: Kathy Daniels, Sam Houston State University
Trombone: Ben Osborne, Sam Houston State University
Bass Clarinet: Chris Bennett, Berry Miller JH, Pearland ISD
Bassoon: Dr. Nathan Koch, Sam Houston State University
Oboe: Alecia Lawyer, Houston Professional Musician
Tuba/Euphonium: Everett Hinote, University of Saint Thomas
Clarinet: Dr. Tricia Card, Sam Houston State University
French Horn: Ronald Todd, Horn Instructor, Fort Bend ISD
Saxophone: Masahito Sugihara, Sam Houston State University
Trumpet: Wesley Smith, Alief ISD

There will be an ATSSB State Board of Directors meeting at 7:15 a.m. in the Minuet Room of the Menger Hotel on Thursday, July 25. Your board includes all elected state officers, all Region Coordinators, all Founding Charter Members, Past-Presidents, and invited guests. If you would like to have input on matters relating to ATSSB State Board of Director activities, I would suggest calling or writing your Region Coordinator (or any state officer) and telling them of your concerns so they can advise the full Board.

We will have our ATSSB General Session at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, July 26, in the Convention Center (tentatively scheduled for CC214). Please make plans to attend if you will be at TBA. This will be an informational meeting at which issues impacting ATSSB will be discussed.

I hope to be able to visit with a lot of you at TBA at the ATSSB table in the Registration Area. Please note the times the ATSSB table will be open for you to stop by. Good luck as you begin another year with your students, especially if you are at a new school (be sure to let us know your new address).

## **FYI, ATSSB at TBA**

(Be sure to check with the convention program for last-minute changes)

Thursday, July 25

7:15 am State Board of Directors meeting, Menger Hotel Minuet Room

ATSSB Outstanding Performance Series (judges' meeting 8:00 in CC305)

8:30 am-12:30 pm Class 1C followed by Class 3A followed by SARC Meeting - CC302

Class 2C followed by Class 1A/2A - CC303

Class 4A - CC304 ATSSB Office - CC305

8:30 am-5:00 pm ATSSB table open in Convention Center lobby

4:30-5:30 pm ATSSB-Sponsored Clinic - "Maintaining Success in a Small-School Band Program

When the Director Retires or Leaves" - Mike Barltey and ROb Toups, clinicians.

Sponsored by ATSSB.

Friday, July 26

7:30 am-5:00 pm ATSSB table open in Registration area 9:00 am-3:30 pm ATSSB All-State Audition Music Clinics

(see convention program or elsewhere in this Newsletter for sites and times)

3:30 pm ATSSB General Session - CC206 (check convention program to be sure)

Saturday, July 22

7:30 am-noon ATSSB table closes at noon

## 4A Class Representative's Column

by Jason R. Smith

Your Faith, Family and your friends . . .

In my student teaching I was given two bits of advice to make it as a career teacher: "It is a marathon not a sprint" and "the three most important things in life are your faith, family and your friends." Many of us are challenged with what we perceive as teacher burnout at some point in our career. I would also ask you to consider if it is burnout or demoralization?

It is a marathon not a sprint--the advice I now give to student teachers. A career teacher is looking to teach for twenty plus years, I am currently on twenty-two. We are going to make mistakes early in our profession, but one of them can not be spending twelve plus hours a day, every day, in our band halls. Efficiency and planning are the keys early on; sometimes by slowing down we can work faster. There has been an abundance of research on teachers leaving the profession in the first three years, due to a variety of reasons. I would encourage young teachers to realize that their mental and physical health are far more important than a trophy or rating. I also believe that many veteran teachers will tell young teachers they will quickly learn how to work faster, not longer to help provide the best instruction for their students. Seek guidance and have master teachers come do clinics or watch them in person with your ensemble. Still in my twenty-second year, I and the other directors have clinicians to come in and show us different ways of teaching.

Planning and avoiding stress--for the veteran teachers in the marathon, long term plans and short term plans are vital to avoid stress. I think a lot of stress comes from last minute details that are overlooked or an unknown item pops up. Plan ahead for these, we say, "if you want

(Continued on Page 8)

(Smith, continued from Page 7):

to sit under a tree plant the seed a long time ago," meaning the more you can get done today, the less you will have to do in the future. We do not always see the future clearly, all the details we must address, but the older we get, the better we get at planning for them. When you have time, use it don't waste it, and don't take work home.

Your faith, family and your friends—the three most import things in your life should be your faith, family and friends. Notice that none of these are your job. After we won the state marching gold medal, I was with my buddies that I play golf with (none are teachers, nor have I taught any of their kids). We are on the first tee, and one of them looked over at me and said, "I heard y'all just did something big in band?" I replied, "Yes, we won the state marching gold medal in San Antonio." He replied, "oh." That was all that was said by any of my friends about that accomplishment. . . it really put in perspective what is important, our friendship, not accomplishments at work. To be honest, I relish the time I spend with my friends because band is never brought up! The person I did my student teaching with would always put me "on the clock" when we spent time together away from band when I started to talk band. It used to frustrate me; then as I got older, I understood why. Get away from band; find things to occupy your time that are not band—your faith, family and friends.

Your faith will help guide you and find a purpose away from band. It will also help find friends to hold you accountable for the beliefs you share in common and remind you of what is important. These friend groups away from band will prolong your teaching life. Your faith is sometimes tied to your family as well; lean on them and center conversations on other topics beside band (put yourself on the clock when you do). Our faith guides us and gives us the security that we will make it through trying times as well as helping us appreciate the good times. It also lets us know that there is a bigger picture we may not see.

Burnout vs Demoralization – Sometimes these topics are the same and sometimes they are different. Many of us suffer from demoralization but call it burnout. The constant recruiting students into our programs, dealing with administration that create schedule conflicts unnecessarily, budget cuts, booster drama, paperwork for purchasing, lesson plans no one reads, change in evaluation techniques by administration, micro management from administration.... All of these can lead to burnout, but really are demoralizing to the active teacher. ALL I WANT TO DO IS TEACH!

We try to build our programs or maintain our programs and yet we feel turn after turn obstacles keep getting put in our way; FOR NO GOOD REASON! I have read a lot of research on this topic and demoralization of the creative teacher is typically the number one reason for teachers to leave the profession. The obstacles that we feel are being placed in front of us, sometimes get placed there due to people not being privy to a complete picture. AND sometimes our frustration is because we are not privy to the complete picture. Either way, it is very demoralizing. When these obstacles come up, be patient (which seems impossible), be creative in your approach to educate those placing the obstacles (just like students, honey is sweeter than vinegar), and don't overreact.

There are no good answers to all of these frustrations we share. Finding balance in our lives, sharing the stress across your staff so everyone carries the load, and changing priorities or time management techniques to help are solutions I use. Recently a 39+ year veteran teacher shared with me, "the only time I enjoy at school anymore, is when students are in front of me." I smiled, because they still enjoy that time. It also reminded me, no matter what happens outside the bells, I needed to enjoy that time with students inside the bell.

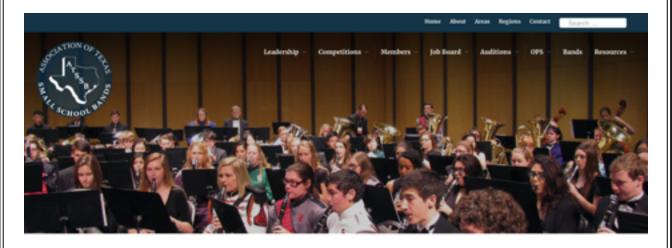
#### Webmaster's Column

By Marc Nichelson

As we finish up the year, I can't help but look back at all the wonderful memories made over the year. Although this time of year brings some well-needed rest, I know many of us are busy preparing for next year with excited anticipation of another season where we get to have more experiences and continue to strive for excellence through the medium of music education. I would also like to wish all of those involved with the OPS and Honor Band competition best of luck with their recordings at these events.

Over the last year, we began the process of updating the ATSSB website. Although it has served us well over the years, it is due for an update to continue to operate in an ever-changing technological landscape. Tim Edins has served diligently as our webmaster, and although his work was typically behind the scenes, we owe him our gratitude for the website's longevity and service to our members. As we transition to the new website, I will be transitioning into the role of webmaster. It is my goal as we update is that the site will continue to perform well for our membership as well as adding a few "new" benefits. A new website also means all of the region/area websites will be moved back to being hosted under the main atssb.org domain (check with your area/region coordinators for more details).

Here is a quick screenshot of the updated layout of the homepage that will appear at atssb.org:



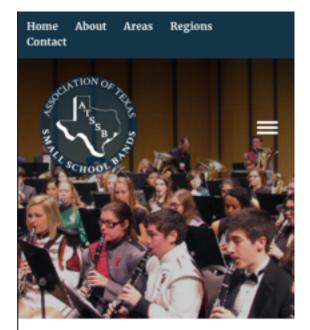
28 Years of Service to Texas Small School Bands.



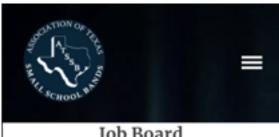
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(Nichelson, continued from Page 9):

The website now will be optimized for mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets:



28 Years of Service to Texas Small School Bands.



Job Board

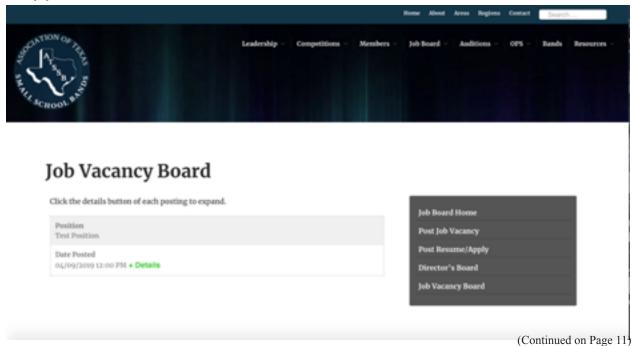
The ATSSB job board is a one stop tool for posting or seeking band and music related positions at small Texas schools. Job seekers can view available positions and upload their resume. Schools can post available positions or find available candidates.

Learn More

OPS

The ATSSB Outstanding Performance Series is a process designed to select

Our Job Board will have a little bit of a facelift, but will function in the same way as it has for many years:



(Nichelson, continued from Page 10):

I want to thank Kelsie Wickliffe for working on getting us set up and migrating all of our information over to the new servers. That was an immensely time-consuming job and she handled it, making the overall product even better. We are looking for pictures to be used on the website and would love to feature bands from our membership. If you have a picture featuring your band performing (or just one you think would be good for the website) and it's a high-quality image you may submit it at the following link:

https://www.dropbox.com/l/AACanUu1nSquXnR1ipBbRuRDNOI1bHr1YYs

As you head into summer, I hope you take time to recharge and reflect on the past year. I know summer is a sacred time in my life, and I wish you the best during that time. See you in July at TBA!

# **Outstanding Performance Series**

by Collin Anderson, OPS State Chair



The 2019 Outstanding Performance Series is in full swing. This year there were a total of 654 pieces uploaded. It is great to see so many schools entering their ensemble's performance selections. Many great performances are being adjudicated this season.

By the time this article is available, several regions will have had their listening sessions and results will be posted in the near future. All participating directors will receive a Certification of Advancement form from me indicating the order in which the selections were ranked and which entries advanced. You may also find the results on the ATSSB OPS webpage under the blue tab "OPS Results (Current)". The final deadline for region listening sessions is Saturday, June 8th. Area listening sessions will begin shortly

thereafter with all Area sessions begin completed by June 22nd. To see which region or area is judging your entries, visit the 2019 OPS Judging Matrix via the link on the OPS webpage.

As always, I want to say a hearty "Thank you" to each Region and Area Coordinator, as well as each director who serves as a judge, for your contribution and service to ATSSB as part of the Outstanding Performance Series competition this year. Without each of you, this competition would not be possible.

This is our second year of digitally uploading our entries, but also note that there will no longer be an actual Winners CD made. All winning entries at the state level will be made available for listening via the ATSSB website. More details on how to access these will be given closer to when they will be posted on the website.

It is a privilege to serve our organization as the OPS State Chair! Please feel free to contact me via email or phone if you have questions or issues and I will do my best to address them in a timely manner. However, the OPS webpage is a great source for information regarding the process of the competition.

Looking forward to seeing many of you at TBA when we host the state level of OPS. In the meantime, have a restful, enjoyable summer!

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