



NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2023

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BEGINNING OUR 33RD YEAR OF SERVICE TO SMALL SCHOOL BANDS IN TEXAS

PRESIDENTS COLUMN

RODNEY BENNETT



It does not seem possible that the 2022–2023 school year has come to close. Or will be soon if you are still in session. It's time to step back, take a breath and get some time away from the band hall. I hope all your spring performances were rewarding and successful.

It was good to have in person TSSEC again with live performances and adjudication for our students. My students were excited and grateful to get to the live experience again and have some fun down time as well. Congratulations to all who had students at TSSEC and hopefully it was a successful and inspiring event for the students.

This school year felt more normal, but were still many challenges to education and our band programs. I realize how fortunate we are in having the opportunity to teach band at our respective schools and share the gift and power of music with our students.

I know many of us are on extended contracts and have obligations at school, but don't forget to take care of you. Get away from the band hall, go be with your family, friends, or just some quiet time alone to reflect. This will help you recharge physically and emotionally. I personally struggle with getting away (there's always something that needs to be done), but I'm making plans to actually take some time off this summer and recharge.

Again, I cannot stress enough about getting away for some R&R. It will help you be ready for the summer marching camps and pre-band activities before we dive into fall 2023. Best wishes for a safe and relaxing time away, the fall semester will be here all too soon.

Thank you for the honor of serving as President of ATSSB. If I can ever be of assistance to you or your students, please don't hesitate to ask.



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PRESIDENT-ELECT COLUMN

ANGIE LISS

I got the email a few days ago telling me it's time to write an article for the quarterly ATSSB newsletter. In all the craziness of the last week of school and also preparing for TSSEC, I put off writing it until today—the day before it is due. I've now sat here off and on all day trying to come up with a clever way to say what's on my mind but it just isn't happening so I decided to just tell it like it is:

This was year 29 for me. It was a good year. A successful year as far as ratings and awards go. But for some reason, as the school year started winding down I found myself feeling like I hadn't done a good job; that perhaps I had let my students down; i.e.; I hadn't taught them enough music; I hadn't challenged them enough; we weren't where we needed to be to be ready for next year, etc. I was really beating myself up. Then I got some end-of-year notes and letters from a few students and had some conversations with parents. You know what? Not one mention of ratings or performances or the shortcomings of the music education I tried to give them but rather words about how I pushed them to be their best by believing in them and seeing their potential.



They talked of how band was a safe place to be where they could show their true self without fear. They spoke of feeling loved, respected, and heard when no one else listened. They thanked me for helping them find their voice and a confidence they didn't know they had. (We even had a graduating senior who quit band after his freshman year come to our office to tell us that he regretted quitting and to thank us for all we had done for him!)

I don't tell you any of this to toot my own horn. I tell you this because I KNOW the same can be said about you! I'm sure many of you received the same notes or letters and had the same conversations but even if you didn't, I KNOW you made a difference in the lives of your students. Whether the ratings were good or not, whether you had huge numbers in the all-region band or not, you made a difference.

I also tell you this because after each of these conversations I found myself emotionally exhausted being reminded of the incredible responsibility and privilege we have in our profession and the direct influence we have on those in our band halls. We pour so much of ourselves into our students that we MUST take some time to recharge and refill the tank. It is so very tempting to take advantage of a band hall with minimal distractions and try to get all the things done but I challenge you to be selfish with some of your summertime and spend it away from the band hall. Spend some hours thinking about anything but band! You deserve it!

I'm a phone call or email away so don't hesitate to reach out if you need anything! Have a great summer and hope to see many of you at TBA!



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PAST PRESIDENT COLUMN

MATT KNIGHT



Where has the time gone... I feel like we just returned home from TMEA. Hope your spring contests went well and you had a great end of the year. It is hard to believe I just finished my 30th year in Abernathy. Time does fly when you doing a job you love. I can honestly say, I have only had to go to work a few days in my life.

This is always a tough time of year if you do not do change. There always seems to be lots of movement in the region or even at your own school. For a person that does not like change, this time of year is even worse. We graduate our SR's, we bring in new freshman, we have students move away or kids just choose not to do your class, there is always change. As I write this column, I just received an email from my HS principal that he and his wife are leaving our district. Ouch! You always want people to do what is best for their family but it is hard when they are leaving "your family" A little side note, I taught my principal. I have been here a long time. Change is hard but it makes us grow. I am a firm believer that God has a plan in everything that happens. How we handle change makes all the difference. My hope as change comes your way, you will take a breath and ponder what direction you are being guided. Your attitude will make all the difference.

Since we are talking change, let take positive change. Take time to do something different for yourself. (I don't take my own advice very well) Get out of the band hall. Spend time with family and friends. Go to a movie, work in the yard, or travel. Do something besides work. You owe it to yourself!! Also it will allow you to better reset for next year.

ATSSB is truly blessed to have great leadership in place. That is why our organization is the quality it is year in and year out. We are always look for people to get involved in the region, area and state level. I encourage you to reach out to you region coordinator, area coordinator, or anyone on the state board if you would like to get more involved.

Thanks as always to Rodney Bennett, Angie Liss, Kenneth Griffin as well as our executive board for the great work they do keeping ATSSB going forward. We are truly blessed that each one of them is willing to give their talents to serve on our board.

If I can ever be of service to you, please let me know.
Have a great summer!!



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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY COLUMN

KENNETH 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 2023-24 as soon as you can to avoid errors while entering students. If you are not yet a member for next year, fill out the application online:

<https://www.atssb.org/atssb-membership-application-form/>

You need only list name and school and any changes - we already have the other posted data in the database. 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 spam guards, so make sure we are allowed). While you are at it, go ahead and join TBA for July.



Be sure to check this link to see the region to which your ISD is assigned:

https://align.tmea.org/align_2224/index.php

See the following link to see how ATSSB has organized the 33 regions into 22 regions and five areas:

<https://www.atssb.org/files/execsec/AreaAlign.pdf>

If you are new to ATSSB, be sure to check out our secure website (<https://www.atssb.org>). If you are having difficulty finding forms or data you need, you can always check out the link at the top of the home page "ATSSB A-Z" which can help you find what you are looking for. If you have suggestions on how we can improve the site's usefulness, send it to our Webmaster, Marc Nicholson (mnichelson@atssb.org). Also let us know if any links are not working so we can keep this trove of data up to date.

In your fall region meetings, you need to nominate a Class 2C Representative, a Class 2A Representative, and a Class 4A Representative to the State Board of Directors. An electronic ballot will be cast in January if an office has more than two candidates to reduce the final ballot to no more than two candidates per office. The election will be held at the General Session tentatively scheduled for Friday, February 11, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

Continued on next page

The Prescribed Audition List Update (Use Year C) is now available online:
<https://www.atssb.org/files/PAL-Files/YearCUpdate2024.pdf>

This coming year, Dr. Michael Golemo (Iowa State University) will be the clinician for the Symphonic Band. William Owens (Composer and Retired Educator) will be the Concert Band clinician. The Concert Band will premier a piece by William Owens commissioned by ATSSB. Noe Marmolejo (University of Houston) will be the clinician for the Jazz Ensemble. The Jazz Ensemble will premier a piece by Aaron Lington commissioned by ATSSB.

TBA has decided to not have clinicians present clinics on the audition etudes this year. We are looking into having videos made of clinicians explaining and demonstrating the etudes, but this is a huge undertaking on our part. Please give us time to get it organized and on our website. There are numerous commercial audios and videos available for purchase. Jordan Sound Productions (JordanSP@aol.com) sells audio files, and Dallas Winds sells a complete audition year of videos (121 videos) for \$110 (<https://dallaswinds.org/atssb/>). There may be other options for audio or video files of the Year C offered, but please look for an official affiliation with ATSSB before using them. We have had numerous issues with universities that do not become official ATSSB Licensees who take liberties with the editions, altering excerpts beyond what is allowed by the Prescribed Audition List.

Your ATSSB State Board of Directors will meet in July. 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 policies and procedures, 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.

I hope you all have a great summer and that I get to visit with many of you in San Antonio at TBA.



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Any correspondence should be addressed to ATSSB; 2117 Morse Street; Houston, TX 77019.

You may also contact us on our Web Site (www.atssb.org) or email the Editor (Marc Nichelson) at mnichelson@atssb.org 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.

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<https://www.atssb.org/files/execsec/AdPolicy.pdf>.



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STATE JAZZ COORDINATOR COLUMN

BRIAN DONNELL

Happy summer to everyone!

The auditions for region jazz bands happen early in the school year, so here are some strategies to help your students prepare.

1 – Acquire the Set C music for the 2023-2024 auditions. The music is available for purchase from www.matteimusicervices.com

2 – Deliver the music and the backing tracks to your students.

3 – Find out your region's entry deadline and audition date. Note, your region does not have to have a performing region band for students to advance to Area and State. We have had students in the All-State Jazz Band who came from regions without a performing group.

4 – Familiarize yourself with the music. The four pieces are written so students can practice alone, with a few students, or with a full band. The music is great for small schools, especially those with just one director.

5 – Also familiarize yourself with the rules. There is no vibraphone audition, no usage of valve trombones or electronic drumsets or flugelhorn, etc. When in doubt, ask your region coordinator or send me a note.

Region coordinators:

The backing tracks for Area recordings will be made available to the region coordinators in July. As in past years, the tracks will be available behind a password protected page on the atssb.org/jazz page.

As always, it is a privilege to serve ATSSB and I welcome the chance to visit with anyone who has an issue or question.

Have a great summer!

Brian Donnell
Greenhill School
bdonnell@atssb.org
www.atssb.org/jazz



Do you need to purchase one of the large 10" patches at state this year? They cost \$10 each (including postage).

Please use the order form online:
<https://www.atssb.org/files/execsec/LargePatchOrder.pdf>





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OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE SERIES

COLLIN ANDERSON

What a privilege it is to get to host the Outstanding Performance Series competition once again this summer! As expected, the number of competing organizations and the number of entries has grown yet again. This season, 320 performing ensembles (up from 290) submitted a total of 878 audio files for adjudication (up from 781)!

Adjudication has been postponed slightly, due to a substantial glitch in DropBox. As of last Saturday (5/27), approximately half of the audio files were not able to be located in the DropBox folders. When transferring the files into specified region folders, some of the audio files went 'walkabout' and DropBox declared them deleted. Thankfully, with the help of our webmaster guru, Marc Nichelson, we were able to locate where the audio files had been relegated and restored them to the DropBox folders where they belonged. As of the writing of this article on Wednesday, May 31, ALL files have been fully restored and are ready to be adjudicated! The original June 10th adjudication deadline for Region-level contests should be able to be met, though.



Continue to refer to the OPS Webpage as your primary source of information for the current Outstanding Performance Series season. All adjudication deadlines and certification of advancement dates are listed there. A matrix of all adjudications can also be found to show what regions are judging your entries. A Certification of Advancement form will be emailed by the OPS State Chair following each level of adjudication to show which entries advanced from region to area and then to the state OPS contest, and will also be available to view on the OPS Webpage.

Should you get a call from this number, 903-390-3271, during the summer, be sure to respond, as I may have questions regarding your entries or may be calling to hire you as a judge for the state-level contest at TBA.

Thank you, as always, for the opportunity to serve you and our fantastic organization as the OPS State Chair.

ATSSB Music Lending Library

Various regions send the music they purchase for all-region band clinics to Groesbeck High School after they use them so others can use the music in similar situations. We also send the All-State music to the Lending Library. If you would like to borrow a title, let them know. Contact Brian Boecker at Groesbeck High School, P.O. Box 559, Groesbeck, TX 76642 or call (254) 729-4117 between 10:10 and 11:00, fax him at (254) 729-5458, or email him at b.boeck@groesbeckisd.net. The only expense you will have is postage (both ways) as a courtesy to Brian and his staff. If you have music left over from an all-region clinic and would like to share it with other regions, send it to Groesbeck High School at the address above.

Here is the current list of titles available: <https://www.atssb.org/files/execsec/MusicLibrary.htm>

We would like to thank Collin Anderson, Brian Boecker and the Groesbeck band staff for providing this service to ATSSB members.



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WEBMASTER COLUMN

MARC NICHELSON



I hope this finds everyone beginning to enjoy a little bit of rest before starting up the marching band machine in full force. Remember in a time where so many people seem to be burning out to make sure to take care of yourself so you can continue to take care of the students in your charge. I am reminded of an object lesson we do with our leadership yearly; imagine your ability to carry chairs (I know we have all done this at some point in our career). How many chairs is the maximum number of chairs you can hold? Don't be humble, I mean really show off how many chairs you can stack and pick up. This is a display of our STRENGTH (look at all those chairs you are holding). However, to reframe the picture, imagine if while holding those chairs I asked you to help a student pick up a piece of paper lying flat on the ground, but you aren't allowed to set down the chairs. Now a seemingly easy task (even though some of us might find that squat to the ground a little more cumbersome these days) is almost impossible because we are carrying all those darn chairs! Take this time to lay down those chairs, rest, maybe even make plans to not have to carry so many things. I find myself involved in SO MANY things. I really find a lot of purpose in being able to do "all the things". Make the time to invest in yourself, your health, and those you love. Crazy thing about band, it's always there when we get back. Enjoy your summer and I look forward to seeing you at TBA!

Website Projects Currently in the works:

1. As always please let us know if something on the site is not functioning the way it is intended or a resource you'd like to see on the website.
2. I'd also like to know if some of you would be willing to help submit materials, we can publish to our social media that would help small school band directors. These could be teaching resources, videos you've made giving a clinic on certain items, etc... This would be specific to Small Schools and something our audience would find beneficial to use in their programs. If interested, please contact me at mnichelson@atssb.org.
3. If you know of any business that would be interested in beginning an advertising relationship with us, please have them contact me at mnichelson@atssb.org.
4. I am also looking at digital media (both in terms of video clinics, podcasts, and even zoom hangouts) to continue adding opportunities for directors not only use our contests but have more wonderful resources given through our website. If you know of anything we can add PLEASE LET ME KNOW!