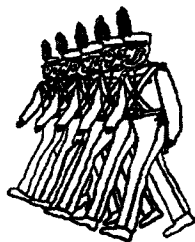


The National Association of



Military Marching Bands

Proudly presents:

“Small Bands and Military Marching”

Clinicians:

Brandon Garmon, Union Grove HS

Shaka Hawkins, Shelbyville HS

Josh King, Rusk HS

Jim Jones, Monitor

Texas Bandmasters Association Convention

San Antonio, TX

Thursday, July 23, 2015

4:45PM-5:45PM

CC 214CD

NAMMB Creed

Recognizing the importance and rich heritage of the precision military marching band, **THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MILITARY MARCHING BANDS** hereby affirms to promote and preserve the military precision style of performance among marching bands in America, and to encourage the superior performance of traditional march music from the band literature.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President – George Little, New Diana
President Elect – Kristy Jones, Cleveland
Past President – Nicholas Durham, Carthage
Board Member – Doice Grant (odd years)
Board Member – Don Lawler (even years)
Publicity Chairman – John Gaertner, Whitehouse
Executive Secretary – Jim Jones, Carthage

UPCOMING DATES

Membership Meeting:
TBA, San Antonio, TX. July 24, 2015, 1PM, CC 205

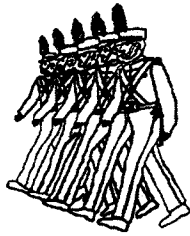
Directors' Retreat:
Camp Tonkawa Springs, August 15, 2015, 4PM (map on-line)

Pre-UIL Marching Contest:
Carthage HS, October 10, 2015

Texas State Military Marching Band Contest:
Longview HS, October 31, 2015

Visit our website: www.nammb.org

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MILITARY MARCHING BANDS



Jim Jones, Executive Secretary
101 Rambling Road Carthage, TX 75633

Dear Clinic Attendee,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to this clinic at the 2015 Texas Bandmasters Convention. We hope that this material might be of use to you in the education of your marching band. This booklet and clinic are in response to the many questions that directors are faced with each year in preparation and execution of the military style of marching band.

On behalf of the National Association of Military Marching Bands, we offer a special thank you to each of our clinicians: Mr. Brandon Garmon, Mr. Josh King and Mr. Shaka Hawkins.

In 1979, the National Association of Military Marching Bands was formed to promote and preserve the military precision style of performance among marching bands of America, and to encourage the superior performance of traditional march music from band literature.

We extend to each of you a special invitation to become a part of this outstanding organization. In the past two years, the Association has:

- Awarded \$7000 in scholarships to students that are majoring in instrumental music
- Created the National Association of Military Marching Bands "Hall of Fame," to be located at Texas A&M University. The first two recipients were Hebert "Butch" Albany and Waymon Bullock.
- Hosted pre-UIL contests at Carthage High School
- Hosted the State Military Marching Band contests at Stephen F. Austin State University

This year's contest will be held in Longview at "Lobo" Stadium on Oct. 31. We also invite you to the annual retreat at Camp Tonkawa (north of Nacogdoches) on Aug 15.

It has been, and shall remain, the Association's honor to host clinics at TBA, and sincerely thank you for your interest in the National Association of Military Marching Bands. Visit us at our web site: nammb.org

Sincerely,

Jim Jones
Executive Secretary, NAMMB
jim-jones@att.net

NAMMB President's Notes – George Little, July 2015

As I took some much needed time off to spend with my family this summer, I was also able to spend time reflecting on the state of military marching bands as well as the important role that NAMMB plays in preserving the heritage of the military marching band.

The NAMMB Creed reads, "Recognizing the importance and rich heritage of the precision military marching band, THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MILITARY MARCHING BANDS hereby affirms to promote and preserve the military precision style of performance among marching bands in America, and to encourage the superior performance of traditional march music from the band literature." NAMMMB offers many helpful resources to band directors. The two most easily accessible tools are the NAMMB website and The Texas State Military Marching Contest hosted by NAMMB.

WWW.NAMMB.ORG has a wealth of information regarding military marching band. I would like to encourage marching band directors from every style to spend time perusing our website. You will find vintage videos, video examples of specific marching formations, and NAMMMB clinic handouts just to name a few. Directors of military bands will find the website a source of inspiration and ideas for writing drill while at the same time directors from corps bands (especially those that judge military bands) can use the website to increase their knowledge of military maneuver terminology and concepts.

The most common reason that I have been told by band directors as to why their band doesn't participate in the annual NAMMB marching contest is that they don't want their students to feel like "losers" if they don't get a first division rating or first, second, or third place. To compare this mindset to parenting, consider that just like parents have the greatest influence on how their child feels about themselves, a band director has the greatest influence on how their band feels about a competition result. Having been on the "winning" end and on the "losing" end of the NAMMMB marching contest, I can tell you that first place and last place can be equally motivating to students when presented properly from the person in charge. A little bit of friendly competition goes a long way. Plus, participation in the NAMMMB marching contest is a great value at only \$300 per band. There is also a NAMMB pre-UIL marching contest each year with an entry fee of \$250. Marching contest dates and locations will be voted on at the NAMMB meeting held during the TBA convention and posted on the NAMMB website.

Marching band means different things to different people. For some, marching band is the premier competitive instrumental ensemble at their school and for others marching band is all about surviving the fall semester until they can have "sit down" band. I would like to challenge every marching band director, whether it be military or corps, to strive for excellence. Let's teach our students music first and foremost. Remember that teaching pride, discipline, and self-sacrifice shouldn't be restricted based on the time of year, the size of the school, the style of marching, or geographical location.

We would like to congratulate the following 2015 high school graduates on receiving a NAMMB scholarship! Anna Click (New Diana HS), Samantha Morris (Spring Hill HS), Dominique Phillips (New Boston HS), Urias Quetzala (Garrison HS), and Edwin Scott (New Boston HS). For details on how to apply for a NAMMMB scholarship please visit www.nammb.org/NAMMMB/Scholarship.html.

Remember that it is now time to pay your NAMMB membership dues for the 2015-2016 school year. The active member fee is \$15 and memberships for college students are free. Membership applications can be found at the NAMMB website. Also, don't forget about the annual NAMMB Stump Burnin' to be held at Camp Tonkawa (near Nacogdoches) on August 15th. See the website for details.

I wish all of you the best with getting the 2015 marching season underway and I hope to see you at the NAMMB marching contest!

The Panel will discuss the following questions for the clinic:

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you pick your music?
2. How do you pace your band?
3. How do you plan your season?
4. What item/ idea do you key on to be successful?
5. How do you come up with drill design?

The following questions will be covered if time permits:

1. How do you recruit members for band?

Brandon Garmon : Every sixth grade student at Union Grove is required to take band their sixth grade year. After that, they can choose to stay in band, or go a different route. At least by getting all of them their sixth grade year, we get a chance to show them what band is all about. Some of them are surprised by how much they enjoy it after they get started. We recruit by teaching those sixth graders at the highest level possible and making band an enjoyable experience so that they will hopefully never want to leave us.

Josh King: We require all sixth-grade students to be in band. It's a matter of retention, and that comes from keeping them curious and interested.

Shaka Hawkins: We don't do a whole lot of recruiting for band since it is required for all 6th grade students to sign up for band. In the past we've done performances for the kids or had section leaders sit in with the recorder class to talk about band.

2. How do you keep students in band?

Brandon Garmon: If a student is good at their instrument and enjoys playing in the band, they will likely stick with it. Good teaching from the beginning is vital to retention. Building a family-like atmosphere in the band hall is also important. I want the kids to encourage one another, laugh together, and support one another even during those difficult times. Create opportunities for the group to spend time together outside of the daily rehearsal. This will help give the kids a sense of belonging and prevents band from becoming just another "class."

Josh King: Trips, success, and a great band staff!

Shaka Hawkins: You must communicate with other teachers, coaches, administrators, etc. early and often. We have had the same after school schedule between band and

sports for years, and we try not to stray away from that schedule so that the kids can be involved in everything they can. Football, cross country, volleyball, and cheer all start at 4 pm after school which is why we start our rehearsals at 6. This works perfect because it ensures that the band students get to rehearsal on time for our scheduled time. I also make sure that everyone knows who/what/when/where preferably at the start of each school semester. This way parents, teachers, coaches, and administrators are aware of everything that we have scheduled to help eliminate any possible conflicts. At least keep them to a minimum, because there will always be conflicts.

3. How do you share students?

Brandon Garmon: We have varsity football players, volleyball players, and cheerleaders in our marching band. Our schedule is set up to where none of those groups meet during our 1st period class time, and they all avoid scheduling any practices each Monday evening from 6-8 PM. They all are able to march with us at halftime and at all of our various contests.

When sharing students in a small school, communication is vital. I try to be very organized in all that I do. I get schedules out to all of our administrators, parents, students, and faculty members as early as possible. I like to visit with any coach or teacher in person to resolve any conflict issues. I've found over the years that this usually works better for me than sending an email. Be sure to seek out the Ag teachers, coaches, and other sponsors on your campus ahead of time to collect information from them about schedules during the year. Being proactive can help in avoiding many scheduling issues.

Josh King: Our students do EVERYTHING! It is important to have good working relationships with your coaches, sponsors, and parents. We push for our students try lots of things to give them a better all-around experience.

Shaka Hawkins: You must communicate with other teachers, coaches, administrators, etc. early and often. We have had the same after school schedule between band and sports for years, and we try not to stray away from that schedule so that the kids can be involved in everything they can.

4. How do you choose music for your marching band?

Brandon Garmon: I look at my overall instrumentation and select music based on the strengths of my ensemble that particular year. I like to read a lot of different music with the band toward the end of the year to give me an idea of what fits the group. I also want to make sure the key signatures make sense and transition smoothly from piece to piece. I never want to play a fanfare in the key of F and follow it with another march in the key of Ab if at all possible. Also, consider the opportunity for contrast in your music

that you pick. Find music that features various strengths of your band, and find ways to make that interesting for the audience.

Josh King: I look at the limitations of the group and what will make them better players. I also try to pick things they will enjoy playing...so they will practice.

Shaka Hawkins: What percentage of the band can successfully play this music? This is the question that I ask myself when choosing music. I generally try to pick what is going to make us have the biggest sound for a band our size. So I tend to stay away from music that has a lot of exposed moments. I play 3-4 marches in a drill each year, and there is at least one of those that pushes each student to play above their level. Everything that I play during the year is rewritten in some form of fashion.

5. What is your rehearsal schedule during football season?

Brandon Garmon: We rehearse each morning during our regular class time from 7:40-8:40. We usually stay inside on Monday mornings to review film from our Friday night performance and rehearse music inside our band hall. We have one full band rehearsal each week on Monday nights from 6-8 PM. We meet early before home and away games to do a short "run-through" before our performance that night. I like to be consistent with all of our rehearsals and times to avoid any confusion.

Josh King: Monday night's 7-9PM with sectionals for those who can attend Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons.

Shaka Hawkins: During school our band class is 9:50-10.40 every day. Because I have 7-12 in my band which are 2 different campuses, the high school being on the other side from the band hall, we modify our start time to 9:55. Also, I have to let the high school students leave early so they can be back in time for the next period. So on a good day we get 35 minutes of band outside. We stay indoors on Mondays, the rest of the week we are outside. We do a walkthrough before football games. After school we do Mondays 6-8 and Tuesdays 6-7. In the past we only did Mondays, but since we have recently added a volleyball team I was forced to add a day because of middle school volleyball games once or twice a month.

6. Do you do music pass-off?

Brandon Garmon: Absolutely! Each student is given a large copy of the music we use on the field. He/She will bring that copy in when they are ready to pass it off. This can mean passing all of a piece off at one time or passing off sections. Whichever they are able to do at the time. I mark a rubric grade on the music with my red pen and also notate anything they need to work on. This helps them to keep track of what they have played for me, and provides documentation if there is ever any confusion about a missing or incorrect grade. We give students deadlines to get certain sections of the

music passed off with the end goal being that everyone has passed off all of our music at a “performance ready” level by the time that we go to contest.

Josh King: Yes. We pass-off for a letter grade that can be raised until the end of the grading period. Those who do not pass-off on time can receive no higher than an 80, regardless of ability. (It’s about teaching responsibility.)

Shaka Hawkins: Students have to pass off something every week up until 3 weeks before contest when all music must be played off. I break each march into weekly assignments if it has multiple strains. For example: Week 1 – Fanfare Due Week 2 – March 1 Intro and 1st Strain Due Week 3 – March 1 Second Strain Due use a chart with gold and silver stars so students can keep track of their own grades. Silver stars are for attempting to play the music off. Mathis means the student played the music with a couple of minor memory lapses and a few mistakes. This is the equivalent of a 70-85 in the grade book. Gold stars mean they played with minimal memory lapses and minimal mistakes. Gold stars are the equivalent of an 86-100 in the grade book. Failure to play music when due results in loss of halftime break for every week it isn’t played off, and continuous means being removed from the contest band.

7. Do you have any extra practices for contest?

Brandnon Garmon: We do not add any extra practices before contest, but we always try to schedule at least one rehearsal to go somewhere that has field turf. Most of the places we typically see on Friday night do not have this type of surface, so I like for my students to have the opportunity to practice on it before UIL or NAMMB. It feels a little different, and I want them to be comfortable with marching on that surface before the day of contest.

Josh King: Rarely. We participate in extra marching contests to better prepare them mentally.

Shaka Hawkins: In the past we’ve gone to a school near us that has turf, or an indoor facility, and have an extended rehearsal on their field. We just had turf put in our football stadium so traveling for extra rehearsals is out of the question. However, I have a great administration that is allowing me to keep my extended rehearsals, they just have to be in house.

8. How do you make the younger players comfortable in marching and playing?

Brandon Garmon: During our pre-season camp we take time to have the older kids work with our younger marchers in small groups. If we see that somebody is struggling, we can pull them out for more individualized instruction as needed. Our older students are great about noticing these things as well, and they will voluntarily schedule some “extra help” sessions for anyone that needs it.

As far as playing, I like to ease the younger students into pass-offs and be as encouraging as possible when they come to play something off for me. They are usually very hesitant about attempting to pass music off and playing in front of the group. Both staff members are available after school each day to help with any student that is having difficulty with their music. Sometimes, after you work with them is a great time to attempt that pass-off they have been so worried about.

Josh King: We cater the music to fit their level of musicianship. We also spend more time with younger students outside so they can blend with the look of our ensemble.

Shaka Hawkins: - Make them feel successful in what they are doing. When you are walking around the field sampling individual areas of the field make a comment directed towards them and the fact they are trying. Section leaders and upper leadership are very vital in this area.

9. Any additional comments:

Brandon Garmon: There are many challenges to being a band director in a small school, but there are also many advantages. I am fortunate to work in a district where each student has the opportunity participate in as many programs as possible, without having to choose one over the other. This is due to supportive administrators who see the value in these students being well-rounded and who encourage the students to experience all the various activities the school has to offer. Fine art, athletic, and academic programs each play an important role in the development of our kids. I believe it is our job as educators to continue to educate not only the students, but the people who make these curriculum decisions, emphasizing the importance of making all educational experiences available to our students.

Josh King: Never be afraid to try new things. They may not work, but at least you tried. I have found things that I use to this day because I was willing to experiment. Your students will also see that you are open to new ideas and change

Shaka Hawkins: There are many issues teaching at a small school, mainly how the children stretch themselves so far by committing to doing so many extracurricular events. However, this is also a blessing in disguise! Those kids that stick around are some of the most dedicated kids you'll ever find, and they are the ones who know how to balance out their hectic lives. Also, don't allow yourself or your kids to settle for the bare minimum. Just because you might have middle school students in your band doesn't mean that they can't achieve something that might be above their heads. Push them, and push yourself!