



# Media Kit



*The Michael D. Sewell Memorial Foundation in Central Ohio assembled a nationwide “band of band directors” who marched in 2022’s world-famous Rose Parade® and the 2023 Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade®. The stunning success of these events, seen by millions of people worldwide, led to an invitation to perform in the 2026 Rose Parade. This is how it all came together.*



Courtesy Tournament of Roses

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*The Band Directors Marching Band performed in the 2022 Rose Parade in Pasadena, California. The combined float and band entry was awarded the Tournament of Roses Showmanship Award.*



## How and why the Michael D. Sewell Memorial Foundation created the Saluting America's Band Directors project



### What is the Michael D. Sewell Memorial Foundation?

The Michael D. Sewell Memorial Foundation was founded in 2017 and is based in Pickerington, Ohio. It was created to recognize and carry on the work of the late Mike Sewell, who dedicated his life to the music programs in Pickerington and the Columbus/Central Ohio area for almost 40 years. Mike was director of bands for the Pickerington Local School District and had forged connections among generations of students and musicians that live on in his memory. The Foundation is the sponsor of The Tournament of Roses® Michael D. Sewell Service Through Music Award. This award was initiated by the Sewell family and the Foundation as a way to honor Mike's dedication to using music with his students and groups to encourage service in their schools, the community, and across the country. The award was implemented for the 2018 Rose Parade bands and is presented each year as a way to honor a participating Rose Parade band that best exemplifies service to their community. Mike always told his students, "The greatest gift you can give someone is your time." The award was inspired by that concept.

### What is the Saluting America's Band Directors™ (SABD) project?

The SABD project was conceived by the Sewell Foundation as a way to recognize and salute the extraordinary dedication and accomplishments of band directors everywhere—public and private schools at all levels, colleges and universities, the military, and community bands. With their strong relationship with the Tournament of Roses, the Foundation sought to create a special entry in the Rose Parade®. Its proposal was historic: to be the first entry accepted by the Tournament of Roses to have both a float and a marching band composed solely of band directors. The band is named The Band Directors Marching Band.™

A spectacular animated float accompanied our 270 band directors from across North America to form an unprecedented marching band of band directors that marched and performed in the 2022 Rose Parade in Pasadena, California.

### Why the project theme, "America's Band Directors: We teach music. We teach life.™"?

The extraordinary dedication and accomplishments of band directors are well known to their students, to parents and to teachers and administrators. No matter where they teach and work, dedicated music educators and directors work long hours to not only teach and conduct music, but to teach life skills as well. Student lives in particular are positively changed by motivational leaders who teach, inspire and mentor them.

### After the 2022 Rose Parade, what happened next?

The Saluting America's Band Directors' entry in the Rose Parade generated countless positive comments from participants and viewers across the country. Soon after, an invitation was received from the planners of Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade® to appear and perform in the 2023 Parade. And now, The Band Directors Marching Band returns for the 2026 Rose Parade.

# THE SALUTING AMERICA'S BAND DIRECTORS™ PROJECT

## The Saluting America's Band Directors™ project At a glance



**Project name:** Saluting America's Band Directors™ (SABD).

**SABD's mission:** Saluting America's Band Directors serves to highlight the outstanding work of America's band directors and to bring attention to and advocate for the important work of our nation's music educators. SABD represents every "music man" and "music woman" in every community across America who endeavors to teach music to our nation's students.

**Project sponsor:** The Michael D. Sewell Memorial Foundation, based in Pickerington, Ohio, was created to carry on the legacy of the late Mike Sewell, beloved longtime band director in the Pickerington, Ohio school system.

**Initial SABD event:** SABD's inaugural event was its appearance in the 2022 Rose Parade.® The entry of The Band Directors Marching Band and float won the Tournament of Roses Showmanship Award.

**Unique aspects of our Rose Parade entry:** First Rose Parade entry comprising a float and a marching band together, as well as the first known marching band in which all members are active or retired band directors.

**SABD Today:** Following the overwhelmingly positive response and success of our 2022 Rose Parade appearance, the Sewell Foundation accepted an invitation to march and perform in the 2023 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade® in New York City and now the 2026 Rose Parade. The Foundation believes that through these projects, it can create one-of-a-kind experiences for deserving music educators, that will continue to shine a light on all that band directors do in their classrooms, their communities and beyond.

Once again the BDMB will March the parade route accompanying an amazing Float crafted by AES ( Artistic Entertainment Services). This year's entry is entitled "Banding Together" and it salutes all the students, teachers, and communities who band together to make music happen. The magic in teamwork happens everyday on the band field and we can't wait for everyone to see our float. Featured riders are recipients of The Tournament of Roses Michael D Sewell Service Through Music Award. Beginning with the 2018 Rose Parade, the Sewell Service Through Music Award has been presented each year to a participating Rose Parade band director and program that displays above and beyond service through music in their school and community. Jim Hahn, long time Southern California middle school educator and Tournament of Roses band liaison, will also be recognized on the float for his years of service to students and band programs in the Rose Parade. Don't miss our band and float interaction at the corner!

# THE SALUTING AMERICA'S BAND DIRECTORS™ PROJECT



**Name of the band:** The Band Directors Marching Band,™ led by nationally known veteran band director Jon Waters.

**The SABD theme:** America's Band Directors: We teach music. We teach life.™

## Profile of The Band Directors Marching Band (BDMB) for the Rose Parade:

- Total number of directors: 350 (as of September 25, 2025)
- Number of states represented: 50 plus Canada, Mexico, and Panama
- Total years experience teaching and directing music: 5,493
- Average years of music teaching experience: 15
- Number of directors with more than 30 years experience: 55
- Number of directors with fewer than 10 years experience: 115
- Longest number of years teaching: 49 by marcher Robert Evans (2025-2026 is his 50th year of teaching!)
- Teacher of the Year recipients (local, state, or national): 67
- Grammy Music Educator of the Year nominees (quarter finalists-finalists): 16
- John Philip Sousa Foundation Legion of Honor Laureates: 3
- Marching in Rose Parade with a family member: 20
- Marching in Rose Parade with a mentor or colleague: 96
- Band Directors who have marched in the Rose Parade Previously: 79
- The most times marched in the Rose Parade: 4 of our members have marched 4 times in the Rose Parade

Our Band Members have many awards and accolades. They have represented the profession and led students in parades all over the world, not only The Rose Parade, but the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, the London New Year's Parade, the Normandy D-Day Anniversary Parade, Inauguration Parades, Independence Day and Memorial Day Parades, Hollywood Christmas Parades and many others including bowl games.

Not only do they teach music, they hold responsibilities in professional organizations promoting music education. Many are professional musicians and are part of performing ensembles. They are all very excited to be a part of this year's Rose Parade. For many, it is a once in a lifetime experience that they would otherwise never have! Each member is proud to represent their school, their community, and all music educators.

**Service Through Music Initiative:** Service is a part of citizenship in a free society. Musicians are specifically called to use their skills and gifts to inspire and lift up the community. This is what we mean by Service Through Music. Service Through Music is a core principle of The Band Directors Marching Band. It is a value that Mike Sewell held dear. This year's Service Through Music Initiative has three parts:

### Part 1: Local Service Through Music Events

Individual members of the Band Directors Marching Band are invited to organize and execute Service Through Music projects in their local communities. In order to illustrate "The Magic in Teamwork," these projects will include two or more performing groups. The projects use music to provide a service to the community. Projects taking place across the country can be viewed on our [website](#).

### Part 2: The Band Directors VIRTUAL Band Video

Members of The Band Directors Marching Band will contribute videos of themselves performing "Brand New Day," arranged by Robert Thurston. These will be combined to create a virtual band video to be released on November 11, 2025 in honor of Veterans Day.

### Part 3: The BDMB Service Through Music Project when in California

The capstone of this year's Service Through Music initiative will be a ceremony and performance when the group is together in California. The event will honor those fire fighters who responded to the wildfires in the Los Angeles area in January of 2025.



# THE SALUTING AMERICA'S BAND DIRECTORS™ PROJECT

## The Band Directors Marching Band™



### Band Director Jon Waters

The Band Directors Marching Band is led by nationally known music educator and innovative band director Jon Waters. He is currently director of athletic bands at Bowling Green State University and serves as head director of the Falcon Marching Band. Previously, he was assistant professor of music education and director of bands at Heidelberg University. He previously taught at The Ohio State University where he served as director of marching and athletic bands.

### Band Members

Current and retired band directors and music educators may apply for membership in The Band Directors Marching Band for each major event. Qualified individuals are selected by a committee of the Michael D. Sewell Memorial Foundation based on required band instrumentation, the geographic location of the applicant and the date of receipt of the application.

Members of The Band Directors Marching Band come from all US states, Canada, Mexico, and Panama. Participants range from recent music education graduates through retired veteran directors. Collectively, band members have taught and mentored hundreds of thousands of students and led bands in sizes from a couple of dozen to hundreds of members.

We believe that each iteration of The Band Directors Marching Band are the most experienced marching bands ever assembled. Collectively, the band directors have thousands of years of experience teaching and performing.



Photographs courtesy Eric Mills

## News release



### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## The Band Directors Marching Band™ reunites for 2026 Rose Parade®

Columbus, OH—Three hundred and Fifty band directors from across the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Panama will again form The Band Directors Marching Band™ to march in the 2026 Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade®. The band's appearance is a part of the Saluting America's Band Directors™ project of the Michael D. Sewell Memorial Foundation, based in Pickerington, Ohio.

The band's Participation on January 1 follows its successful appearance in the 2022 Rose Parade® and the 2023 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade®. Through its theme, "America's Band Directors: We teach music. We teach life", the Saluting America's Band Directors project aims to spotlight the extraordinary dedication and accomplishments of band directors everywhere. Regardless of where they teach and work—public and private schools, colleges and universities, the military, or community bands—dedicated music educators and leaders work long hours to not only teach and conduct music, but to impart critical life skills. Student lives in particular are positively changed by motivational leaders who teach, inspire and mentor them.

As in 2022, the 2026 Band Directors Marching Band will accompany a float entitled "Banding Together." The float-band entry is unique to Saluting America's Band Directors. Crafted by Artistic Entertainment Services, the "Banding Together" float salutes all the students, teachers, and communities who band together to make music happen.

The Performance for the 5.5 mile route through Pasadena will be led by nationally-known music educator and innovative band director Jon Waters, director of bands for Bowling Green State University. The parade will be televised to national and international audiences.

As the sponsoring organization behind the project, the Michael D. Sewell Memorial Foundation was created to recognize and carry on the work of the late Mike Sewell, who dedicated his life to schools and community music programs in Pickerington and the Central Ohio area for almost 40 years.

Additional details can be found on the Saluting America's Band Directors website, [Band Director Salute.org](https://www.BandDirectorSalute.org).

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Contact: John Cisetti

Email: [John@BandDirectorSalute.org](mailto:John@BandDirectorSalute.org)

## Saluting America's Band Directors Advisory Team

*The Saluting America's Band Directors project is administered by an all-volunteer advisory team of professionals from various fields.*

### **Karen Sewell, President**

**Michael D. Sewell Memorial Foundation**

[Karen@BandDirectorSalute.org](mailto:Karen@BandDirectorSalute.org)

Karen is the widow of former Pickerington (Ohio) High School Band Director Mike Sewell. She was the inspiration behind the creation of the Michael D. Sewell Memorial Foundation in 2017. Karen is the Foundation president and board member. The Foundation is the proud sponsor of the Tournament of Roses Michael D. Sewell Service Through Music Award. This award was organized by the Sewell family and the Foundation as a way to honor Mike's dedication to using music with his students to encourage service in their schools, the community, and across the country. Karen & Mike's four children are alumni of the Pickerington High School Band program. Karen continues to support the Pickerington schools music programs in multiple ways, including the combined high school bands' trip to march in the 2019 Rose Parade.

## Music Team

### **Jon Waters**

**Director of Marching and Music**

[Jon@BandDirectorSalute.org](mailto:Jon@BandDirectorSalute.org)

Jon is an internationally known Music Educator and Band Director. Jon is currently Assistant Professor of Music Education and Director of Marching and Athletics Bands at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. Previously as Director of Marching and Athletic Bands at The Ohio State University, his innovative use of iPads in creating unprecedented animated marching formations led to worldwide recognition and millions of YouTube hits. In 2014, he delivered a TEDx talk on "Tradition thru Innovation." Jon also has led the Band Directors Marching Band in the 2022 Rose Parade and the 2023 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

### **John Ciseti**

**Assistant Director/**

**Service Through Music**

[John@BandDirectorSalute.org](mailto:John@BandDirectorSalute.org)

John retired in 2019 after leading the band program in Louisburg, Kansas for 40 years. An alumnus of the University of Missouri-Kansas City, John holds Bachelor of Music Education, Master of Arts, and Educational Specialist degrees from the UMKC Conservatory of Music and School of Education. He taught more than 350 students per day in grades five through twelve and produced more than 50 public performances each year. John was named a 2017 Laureate of the John Philip Sousa Foundation Legion of Honor and was recognized as the 2020 Outstanding Bandmaster by the Kansas Bandmasters Association. Under John's leadership, the Louisburg Band marched in the 2018 Tournament of Roses Parade and was chosen as the first band to receive the Michael D. Sewell Service Through Music Award.

### **Honglac Hathuc**

**Assistant Director/**

**Percussion Captain Music**

[hhathuc@valverde.edu](mailto:hhathuc@valverde.edu)

Honglac Hathuc is currently in his 22nd year as the band director at Rancho Verde High School in the Val Verde Unified School District and his 25th year in education. Before Rancho Verde High School, Mr. Hathuc taught elementary choir, band, and an elementary marching band in Northern California. Mr. Hathuc is also an adjunct professor at Moreno Valley College. The Rancho Verde Crimson Regiment, under Mr. Hathuc, performed at the 2020 Roses Parade where the band received The Tournament of Roses Michael D. Sewell Service Award. Mr. Hathuc is a native of Southern California and alumnus of The University of California at Los Angeles with a Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance. After UCLA he attended The San Francisco Conservatory of Music where he earned a Master of

Music in Music Performance (MM)

where he was a member of the SFCM Baroque Ensemble and SFCM Guitar Ensemble. Mr. Hathuc attended The University of Redlands, he received both a California Single Subject Teaching Credential and a Tier I School Service Administrative Credential. Mr. Hathuc is endorsed by D'Addario and Remo Drumheads.

### **Rodney Miller**

**Associate Director**

[Rmiller8801@icloud.com](mailto:Rmiller8801@icloud.com)

Rod is a native of Springfield, Ohio, and life-long music professional and educator with a total of 36 years in music education. After earning his Bachelor of Music Education from The Ohio State University and his Master of Music degree from Cleveland State, he had a 34-year career directing high school bands and 2 years as the Director of Bands at Heidelberg University. Throughout his career, he was twice nominated for "Music Educator of the Year" Grammy awards. He has conducted professional bands across the country, including "The President's Own" United States Marine Band and The Toledo Symphony.

### **Matt Taylor**

**Assistant Director**

[mtaylor@valverde.edu](mailto:mtaylor@valverde.edu)

Matthew Taylor has been the band director at Lakeside Middle school in Perris, California for 22 years. He has been a music educator in the Val Verde Unified School district for over 35 years. He and his wife live in Grand Terrace, California. Matthew has gone on to earn a Master's in Instrumental Conducting from the American Band College. This will be his fourth New Year's trip down Colorado Boulevard, twice with Rancho Verde High School and now two times with Saluting American Band Directors. He also had the privilege to serve on the staff during the SABD's appearance in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.



## The SABD Advisory Team

(Continued)

### Jennifer Mills

#### Assistant Director

[Jennifer@banddirectorsalute.org](mailto:Jennifer@banddirectorsalute.org)

Jenn has been an Illinois music educator since 2003, specializing in band and instrumental music, although she has taught music theory, history, appreciation, piano, and vocal and general music, as well. Her K-12 experiences were in rural settings where her bands won numerous awards. She moved to collegiate teaching in 2010, where she continues to teach today, and was a college band director in the Chicago suburbs from 2011-2020. Jenn is currently pursuing her PhD in Music Education from the University of Iowa, has her Master of Music from Kent State University (Ohio), a Bachelor of Music from Eastern Illinois University, and an Associate of Arts from Lincoln Trail College (IL). She holds professional memberships with NAFME, ILMEA, NBA, CBDNA, WASBE, and is a lifetime member of Sigma Alpha Iota. Jenn is also an SABD marcher – playing piccolo for the 2022 Rose Parade and the 2023 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

### Michael Reynolds

#### Assistant Director / Percussion

[Michael@banddirectorsalute.org](mailto:Michael@banddirectorsalute.org)

Michael is currently an assistant band director at James Madison High School in San Antonio, TX. This is his 33rd year as a music educator and his 25th year teaching at Madison. Michael has a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Indiana University-Bloomington (1992) and a Master of Music degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia (1996). He was a member of Star of Indiana Drum & Bugle Corps in 1988 & 1989. Michael marched snare drum with the SABD in the 2022 Rose Parade and the 2023 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. He was appointed the percussion section leader for the 2023 parade.

## Outreach

### Dan Ross

#### Scholastic Outreach

[Dan@BandDirectorSalute.org](mailto:Dan@BandDirectorSalute.org)

Dan is retired from the Ohio High School Athletic Association as commissioner and executive director. His passion, enthusiasm and tireless efforts to promote the important role that interscholastic athletics and extracurricular programs play for students helped the OHSAA become one of the most respected high school associations in the country. He has served as a superintendent, principal, teacher, counselor, college instructor and coach for 33 years, as well as a contest official for 20 years. Dan earned a bachelor's degree in history and political science from Ohio Dominican College in 1971 and a master's degree in guidance and counseling from Xavier University in 1973. He was awarded his PhD at Bowling Green State University in 1983 in educational administration and supervision and has completed additional postgraduate work.

### Marc Parulekar

#### Music Outreach

[Marc@BandDirectorSalute.org](mailto:Marc@BandDirectorSalute.org)

Marc is in his 20th year of teaching and serves as the music coordinator for the Pickerington Local Schools (Ohio). He served as director of bands at Pickerington North HS for 15 years. Marc has also served as a graduate assistant director with The Ohio State University Marching Band. During his tenure at Pickerington North High School, the band performed in the 2006 and 2019 Rose Parades, 2018 London New Years Day Parade, and won the Grand Champion award in the 2013 Fiesta Bowl Parade. Marc is a graduate of The Ohio State University where he earned a Bachelor of Music Education Degree, Master of Arts in Music Education, and Doctor of Philosophy in Music Education.

### Tim Lautzenheiser

#### National Outreach

[timact@aol.com](mailto:timact@aol.com)

Tim began his teaching career at Northern Michigan University, moving to the University of Missouri, and then to New Mexico State University. During that time, Tim developed highly acclaimed groups in both instrumental and vocal music. Following his tenure in the college band directing world, he spent three years as Executive Director of Bands of America. In 1981, Tim created Attitude Concepts for Today, Inc., an organization designed to manage the many requests for teacher in service workshops, student leadership seminars, and convention speaking engagements focusing on the area of effective leadership training. After thirty-plus years of clinic presentations, some three million students have experienced one of his popular sessions. Tim presently serves as Vice President of Education for Conn-Selmer, Inc. He is a nationally recognized voice touting the importance of arts education for every child. His books continue to be bestsellers in the educational community. He is also co-author of popular band method, *Essential Elements*, as well as the Senior Educational Consultant for Hal Leonard, Inc. Tim is also the Senior Educational Advisor for Music for All, and NAMM (The National Association of Music Merchants). He holds degrees from Ball State University and the University of Alabama; in 1995 he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the VanderCook College of Music. He continues to teach as an adjunct faculty member at Ball State University, Indiana-Purdue/Ft. Wayne University, and Butler University. In addition, he is a member of the Midwest Clinic Board of Directors and the Western International Band Clinic/American Band College Board of Directors. He is presently the Chair of the National Association for Music Education Music Honor Society.



## The SABD advisory team

(Continued)

### Administrative Team

**Craig Orr**

**Program Director**

[Craig@banddirectorsalute.org](mailto:Craig@banddirectorsalute.org)

Craig has 36 years of music experience with extensive instruction in both public and private education. He has helped prepare bands for the Tournament of Roses Parade, Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, the Fiesta Bowl Parade, the Gator Bowl Parade, the Orange Bowl Parade and the Walt Disney World Parade. In addition, he has prepared bands and drum lines for DCI, WGI, and BOA. Craig has worked as an adjudicator and clinician in Ohio. He earned his Bachelor of Music Education from Capital University and his Master of Music Education from Florida State University.

**Cynthia Orr**

**Registration, Communications,  
and Hospitality Chair**

[Cyndi@banddirectorsalute.org](mailto:Cyndi@banddirectorsalute.org)

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**Derek Condo**

**Logistics**

**Eric Mills**

**Photography**

**Grace Lukich**

**Social Media**



The Band Directors Marching Band performed at the 2022 Rose Parade Float Judging. The event's first- ever combined entry won the Rose Parade's Showmanship Award.

Courtesy Eric Mills

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## The 2021-2022 Band Directors Marching Band, Banner Carriers, and Staff



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