



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®. The stunning success of that event, seen by millions of people worldwide, led to an invitation to perform in the 2023 Macy's Thanksgiving Day 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 Rose Parade, what's happening 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. Marchers in the Rose Parade numbered 270; The Band Directors Marching Band for the Macy's Parade will have approximately 400 marchers.



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.

Future SABD events: Following the overwhelmingly positive response and success of our Rose Parade event, the Sewell Foundation accepted an invitation to march and perform in the 2023 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade® in New York City. 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. Another aspect of SABD is its Service Through Music initiative in which our participating band directors create and/or participate in their own local community events, such as fundraisers, parades and performances.

Name of the marching 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.*™

The SABD website: banddirectorsalute.org

Profile of The Band Directors Marching Band (BDMB) for the Macy's Parade:

Total number of directors: 394 (as of August 30, 2023)

Number of states represented: 49 plus Mexico

Total years experience teaching and directing music: 7,162

Average years of music teaching experience: 18

Number of directors with more than 30 years experience: 96

Number of directors with fewer than 10 years experience: 137

Longest number of years teaching: 48 by marcher David Cozby

Grammy Music Educator of the Year nominees (quarter finalists to finalists): 20

Teacher of the year recipients (local, district, state or national): 110

Approximate number of students taught by BDMB directors: 286,400

Marching in New York with a family member: 73

Marching in New York with a mentor or colleague: 128

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.

For the Rose Parade, members of The Band Directors Marching Band came from all US states and Mexico. Participants ranged 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 is the most experienced marching bands ever assembled. Collectively, the band directors have thousands of years of experience teaching and performing. At the first rehearsal in Pasadena in the hotel ballroom, the band, who had never met before or previously played together, performed like a well-seasoned ensemble. Take a look and a listen: <https://youtu.be/X0CsVSsPkFc>



Photographs courtesy Eric Mills

News release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Band Directors Marching Band™ reunites for 2023 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade®

Columbus, OH—Four hundred band directors from across the United States and Mexico will again form The Band Directors Marching Band™ to march in the 2023 Macy's Thanksgiving Day 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 November 23 follows its successful inaugural appearance in Pasadena's 2022 Rose 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.

The performance for the 2.5-mile route through Midtown Manhattan will be conducted by nationally-known music educator and innovative band director Jon Waters, director of bands for Bowling Green State University. The band will perform for television at the historic Macy's Herald Square.

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, BandDirectorSalute.org.

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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

Karen is the widow of former Pickerington (Ohio) High School Band Director Mike Sewell. She was the inspiration behind the Michael D. Sewell Memorial Foundation, created in 2017 to recognize and carry on the work of the late Mike, who dedicated his life to music education and the band.

Administrative team

James Kuebler, project manager
JimK@BandDirectorSalute.org

Jim served in several positions at Ohio Bell and Ameritech for 28 years in various engineering and operations organizations. He was vice president of project management for large corporations while at Ameritech where he won a Presidents Award for outstanding performance. Jim was a business partner at Ameritraining, a technical consulting firm in the

telecommunications field. Jim has served on the boards of several non-profit organizations.

Dr. Jim McSkimin, information technology

JimM@BandDirectorSalute.org

Jim spent 28 years working in the telecommunications industry, primarily at AT&T Bell Labs. He designed and developed software in the areas of real-time file systems and database systems, computer networking, and user interfaces. He has been an active volunteer for the Pickerington Locals Schools music programs.

Sanford Meisel, marketing director

Sandy@BandDirectorSalute.org

Sandy has worked and consulted in marketing, branding, publishing, communication and design in the roles of marketing director, creative director, design director, publisher and educator. He has created award-winning solutions for a broad range of clients in the financial, publishing, educational, health care, government and manufacturing sectors, as well as leading his own marketing firm. Sandy has held leadership and board

positions in several professional and community organizations and has taught and lectured at The Ohio State University and the Columbus College of Art and Design.

Bill Pope, corporate & organization relations

Bill@BandDirectorSalute.org

Bill spent 15 years in higher education and healthcare fundraising at Albion College, The Ohio State University and Duke University Medical Center at a variety of positions including Corporate and Foundation Relations, Executive Director and Director of Major Gifts. Additionally, Bill has spent the past 20 years in leadership positions for several family owned companies. Bill currently spends time volunteering for local non-profits by assisting their fund-raising programs.

Administrative support

Laura Miller, finance and registration
Cynthia, Caleb, Hollyn and Clara Orr, registration and logistics
Megan Gwartz, social media
Grace Lukich, social media

Music team

Jon Waters, marching and music director

Jon@BandDirectorSalute.org

Jon is an internationally known music educator and band director. He is professor of music education and director of marching and athletic bands at Bowling Green State University. Prior to his appointment at Bowling Green, Jon served as professor

of music education and director of bands at Heidelberg University in Tiffin, Ohio, a position which he held since 2016. Previous to that, Waters served as director of The Ohio State University Marching and Athletic Bands from 2012-2014, and held the post of assistant director from 2002-2011. The outstanding work of his students and an adherence to the mantra "Tradition through Innovation" garnered Jon and his students

national and international recognition. Jon received a bachelor's degree in music education and two master's degrees in conducting and music education, all from Ohio State University. He was the co-founder of the College Band Directors National Association Marching and Athletic Band Symposium in 2003 and served as North Central District Governor for Kappa Kappa Psi, National Band Fraternity. Through a collaborative

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The SABD advisory team

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effort, Jon and his students implemented the use of the iPad into the rehearsal plan for the modern marching band. Under his leadership, students and staff pilot tested and developed applications and technologies which revolutionized the teaching and learning process for the marching arts. Bands around the country now use these techniques and technologies.

Craig Orr, percussion director
music@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.

John Cisetti, assistant director and Service Through Music chair
cisettij@gmail.com

John retired in 2019 after leading the band program in Louisburg, Kansas for 40 years. 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. John currently plays French horn in the De Soto Brass Band and the Sounds of South Kansas City Community Band.

Dr. Marc Parulekar, assistant director
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 High School 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.

Rodney Miller, assistant director
rmiller5@heidelberg.edu

Rodney is director of bands and professor of music education at Heidelberg University, in his 36th year of teaching. Prior to his appointment at Heidelberg, Rod was the director of bands at four Ohio high schools. He holds a Bachelor of Music Education from The Ohio State University and a Master of Education, with Music Emphasis, from Cleveland State University. He is recognized as being one of the foremost experts and portrayers of John Philip Sousa. Over

the past 35 years, he has appeared with and/or conducted notable ensembles such as "The President's Own" United States Marine Band, The Marine Band of Quantico, The University of Delaware Wind Ensemble, The Toledo Symphony, and The Cleveland Winds as well as several community bands. Rod is a two-time Grammy Award Quarterfinalist for the Outstanding National Music Educator Award.

Honglac Hathuc, assistant director
hhathuc@valverde.edu

Honglac is in his twenty-first year as the band director of The Rancho Verde Crimson Regiment in Moreno Valley, California. Under Honglac's leadership, The Rancho Verde Crimson Regiment has qualified for the WBA Grand Championships or SCSBOA Championships every year since 2008. The Rancho Verde Crimson Regiment is the 2017 WAMSB World Champion Showband. The Rancho Verde Crimson Regiment marched in the 2020 Tournament of Roses Parade and was the third band to receive the Michael D. Sewell Service Through Music Award. Honglac is a graduate of UCLA where he earned his Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Music and is a graduate of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music where he earned a Master of Music. Honglac's major instrument is classical guitar, and he is a D'addario Artist.

Matt Taylor, assistant director
mtaylor@valverde.edu

Matthew Taylor completed his Bachelor of Arts in Music at Cal Poly Pomona. During that time, he was selected to the Olympic "All-American" Marching Band and performed for the

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The SABD advisory team

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opening and closing ceremonies of the 1984 Games in Los Angeles. He has gone on to a long tenure in the Val Verde Unified School District, teaching music from grades K-12. For the past 30 years he has taught Middle School band. In 2008 Matthew earned his Master's in Instrumental Conducting from the American Band College in Ashland Oregon.

Matt Guirrerri, assistant director

Matt@BandDirectorSalute.org

Matt is in his 17th year of teaching and serves as a band director for grades 6-12 in Pickerington Local Schools (OH). He has served as the assistant director of bands at Pickerington North High School for 15 years. While there, Matt has helped guide the band in the 2009 Citrus Bowl Parade, 2011 NYC Veteran's Day Parade, 2013 Fiesta Bowl Parade, 2018 London New Year's Day Parade and the 2019 Bands of America competition in Indianapolis. Matt, under Mike Sewell's leadership, is a graduate of Pickerington High School, The Ohio State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Music Education Degree, as well as Capital University, where he earned a Master of Arts in Music Education.

Janelle Guirrerri, assistant director

janelle_guirrerri@plsd.us

Janelle represents the legacy of the thousands of lives Mike Sewell touched and exemplifies the future of music education. She is a graduate of Pickerington High School and, like Mike, attended Otterbein University for her degree in music education. Janelle is married to Matt Guirrerri, another of SABD's advisory board members. Matt and Janelle have participated in previous Rose Parades, participating as students and assistants. Matt and Janelle are both music teachers in the Pickerington Local School District.

Ben Meisel, assistant director

Ben@BandDirectorSalute.org

Ben has been teaching music and band in the public schools for 13 years. He currently serves as a middle school band director for Mentor Schools in northeast Ohio. Additionally, he has served as all-state coordinator, district president, and adjudicator for the Ohio Music Education Association (OMEA). Ben student taught in Pickerington Local Schools. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from The Ohio State University where he was in

the OSU Marching Band under Jon Waters. He received a Master of the Arts in Music Education from Case Western Reserve University.

Music and recruiting support

Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser, national outreach

timact@aol.com

Tim is a nationally known music educator, band director, music clinician and educational consultant. He presently serves as vice president of education for Conn-Selmer, Inc. Tim is also the senior educational advisor for Music for All, and NAMM (The National Association of Music Merchants) and chair of the National Association for Music Education Music Honor Society.

Dr. Dan Ross, scholastic outreach

Dan@BandDirectorSalute.org

Dan is retired from the Ohio High School Athletic Association as commissioner and executive director. He has served as a superintendent, principal, teacher, counselor, college instructor and coach for 33 years.



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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“Band Directors Marching Band™”

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Graphic for the Saluting America’s Band Directors project

Graphic for the Band Directors Marching Band



The 2021 Band Directors Marching Band, banner carriers and staff

