

**52ND ANNUAL
ARKANSAS BANDMASTERS ASSOCIATION CONVENTION
JULY 22 – 25, 2026**



FORT SMITH CONVENTION CENTER AND WYNDHAM HOTEL

DIRECTOR SCHEDULE

Wednesday, July 22

7:20 am	ABA Golf Tournament – Ben Geren		Rico Belotti, presiding
9:30 am	ABA Board Meeting	Judge Parker	Carl L. McCraney, Jr., presiding
11:00 am-5:00 pm	Registration	CC Lobby	Valerie Laney and Brice Evans, presiding
1:00-3:55 pm	“Strategies for ‘Sound’ Beginning Pedagogy”	CC A1-2	Brian Pearson, presiding
1:00-1:55 pm	Beginning Flute	<i>Susan Ford – Cabot</i>	
2:00-2:55 pm	Beginning Oboe	<i>Gabrielle Mitchell – Fort Smith</i>	
3:00-3:55 pm	Beginning Euphonium/Tuba	<i>Cody Ford – ASMSA</i>	
	Sponsored by the Arkansas Women Band Directors Association		
1:00-1:55 pm	“Building a Jazz Program from Scratch: Rehearsal Techniques & Literature for Young & Non-Standard Instrumentation Jazz Ensembles”	CC A3	Cathy Williams, presiding
	<i>Kaleb Knight – Vilonia</i>		
	Sponsored by Arkansas Jazz Educators		
2:00-2:55 pm	“Get the Most out of Your Rhythm Section: FAQ’s & Real-World Solutions for Developing Your Rhythm Section”	CC A3	Janna Lane, presiding
	<i>Al Clevenger – Piano – Batesville, Adam Coats – Guitar – Fort Smith, Logan Dooley – Bass – Lavaca, Phillip House – Drums – Riverview</i>		
	Sponsored by Arkansas Jazz Educators		
3:00-3:55 pm	“...But Does it Swing? Demystifying Nuanced & ‘Unwritten Rules’ of Swing & Big Band Jazz Music Through Rehearsal Techniques”	CC A3	Ralph Brody, presiding
	<i>Tylar Bullion – University of Central Arkansas</i>		
	Sponsored by Arkansas Jazz Educators		
4:00-4:55 pm	“You Got the Gig – Now What? Thriving as a Director at any Level”	CC A1-2	Aaron Durham, presiding
	<i>J. P. Wilson – Southern Arkansas University, Alicengrace Allen – Beebe High School, Carl L. McCraney, Jr., – Lakeside Junior High</i>		
	<i>Jason Smith, Moderator – Southern Arkansas University</i>		
5:00-6:15 pm	New Director Soirée	Memphis/Tulsa	Dewayne Dove, presiding
	ABA/ASBOA Clinic for Directors New to Teaching, New to Our State, and College Music Majors		
	“Habits of a Significant Music Educator”		
	<i>Dr. Richard Crain – Houston, Texas</i>		
	Sponsored by RG Security		
5:00-6:15 pm	Arkansas Jazz Educators Membership Meeting	CC A3	Kaleb Knight, presiding
5:30-7:00 pm	Arkansas Highlands Brass Band Set Up/Warm Up	CC A1-2	John Prater, presiding
6:15-6:55 pm	ASBOA Executive Advisory Committee Meeting	Wyndham Board Room	Matt Teague, presiding
7:00-8:00 pm	J. Raymond Brandon Kick-Off Concert:	CC A1-2	Carl L. McCraney, Jr., presiding
	Performance by the Arkansas Highlands Brass Band		
	Dr. Evan Harger, Conductor		
8:30-9:30 pm	ASBOA Executive Board Meeting	CC A3	Erica Hann, presiding
10:00 pm	ABA Board Meeting	Judge Parker	Carl L. McCraney, Jr., presiding

Thursday, July 23

8:00 am-12:00 pm	Registration	CC Lobby	Valerie Laney and Brice Evans, presiding
8:00-8:45 am	Arkansas Instrumental Group Rehearsals		
	Arkansas Flutes	Little Rock	Dr. Stephanie Hoeckley - ASU, presiding
	Arkansas Clarinets	Belle Starr	Dr. Kelly Johnson - UCA, presiding
	Arkansas Saxophones	Dallas	Dr. Nathan Mensink - ATU, presiding
	Arkansas Trumpets	Memphis/Tulsa	Josh Jackson - Maumelle, presiding
	Arkansas Horns	Hot Springs	Amanda Lucy - Batesville, presiding
	Arkansas Trombones	St. Louis	Dr. Austin Motley - OBU, presiding
	Arkansas Tubas/Euphoniums	CC A1-2	Dr. Ryan Matejek - Van Buren, presiding
8:50-9:00 am	Prelude to Keynote Address – Arkansas Tuba/Euphoniums	CC A1-2	Dr. Ryan Matejek - Van Buren, presiding

9:00-9:25 am	Keynote Address: “Play it FORWARD! Navigating the Intersection of Composer, Conductor, Publisher, and Performer <i>Brian Balmages</i> Sponsored by Alfred Music and MakeMusic	CC A1-2	Carl L. McCraney, Jr., presiding
9:30 am-12:30 pm	Exhibits Open	CC Exhibit Hall C	Prissy Buchanan and Emily Evans, presiding
9:30-10:25 am	Reading Band – New Music <i>Brian Balmages</i> Sponsored by Alfred Music, MakeMusic, Phi Beta Mu, and Jeff Girard at Gateway Sheet Music	CC A1-2	John Prater, presiding
10:30-11:25 am	“If you PLAY Something, SAY Something!” <i>Brian Balmages</i> Sponsored by Alfred Music and MakeMusic	CC A1-2	Carl L. McCraney, Jr., presiding
11:30 am	ASBOA Region Meetings		Region Chairs, presiding
	I – St. Louis IV – Hot Springs VII – Belle Starr II – Dallas V – Little Rock VIII – CC A3 III – Fayetteville VI – Memphis/Tulsa IX – CC A1-2		
1:00-4:00 pm	Registration	CC Lobby	Valerie Laney and Brice Evans, presiding
1:00-1:55 pm	“Conducting Symposium Part I” <i>Dr. Caroline Hand – University of Oklahoma</i> Sponsored by Arkansas Omicron Chapter of Phi Beta Mu	CC A1-2	John Prater, presiding
1:00-1:55 pm	“Foundations: Hiding the Vegetables in Awesomesauce” <i>Brian Balmages</i> Sponsored by Alfred Music, MakeMusic, and D’Addario Company	CC A3	Carl L. McCraney, Jr., presiding
1:30-4:30 pm	Exhibits Open	CC Exhibit Hall C	Prissy Buchanan and Emily Evans, presiding
2:00-2:10 pm	‘Kick-Off’ for Exhibits Music by Arkansas Saxophones	CC Exhibit Hall C	Dr. Nathan Mensink - ATU, presiding
2:00-3:30 pm	EXHIBITS GRAND OPENING Dedicated Exhibit Time <i>PLEASE take advantage of this special block of time to show appreciation to the sponsors of this convention by visiting their booths. Some of the BIGGEST and BEST DOOR PRIZES are to be given during this time. Remember to bring your door prize ticket to deposit in the drawing box!</i>	CC Exhibit Hall C	Prissy Buchanan & Emily Evans, presiding
	PLEASE SUPPORT ALL OF OUR EXHIBITORS!		
3:00-3:30 pm	AWBDA Meeting	Belle Starr	Michelle Smith, presiding
3:30-4:25 pm	“Conducting Symposium Part II” <i>Dr. Caroline Hand – University of Oklahoma</i> Sponsored by Arkansas Omicron Chapter of Phi Beta Mu	CC A1-2	John Prater, presiding
3:30-4:25 pm	“Maestro Vanilla Ice: Stop, Collaborate, and Listen” <i>Dr. Daniel A. Belongia – Arkansas Tech University</i>	CC A3	Hope Bruner, presiding
4:45-6:45 pm	ASBOA General Meeting	CC A1-2	Erica Hann, presiding
4:45-5:30 pm	Arkansas Chapter of CBDNA Meeting	Belle Starr	Harold Fooster, presiding
6:45-8:30 pm	A Taste of Fort Smith		
10:00 pm	ABA Board Meeting	Judge Parker	Carl L. McCraney, Jr., presiding

Friday, July 24

7:00 am	Phi Beta Mu Breakfast (Ticket Required)	Dallas/Little Rock	Carrie Teague, presiding
8:15-9:10 am	“Beat the Heat: Marching Band and Safety Essentials” <i>Amanda Trickey – Harmony Grove</i>	CC A1-2	John Prater, presiding
8:30-10:00 am	Registration	CC Lobby	Valerie Laney and Brice Evans, presiding
9:00-11:50 am	Exhibits Open	CC Exhibit Hall C	Prissy Buchanan, presiding
9:00-11:00 am	Dedicated Exhibit Time	CC Exhibit Hall C	Prissy Buchanan, presiding
9:15 am	BDK Photo (All Band Directors’ Kids, 0-100 Years Old)	CC Rotunda	Dr. Teresa McCraney, presiding
10:00-10:10 am	Music by Arkansas Clarinets	CC Exhibit Hall C	Dr. Kelly Johnson – UCA, presiding
10:45-10:55 am	Music by Arkansas Horns	CC Exhibit Hall C	Amanda Lucy – Batesville, presiding
11:00-11:50 am	“Priorities for Developing a Good Band Sound” <i>David Rollins – Arkadelphia</i>	CC A1-2	Jeff Marlow, presiding
11:00-11:55 am	“Beyond the Elementary Program: Modernizing Elementary Music with Low Stress and High Impact” <i>Stephanie Williams – Benton Mountain View Elementary</i>	CC A3	Janna Lane, presiding

12:00 pm	ABA Business Luncheon (Ticket Required)	Dallas/Little Rock	Carl L. McCraney, Jr., presiding
1:00 pm	Christian Instrumental Directors Association	Belle Starr	Joy and Bruce Shaver, presiding
1:30-2:25 pm	"A Conversation with Doreen Ketchens"	CC A1-2	Dr. Teresa McCraney, presiding
2:30-3:25 pm	"How to Create a Marching Band Sound that Translates to Your Concert Band" <i>Jon Shultz – Lake Hamilton High School</i>	CC A1-2	Karen Dismuke, presiding
2:30-3:25 pm	"The Soundtrack of Gen Alpha: Gaming, Film Scoring, and Creative Coding for Middle School and Junior High General Music" <i>Stephanie Williams – Benton Mountain View Elementary</i>	CC A3	Valerie Laney, presiding
3:30-4:25 pm	"The Best Presence Ever: These are a Few of my Favorite Things (How to Prepare for a Great Performance)" <i>Greg Bruner – Highland</i>	CC A1-2	Peggy Jeffries, presiding
3:30-4:25 pm	"No Budget? No Problem! (How to Build a Strong Program With Limited Resources)" <i>Monty Hill – Henderson State University</i>	CC A3	Karen Dismuke, presiding
4:30-5:00 pm	Arkansas Small Band Association	CC A3	Trey Reely, presiding
5:15 pm	Music by Arkansas Trumpets	Wyndham Lobby	Josh Jackson - Maumelle, presiding
5:30 pm	Music by Arkansas Trombones	Wyndham Lobby	Dr. Austin Motley - OBU, presiding
5:45 pm	Music by Arkansas Flutes	Wyndham Ballroom	Dr. Stephanie Hoeckley - ASU, presiding
6:00 pm	ABA Banquet (Ticket Required) <i>Seating begins at 5:40 pm</i>	Wyndham Ballroom	Carl L. McCraney, Jr., presiding
8:00 pm	"Eldon Janzen Tribute Concert"	ArcBest Performing Arts Center	Carl L. McCraney, Jr., presiding
Metropolitan Winds Frank Felice, Conductor Sponsored by Eagle Fund Raising, D'Addario Company, and Stanbury Uniforms			
10:00 pm	ABA Bandmaster of the Year Reception <i>Hosted by the Arkansas Bandmaster of the Year Committee</i> Sponsored by Eagle Fund Raising	CC Rotunda	Dewayne Dove, presiding

Saturday, July 25

9:00 am-12:00 pm	"School Bus Driver Workshop for Registered ABA Attendees" <i>Trisha Labit – Arkansas Department of Education</i> Sponsored by the Arkansas Department of Education	Memphis/Tulsa	John Prater, presiding
9:30-10:25 am	"Digital Audio Mixing Tips for Band" <i>Neal Moss – Lakeside</i>	Dallas/Little Rock	Brice Evans, presiding
10:30-11:25 am	"Cost Effective Color Guard: The Directors Guide to Saving Money" <i>Sara Field – Lake Hamilton</i>	Dallas/Little Rock	Valerie Laney, presiding
11:30 am	ABA Board Wrap-up	Judge Parker	John Prater, presiding



Registration hours are from
11:00 am-5:00 pm Wednesday;
8:00 am-12:00 pm & 1:00-4:00 pm Thursday;
8:30-10:00 am Friday in the Convention Center Lobby;
Thereafter in Judge Parker