

# TBA Bandmaster of the Year 2014

## Dan Gibbs

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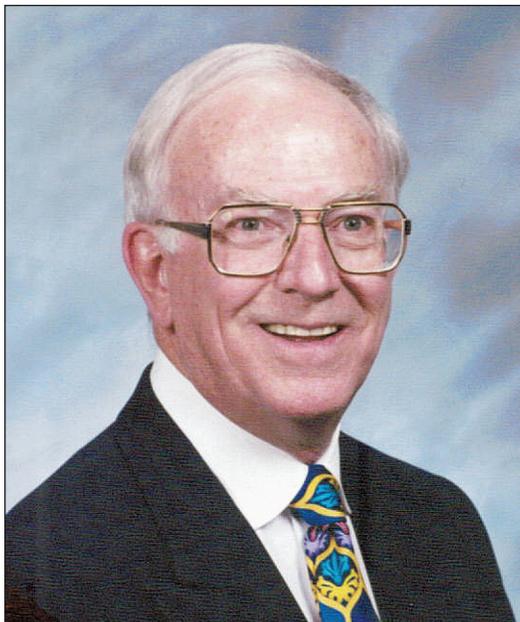
The youngest of four children, Dan Gibbs was born January 26, 1937 to Robert and Daisy Gibbs in Murchison, Texas. Dan's mother was the only good piano player in their small town, so she was invited to play piano at all the church revivals. Due to his mother's influence, Dan's musical career started at age six when he started singing solos in church; and he has done it ever since.

After attending elementary school in Murchison through the eighth grade, where they had two grades in each classroom with one teacher, Dan transferred to Brownsboro High School. Some of the first friends he

met asked him to join the band, and his band career began when his mom and dad rented a Holton trombone for six dollars a month.

The band director was a self-taught Baptist preacher whose "claim-to-fame" was his ability to play the "musical saw"...the only instrument he played. During Dan's second year in high school, a new band director was hired... he was a Country and Western cello player. At mid-term his junior year, the director left and they did not have a director the rest of the year. In 1953, Dan's senior year, Roger Winslow, a brand new band

director from Western State College in Gunnison, Colorado, came to Brownsboro. Until midterm his senior year, Dan planned to be a high school English teacher, but all



that changed through the influence of Roger Winslow. When Dan saw what an influence Mr. Winslow had on these country kids, and what a difference he made in their lives, Dan decided to become a band director.

After graduation from Brownsboro High School at age seventeen, Dan married Shirley Colley, his high school sweetheart. He enrolled at Tyler Junior College and Shirley got a secretarial job to pay the bills. Other than being able to sing pretty well, Dan's formal musical training was that he knew the B-flat scale on his

trombone—not necessarily the names of the notes, but he knew the slide positions were 1-6-4-3-1-4-2-1. Eddie "Pinky" Fowler, band director at TJC, was another great influence on Dan's musical life. After finishing Tyler Junior College, Dan transferred to North Texas State College (now the University of North Texas). Shirley got a secretarial job in Dallas and commuted every day until Dan got his master's degree.

After graduating from North Texas in three years at age 20, Mr. Maurice McAdow invited Dan to stay on and get his master's degree and become the graduate

assistant band director. This turned out to be the greatest thing that ever happened to his career. Through studying conducting and working daily with Mr. McAdow, Dan learned that there was a lot more to making music than just playing right notes and rhythms. Mr. McAdow taught him that music really comes from the "heart and soul" and gave him a daily example of all the attributes of a real gentleman.

At age 21, married four years with a master's degree, Dan was hired to be the junior high band director in Monahans in 1958.

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Never having witnessed a marching contest (even as a spectator), Dan took his first band to contest in Odessa and marched between J. R. McEntyre's Bonham Jr. High Band and Bill Dean's Bowie Jr. High Band. Dan's band ended their marching show with a minstrel turn toward the pressbox playing the trio to "Rifle Rangers" march...not knowing that "Rifle Rangers" was Bowie's fight song. After hearing the Monahans band play their fight song, the Bowie band came down the field playing "King Size March". Dan says they were marching about 180 beats a minute, and they were blowing the grass out of the ground. Bill has thanked Dan many times over the years for inspiring his Bowie band. And, by the way, the Monahans band did make a first division.

During that time, Dan and Shirley's son Tony was born in December of 1958, and daughter Angie was born December 1960.

After three years at the junior high, Dan became the high school band director where he had an exciting 21-year career.

Some of the highlights of Dan's career include being named TMEA Honor Band in 1972 and 1976 as well as performing at the Music Educators National Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, with Tommy Fry conducting the premier performance of "Triptych". His bands appeared many times on national television during Dallas Cowboys halftimes. A special memory is when the Monahans "Big Green Band" performed the first Dallas Cowboys halftime in Texas Stadium in October 1971 with President Lyndon Johnson, Lady Bird, and Mamie Eisenhower in attendance.

Dan has been privileged to serve as a clinician, guest conductor, and judge throughout the United States, including Alaska. He is a long time member of TBA, TMEA, Phi Beta Mu, and the Rotary Club. He is currently serving as minister of music at the First Baptist Church of Monahans and sings in the *Singing Men of Texas*. In 2009, the new Monahans High School band hall was named the "Dan M. Gibbs Band Hall".

One of Dan's all-time great memories is being a guest conductor on his son Tony's 1999 TMEA Honor Band concert with his Monahans Band. Dan and Tony are the only father/son to ever win TMEA Honor Band at the same school.

During his illustrious career, many outstanding individuals have influenced Dan. Most notable are Roger Winslow, Eddie Fowler, Maurice

McAdow, Wesley May, J.R. McEntyre, Bill Dean, Gene Smith, Dean Killion, Sam Robertson, Francis McBeth, G.T. Gilligan, Tommy Fry, Jerry Finnel, Ronnie Smith, and Ronnie Vaughn.

When asked of his greatest accomplishment, Dan says "my greatest accomplishment is being married to Shirley for sixty years and having two fantastic kids, the "world's finest" son-in-law and daughter-in-law, five "state-of-the-art grandchildren, and a two-year old great-granddaughter. They are my heroes!

Dan is extremely grateful that God has blessed him beyond his wildest dreams, and he considers it a sincere privilege and honor to be selected as TBA's BANDMASTER OF THE YEAR FOR 2014.

**TBA Bandmaster  
of the Year 2014  
Dan Gibbs will be  
honored at the  
TBA Business  
Luncheon on  
Tuesday, July 29**