

# Kenneth L. Griffin

Kenneth L. Griffin was born in 1945 in Paris, Texas. He began playing the trombone in the seventh grade under the direction of Irene Weger. He spent all four years in Paris High School under the baton of Phi Beta Mu Hall of Fame member Floyd Weger.

After high school he attended East Texas State University (now Texas A&M-Commerce) where he studied trombone with Dr. Neil Humfeld. He was a graduate assistant for one year while working on his master's degree. At the end of that year, he received a call from Floyd Weger in Paris to come work with him.



While in Paris, Griffin taught at Travis Junior High School and assisted Weger at the high school, writing and teaching the marching drills. During that seven-year stint, Griffin was commissioned by the senior class of Prairiland High School in Pattonville to write their school song (“Hail, Ye Patriots”). He served as president of the Paris Community Concert Series and President of the local chapter of the Texas State Teachers Association. He also served as Interim Director of Music at the Paris First Baptist Church.

In 1974, he moved to Kilgore to be the junior high school band director and assistant high school director under Phi Beta Mu Hall of Fame member Mike Geddie. He taught there three years where he also served as Kilgore Community Concert president and as Interim Director of Music at the Kilgore First Baptist Church.

In 1977, he moved to Van to become their high school band director. During his twenty years at Van High School, his band accumulated a string of nineteen consecutive sweepstakes awards, was named the 1986 3A Texas Music Educators Association State Honor Band, won the 3A Sweepstakes trophy at the 1986 Texas State Solo Ensemble Contest in Austin, and was named the Outstanding 3A Band at the 1988 National Association of Military Marching Bands - Texas State Marching Contest. He also served as Interim Director of Music at the Van First Baptist Church, then Director of Music at the Van United Methodist Church.

Griffin is a life member of the Texas State Teachers Association, is listed in the 2004 Who's Who Among America's Teachers, has been the Region III Texas Music Educators Association 4A Band Chairman, is a founding charter member and executive secretary of the Association of Texas Small School Bands, is a member of the Texas Music Adjudicators Association and Phi Beta Mu and serves as a clinician and adjudicator across the state. He received the 2009 Outstanding Music Educator Award from the National Federation of State High School Associations and was inducted into the Alpha Chapter of Phi Beta Mu Hall of Fame in 2021.

His wife Jeannie is retired after a twenty-five-year career as a music educator. Their daughter Alecia Lawyer is a Cum Laude graduate of Southern Methodist University in Dallas and a graduate of the Juilliard School of Music in New York with a degree in oboe performance. She is Executive Director, founder and principal oboist of the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra in Houston (roco.org).

Griffin is a published composer of instrumental music, including TALION, DAY TO DAY, WHERE EAGLES DARE (commissioned by the Rusk Junior High School band), FIRST COLONY MARCH, WHITE OAK CONCERT MARCH (commissioned by the White Oak High School Band), and RESOLUTION (commissioned by ATSSB commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Association of Texas Small School Bands). All are published on the Internet by The Griffin Press (<http://www.griffinpress.co>). His CHICAGO BELLE MOTIFS was selected as the winner of the 2018 ATSSB Composition Competition and was premiered by the 2018 ATSSB All-State Concert Band under the direction of Dr. Matthew McInturf. It is published by TRN Music Publishers.

Retiring after thirty-one years of teaching band in public schools, Griffin moved to Houston when his first grandson was born. In Houston, he was contacted by Houston Christian High School to teach their band. There were eleven students in the band his first year there, but the band still placed as runner-up in the Instrumental Division of the TAPPS State Music Contest in Abilene (adjudicated by Hall of Fame member Bill Woods on stage and Hall of Fame member Don Hanna in sightreading). The next year, there were fifteen members in the band, but that group won their division at the TAPPS State Music Contest. They got a Sweepstakes award both years at regional and state contests.

In 2001, St. John Paul II Catholic School contacted him about being their band director. Now in his twenty-third year at SJP2, his sixth-grade band has fifty students (out of seventy-five in the class) and the seventh and eighth grade band has received a sweepstakes award at the Houston Symphonic Band Concert & Sightreading Contest for the past twelve years. The 2011 SJP2 band won the state class C march competition in the Association of Texas Small School Bands Outstanding Performance Series, the recording of which is on the winner's CD produced by ATSSB.

In his fifty-sixth year of teaching, Griffin still enjoys his sixth-grade beginners and watching the seventh and eighth graders mature musically. He also enjoys organizing the 1300 members of the Association of Texas Small School Bands as their executive secretary, now in his thirty-third year. In his leisure time, he keeps up with his two grandsons, Jacob and Zachary and enjoys traveling with his wife of fifty-six years, Jeannie.