

**Illinois State University**  
**Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts**  
**School of Music**

**Illinois State University**  
**University Band**

Prof. Lauren N. Bobarsky, *conductor*  
Wesley Anderson, *graduate conductor*  
Madison Mueller-Howell, *graduate conductor*  
Colby Powers, *graduate conductor*  
Alexandra Karafotias, *graduate conductor*  
Michael Hammon, *student conductor*  
Sam Kapus, *student conductor*  
Gunnar Tejes, *student conductor*  
Jessica Wenc, *student conductor*

**Center for the Performing Arts**  
**April 29, 2026**  
**Wednesday Evening**  
**8:00 p.m.**

**This is the two hundred and fifth program of the 2025-2026 season.**

# Program

Please silence all electronics for the duration of the concert. Thank you.

## Reggie Band

Prairie Songs	Pierre LaPlante (born 1998)
Cajun Folk Songs I. La Belle et le Capitaine II. Belle	Frank Ticheli (born 1958)
Sweet Like That	Christopher Theofanidis (born 1967)
Ammerland	Jacob de Haan (born 1959)
Angry Beavers!	Brian Beck (born 1976)

*~Intermission~*

## Redbird Band

The County Club Stomp	JaRod Hall (born 1991)
Salvation is Created	Pavel Tchesnokov (1877-1944) arr. Bruce Houseknecht
The Great Locomotive Chase	Robert W. Smith (1958-2023)
Loch Lomond	Frank Ticeli (born 1958)
Critical Mass	Todd Stalter (born 1966)

# Program Notes

## Reggie Band

### *Prairie Songs*

Duration – 4.5'

*Prairie Songs* is based on two songs from the Midwest. These songs were sung and known in Wisconsin and, therefore, seem especially appropriate for a piece to celebrate the state's sesquicentennial (1848-1998).

“The Pinery Boy,” from the Eau Claire region of Wisconsin, is used in the opening section of *Prairie Song*. The song tells the story of a young girl who set out in search of her lover, a raftsmen working on the river. Her search ends when she learns from the captain that her lover has perished in the river. The young lady returns home and dies of a broken heart. Despite the tragic, and at times, melodramatic nature of the verse, the melody is broad and expansive in scope (an octave plus three notes). The setting of this tune in *Prairie Songs* is intended to convey a feeling of grandeur and beauty of the (land before time).

The second section of the piece quotes “The Turkey Song” which some authorities believe originated in Kentucky and moved west with settlers. It is found in various collections of children's folksongs, including those of Pete Seeger and Jill Trinka.

Common melodic patterns between the two songs make them sound as though they are related. The two themes are presented concurrently in the *maestoso* section just prior to the code (*allegro*).

- Program note by Sam Kapus

### *Cajun Folk Songs*

Duration – 6.5'

Cajuns are descendants of the Acadians, a group of early French colonists who began settling in Acadia (now Nova Scotia) around 1604. In 1755 they were driven out by the British, eventually resettling in south Louisiana. Today there are nearly a million French-speaking descendants of the Acadians living in Louisiana and parts of Texas, preserving many of the customs, traditions, stories, and songs of their ancestors.

Although a rich Cajun folk song tradition exists, the music has become increasingly commercialized and Americanized throughout the twentieth century, obscuring its original simplicity and directness. In response to this trend, Alan and John Lomax traveled to south Louisiana in 1934 to collect and record numerous Cajun folk songs in the field for the Archive of Folk Music in the Library of Congress. By doing so, they helped to preserve Cajun music in its original form as a pure and powerful expression of Louisiana French Society.

*La Belle et le Capitaine* and *Belle* can both be heard in their original versions on the Lomax recordings (Swallow LP-8003-2, Swallow Records Co., Ville Platte, Louisiana). *La Belle et le Capitaine* tells the story of a young girl who feigns death to avoid being seduced by a captain. Its Dorian melody is remarkably free, shifting back and forth between duple and triple meters. In this arrangement the melody is stated three times. The third time an original countermelody is added in flutes, oboe, clarinet, and trumpet.

*Belle* is about a man who goes away to Texas only to receive word of his sweetheart's illness, forcing him to return to Louisiana. Finding her unconscious upon his return, he pawns his horse to try to save her, to no avail. The folk melody is sometimes varied rhythmically, texturally, and coloristically, and an original melody is added for variety.

*Cajun Folk Songs* is composed as a tribute to the people of the old Cajun folk song culture with hopes that their contributions will not be forgotten. The work is dedicated to the Murchison Middle School Band, Austin, Texas, Cheryl Floyd, director, who commissioned the work and gave its premiere on May 22, 1990.

- *Program Note by composer*

### ***Sweet Like This***

Duration – 3'

Writing *Sweet Like That* for the Betsy Ross Arts Magnet Middle School Band was one of the most enjoyable projects I have been involved with in recent years. As part of the BandQuest® mission, I went to the school a couple of times here in New Haven (right around the corner from where I live) and really enjoyed talking with and getting to know the students.

I knew that I wanted to write something that these eager musicians would have fun playing and that they would know was written especially for them. On one of the visits, I asked them what kind of things they wanted to play—things they would compose if they could write their own composition—and the list was huge! In fact, they gave me many of the basic ideas for the work, and I consider them co-creators in the process. Some of the big things from our meetings that made it into this piece were:

- the tuba player asked to be featured (so there is a low brass emphasis in the opening and closing measures);
- the flute players wanted to play piccolo (so half the flutes play piccolo);
- the percussion section asked for a drum set to be included (so there is);
- the percussion section also asked for several unusual instruments (so I included vibraslap, whistle, egg shaker, sleigh bells, and slapstick, among many other cool percussion instruments);
- the brass players wanted to use mutes (so there are a couple of passages with straight mutes in them).

The title of this work comes as a response to the students' love of jazz titles. I went back to the work of the great jazz cornet player, King Oliver, Louis Armstrong's teacher, and one of the great pioneers of "hot jazz" (where soloists improvise collectively). He wrote a piece called, *Sweet Like This*.

The school's band director, Matthew Fried, was very kind to me on my visits and helped me understand the level of the band, and what kind of things would be useful to consider. He and the arts coordinator at Betsy Ross, Sylvia Petriccione, run a tight ship, and I owe them a great deal in facilitating this project. I think the BandQuest program is really onto something great by giving concert composers a chance to write and interact with great younger musicians and to connect with their limitless enthusiasm.

- *Program Note By: Christopher Theofanidis*

### ***Ammerland***

Duration – 3'

Gorgeous and enchanting, this warm and rich work will have your band reaching to new heights of expression. The mid-voices introduce the simply exquisite melody, followed in turn by bolder scoring that invites the entire ensemble to create moments of broad intensity.

Ammerland is a district in Lower Saxony, Germany.

- *Program Note from publisher*

### ***Angry Beavers!***

Duration – 2.5'

Prepare yourself, because as you can guess from the title, things are about to get weird! Multiple time signatures, funky rhythms, and unexpected jazz harmonies are featured with a slick, ultra-cool fast-rock backbeat. The title of this piece was inspired by the composer's middle school band students in the low brass and woodwind sections, who call themselves "The Angry Beavers." The Angry Beavers finally have a melody to play that is worthy of their amazing abilities!

- *Program Note from score*

## **Redbird Band**

### ***The County Club Stomp***

Duration- 3'

Experience a New Orleans vibe with this exciting, parade-inspired crowd pleaser. A celebration of music, life, and love, this piece has an infectious rhythmic groove and a spirited melody. Elements of jazz occur throughout, and there is strong reference to the West African circle dances from which this music evolved. Stellar writing that is fun, catchy, informative, and spirited.

- *Program Note adapted from publisher*

### ***Salvation is Created***

Duration- 3:15'

Salvation Is Created is a choral work composed by Pavel Tchesnokov in 1912. It was one of the very last sacred works he composed before he was forced to turn to secular arts by the Soviet government. Tchesnokov did not compose much after this piece for his church which was destroyed by the government. Although he never heard his own composition performed, his children had the opportunity to in the years following his death. Tchesnokov unfortunately passed away due to starvation in line for bread. Salvation Is Created was originally published in 1913 by J. Fischer and Bro., but its popularity drove editors to produce many different versions in both Russian and English. Scored for either six or eight voices, the work is a communion hymn based on a synodal Kievan chant melody and Psalm 74.

- *Program Note adapted from publisher*

### ***The Great Locomotive Chase***

Duration- 4:35'

Inspired by the events surrounding the railway between Atlanta and Chattanooga during the early years of the Civil War, Robert W. Smith stages the train chase complete with fascinating textures and effects. Listeners become engulfed in the vivid sounds. You can almost smell the smoke. All aboard!

- *Program Note adapted from publisher*

### ***Loch Lomond***

Duration- 6:25'

Frank Ticheili's *Loch Lomond* is deeply expressive and lyrical variations of a Scottish folk song that shares the same name. The folk tune talks about a bittersweet story of love and loss, usually interpreted as a farewell and separation of the two lovers by fate and death.

The piece flows from variation to variation. Ticheli starts with the soft melody, creating a sense of nostalgia. As the piece continues, the intensity grows. The mid-section introduces fuller textures and contrasts. The climax reaches full intensity, but shortly after returns to the quiet for its end.

- *Program Note by Jessica Wenc*

### ***Critical Mass***

Duration- 2:35'

Critical mass is a scientific term that refers to the smallest amount of fissile material needed to sustain a nuclear chain reaction. The work begins with an explosion of sound, then launches forward through small, ever-growing melodic fragments that expand outward and upward. [OB]

- *Program Note from Score*

## Biographies

**Professor Lauren N. Bobarsky** currently serves as Assistant Director of Bands at Illinois State University where she directs the Symphonic Band, University Band, Pep Band, and assists with the Big Red Marching Machine. Lauren is also the Camp Director for the ISU Junior and Senior High Summer Band Camps.

Prior to her current position, Lauren was the Music Undergraduate Admissions Coordinator at Illinois State University. She worked closely with the admissions process for prospective students auditioning into the School of Music. Lauren was also the Drumline Instructor for the Illinois State University Big Red Marching Machine where she regularly arranged the drumline parts for the organization and oversaw all operational logistics for the drumline.

Lauren was previously a graduate teaching assistant at Illinois State University where she received her master's degree in Wind Conducting and studied with Dr. Anthony C. Marinello, III. While at ISU, Lauren worked extensively with the wind bands, athletic bands, and taught undergraduate conducting. In 2022, Lauren was awarded the CBDNA Mike Moss Conducting Grant.

Before serving in her current position at ISU, Lauren was a 5th through 12th grade band director and drumline instructor at several schools throughout Central Illinois. Her most recent position was serving as Director of Bands at Central Catholic High School in Bloomington, IL. Lauren is an active conductor, clinician, and percussion adjudicator and continues to serve the music education community as the Percussion Coordinator for the Illinois Music Education Conference.

Lauren graduated from Illinois State University with a Bachelor of Music Education. Lauren holds memberships with The National Band Association, National Association for Music Education, Illinois Music Education Association, Percussive Arts Society, and Pi Kappa Lambda Music Honor Society. In her spare time, Lauren enjoys spending time with her husband Kevin and doggies Pumpkin and Thunder.

**Wesley Anderson** is a conductor, educator, and bassist currently serving as a Graduate Assistant with the Illinois State University Band Department. Wesley also serves as a Sergeant and Musical Performance Team Leader with the 144th Army Band, where he has led over 50 missions, revived the Big Band, and conducted and composed for major civic events, including the Illinois Polish Freedom Day Ceremony. Wesley's military education includes the Army School of Music Advanced Individual Training (earning a Distinguished Honor Graduate award), Basic Leaders Course (earning Commandant's List honors), and Advanced Leaders Course (earning a Distinguished Honor Graduate and Distinguished Leader awards).

An active educator, Wesley earned his master's in teaching from Western Illinois University and directed the award-winning music program at ROWVA High School from 2022–2025. Wesley doubled student participation in music every school year, secured full program funding to make music free for all students, led ROWVA to its first top-three finish in the IHSA, and founded the district's first Tri-M Music Honor Society. Wesley's ensembles consistently earn superior ratings at contests. Wesley earned Teacher of the Year for his district and the Illinois State Board of Education's Award of Meritorious Service.

A summa cum laude graduate of Berklee College of Music in Film Scoring and Composition, Wesley was awarded the prestigious Wachter Fellowship while in his undergraduate studies. Wesley has recorded on over 50 film and video game projects, performs regularly as a jazz musician and with the Knox-Galesburg Symphony, and is an active conductor, clinician, composer, arranger, and drill designer. Wesley remains committed to fostering a community of musicians who show up, bring a positive attitude, and have fun making music together.

**Madison Mueller-Howell** is a native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and is currently a Graduate Assistant for the Band Department at Illinois State University where she is pursuing her Master of Music in Trumpet Performance and studying under Dr. Anne McNamara. She also previously held the Graduate Assistantship for Trumpet for the 2024-2025 academic year, during which she had the opportunity to perform with the Faculty Brass Quintet and Bastille Brass Quintet. She works with the Big Red Marching Machine, Wind Symphony, Symphonic Winds, and University Band. She has also performed with Illinois State University's Symphony Orchestra, Jazz I, and the Valkyrie Trumpet Ensemble. She works with ISU's Community School for the Arts to provide private trumpet lessons to students in the community.

She graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Music with a Music Education focus from Westminster College, Pennsylvania in 2024. In 2023, she received the Outstanding Junior Music Major award, which is a prestigious award granted to the top students in the music department. She is a member of Mu Phi Epsilon, a professional music fraternity, where she received the International Sterling Achievement Award for the Eastern Great Lakes Division in 2024. This award is granted to the top contributing members of the organization in recognition for their dedication to the organization.

While at Westminster, she studied under Dr. Timothy Winfield. In 2022 and 2024, she was selected to perform as a prelude trumpet ensemble for the International Trumpet Guild Conferences. She also performed in Boston, MA, with the Pennsylvania Lions Club All-State Band at the Lion's Club International Conference in 2023

She also volunteers as a collegiate advisor for the Campus Relations department for Alpha Gamma Delta, Beta Omicron chapter at ISU.

**Colby Powers** is a Colorado born educator, conductor, and musician. Colby holds a bachelor's degree in music education with a minor in Jazz Studies from Illinois Wesleyan University. He currently attends Illinois State University as he pursues his Master of Music in Wind Band Conducting. There, his duties include assisting with the Big Red Marching Machine, Pep Band, assisting with undergraduate conducting courses, as well as guest conducting the Wind Symphony, Symphonic Winds, Symphonic Band, and University Band. While his primary instrument is the clarinet, he has also taken lessons and performed on the alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, and bassoon. Colby has played in Orchestras, Wind Ensembles, Jazz bands, Jazz Combos, and Musical Pits at both the collegiate level and as a gigging musician.

Professionally, Colby has made a name for himself as a jazz director, private studio teacher, performer and conductor. In Spring 2024, Colby became the Jazz Director at George Evans Junior High and since then, the jazz program has continued to grow consistently each year since Mr. Power's arrival. From 2023 to 2025, Colby was an

Assistant Jazz Band Director with the Normal West High School jazz bands, where he directed the “Jazz Katz” ensemble.

Outside of teaching in the public schools, Colby also is the Program Manager of the Bloomington-Normal Youth Orchestra based in Bloomington-Normal as well as the conductor of the Concert Orchestra in the Youth Music Illinois Program based in Peoria Illinois. Colby also runs a personal studio, currently made up of over 7 students from a wide variety of backgrounds. Colby is also a teacher through the Illinois Wesleyans preparatory program which supplies lessons to local kids in the Bloomington-Normal Area. Colby strives to inspire his students to continue to grow and become the best versions of themselves through music and exploration.

**Alexandra Karafotias** is an alumnus of Illinois State University, graduating in Dec. 2021 with a bachelor's in music education and Trumpet Performance. She is currently back for her master's in music education while also acting as the Graduate Assistant for Music Education - Instrumental. Her time was cut short at ISU due to an unfortunate quarantine in 2020, but she is overjoyed to be accepted back to complete 2 more years on campus. Alexandra taught K-5 general music in her hometown, Bolingbrook, IL for 4 years, teaching in the schools she grew up. Working alongside supportive former teachers and staff, she felt strongly to come back and continue her education as a music teacher. This is her debut conducting on the ISU stage, and she looks forward to learning more about the field that brings joy and passion to many.

**Gunnar Tejes** is a Senior Music Education Major at Illinois State University. He plays the saxophone in solo and concert settings, including three years in the Symphonic Band and one semester in the Symphonic Winds. In addition to concert ensembles, he played euphonium in the Big Red Marching Machine (BRMM) during his freshman and sophomore years.

A graduate of Herscher High School in Herscher, IL, Gunnar served as Drum Major for three years and performed in nearly every band and choir ensemble offered. During his senior year, he was a member of the 2022 Bands of America Rose Bowl Honor Band—a cherished memory that helped guide him toward studying music at the collegiate level.

Gunnar is a collegiate member of the Nu Omicron Chapter of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity, serving as the Collegiate Province Representative for central and northern Illinois during his junior and senior years, and as the Fraternity Education Officer during his sophomore and senior years. He is also a Golden Apple Scholar. The Golden Apple Foundation inspires, develops, and supports teacher excellence, especially in schools of need, where Gunnar aims to teach for at least five years. Next fall, he will be student teaching at Prairie Central High School and Prairie Central Jr. High School.

**Sam Kapus** currently is a junior music education student at Illinois State University, where she studies flute with Dr. Kimberly Risinger and studied conducting with Dr. Anthony Marinello and Dr. Tim Fredstrom. At Illinois State, she is an active member of The Big Red Marching Machine, where she has served as section leader for the flute and piccolo section for the past two years and will be serving as drum major this upcoming season. She will also be a student drill writer for one of the halftime performances next season. Sam has been the Vice President for Service for Tau Beta Sigma for the past two years, and in this position, she restarted and led the now annual marching band banquet.

Originally from Crystal Lake, Illinois, Sam graduated from Crystal Lake South High School in 2023, where she served as head drum major, band president, and an executive member of districts Tri-M Music Honor Society.

Outside of Illinois State, Sam works with various high schools around Illinois. She is on the marching band staff at Evergreen Park High School where she leads woodwind sectionals and marching rehearsals. She also is the flute tech at the award-winning Normal Marching Band. In addition to being a marching band tech, Sam has been interning at Smith Walbridge Clinics since 2023, where she has participated in their drum major camp, color guard camp, directors clinic, and drill writing clinic. During her time there she has received her First Class in the Corps Style.

With her dedication, drive, and passion, Sam is committed to inspiring her students and striving to make meaningful contributions to the field of music education.

Sam would like to thank Professor Lauren Bobarsky for this wonderful opportunity, her parents and loved ones for their constant support, and to all the teachers who have inspired her to become a music educator.

**Michael Hammon** is a senior studying Music Education at Illinois State University. He has played in Illinois State University's Wind Symphony, Symphony Orchestra, Symphonic Winds, and Symphonic Band. He has also conducted University Band, Illinois State University's Trombone Choir, and Slide Collective, a trombone RSO at Illinois State University. Michael will be student teaching in the fall.

**Jessica Izabela Wenc** from Palos Hills, Illinois is currently an Undergraduate Student at Illinois State University working towards her bachelor's in music education. She studies French Horn under Prof. Mary Monaghan and Dr. Racheal Hockenberry. Jessica came to ISU Fall 2023; this is her last semester on campus as she is set to student teach at Carl Sandburg High School under Mr. Stewart Bailey and Oak Lawn-Hometown Middle School under Mrs. Beth Lyons. She is set to graduate this year in December.

Jessica is a first generation Polish American and was a part o

f many culture groups celebrating her heritage. With the support of her family, she started on Trumpet in 5th grade and a year later joined Polonijna Orkiestra Ludowa, which grew her love for music. Her junior year she switched over to her now primary instrument, French Horn, and senior year she decided to pursue music education. In college, she has spent a mass amount of time in various RSO groups and volunteering opportunities to give back to her School of Music Community.

**University Band**  
~ Reggie Band ~

**Flute**

Alexa Deuter, Joliet  
Kristin Kolbus, Bloomington  
Taylor McKee, Normal  
Lola Rodriguez, Lockport  
Andreea Sofariu, Wheaton  
Marilyn Urban, Brookfield  
Michaela Woodson, Normal

**Oboe**

Kerth Judd, Barrington

**Bassoon**

Benjamin Martinez, Montgomery

**Clarinet**

Mia Cisneros-Nino, Oak Forest  
Shannon Doyle, Mundelein  
December Estes, Danville  
Leon Flores, Mount Prospect  
Jack Gibson, Naperville  
Camryn Hall, Albers  
Karli Pierson, Plainfield  
Kaylee Sojka, Lemont  
Kaiden Yost, Auburn, AL

**Bass Clarinet**

Addison Beckman, Sherman

**Alto Saxophone**

Rina Clark, Chicago  
Aidan Collins, Oswego  
Kaley Trujillo, Burbank  
Joshua Jenson, Effingham  
Alli Wetzler, Eureka

**Tenor Saxophone**

Rose Craane, Wheaton  
Benjamin Koester, O'Fallon  
Daniella Porter, Wauconda

**Bari Saxophone**

Kat Barriball, Aurora

**Horn**

Noah Benard, Wheaton  
James Dahmm, Bloomington  
Sophia Quintero, Wheeling  
Kennadie Ruot, East Alton  
Isaac Vandermyde, Eureka

**Trumpet**

William Greer, Country Club Hills  
Miguel Macias, Plainfield  
Mathew Malato, Monticello  
Celeste Marzano, Tinley  
Lydia Ruot, East Alton  
Gianna Sagel, Dixon  
Kaili Stanford, Bethalto

**Trombone**

Drew Hartmann, Round Lake  
Megan Heistand, Monticello  
Nick Vandenberg, Deerfield  
Patricia Yuhás, Bay Village, OH

**Euphonium**

Crow Behrens, Crystal Lake  
Thomas Haban, Mount Prospect  
Viktor Medina, Joliet  
Matthew Weaver, New Lenox

**Tuba**

Valerie Mattsey, Macomb

**Percussion**

Mackenzie Ceh, Manhattan  
Judah Crowder, Homewood  
Thomas Curran, Crestwood  
Brady Grizzle, Le Roy  
Luna Letarte, Lombard  
Matt Sourwine, Keeneyville  
Jacob Wolfmeyer, Washington

**University Band**  
**~ Redbird Band ~**

**Flute**

Savannah Delzell, Normal  
Leo Kleisch, Wauconda  
Ryne Luna, Chicago Ridge  
Paris Markley, Bloomington  
Maddie Olsen, Mount Prospect  
Natalie Subgrunski, Naperville  
Erin Tamasi, Westmont

**Oboe**

Sarah Cosenza, Ellsworth  
Breanna German, Elmwood

**Bassoon**

Quinn Barker, Metamora

**Clarinet**

Emily Bukala, Palatine  
Dylan Fippingger, Carol Stream  
Gabriella Gillmore, Bloomington  
Kelly Liederbach, Lake Villa  
Izzy Miller, New Lenox  
Jessica Schnittger, Wilmington  
Arnav Shrivastava, Naperville  
Ethne Waters, Bloomington

**Alto Saxophone**

Tyler Belan, East Moline  
Aubry Dale, Galesburg  
Katarina Meschbach, Buffalo Grove  
Caden Peterson, Manteno  
Ellie Phelps, Washington

**Tenor Saxophone**

Rebecca Bricco, Antioch  
Benito Huizar-Carrillo, Lafayette IN  
Marcelene Pelphrey, Chillicothe

**Baritone Saxophone**

Elizabeth Abbott, Streator

**Horn**

Anthony Frasca, Savoy  
Nolan Hansen, Minonk  
Adele Mau-Bridges, Kankakee  
Caitlin O'Connor, Villa Park  
Isabelle Pray, Le Roy

**Trumpet**

Ryan Guilfoyle, Lombard  
Audey Hjerpe, Winfield  
Zach Nixon, Woodstock  
Paul Pituch, Barrington  
Taylor Ruestman, Bloomington  
Cameron Shinkus, Homer Glen

**Trombone**

Kate Harris, Naperville  
Jacob Heaton, Mahomet  
Alexander Hopp, Normal  
Michael Muchowicz Jr., Tinley Park

**Euphonium**

Bryanna Kennedy, South Elgin  
Matteo Moudy, Bloomington  
Alexa Sobieszczyk, Plano

**Tuba**

Bradley Raffel, Morris

**Percussion**

Lincoln Cieciva, Lindenhurst  
Daniel Easter, Clifton  
Addy Palermo, Carol Stream  
Cyena Ulloa, Joliet  
Harrison Weidemiller, Orland Park  
Jennifer Yates, Hoffman Estates