



THE STATE OF TEXAS

GOVERNOR



*To all to whom these presents shall come, Greetings:
Know ye that this official recognition is presented to all observing*

Big Bertha Day

October 15, 2022

Some say that everything is bigger in Texas, and the University of Texas Longhorn Band's drumline certainly stands as a testament to this notion. From "The Eyes of Texas" to "March Grandioso," the band's iconic sound would not be complete without its largest and oldest bass drum: Big Bertha. This year, the eight-foot drum celebrates its one-hundredth anniversary, and its thunderous sound remains a focal point of the Longhorn Band to this day.

An awe-inspiring instrument to behold and to hear, even throngs of thousands cannot overpower the musical monstrosity that is Big Bertha. The drum itself has a rich history that runs parallel to many historical arcs of the twentieth century. The colossal drum was built during the height of the Roaring Twenties, symbolizing pride and prosperity in equal measure, but it fell into disuse in the latter years of the Great Depression as America fell on hard times. The drum was then stored at a Manhattan Project test site, where Bertha witnessed the dawning of the Atomic Age firsthand, as evidenced by its trace amounts of radioactivity.

Like many Americans, Bertha's best years came after moving to Texas, and since 1955, Big Bertha has been the Longhorn Band's pride and joy. With the Longhorn Band, Bertha has had a front-row seat to many historic moments, such as the inaugurations of Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, and Reagan.

Every tale must, however, have its end, and the baton is now passed to a *new* Big Bertha. The original drum will take a permanent place of honor at Darrel K. Royal Memorial Stadium, and the new drum will ensure that the Longhorn Band's traditions survive for years to come.

The University of Texas bands are renowned the world over, and I am immensely proud of the program, both as Governor of Texas and as an alumnus of this fine institution. On this centennial celebration, I hope that you take pride in your band as well as its largest percussion instrument and may you look forward to many more years of beautiful music making.

First Lady Cecilia Abbott joins me in wishing you the best.



In testimony whereof, I have signed my name and caused the Seal of the State of Texas to be affixed at the City of Austin, this the 30th day of September, 2022.

Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas