

Passion brings forth musical greatness

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Staff Reporter

Known for sports, academic accomplishments and a reputable theater program, WLHS also has a renowned musical program. Consisting of numerous choir and instrumental groups, over the school's history West Linn has become a force to be reckoned with on the musical front.

"I love band because it gives me a chance to express myself! Band is cool because we play really good music and it's fun and laid back," Hayden McClellan, junior trumpet, said.

A new band director, Kevin Egan, stepped into the spot left by Jeff Cumpston, the previous band director who moved last year with his family to Zimbabwe. Egan credits Cumpston with the strength of the band program. Egan's enjoyment and appreciation of music stems not only from a deeper level of developing the music, but also the listening and experiencing of it firsthand. It has brought him to a new level of admiration in creating the melodic work of art.

The band and orchestra have performed well at local competitions, and with the installment of a new director that hasn't changed. The instrumental groups have qualified for the State contest each year. The Symphony Orchestra placed fourth in

State last year.

The Jazz Band continues to be not only a top band in the state, but in the greater Northwest region as well.

audition tape and be specially selected. They include Michael Biancardi, junior, on jazz saxophone; Kyle Brooks, senior, on jazz

failed to show the talent they really have.

"The progress this year has come from new players and younger players filling

improve the band and orchestra programs even more according to Egan. It's a change he would like to see happen in the near future.

"The music program is nice, but really neglected because the school's money goes to sports stuff we don't need when there's lots of music stuff needed," Iwata said. He is deeply committed to his music and would like to see the program become more of a priority in the school community.

The bands and orchestras continue to awe crowds. At a recent concert they were joined by the choir and orchestra. It was the first time that the three programs have performed in musical conjunction all in one night. After having been postponed for three weeks, with the original date during the snow hiatus, Egan was pleased with the level of commitment and strength the instrumental groups came back with.

Trying to create a challenging and fun environment where students are excited and eager to perform is one of Egan's goals for the future.

"I'd like every student who comes out of the WL program to have a deep appreciation for music, both as a performer and as an audience member. I hope their high school experience is filled with positive memories of performing great music with friends," Egan said.



The Symphonic band plays in the three week postponed concert, on Jan 7. This band is one of the most advanced instrumental groups and students must audition to be a member. Photo by Phil Brooks

The band recently won League for the 21st year consecutively. The students transitioned well to the new band director.

"Mr. Egan has been doing a really good job. He does things how they used to be done, but with his own style and he listens to our input," Alexandra Mink, junior clarinet, said. "Of course, I still miss Cumpston, but I couldn't think of a better substitute."

Many students have also been accepted to be in the All-State bands and Orchestra. Each student had to make a high quality

trombone; Troy Cornelius, sophomore, on bassoon; Emma Davis, sophomore, on flute; Samantha Ing, sophomore, on violin; Charlie Iwata, junior, on tuba; Brittany Peterson, freshman, on trumpet; Christina Smith, sophomore, on oboe. In addition to the All-State bands Brooks and Davis have also been specially selected for the All-Northwest bands.

"I feel good about being better than everyone else," Iwata jokingly said about winning.

These students have risen above expectations and no student has disappointed or

vital roles left empty from graduation and the returning players stepping up into leadership roles. It's always fun to see who the next great player is going to be. There's a lot of talent in this school," Egan said.

With the band's impressive performance level before his arrival, Egan hopes that he will be able to fill the shoes of his predecessor. Though thoroughly pleased with the performance of students and hoping to keep the integrity of the program, having a larger amount of students interested in music at the high school level would

ASB President gives insight on her busy everyday life

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Ever wonder what the Associated Student Body President really does? As it turns out, the elected student is involved in much more than just the weekly announcements. This year's president, Samantha Hanlin, senior, is a part of all the projects and goals in the Leadership classes. Every day is unpredictable and different from the previous day, according to Hanlin.

"If you look at my planner you would seriously need a decoder. I plan, plan, plan. And we're not talking small notes here, we're talking full scale novel," Hanlin said. Besides planning events and projects, Hanlin creates new ideas and recruits volunteers.

"Many ideas that are brought to our attention originate in the hallways or break rooms; it's just ASB's job to put them into motion, and my job to see it through," Hanlin said. Because so many projects and events go on at the same time it can be hard to remember everything. Hanlin claims she has a memory like an "etch-a-sketch" and is terrible at remembering things.

"I do my best to do all the items on my lists and

reminders but occasionally there's a memo that is left out," Hanlin said. Fortunately, those have only been small things such as insignificant meetings or a phone call here and there, and have all been easily fixed so far.



Samantha Hanlin, ASB president, helps plan the next event for Invisible Children. She must balance her social and academic goals along with ASB projects said. She tries throughout the entire year. Photo by Zack Mueller

However, ASB doesn't do it all alone. They team up with Leadership classes, class councils, administration, volunteer individuals such as Kristy Wilkinson, Austin Volk and Conner Olsen, seniors, and others depending on what project is in the work.

"Students would be surprised how different

events would be without these groups' help and participation. There are always students available to help save the day," Hanlin said.

The administration is especially helpful in planning and carrying out ideas and events, according to Hanlin. Everything the ASB does eventually passes through the administration.

"There is this common misconception that the teachers and administration say 'no' before the question is asked, when really, they play a huge part in many

of our large events," Hanlin said. She tries to make sure students know that the office door is a gateway rather than a dead end.

Though Hanlin works hard at being a leader in the community, she does other things with her time as well. When she is not at school or working on ASB related topics, she is planning social

events and hanging out.

"You know the usual; life stuff and just goofing around. Every teenager's dream," Hanlin said. She admits she does many school related activities like painting flyers and posters, outside of school.

The busiest time of the school year for ASB is the start and the end, which includes Homecoming, which is busy, but May Day was even busier.

"It takes an incredible amount of preparation and down-to-the-wire detailed planning. It can get overwhelming realizing that you need to remember everything from how the assembly runs to how the halftime show is going to get through the back gate," Hanlin said.

If being extremely busy is the downside, all the people and interaction is definitely the upside. Communicating with various people takes up many hours of Hanlin's life. She estimated about 32-55 hours spent a week on president related activities.

"My favorite part about ASB is talking to people. Before, I didn't have an excuse to walk up to random people and try to get to know them but now I have

a bulletproof reason; I'm on ASB, and it's all about the networking," Hanlin said. She loves being able to see, and be a part of, all the success the projects bring; though not all of them are perfect. Some of the events and plans fail or as Hanlin likes to say, "They'll do better next year".

Help from the student body and suggestions are always appreciated. ASB, student councils, and Leadership classes work to make things run the way they do. Students who complain and offer no solutions are very frustrating according to Hanlin.

"It's really important to hear both the positive and the negative, but too often the negative is just a person trying to be a downer," Hanlin said.

There is a suggestion locker (located by the E-porch, locker 1294) that is open for anyone to contribute ideas and solutions to problems that will improve the student body.

"I really advise people to take advantage of their choice. It's basically the Help Us, Help You method, and trust me, it really works," Hanlin said.