

KeizerCommunity

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McNary musicians place at state

By DEREK WILEY
Of the Keizertimes

When Kacey Whitfield went to an instrument fitting at the end of the fourth grade, she knew exactly which mouth piece she wanted.

Her older brother and sister, both musicians, had already made that decision for her.

"My sister was a trumpet player and my brother was a trombone and they kind of brainwashed me from age 3 to play the French horn so that we could have a brass trio," Whitfield said. "People usually start out on a different instrument and switch to French horn. I didn't want to try on any other instruments. I just wanted to try the French horn mouth piece."

Whitfield knew right away that she had made the right decision and by the time she was in the sixth grade was playing with eighth graders in the top band.

Now a sophomore at McNary, Whitfield placed second in the OSAA State Solo Competition at Pacific University in Forest Grove on Saturday, April 28.

Southridge senior Layan Atieh won the event. Two of the three judges had Whitefield and Atieh separated by just one point.

"It's something I've imagined but I never really expected it to happen," Whitfield said. "Part of me is glad I didn't take first because there would be so much pressure to win the next two years. Now I still feel like I have areas I can improve on and hopefully be state champion by my senior year."

Each musician played for a maximum 10 minutes in front of the judges. Whitfield, playing *Concerto for Horn and Strings* by Gordon Jacob, was the second to last French horn player, just before Atieh.

"I made the decision not to listen to anybody before me just because I didn't want to get psyched out," Whitfield said. "After I played I felt really good about my performance. I got to hear her (Atieh) performance and right away knew that she was amazing and was probably going to win."

Along with the band, Whitfield joined the McNary choir this year.

"I've always love singing,"



Submitted
McNary sophomore Kacey Whitfield placed second at the OSAA State Solo Competition in the French horn at Pacific University on Saturday, April 28.

she said. "I've never been as good at it as I have at French horn. It's still a lot of fun and I am improving."

Whitfield was also voted Miss Marion-Polk County Outstanding Teen in 2017 and is competing for Miss Three Rivers Outstanding Teen on Saturday, May 5 in Oregon City. For her talent, she'll play *Colors of the Wind* on the French horn. Her platform is music education in schools.

Along with placing second in the French horn, Whitefield also played in the state ensemble competition on Friday, finishing third in large brass ensemble with Danny Okada (trumpet), Jeremiah Voight (trumpet), Andy Okada (trombone) and Jesus Martinez (tuba); and fourth in large woodwind ensemble with Cole Branson (bassoon), Tabitha Sol (oboe), Nicholas

Weathers (clarinet) and Rose LeLack (flute).

McNary's clarinet ensemble of Weathers, Chandler Foster, Kayla Jones, Katana Hamilton, Riley Smith, Julia Melting and Ana Diaz also

took third in the state.

Voight and Danny Okada placed fourth in small brass ensemble. Voight also took home a solo medal, finishing sixth in the trumpet.

McNary's band is directed by Jennifer Bell.



Submitted
Danny Okada, left, and Jeremiah Voight, with director Jennifer Bell, placed fourth in small brass ensemble.



Submitted
ABOVE: Chandler Foster, Kayla Jones, Katana Hamilton, Nicholas Weathers, Riley Smith, Julia Melting and Ana Diaz finished third in large woodwind ensemble. BELOW: Danny Okada, Jeremiah Voight, Kacey Whitfield, Andy Okada and Jesus Martinez placed third in large brass ensemble.



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