

MARCH ON SAN DIEGO

- 92** Hermiston band members
- 15** Fundraisers for trip
- 3** Grants received
- \$60K** Money raised
- 21** Years since last major trip
- 1,250** Miles to San Diego
- 1** Mile parade route
- 30** Minutes marching time
- 10** Bands in halftime performance



The Hermiston High School Band entertains during a home football game in October.

Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Hermiston High School marching band to perform at national holiday bowl

By TAMMY MALGESINI
East Oregonian

Although the teams have yet to be determined for the National University Holiday Bowl, one group for sure will be on the field — the Hermiston High School marching band.

It's the first time in 21 years that a marching band from Hermiston has taken a trip of that magnitude. In 1994, the band performed during the Rose Bowl game, said Paul Dunsmoor, Hermiston's director of bands.

In addition to the parade and halftime combined performance featuring 10 bands, the Hermiston band will participate in a competition with the winning band garnering a spot during the pre-game festivities.

The band's 2015 show features "The James Bond Theme," "Skyfall," "Goldfinger" and "Live and Let Die." They have performed it for several competitions. Also, Bulldog fans have seen portions of it during home games. Drum major Amanda Gutierrez would love



The Hermiston High School flute section marches with their bandmates during a recent home football game.

Staff photo by Kathy Aney

nothing more than to have the last performance be for the pre-game show in San Diego's Qualcomm Stadium, home of the San Diego Chargers.

"We have very big visions with

this band," she said. "We get to have the opportunity to put ourselves on the map and make a name for ourselves in the marching band community."

The road to San Diego began about 19 months ago when Dunsmoor received an invitation to perform. He presented a proposal to the school's administration, which paved the way for the trip. The effort gained traction with at least 15 fundraisers and three grants from the Hermiston Education Foundation. The total amount raised is nearly \$60,000, Dunsmoor said.

An Oregon State University graduate, Dunsmoor is in his fourth year of teaching — all at Hermiston. While in school, he estimates spending 6-8 hours a day focusing on music, including classes, practicing and performing with different ensembles. "Music is my life," he said.



Two HHS band members play with their fellow musicians at a recent practice on the school's baseball field.

Staff photo by Kathy Aney

maintaining quality sound. "Louder isn't better unless you're in tune," Gutierrez said. "Otherwise it's just irritating sound."

Dunsmoor said members of the marching band have been up to the challenge of performing in San Diego since the beginning. The group memorized their show songs on schedule, which included participation in band camp and sectional practices this past summer. Gutierrez said some of the rehearsals were grueling.

"It would be 100 degrees during band camp," she said. "We were dog tired but kept playing and marching."

Brandon Marshall, senior drumline quintus player, said the band works together to support one another.

"The camaraderie is like a family," he said. "It's kind of like a sports team, but it's band."

Steve Anderson, a sophomore English teacher who serves as the assistant director, gets giddy when talking about going to San Diego.

"I've been a band geek forever," he said.

The trip, Anderson said, will stay with students long after they've finished school. The itinerary, he said, includes playing and competing with other bands, performing during a nationally televised college bowl game, sightseeing and hanging out on the beach.

"It will be a phenomenal experience for the students," Anderson said.

Gutierrez agreed, summing it up quite simply.

"Besides that, who doesn't want to go to California?"



Drum major Andy Gillham leads the Hermiston High School Band in the national anthem during a recent home football game.

Staff photo by Kathy Aney



The HHS band provides musical encouragement during a recent home football game.

Staff photo by Kathy Aney