

High school musical

Eighth-grader Olivia Schultz plays in the big band

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

SALEM — “To see the look and smile on her face when the marching band is competing, or she’s playing at a high school football game on Friday night, is worth a million dollars,” says Kevin Schultz about his daughter, Olivia, a 13-year-old Judson Middle School student who has had the rare opportunity to play in a high school marching band this year.

Olivia’s big break came at Sprague High School, where a broken leg and a few other openings in the marching band made way for Olivia.

“Dr. (Richard) Greenwood (Sprague marching band professor) has heard me before in the middle school band, and he knew I was dedicated,” says Olivia.

Olivia has been playing clarinet since fourth grade and saxophone since sixth. “I gradually picked up the saxophone in sixth grade, and became really confident with both of them,” she says.

While saxophone was her instrument of choice, she says, “I had to start out on a main instrument. But clarinet is just like a sax. They’re very similar in a lot of ways.”

It was all a natural progression, Olivia says. Of the saxophone, she adds, “Even before taking up the clarinet, the saxophone was my first ambition. It just kind of appealed to me. I’ve been in love with it ever since.”

Today, she is full-time on the saxophone, with the clarinet a part of her past. “It just didn’t appeal to me as I got older. When I quit (the clarinet), I was grateful that the



Courtesy photo

Eighth-grader Olivia Schultz attends Judson Middle School in Salem but has had the rare opportunity to play in the Sprague High School marching band this year.

Marching band came up.

“You never know what, but something definitely will fill up the extra time.”

The first day or two of working with the high school marching band, Olivia says, “I kind of got the hang of it, and as the season progressed, it was just kind of a natural feeling to me, I guess.

“In my generation, there are not a lot who are into music. When I was with the marching band, I found people with a passion for music just like me. The first day, I felt like I was one of them. They’re probably the sweetest, funniest, most genuine people I know.”

Meanwhile, as if the high school marching band was not enough, Olivia also plays in two middle school bands.

“It’s a lot of work,” she says, “but

it’s really worth it. I’m doing what I love, so I’m perfectly OK with that. It’s not a miserable thing for me to be busy. I couldn’t ask for a better thing to do.”

“I see her doing homework during breakfast,” says Kevin. “She puts in 12- to 14-hour days. It’s just remarkable.”

Kevin is a division commander for the Marion County Sheriff’s Office. He and his wife, Julie, believe that if you can keep children involved in “time-consuming and challenging” pursuits, they are less likely to get into trouble.

As for outside activities, Olivia spent five years studying karate, earning a brown belt. That, too, is part of her past now.

As for academic work, Olivia says, “I’m really good at health stuff, like the human body and how the brain works.”

And at 13, her view of her future is musical.

“I see myself being a musician, but if that doesn’t work out, I’m thinking about being a therapist for people with depression, eating disorders, that kind of stuff,” she

says. “I think it’s today’s society, really; in social media, you see all this. I don’t want anyone to suffer. If I can’t do that with music, there has to be some other way. I know that there are people out there who do suffer, and I just want to be able to help them when the time comes.”

Kevin and his three children are members of the Tribe. His other daughter is Spencer, 22.

Today, older brother Jordan, 26, works for KXL in Portland and Spencer is a senior at Western Oregon University, majoring in exercise science.

Kevin has served on the Spirit Mountain Casino Board of Directors and the Tribal Fish and Wildlife Committee. Olivia has competed at powwows.

Jordan, in his high school days, was all-state in jazz choir. He is Olivia’s biggest influence.

“They have a special bond,” says Kevin.

“He was a great influence on me,” said Olivia. “He took me to concerts when I was growing up. To this day, he supports me in every way. It’s just awesome.” ■

Tutors available to help

Youth Education K-12 staff will be available on Monday, Dec. 15, to support parents, teachers and youth during the Willamina School District’s Parent-Teacher conferences. Contact your child’s Tribal tutor at Youth Education by calling 503-879-2101 if you would like them to be a part of your scheduled meeting. ■

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University of Oregon representatives will be visiting the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Willamina and Sheridan School Districts to share with students and families, the many opportunities at the University for students to help them prepare for higher education. All families are welcome!

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