

Welcome to the.....



Holiday 2007 Silver Jaguar Newsletter

Silver Jaguar Bands

OFFICEMAX, INC.



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The Shark Tank

Marching Band Season Report

Another marching band season at FZW has come to a close. At this point, I always take a step back and evaluate the season. I look for successes and opportunities for improvement. As with all endeavors, there are some of both. I ask myself, "Was this season successful or not? That depends on how you define success. As an educator, the bottom line is whether or not the students learned and improved. From the opening festival, Farmington, where we scored a 62.00 to our final performance at Mizzou, where we scored a 76.30, improvement did take place throughout the season. That being said, I then ask myself, "What can we do to be more successful next year and into the future?"

To begin with, I like to look at what our challenges were this year, and try to see what we can adapt to lessen those challenges in the future. Student attendance, the skill level that we began the season at and the number of students in our Color Guard were the biggest challenges to our success this year.

During the school year, we NEVER had 100%, not even at competitions. This is the first time in my fourteen years of teaching that has happened. I believe that single fact had the biggest impact on our season. There was a one week stretch where our attendance rate had a low of 76% and a high of less than 90%. That meant that we were basically "spinning our wheels." While some of those absent were for legitimate reasons, if we want to be MORE successful in the future, that is an unacceptable situation. Students and parents have to commit to a higher level of attendance, and make more sacrifices to ensure maximum attendance. We may have to put off getting our drivers' permit until next week, or changing a lesson time, or missing an after school club meeting, if we truly want to be better. While that may sound harsh, that is what is necessary to get our band back to the level we were at a few years ago.

While we can't do anything to affect the skill level of incoming students, we can do some things to try to "nudge" that level higher, and develop some strategies to improve at a faster rate, or to a higher level. First off, we are going to make the auditions a bit tougher in the future. As a minimum, all students will be required to not just "prepare" all 12 major scales, they will actually be required to play all of them at a high level before being admitted to the Silver Jaguar Band Department. If as student auditions and cannot satisfy that requirement, they will be encouraged to work at it some more, and re-audition. Secondly, the past two years, we have condensed our summer preparation time by beginning mini camp at the end of July, whereas in the past, we actually had a mini camp (three days) at the end of June. We are going to return to that schedule next year. That will give our students another month for the seeds of success to grow.

The number of students in Color Guard has dwindled over the past three years from 28 to 11. On the surface, one might think that is due to Mr. T. resigning last year, but I don't believe that is entirely true. While a change in instructor can affect things like numbers of participants, I don't think that was the case here. Before Mr. T. resigned, the number of students signed up or interested in Color Guard had already dropped from 28 to 16. I believe that is because we haven't done any real recruiting of new members from the incoming freshmen classes. Five years ago, we had a large percentage of our Color Guard members come into the program as freshmen from North Middle School. This was because North High's Color Guard recruited at North Middle HEAVILY! We reaped the benefits of that, as many of those students came to West High. Since the boundary lines have been re-drawn a couple of times since then, we no longer get many students from North Middle.

Finally, I believe that we all need to realize and support the importance of concert band in the grand scheme of things. Concert Band season is the most critical part of our program. IT is the focal point of any good school band. The bands nationwide and within the State of Missouri that are at the top of their game, so to speak, have great all-around band programs. They don't just have a good marching band, they have a good band ALL YEAR

LONG! This requires us to shift our mode of thinking. Presently, we get to the end of marching band season, and look at next marching band season, when in reality, we still have six to seven months of concert band.

During those seven months, the students should be learning more and progressing further than any other time of the year. To do that, we have implemented a "spiral curriculum" where in addition to the student's responsibilities as band members, they have different levels of testing material, designed to challenge them at their level of ability. This new addition to our program should help us to progress more if the students take the time to actually practice these things on their own at home. If your son or daughter is not practicing at home daily, then they are holding themselves and this band program back. The amount of material in each of these levels is more than attainable by every student within a given school year. In fact, there should be some students who could progress through two levels within a year, if they apply themselves.

To summarize:

- 1) Attendance – stricter policy next year – no late arrivals!!!!
- 2) Color Guard – stir up interest in program
 - trying to start an intramural color guard at West Middle School
 - hold a clinic for all ages
- 3) Skill level
 - hire a visual staff person/clinician
 - more stringent auditions
 - Mini-camp prior to July 4th
 - march in July 4th Parade
 - more hands on with "techies"
 - Tuesday evening rehearsals next year
 - time when helpers can be here
 - give students at least one day a week with immediately after-school free for tutoring, meetings, doctor's appointments etc.
 - more testing/identifying struggling students and helping those students
 - try to more closely tie our level to the level of the music and marching
 - more attention to the strengths and weaknesses
- 4) Focus on Concert Band
 - this is the real area where we improve our musical skills
 - students trying to "better" themselves
 - District Band Audition/State Band Audition
 - 40% of band auditions for District Band
 - 30% this year, highest ever – requirement for levels 3 & 4
 - Private lessons
 - hard to do – costs you \$
 - benefits are HUGE – students get one-on-one attention

The bottom line is this: Band is a big commitment, and can provide our children with GREAT rewards. As in many cases in life, you will only get out of something what you put in to it. Put more of yourselves into the program, and you will get much, much more out of it. Have a great holiday season, and we hope to see you at our concert on Friday, December 14 – 7:00 PM in the Auditorium.

Dale Sharkey

A Letter From Our Board President

Greetings Band Family,

It is hard to believe that marching season is over! From the hot summer days during band camp to the final competition at Mizzou, well, it was an awesome season! The students worked hard all season long. I would like to congratulate the students on doing an awesome job this season. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the parents who helped assist the band during marching season. To those parents who helped during band camp; to all the parents who chaperoned the football games and the competitions; to the people who helped haul equipment, supply food, give first aid, take care of uniforms, THANK YOU!!! None of this was possible without all of you!!

I would also like to take this time to congratulate all the seniors on an awesome season. To Michael, Jeremy, Amber, Crystal, Meghan, Alysse, Andrew, Tahne, Kelly, Chris, Lindsey, Kyle, Steve, Katie, Meghan, Justin, Andrew, Rachel, Aaron, Aaron, Amy and Emily, thank you! You all did a great job and you were great role models. The underclassman really looked up to all of you and you will be missed! Be sure to tell your parents about the "Senior Wall" bulletin board.

Now it is on to other things! There was an awesome jazz concert last week and now we can look forward to the next concert on December 14th. During this concert will be our annual cake auction! The kids look forward to this fun time every year!! Then it is on to Pep Band, Winter Drum line and Winter Guard. It seems the band never sleeps!!

We also had a good season with our fund raisers. VWA paid \$47.50 a shift and the Fair & Air show paid \$8.25 an hour. We sold about \$5000.00 in Butter Braids which paid well over \$2000.00. All this was credited to the students accounts! We are currently looking for someone to take charge of our annual Trivia Night. There are many people willing to help whoever takes charge! Please let any board member know if you are interested in taking on this profitable fund raiser.

In closing, I would like to wish everyone a wonderful

holiday season!

Sincerely,

Debbie Annarelli

CONGRATS....Jeremy Darnell!!!!!!

Jeremy Darnell, Senior, baritone section leader, auditioned for and was selected to the 2007 U.S. Army All-American Marching Band. Jeremy earns an all-expenses paid trip to the U.S. Army All-American Bowl on January 5, 2008 in San Antonio, Texas.

If you'd like to audition for the 2009 U.S. Army All-American Marching Band, check out the website for more information



Congratulations

These students were selected for the St. Louis Metropolitan District 8 Honors Band

Taylor Lane (9) - clarinet
Stephanie Sears (11) - contra-alto clarinet
Jeremy Darnell (12) - bassoon
Trisha Ingraham (11) - bassoon
Aaron Ring (12) - alto sax
Steve Martin (12) - tenor sax, jazz tenor sax
Kyle Lessnau (12) - trumpet
Andrew Myers (12) - trumpet alt., jazz trumpet
Danny Pace (10) - trumpet
Lauren Turner (11) - snare alt.
Amber Farhat (12) - mallets
Kathleen Hoormann (9) - mallets

More CONGRATULATIONS

Saturday, December 1st, we had four students selected for the Missouri All-State Band. This is a HUGE deal! The most we've ever had at one time is two, and we've only had a total of four different students achieve this in the past ten years. To have four selected at once is a great achievement for these kids.

Steve Martin made All-State Jazz Band, tenor saxophone

Kyle Lessnau made All-State Concert Band, trumpet

Jeremy Darnell made All-State Concert Band, bassoon

Trisha Ingraham made All-State Philharmonic Orchestra, bassoon and contra-bassoon

A huge congratulations to these students. It takes an IMMENSE amount of dedication, patience and PRACTICE to make this honor.

- Shoes: the Drillmasters are a part of the uniform and scoring during competition. Time to polish them up and put away for next year. You can get polish at the Dollar Tree.
- Congrats to Debbie Kinney for participating in fundraising this summer. She was able to raise \$1252.14 for her children's account. **FUNDRAISING WORKS!**
- Speaking of fundraising: if you want your Fair and Air Show and VWA totals, contact Debbie Annarelli.
- Trivia Nite: we need a new volunteer to organize this event. Mrs. Spurlock has offered to help the new organizer. Please contact Debbie Annarelli.
- Uniform preview at the December meeting!
- Be on the lookout for next year's schedule. *Rumor* has it that it might be available by winter break.
- Pep Band schedule is posted on the website. Students earn points for each event.
- Winter Drum Line is in full swing. Practices have begun and we had a GREAT turn out for tryouts and it looks as if we will have a larger group this year with students from all disciplines participating. We look forward to a great season and look forward for all your support. Our schedule is posted on the website.

Show Your Support!

From Jeanne & Sylvia

Hello everyone --I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday with family and friends.

Coming up -- December 8th is the Barnes and Noble band fundraiser. This is a terrific way to help the band while doing some Christmas shopping. Please help make these events a success for the band !!

Thanks!

Connie

I can't believe it's that time already ---

I signed us up for the Barnes & Noble Book Fair, on December 8 at the Barnes & Noble in St. Peters (across from Mid Rivers Mall) -- all day, from store open to close. There are a couple of changes, which are good! There is no need for a voucher this time! Hurray! Save the paper. Save the trees! All one needs to do to count their purchase toward our band is to mention it at the cash register. Also, cafe items are now applicable to the fundraiser -- like I really needed a reason to drink more mochas! : -) Jeanne Ransom

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The Cake Auction is approaching quickly. It is always so much fun for the students. This year we will only auction off 5 Senior cakes during the Dec. 14th concert. The other cakes will go into our silent auction. We will also sell cookies and candy gift baskets. If you would like to make up a cookie or candy basket to donate to sell, please let me know. We are in need of parents to make plain, undecorated cakes to be decorated for Thursday after school. Send the cake to school with your student Thursday morning, Dec. 13th. Either place the cake on a clean piece of cardboard and cover with foil/plastic or bake it in a foil/throw away container with a lid. To keep the cake fresh, you can cover it with a thin coat of can vanilla frosting. The students can bring the cake(s) to Room 142 (Foods room) before school, we will store it in there. Please let me know if you plan to bring a cake. The students can bring any toppings to decorate with, label them with their name, and store them in Room 142 too. We are also in need of decorator icing. A copy of the recipe is below. If you would like to make some icing, please let me know so I can keep track of how much is coming. I will provide the decorator tubes and color for the icing. You can contact me at syviapuckett@yahoo.com or call me at (636)675-0262. Let's make this a fun event for the students as well as another year of great Cake Auction fundraising.

Any parents who would like to help with the decorating, please plan to go to Room 142 after school (2:15) on Thursday, Dec. 13th. We will be there 2 - 3 hours until all cakes are decorated and the room is cleaned up.

Come join us for a great time.

Sylvia Puckett/Food Committee Chairman

Decorator Icing:

2 lb. bag of powdered sugar

1 cup Crisco shortening

1 cup soft tub margarine

6 TB milk

2 t. vanilla

Place the Crisco and margarine in a heavy-duty mixer. Mix milk and vanilla together and set aside.

Add 1/3 bag powdered sugar and 1/3 of the milk/vanilla mixture at a time and beat on low, then switch to high once it is mixed well. Add more powdered sugar and milk mixture and mix well.

Do this until all ingredients are added, whipped and fluffy.



Silver Jaguar Bands

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Go Jaguars!

We're on the Web again!

www.fzwband.net



Calendar News—dates and times subject to change

December 8th—Barnes and Noble Fundraiser

January 26th—Drum Line/Guard competition (F.H.S.)

December 10th—Booster Meeting 7pm

December 11th—Pep Band (FZN)

December 14th—Winter Concert.

January 10th—Pep Band (Wentzville Girls)

January 11th—Pep Band (Wentzville Boys)

January 14th—Booster Meeting

