

## Harlan County Marching Band: Marching as an Art

This year the Harlan County High School Marching Black Bears started off the season with the Harlan Daily Enterprise Reader's Choice award for the Best Local High School Band. The band directors are Alex Britton, Kevin Shepherd, Jeremy Bell, and Felicia Shepherd. The award results from readers' votes.



**Mr. Alex Britton** says, "The band is playing much more musically this year. We as a staff are challenging the student's everyday so that they can compete with other bands around Kentucky and Tennessee." In their first competition of the year, at North Laurel High School, the band went up against two other bands. One of those bands were double their size! They received a score of 42.8 out of 70 overall at the competition. They beat seven other bands in music, seven other bands in colorguard, and seven other bands in percussion. "There is much room for our group to improve. The Harlan County High School Marching Band did a fantastic job this past Saturday. Our competition was in Bristol, TN at Tennessee High School where the band went against 3 other bands in their class. There were 27 bands in attendance on Saturday and the bands were classified by band size, not school size. Harlan came in 2nd place in their class. The band also won the following awards: 1st Place in Drum Major (Chance Turner), 1st Place in Colorguard (Led by Katelyn McClure), 1st Place in Music, 2nd Place Visual, 2nd Place Effect, and Emily Perkins won Best Overall Soloist of the entire competition - beating 25 other bands! The staff, parents, and students are all very proud of the group. The Harlan County Marching Band came in 3<sup>rd</sup> Place at their last competition. They received the following trophies as well: 3<sup>rd</sup> Place in Drum Major, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place in Colorguard, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Place in Percussion.

"What a blessing it is to teach music! As a new director in the Harlan County School System I have enjoyed working with the students throughout band camp and all of the many after-school rehearsals. My position in the school system does not really allow me much opportunity to interact with the high school students during the regular school day; nonetheless, they have been very welcoming of me. The students have worked hard to perform this year's marching show and they proved it during each performance by making it stronger than the last. As a director I hope that I can be a source of encouragement and motivation to each student that is in the Harlan County High School Band," says Director Jeremy Bell.

"Thank you to the students and parents for all they have done." says Kevin and Felicia Shepherd.

"As our students become more knowledgeable about the art of marching band, learn more of the show music and drill, watch drum corps (which is essentially the "NFL for Marching Band"), and watch videos of the top competing bands in the state and in the national, our group gets better at every rehearsal so that our scores can improve." Adds Mr. Britton.



*Pictured above is (Upper-Left to Right): Mack Napier, Zachary Perkins, and Chance Turner. (Bottom-Left to Right): Tesia Nolan, Kellie Caldwell, and Katelyn McClure.*

## **Our Senior Band Members**

**Kellie Caldwell** – Band means friendship and family to me. I do band because it lets me be more creative with my music and it helps me express myself. I've been in band for three years now and each year has been different. We all manage to be more communicative toward each other rather than with anyone else. I think the show has great music and a great theme. I truly like this year's show.

**Zachery Perkins** – Through the years my band experience just keeps getting better. Some of my band family may graduate but, more freshmen come in to fill the parts. The show this season is a great one. It has energy and an amazing theme. Im glad I can finish my high school marching with such an awesome show. I do marching band because I love music. Band is like my family. When we work, we work hard. If we fall, we help each other up. I love my band family and im going to miss them and my percussion brothers and sisters. Thank you to my directors and my friends, my old drum captain, and my teacher, Matt Sawyers.

**Tesia Nolan** – Band means everything to me. I love music in general especially performing for others. My band experience within my four years has changed really. It's made me become a better player over the years. The show this year, I think, is really neat. I really love the alien idea.

**Mack Napier** – Band means a lot to me. I can say that I've grown as a person now thanks to band. The show this year is awesome! I've always loved listening to Paint It Black. I have always had a fascination for music and it's a lot of fun.

**Katelyn McClure** – Band means so much to me. As a person who has always been shy and awkward, it has helped me break out of my shell at least a little bit. I feel so much more confident and sure of myself in everything that I do because of band. Band has taught me that you must try and try no matter how many times you may mess up. That is how you build your confidence. I honestly don't believe that I would be the person I am today without band.

**Chance Turner** – Band to me is a time of day when I feel that all the stress from earlier in the day is lifted. I feel like I can walk into the band room and forget that anything bad had ever happened. The band room is a place of relief to me. I love walking in everyday and getting to see my band directors. I love every one of them as if they were my family. I would do anything for them, and I know they would do the same for me.

**Edna Burkhart** - "I am very proud of our band directors and students at HCHS. These are a very unique and talented group of students who are extremely dedicated to music. These students work very hard all summer preparing for the football season when they will march on the field. Our band also represents HC at numerous competitions throughout the state. I always look forward to the band performances in the winter and spring concerts. The hard work these students put into band shines forth in every event and program in which they are involved," Says Edna Burkhart, Principal of the Harlan County High School.



### **The Show Concept: “Xtraterrestrial” and its meaning.**

The Show this year is entitled **“Xtraterrestrial.”** Some may ask, why is the title spelled differently, but the answer is that the “X” is symbolism in the show. It represents the concept and theme of aliens and even one of the formations the band makes is a giant X. The percussion section also have caution tape on their instruments with an X symbol. To the audience, the X could represent the T.V. show “X-Files” or could mean something completely different, but is left to the imagination of the viewer.

Though the show you watched during halftime or at the competition is about aliens, there is a deeper meaning to the show. Have you ever watched the news and thought to yourself, this is depressing or there is so much crime, violence, and hate in the world? The inspiration for the show concept was developed over the summer of 2016. “I thought to myself, enough is enough! The students we teach will go into the world and make a change. They are bright people who need to make the world a better place, especially at a time like this,” said Mr. Britton. The show is the epitome of world peace and acceptance of others who are different than yourself.

**Movement I** is entitled Invasion (Heart: Heartrate by Randall Standridge). The first song is about someone who is a little different than the rest. The song does not exactly represent

an invasion by an alien, but by a person unknown to the rest that seems strange, weird, bizarre, or creepy. All of these words seem to hurt others and we as people forget to empathize with others. We as a society need to learn that empathizing with others will open new doors in our own mind to acceptance of others.



*Pictured above is Katelyn McClure, the alien, being lifted by the other members of the Colorguard.*

**Movement II** is entitled Benevolence (Open Arms arr. Jay Bocook and Omar Carmenates). This movement is about kindness, compassion, and humility. The world needs more of those three things. As teachers it starts with us. Modeling kindness to our students will help people as they grow up and go out into the world of endless possibility.



*Pictured here is “the Alien,” Katelyn McClure and Colorguard Member Ashton Gross grasping hands as a symbol of acceptance in the song Open Arms.*

**Movement III** is entitled The Choice (Planetary Collisions: Red Planet Mash Up by Gustav Holst). This movement is called the choice because we can choose to work in harmony with others or create dissonance. Every day we make decisions in our lives that affect others whether it be bullying, drama, talking behind others backs, and with this song there appears to be an internal battle to make the right decisions and resolve conflict.



*Pictured here is Marching Band members Emily Perkins, Jeffrey Ramsey, and Christopher Massingale.*

**Movement IV** is entitled Perspective (Paint It Black arr. Roland Barrett). The Song Paint It Black is about a red door that the singer wants to paint black. Too many times we see someone else and we want them to be just like us. We must come to realize that this world is full of different people that come from different backgrounds, cultures, religions, etc. This song is about looking at the perspective of others.





*Pictured here is Trumpet Soloist Emily Perkins with the Prop that represents world peace.*

“We hope our students understand that it is okay to be different. We as a society must strive to be the best that we can be, accept others for who they are, empathize with them, show mankind that humility is the key to world peace.” Says Mr. Britton. The goal for next year is to increase the amount of playing members and guard members of the band. All of the middle school band students are invited to march with the band Harlan County High School Black Bear Band in the Christmas Parades. Those dates are: December 2, 2016 in Cumberland, December 3, 2016 in Harlan City, and December 4, 2016 in Evarts.