



Sticking to it: Jenny Ehland of Harrison High School's marching band, plays the timpani during a recent national band competition in Indianapolis.

Harrison band trumpets national ranking

BY DIANE HANSON
SPECIAL WRITER

Not had for the first time in a national competition.

That was the opinion of Mark Phillips, director of the 130-member Harrison High School marching band, which traveled to Indianapolis Nov. 10-11 to take part in the Bands of America Grand National Championships.

Harrison was one of 76 bands to add to the pageantry, color, masterful marching, creative choreography and moving music that make up the 10- to 11-minute program presented by each band.

This is the first year the Har-

ison Band has competed on a national level and band director, Mark Phillips, and his students were very pleased with the performance.

"I felt really good about the performance," said Phillips. "It was definitely their best performance."

That was the consensus of the performers as well. Color guard members, Shanti Ammon, a junior, and senior Amanda Rothman both said they thought it was their best performances.

It was a great present for Rothman who was celebrating her birthday on Nov. 10, the day of the performance.

Of the 25 bands competing in

the preliminary AA category, the Harrison band ranked sixth with a respectable score of 82.15 out of a possible 100 points.

That score netted them a Division I rating, which required a score of 76 or above.

The national competition capped off an exciting season for the Harrison band. Their program, "The Purple Twilight," a musical memorial to the crew of the space shuttle, "Challenger," which perished in an explosion in January of 1986, netted top placements in local competitions this year.

The band captured two first place awards and three second places for Flight II competitions

this fall. They placed fourth in Flight II at the MCBA (Michigan Competing Bands Association) State Championships.

At the Bands of America Regional Championships held in Toledo in September, Harrison was one of the 10 highest scoring bands out of the 29 participating to make the finals evening competition where they placed seventh.

Of the 14 bands that made it into the evening finals competition in Indianapolis, the Plymouth-Canton band was the only one from Michigan. They received a score of 91.85, capturing fifth place. In first place, with a score of 97, was Center Grove High School from Green-

wood, Ind.

The Harrison band members watched the entire BOA Grand National Championships show with, perhaps, an ulterior motive in mind.

"If we want to be in this arena, which these kids do, they need to see what those other groups are doing," explained Phillips. "That's a big part of the learning experience."

Because of the excitement and positive reaction of both the parents and the students, Phillips believes the national championships will also be in next year's schedule.

That would be fine with saxophone player Adam Marshall, a

junior who has played in the marching band all three years.

"I felt very good about it," he said. "I would really love to do it again, give it another chance."

Phillips believes in setting realistic goals for his band and has already seen the positive results.

"The first time we went to Toledo three years ago, we didn't make the night show," Phillips recounted. "Then, our goal was to make the night show. We've done that and we moved up the last two years."

"Obviously, another one of our goals is to try and make the night show at Nationals. We've made a statement that we can be in that ball park."

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say to myself I don't know they are going to pull this off," Koperski said. "Some of the topics are a little off the wall. It's interesting to see where they can take them."

Or, where the projects take the students.

Fifth grader Dana Kaplan, 10, went to restrooms at Burger King and McDonald's to prove her scientific theory about cleanliness.

She swabbed the restroom door handles and put the samples in petri dishes. What grew was a colony of germs.

Some of those found public restrooms include: strep, salmonella and hepatitis, according to Dana.

"My mom kind of gave me the idea," Dana said. "Whenever we're out to dinner we have to hurry up because she doesn't want to use the bathroom in the restaurant."

Samantha Delaney, 11, was inspired by the family's bread box for her project.

"I knew a lot about mold," Samantha said. "We buy a lot of bread and it gets moldy."

Onion bread turns a ghastly green quicker than most. That's because of the bread's high moisture content. By contrast, pita bread stays pristine the longest.

Brianna Barnett, 11, had another shade of green in mind. She tried to grow grass in Swiss cheese and spaghetti as well as in a sponge.

When she was in preschool, Brianna and classmates used to grow turf in beans and paper towels.

"I thought it would be interesting to try and grow grass in something different," Brianna said.



STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LEMIERRE

About that bacteria: Saree Hantler and her 5-year-old son Bradley tour the science projects, asking questions of Danas Kaplan who did a project on bacteria in restaurant restrooms.

The results — especially with the spaghetti — didn't have horticultural hall of fame written all over them. But that's the point, said Brianna.

"Grass needs certain nutrients like the ones in soil to grow," she said.

It also needs a little sun, which was hard to come by for Andrew Stanis.

He was trying to show the pow-

er of solar energy, but overcast days didn't help the cause. He improvised, using a lamp.

Children lined up for a sample of dried apple and pear pieces he dried.

Andrew got the notion for the project out of the book, "Science Crafts for Kids."

"I thought it was interesting and I thought I'd get a good project out of it," Andrew said.



A dry subject: Andrew Stanis says he dried fruit for 10 days with a reading lamp because the sun wasn't out enough.

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