

## **Bands Compete in Cheshire**

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CHESHIRE - From the end of September to early November, every Saturday is competition day for Connecticut high school marching bands that have the courage to compete in front of hundreds, sometimes thousands.

Last week Lyman Hall High School housed the visiting musicians and bowed out of the competition, but still performed for the crowd as the exhibition band.

This weekend it was Cheshire's turn.

"We love coming back," said band alumna Viki Stuart, a 2009 graduate of Cheshire High School and West Hartford-based college student. "I was running up and down the halls of my dorm like, 'it's Music in Motion weekend!' " With 19 bands competing from 4 p.m. well past 9 p.m. Saturday, parent volunteers directed the bands to various staging areas, some across the street at Bartlem Park so as not to disturb those competing on McClary Athletic Complex where the eyes of 10 judges critiqued six divisions of bands, broken down by size, with the smallest bands up first.

In its 26th year, the competition continues to be the band's largest fundraiser, event chairwoman Laura Wannerberger said. Between 3,000 and 5,000 people attend each year. Last year, the Band Parents' Association raised close to \$8,000.

But it's also expensive to house the event, Wannerberger added, as the school brings in equipment to cook fresh clam chowder, chili and fried dough on the premises and pays professional judges to keep tally.

Parents are also a key, as 75 took to various booths and positions to cook, direct, and raise money.

Cindi Climer considers herself a parent- alumna now that her three kids have graduated from the school and its ram band, but that doesn't stop her from coming out the day prior to cook chili and chowder on double boilers near the field. "The recipe came from Don Mason," she said, "he taught me and it's actually really good."

Color guards out on the field had to battle the elements as the wind kicked up during the evening. But it didn't seem to faze any involved.

"They love it; they work hard all week long and this is our chance to shine," said Michael Martino, band director of East Haven High School's Yellow Jacket Marching Band, as the band warmed up for its Russia show, the last to perform prior to intermission.

After opening the evening to the National Anthem with Dodd Middle School band,

Cheshire's ram band members partly changed into civilian clothes as they scurried around, catching up with friends and enjoying a competition on their home field.

The undefeated band that took home the class IV trophy Saturday closed the evening performing "Buggin' Out," an avant-garde style interpretation of life from an insect's perspective.

"It's really exciting, it's like your home show," said Christina Garbalosa, a senior horn player, while catching up with Stuart, an old friend. "We want to perform for the alumni, show them our show is better than they were."

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Caption: Samaia Hernandez /Record-Journal Montville High School's Marching Indians perform their show, "Westward" at Cheshire High School's Music in Motion marching band competition Saturday.

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