

OCTOBER 2016

# Neighbors of Union

An exclusive magazine serving the residents of Union

Ryle High School  
Marching Band

★ **Marching** ★  
**BAND**

THE ULTIMATE TEAM  
**Sport**



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Cover photo by Ryle Band Boosters



WRITTEN BY TRACY FUCHS, Ryle High School Band Booster President  
PHOTOS BY RYLE BAND BOOSTERS AND PARENTS



# ★ Marching BAND ★

THE ULTIMATE TEAM  
Sport

★ Whether attending a high school football game, college or NFL game, the half time show to entertain the cheering crowd is truly an American tradition. ★



But here is where the marching band team differs from most other sports teams. As one band booster from Florida put it:

“Marching band students spend hours upon hours working to perfect a show for a performance that will last around eight minutes. They don’t get four quarters, two halves or 9 innings – just a few minutes. There are no time outs during a performance and no substitutions. The show must go on.”

**Marching bands** evolved out of military bands. As musicians became less and less important in directing the movement of troops on the battlefield, the bands moved into increasingly ceremonial roles. In the late nineteenth century, they became popular features of American life in part through the musical work and leadership of John Philip Sousa, who headed the U.S. Marine Band in the late 1800s.

The first halftime show performed by a marching band at a football game was the University of Illinois Marching Illini in 1907, at a game against the University of Chicago. Since that first halftime show, marching bands have seen many changes in style of marching, music genres, uniforms, drum majors, flags, sabers and rifles, moving percussion equipment and keyboards, even vocalists and electric guitars. Guard members change colors of flags even costumes in the middle of a performance.

Giant props are displayed around the field, and voice-overs tell a story amplified through large speakers, all for the crowds’ enjoyment. It’s not just your march around in a squad and form square shaped designs anymore. Some are comparable to Broadway productions. But through the years, one thing has not changed for high school or college bands: that is the pride, sense of family and team environment that all members share and value.

The Ryle High School Marching Band is your typical high school competition marching band. They perform at the high school football games and attend statewide marching band competitions to represent Ryle High School amongst its peers and rivals. Not too different from other competitive sports teams at a high school level.

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No one student has their name in the newspaper the next day highlighting their musical efforts. They don't get special recognition for outstanding individual performance.

Band is the ultimate team sport because no one person is recognized publicly for their outstanding performance. The marching band as a team gets a trophy. The marching band as a team may get an article in the local newspaper or recognition on the morning announcements at school, but as a group; a team.

So why does a kid want to be in marching band? Stigmas are associated with marching band kids just like they are for other sports. Jocks, cheerleaders, geeks, band kids. High school hasn't changed that much.

Kids join marching band knowing that they won't get individual recognition for their efforts; knowing they may not get their picture in the newspaper, and there is no



number on the back of their uniform to help their parents find them on the field. They do it because they want to be a part of a team. To be a part of something bigger than themselves.

"When I first began concert band, I was a very shy sixth grader. Now almost seven years later this Marching Band program and the people in it have helped me become a confident leader that I never would have dreamt possible before," said Noah Murphy, Senior drum major, Ryle High School. "Marching band and really band in general has

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given me opportunities and taught me lessons that no other activity could have. From giving me the chance to perform concerts across Europe for 16 days to enabling me to go to the Music for All Leadership Weekend, it has single-handedly changed my character for the better."

"More so than these experiences that I have had, I think that the best thing marching band has taught me is how much of an impact I can have on others' lives. It has been amazing to me to watch the rookies at this year's rookie camp and realize that in that group of marchers are our future section leaders and future drum majors. That realization helped me to understand that marching band has given me the ability and really the responsibility to help this program's future."

Next time you attend a football game, take a moment to listen, to watch and to enjoy the half time show, it's only eight minutes long. And remember, marching band is truly the ultimate team sport.

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