

Marching Pioneers are 'In Pursuit Of' greatness

By Sharon Lee

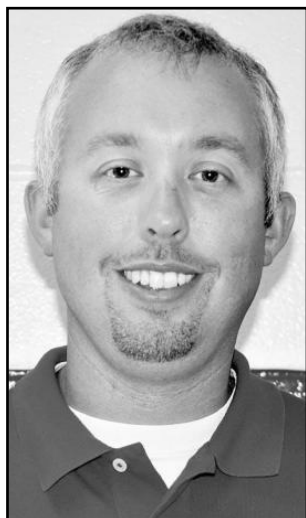
All my life, I have looked, searched and been in pursuit of...

The journey of one's desire to find the "something" that fulfills their life will be presented through music in the 2017 Gibson County Marching Pioneer production titled "In Pursuit Of." Through this production, spectators will follow the journey of a beautiful young woman portrayed by Libby Thetford who represents the one "in pursuit of..." and a handsome young man portrayed by Jarrett Stephenson as the "something" being pursued and the obstacles faced along the way as she tries to fulfill that void in her life. What that void is only the show will tell.

Gibson County's reigning State Champion Color Guard will spin beautiful silks with a "broken glass" pattern to represent the many choices we must make as we go through life.

As the soloists and front ensemble begin the show with Aaron Copland's "The Promise of Living," the audience will hear words such as delight, joy, elation, well-being, bliss, enjoyment, etc. The words, along with the hues of yellow and green silks, represent that we are all in pursuit of something in life, even though we may not always know what that may be. As the words continue, they will begin to overlap on each other to increase the intensity, which leads into a brief moment of silence followed by our young wanderers thinking "In Pursuit of..." This transitions the show into a spirited playing of Copland's "Simple Gifts."

"Just like I do with most shows, I try to find a theme that is catchy and one that the Friday night audience can relate to, yet



JEREMY TATE returns as Gibson County High School band director. He has led the Marching Pioneers to countless trophies and titles during his time in Dyer.

will be competitive during contests on Saturday," said Band Director Jeremy Tate. "At the same time, I try to throw in a familiar tune or two that the audience can grab a hold of, too. I think we have definitely done that this year."

Moving from a spirited, high intensity tune into the ballad, the audience will hear the soloists begin their quest for love as they perform "A Time for Us" from the timeless classic "Romeo and Juliet." This ballad highlights that Libby has found what she is in search of. She isn't sure at this point what it is yet. She has it in her sight but cannot quite get to it. The guard will spin a silk with various shades of blue, and Kayley Taylor will perform a dance solo.

Like in real life, fulfilling life's pursuit can be a wonderful journey but full of conflicts along the way to true happiness. Representing this time of conflict, the drum break will feature the award winning Color Guard Rifle Line and the reigning State Champion Percussion sec-

tion performing Meatloaf's "I Would Do Anything for Love." The tune also features the full ensemble as well as the soloists as they search for each other and are stopped just before they find the "something" they are so desperately seeking.

To end this journey, the band will perform Puccini's "Nessun Dorma" (translated "None Shall Sleep") which tells us the young loves will not rest until they find happiness and love and will be with each other. During this tune, soloist Jarrett Stephenson will become "humanized" by the shedding of his hat so that you can now see his face. The two soloists will unite on the 50-yard line at the climax of this tune. This signifies the pursuit has ended.

To bring all of the characters and feelings of this show together, the guard will spin a silk with smooth, flowing lines and beautiful shades of red while their white uniforms turn into a captivating red ball gown while featuring members Emma Upchurch and Mackenzie Eddlemon. The show will close with Bernstein's "Ode to Joy" to signal that the "something" has been found, the pursuit of love has been fulfilled, and the pursuit of lifelong happiness has just begun.

Asked to describe the 102-member band, Director Jeremy Tate said, "This is a very well-balanced band. For the first time in several years, our freshman and sophomore numbers pretty much equal our junior and senior numbers. So, it is an exciting time for our band, because we have been very young for the last two years. Now, we are finally reaping the benefits of our harvest by having just as many upperclassmen as we have underclassmen."

Last year's one-tenth of



GCHS WOODWIND SECTION – Members of the Gibson County Marching Pioneers woodwind section are (front row, from left) Libby Thetford, Abbey Landrum, Allie Landrum, Alyssa Welch, Hannah Kennedy, Halle Barber, Alexis Pate, Sarah Robinson; (second row) Caitlin Watts, Rebecca Welch, Caleigh Patterson, Jessica Griffin, Marlene Perez, Audrey House, Molly Greer, Brenlee Watts; (third row) Corinne Rutherford, Hannah Whitworth, Triggor Carlton, Gracie Schleifer, Jumeria LaRue, Allison Lay, Ashley Landrum; (fourth row) Darcie Halliburton, Darius Talib-Din, Kaitlyn Zarecor, Lydia Todd, Molly Tate, Madison Fussell; (back row) Sarah Watson, Ambere Flowers, Eva Dwyer, Autumn Locke, Sharesa Harris and Henry Todd.

a point loss to Goodpasture in the Division I State Championship serves as motivation for this year's band. "I told the kids, not to let a practice make a difference in a tenth of point, because we know that can be the difference in winning a state championship or finishing in second place," noted the director.

The strength of this year's band will be the fact that it is very well-rounded. "Our guard and percussion were both first place at state last year. Obviously, both sections are coming back strong. We have good musicians in every single section. Our clarinets are our youngest section. We have the most freshmen in that group, so that is the one that will be on a type of learning curve, trying to get them up to everybody else's level. And, as always, another concern is the heat. In band camp, we lost about six hours of rehearsal because of the heat index," informed Tate.

Keys to success for the band will be: hard work, practice, and always giving 110 percent.

Gary Smith contributed to this report.



GCHS DRUM MAJORS – Conducting the Gibson County Marching Pioneers Band will be drum majors Logan McBride (left) and Alaina Eddlemon.

*Good Luck to the
Gibson County
Marching Pioneers!*

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