

Poms and Pride

By Bayleigh Hicks
Goldthwaite Eagle

Cheerleading is both a mentally and physically demanding sport. Soundrea McCarty, cheer coach, spoke about the struggles, and the rewards of cheer.

"This will be my 5th year coaching cheer at Goldthwaite. I decided to take it over because of my background in both dance and cheer. I have a passion for not only dancing but coaching, and I love to not only make them better cheerleaders but better people," McCarty said. McCarty explained that her motivation behind continuing to do it, despite the time it takes away from her children, is the bonds she is able to make with her cheerleaders.

"We typically have a practice every month and we also go to summer camp in Angelo learning cheers and chants. Then once school starts we will spend some time getting ready for meet the eagles. The cheerleaders typically learn 12 dances and 30-40 cheers/chants. They have on average around 10 hours of cheer practice per week during the school year," McCarty said.

She mentioned that for the people who don't think cheer is a sport, they should come and try

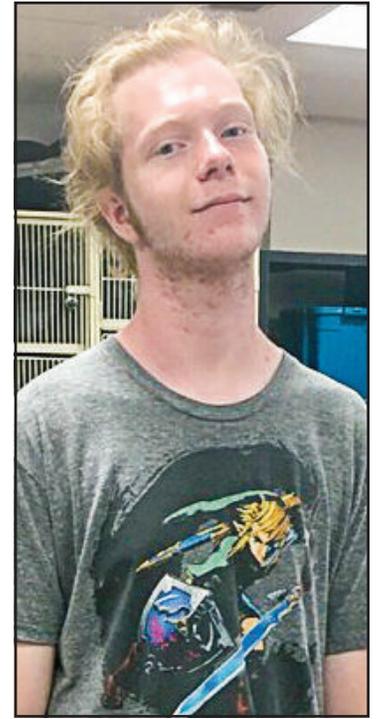
it out themselves and see how challenging both mentally and physically it really is.

"We go to UIL State Spirit Championship every year and compete. This specific competition focuses on a band dance, fight song and then a cheer. The focus is not big stunts, they want you to be the best crowd leaders," McCarty said.

The Eagle also spoke to some of the cheerleaders to get an inside perspective. Katie Whitted senior captain talked about her becoming an All American Cheerleader.

"At camp you try out for the All American Cheer team, which consists of a dance, a cheer and a jump. Based on technique and skill for seniors they were looking for good leaders. If you do make it you get to go to London and cheer at the new years parade," Whitted said. Shilah Swartz, freshman talked about the transition from middle school to high school cheer.

"I'm most looking forward to having a new set of teammates that are older and that I can look up to. I'm nervous about letting them down, which makes me push myself even harder. Mrs. McCarty pushes us because she expects more than our middle school coach did," Swartz said.



Bayleigh Hicks and Colby Darnell

GHS Band Drum Majors

2018-19 Golden Eagle Band

By Bayleigh Hicks
Goldthwaite Eagle

As football season approaches, so does marching season. The Eagle recently discussed the upcoming marching season with Band Director Susan Reynolds. This will be Reynolds' 22nd year serving Goldthwaite and 27 years overall as a band teacher. Her favorite part about marching band is seeing her kids succeed.

"Unlike most of the kids it's not the bus trips. I really like when the halftime show is over and everyone has done a good job or when the group makes improvements. The first game is rough especially for the freshmen, so I love to see them get better as the season goes on," Reynolds said.

She also discussed the time and hard work it takes to create a great show.

"We're going to be logging 24 hours of work in the span of two days for summer band. As far as how long it takes to have a great show I can't put it into hours, I have to put it in months. October is when the show really starts to look solid," Reynolds said.

She also had something to say to the people that don't think band is a sport.

"They have obviously never done it. College marching band was when I was most in shape, I had never ran so many bleachers and worked so much upper body. I wear a pedometer everywhere I go and I will march 2 miles every 45 minute class,

and I don't march near as much as my students do. All this marching the kids do is also while having controlled breathing and holding up instruments. There's not bursts of speed but marching is endurance," Reynolds said.

The preparations for the upcoming show started months ago.

"I started working on the competition show back in March. The music was just completed last Friday and I'm now taking the music to people that are going to help with visuals. Starting tomorrow I will start working on the drill, it usually takes me about until the second week of school to really have it together because that's when I know for sure who's going to be in band," Reynolds said.

She's most excited about the show and the underlying meaning of it.

"We're doing a show based on wind. I'm calling the show 'the whisper in the wind.' The script that I'm working on is based on scriptures in 1 Kings, because in one of the verses it says that God's voice is the whisper in the wind. We are using this as a bold statement for a public school, and my principal is behind it," Reynolds said.

She also gave The Eagle a little insight on the new features that the show will have.

"The costuming is going to be very cool this year with the flags and the twirlers. I'm also going to be using the minions as participants on the field, whoever the minions

end up being this year are really going to have to commit to being at every show," Reynolds said.

The Eagle also spoke to students who are participants in the band to get an inside look into what band is all about. Colby Darnell, saxophonist and recently turned drum major talked about his band experience.

"If it weren't for band I don't think I would have gotten serious about music, if I had never been in band I would have never had the interest in music I have," Darnell said. "Don't give up, band can be discouraging sometimes, you just have to keep trying to get better. We are our toughest critics and we make it harder on ourselves constantly stressing about things. I wanted to try out for drum major to be involved more so than I already was. My goal is to inspire band members and future drum majors. If you're thinking about trying out for drum major don't be scared, Mrs. Reynolds is willing to help anyone who's willing to put in the work. Me and Bayleigh [Hicks] will also be there to lend a helping hand to anybody struggling," Darnell said.

Among drum majors The Eagle also talked to Izic Odom who's been in both art and band.

"I joined band because at all the football games I would see the band jumping, hollering, and just looking like they were having a good time. I wanted to see what

all the fuss was about. Band was great but I wanted to experience something else so I went to art. Art was great but I missed the community band has. Band is a family and art is mostly a individual class," Odom said. "I also transitioned from oboe to tuba and my transition wouldn't have been as easy without the help I received from Mrs. Reynolds. She put in work with me in and out of the classroom with homeroom and after school practice."

Sophomore saxophonist Emmy Jernigan said band has brought out her social side.

"Band has helped me to become more social through going on so many different trips and talking to other bands during half time," Jernigan said. "I'm pretty competitive and I like to see if I can do better every year I compete."

Kaley Dowell, twirler for Tarleton State University discussed her journey with the Goldthwaite band, from which she continued her career into college.

"Mrs. Reynolds helped me prepare for the treatment I now receive in college. She was tough but if you did what you were supposed to she made it really fun, similar to my band director now," Dowell said. "College band is a great way to get involved, most of my friends are in the band. The football games are insane and everyone is in band because they want to be not because they need the credit."