

# New Coach, Same Spirit

**By Madison Lewis**  
**Goldthwaite Eagle**

What would black be without gold? Or a small community without pride? What would Goldthwaite be without loving support? And what would football be without cheer?

Whitney Alex Biddle is the new first-time cheer coach for the Goldthwaite Cheer Team, and although she is new at teaching the sport, she indicated to The Eagle she is more than ready to lead her squad.

"I grew up in Normangee, Tx, but moved here from Kerrville, Tx. I cheered in junior high and high school and loved it, but this will be my first experience coaching it," Biddle said.

Biddle suggested cheer isn't just about helping lead the football

team to victory and hyping up the crowd but also being a role model to younger students.

"I'd like my cheerleaders to always remember to be role models to the kids that may be looking up to them," Biddle said. "The cheerleaders and other older athletes are like superstars to these younger kids and need to set good examples and remember that young eyes are always watching."

Biddle has previous experience coaching softball and will be an assistant softball coach in addition to teaching a science course and sponsoring the cheer team.

"I like to brainstorm new ideas, and really give my athletes a chance to grow," she said. "My style of coaching has always been to teach and prepare all I can in practice, and to

support in competition. In practice, I try to give my athletes tools to help them self correct and learn to coach themselves because I feel like that makes a true athlete in any sport."

The Goldthwaite Cheer department has won an impressive array of awards and recognitions, including winning 'Top Bananas' at the 2019 UCA cheer camp for overall spirit as well as four members of the team being recognized as 'All American' recipients, giving them a chance to cheer in London's New Year's Parade. The team also received first place rally routine, first place overall game-day routine, and Wyatt Adams, as Iggy the Eagle, was voted 'camp champ.'

"To the people who don't consider cheer a sport, I simply invite them to practice or to really take a closer

look at the athleticism of our squad the next time we perform," Biddle told The Eagle. "Not only does cheer take strength, skill, and competition, but it goes beyond what a sport is with community support and school spirit!"

Beckah Mersinger, a sophomore in the squad commented on her new coach.

"I really like her!" Mersinger said. "I can tell that she knows what she's doing so I'm super excited for this upcoming year."

Although this is her second year in high school, it is only Mersingers' first year cheering.

"I like the positive atmosphere that the cheerleaders always create and I like the friendships that I have

**Continued Page 25**

## 2018-19 Golden Eagle Band

**By Bayleigh Hicks**  
**Goldthwaite Eagle**

Susan Reynolds, Head Band Director for Goldthwaites band program recently talked to The Eagle about what her new assistant band director, the new school, and the new show will hopefully bring to the program.

"I am very excited that we have the kids to pull the show off and it is going to be noticeably different than what we've done in past shows because of the preshow, new music, backdrops, and visuals. People need to realize though, that it won't start out finished and it will get more complete as the season progresses," Reynolds said.

Aside from the excitement of the new show, the last of the earth, air, fire, and water installment of the Elements series, Reynolds is excited about having the first-ever assistant band director.

"There will be a lot of changes as

far as the middle school portion of the band program goes. As the band program has grown and UIL has expanded there requirements on the highschool portion of things, it has shifted my focus from the whole program to having to dedicate more time and preparation to be able to get the high school competitively ready," Reynolds said. "Having to take away time from my middle school students has made it more difficult to have prepared incoming freshmen when it comes to the fundamentals of marching, playing, and the competitive mindset that is necessary for success."

"Ms. Wicks' primary focus will be the middle school band, but she will still be helping with highschool. Her working with the middle school will open up the opportunity for middle school students to try out for the all-district band, compete at solo and ensemble, and allow the middle school students to grow," Reynolds said.

olds said.

Reynolds is thankful for the administration for making her dreams of having an assistant, a reality.

"I owe a great big thank you to the school board, Mr. Hollingsworth, and Mr. Wright for meeting the needs of the students in the band program. The absence of an assistant band director in the past was not from lack of need or acknowledgement, it just wasn't ever the right time. There's a time for everything, and the timing this year was perfect," Reynolds said.

Reynolds loves Wicks' bubbly personality and believes that she will make a very positive impact on the program.

"She's funny and very good about helping me to remember things. I have a feeling I'm going to enjoy the way she teaches. I'm am grateful that I will no longer be alone, and that we have doubled the number of full-time band directors in the county," Reynolds said.

The burning question that everyone has been wondering is whether or not the upcoming Disney trip will mark her retirement or just her last trip.

"I meet the rule of 80 this year but I am choosing to continue teaching up until 2022. This will be my last time taking kids to Disney, but not my last year of teaching," Reynolds said.



Bayleigh Hicks and Colby Darnell

**GHS Band Drum Majors**