

# BAND

## Nathan Benya

Band Director Jim Miller has nothing but good things to say about this month's selection. "Nathan has shown his leadership skills as section leader for the drum line this fall. In addition to these duties, Nathan is an extremely talented percussionist and has recently been selected into All-State. Completing the circle, Nathan is also the drummer for Revs," says Miller. "Clearly a well-rounded percussionist, Nathan leads by example everyday through his intense involvement in the band program. He works very hard and sets the bar extremely high. Nathan is a great guy to know in Band World!" Miller adds.

Along with his involvement in Wind Symphony, Pit Orchestra, Symphony Orchestra, and Revs, Nathan is also a member of Science Olympiad, Math Team, Interact and Adastra at WHS. Outside of school he is very busy as well. "I am interested in astronomy, physics, movies, food, computers, more food, and sports. (I'm kinda all over the place)," shares Nathan. His family consists of parents Jon and Susan and his sister Katherine, who is a sophomore.

Having been involved in so many musical groups at WHS, Nathan has several special memories, but one of his favorites was playing *Liturgical Dances* by David Holsinger at State Large Group Contest his sophomore year. "It was such an incredible performance that we received a perfect score and made at least one judge cry. That felt pretty great," he recalls.

After graduation next spring, Nathan plans to attend the University of Iowa and major in Actuarial Science, Math and Economics. Let's hope he also joins a band or two.

Nathan encourages younger performers to "take advantage of every opportunity you can. You never know what the end result will be and how it will affect you."



## **DANCE**

### **Ellie Carver**

"Ellie is a senior and captain; she sets a great example for the other members of the team," declares Dance Team Director Nichole Vogl. "She also recently choreographed a halftime routine herself that the team performed at the homecoming game. Ellie did a great job making up the routine, editing her own music, and teaching the routine to the team," says Vogl.

In addition to her participation in Dance Team at WHS, Ellie also is involved in Competitive Dance. She enjoys spending time with her family and friends. This includes parents Stephanie Neighbor Kubik and Mike Carver, half-siblings Colton and Ava, and step-siblings Emily and Jayson. Ellie shared a fun fact that most people don't know. "For my 4<sup>th</sup> birthday party I had a Darth Maul cake and loved *Star Wars*."

Her most recent Golden Memory was placing at the Dance Team's summer competition, which they had never done before. After graduation, Ellie plans to attend Iowa State University to double major in Elementary Education and Event Management.

Ellie seems to heed her own advice, which is, "Always push yourself to your fullest amount that you can give and set up a good model for participants younger than yourself to follow."



## **ORCHESTRA**

### **Megan Jonas**

Orchestra Director Dr. Kreitzer is very appreciative for students such as Megan who have made the transition to his temporary position easier. "Megan has been very helpful to me in getting the year started. She is a dedicated officer and fine viola player," praises Kreitzer. Many people don't know that Megan started out playing violin many years ago, but switched to viola after just a year and a half. "Mr. Clancy had asked if I would switch to strengthen the viola section. CLANCY 4 LIFE!" she remarks. (Guess she is glad she switched.)

Along with her involvement in Orchestra, Megan is also active in Tennis and Softball at WHS. She especially enjoys being a member of the cheer squad. "It's my first year in cheer, but I truly love it more than any other sport." Her family includes parents Randy and Michelle and siblings Ethan, Melanie and Spenser.

Megan's Golden Memory happened long ago in 6<sup>th</sup> grade after being selected for Metro Orchestra. "I felt so honored that the teacher thought I was ready after just beginning the violin," she recalls.

After graduating this spring, Megan plans to either attend ISU and study psychology and sociology or enroll at Coe College and play softball.

Younger performers should practice and partake in any performance they can, such as Metro, NEISTA or All-State. Megan adds that this is a great way to earn scholarships.



## TECHNICAL THEATER

### Kassie Kittredge

According to Technical Theater Director Bill Lammers, Kassie has many reasons to be chosen as Performer of the Month. "Kassie was exceptional as a stage manager for *Leading Ladies*, which proved to be a formidable show technically. She also mentored our props mistress for the show. Right now, she has plunged into the props needs for *Guys and Dolls*, and was determined to have the props for the show completed by the first technical rehearsal. She is always pleasant and focused on her job – she makes our job a lot easier."

Kassie, a senior, is a member of the Orchestra, Gay Straight Alliance, Adastra, and Academic Decathlon at WHS. When not busy with school, she enjoys getting caught up in books and in "writing, writing, writing." A fun fact most people don't know is that Kassie can purr. Family members include parents Katherine Kittredge and Derin Sherman, and a brother Cameron, who is a freshman at WHS.

A Golden Memory for Kassie was last fall when she was props master for *The Wizard of Oz*. "Even though it was very stressful with all of the props, it was very well worth it. I received some of the most spirit-lifting compliments ever, and the show was great. My boss saw it and loved it a lot, and even when the net broke on stage, it was okay. It was just a phenomenal experience," shares Kassie.

"After graduation, I plan to attend college somewhere in the northeast, preferably Swarthmore, but whatever happens, happens," says Kassie. "I am going to study snakes. It's gonna happen. I love those animals. After that, I am planning on either a) going down to Florida to catch boas, or b) joining the Peace Corps or Japan Exchange and Teaching Program."

Kassie recommends that younger performers keep these things in mind: "Life's too short to do what doesn't make you happy, so do what does. Remember that everything has things you love about it and things you hate about it; try to find something fun about every thing you do."



## DRAMA

### Jessi Spurrell

"Jessi has set herself apart from other students through her work ethic, her positive attitude, and her constant willingness to help others," praises Drama Director Carrie Tinkham. "She works hard to excel at any activity she is involved in, and is always willing to lend a hand to help the drama club, whether it is attending officer meetings, recruiting new members, or helping other students learn lines." Jessi showed off her command of comic timing while she played her role of "Audrey" in *Leading Ladies* this fall, and came to each rehearsal prepared and with a positive attitude. "Keep an eye on her, as she is bound for greatness for the rest of her senior year!" adds Tinkham.

Other activities that Jessi is involved in at WHS include Math Team, Concert Choir and Speech. She also enjoys playing guitar, ukulele and piano, photography and calculus homework (!?). Most people don't know that Jessi is a vegetarian.

A recent exceptional occasion for Jessi was when *Leading Ladies* sold out on the second night. "It made me feel so special and honored to be a part of a show that was going so well. The next night, Mr. Lammers said he couldn't remember a non-musical selling out in the 20 years he's taught at Wash," she says.

After graduation next spring, Jessi plans to study Statistics or Actuarial Studies at Iowa State University or Drake University. Her family includes parents David and Jennifer Spurrell and siblings Jacob, Jadon and Joshua.

Younger performers should work hard in whatever they do according to Jessi. "Even if you don't get the part you want in a production, don't sweat it! People will respect you more than if you are bitter. You'll have a ton of fun with whatever role you have, and a smaller part takes off the stress of learning more lines," Jessi adds.