



VALHALLA NORSEMEN NOTES

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Our Director

It's already October!? Wow! I hope you have had a chance to see the Marching Band this year. Let me reiterate, WOW! This has to be the best Marching Band we have had in the 5 years that I have been here. The performance at Westview High School was truly the best first time out for any band the last 5 years and they received 1st place in band and colorguard to boot. I don't know if it is a contagious thing but the string orchestra and the jazz band are much better this year as well, possibly the strongest those groups have been in over 5 years as well. What a way to start the year! And what a freshmen class!

Lots of changes as you may already be aware. New to the staff is Percussion Coach Kevin Stickney. Coming on board after the marching season will be Daniel Pate to work with the mallets/pit. Also we have 2 new Marching Techs. Helping out returning M.T. Kevin Hilgeman is newcomer Jesse Rogers and David Berger. Also helping out on the field and the classroom is Student Teacher Megan Loperana. We have also hired on coaches for the winds and strings. We welcome them all as they endeavor to take us from good to great.

Let me encourage you, if you don't already do it, volunteer to help out with your sons/daughters-performing group. They work very hard and you can have a first hand appreciation of that hard work when you volunteer and see them perform. Or just come out and watch them perform. We are lucky to have some of the hardest working students in all of San Diego County. These students accomplish more with less time than any other band I know.

My I also take this time to thank all of the families that have paid their dues to date. It is because of you that in part we can do the things that we need to do to enable our students to perform the way they do. Thank you so very much for that support!

Of special note, this year the District Field Show is being hosted by Valhalla. This means we are going to need many more individuals to step it up so that we may show everyone else how to run this Showcase correctly. This is a great opportunity for us. We have been blessed with many great things, which are a direct result of the great work this organization and its support group (RSDMF) does in the public eye. Valhalla's reputation is a reason we get called to perform, participate and perform for key and popular events. We often have to say no more than yes because of the demand for our students and parents exceeds our free time and availability. That is a tribute to all of you.

If you have not had a chance to look at it yet, please look at our awesome website (vhsmusic.org). There is a boatload of useful, pertinent information and material for the Instrumental Music Department. And it's pretty cool to look at, too. When in doubt, check it out.

I hope you all have an opportunity to hear and see your child in performance soon. I cannot remember a performance where I did not have tears of pride in my eyes when my son played his trombone in performance. You will too.

Mr. Almanza



Welcome to all of our new students and families!!! It is great to begin meeting you and hope to meet everyone soon. Welcome back to our returning students and families for another great year. It is hard for me to believe this is my 6th and last year as a Valhalla parent! Looking back, it is amazing the accomplishments our band and color guard have made. It would not be possible without all of the family support so thank you all!

Looking ahead, we have lots of activity as usual! I would encourage you to attend and assist with as many performances as you can. It is so rewarding to work with the students and they appreciate our presence very much (whether they admit it to Mom and Dad or not!)

We, like all other public school groups, are always in need of discussing and raising funds. You have received information on donations. This is less than half of the amount of money needed to run the program. The rest of the funds depend on our fund raising efforts. We have several big events in the future: Horse Apple drop (Dec. 1st), Auction (to be combined with the Feb 29th concert) and the golf tournament (date TBA)

We need volunteers to chair these events as well as work on the committees involved. For more information and to volunteer, please contact Mr. Almanza or any board member.

Thanks again for all you do and looking forward to an awesome year!!

Cathy Gac
Booster Club President

2007- 2008 RSDMF Board

- President Cathy Gac
- Vice President..... Karen Stewart
- Treasurer Dave Wallace
- Secretary..... Bev Lindahl
- PMAG..... Frannie LaRussa
- Parent At Large Lina Cortes



BAND FEES are determined each year by the projected costs to run the program divided by the number of students (including Jazz Band and String Orchestra). This year's total is \$730 for each Marching Band and Color Guard student and \$500 for each Jazz and String Orchestra student. Three payment options are described below:

For Marching Band & color Guard students:

Option #1: Monthly payments of \$46.50 (over 10 months). Students are still asked to participate in fund raising to make up the balance of the total cost.

Option #2: One payment of \$465.00. Students are still asked to participate in fund raising to make up the balance of the total cost.

Option #3: One payment of \$730.00. Students can option out of all fund-raising for the year.

As an incentive, \$50 is deducted when the student's full amount (either \$465 or \$730) is paid by November 15, 2007.

Payment options for String Orchestra and Jazz students:

Option #1: Monthly Payment of \$30 (over 10 months). Students are still asked to participate in fund raising to make up the balance of the total cost.

Option #2: One payment of \$300. Students are still asked to participate in fund raising to make up the balance of the total cost.

Option #3: One payment of \$500.00. Students can option out of all fund-raising for the year.

The \$50 incentive for paying the student's full amount (either \$300 or \$500) by November 15, 2007 also applies.



Chaperone Tips

- Football games are the best intro to Chaperoning. Help the band and colorguard while in the stands and enjoy a football game too!
- Band Reviews & Field Shows - Come prepared with a backpack with your lunch, sunscreen, sweatshirt, water bottle and cell phone.
- Don't hesitate to jump in and help. Prepping the band and colorguard is a bit of a timed event in itself.
 - Remember, the kids love having you there, and they can't do it without your help!

Instrumental Music Department 2007/2008 Schedule

October 20th Rancho Buena Vista Field Tournament
October 27th Loara Band Review & Field Tournament (Santa Ana)
November 3rd Mira Mesa Band Review & Field Tournament
November 9th Jazz Band Concert
November 14th Orchestra Concert
November 17th West Arcadia Band Review
November 20th District Field Show @Valhalla H.S.
January 23rd Jazz Band Concert
February 22nd Orchestra Concert
February 29th Pre-Festival Concert (Hillsdale)
March 1st Helix Solo/Ensemble Festival
March 6th El Camino HS Band
March 12th Hillsdale Solo & Ensemble Festival
March 7 & 8 Grossmont Band & Orchestra Festival
April 23rd San Elijo Jazz Festival
May 3rd Valhalla Jazz Festival
May 10th Coronado Jazz Festival
May 22nd Pops Concert
May 30th Awards Dinner
June 6th Graduation (Band plays)

ALL EVENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Details concerning times will be given when available. Please reserve these dates on your calendar. Remember, only you can fill your position! You are needed for all events; there are no substitutes to fill your position. If you have a conflict, it must be cleared as soon as possible and meet the requirements of the school and district.

Drum Line, Indoor Color Guard and further Jazz Festival dates will come later when we receive the schedules from the organizations in charge.

Marching Band rehearsals are Mondays and Thursdays from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM.

Tips For Buying Used Instruments

The first thing you need to arm yourself with is knowledge. Don't just buy something that is cheap. You might end up with nothing more than some used scrap metal. You need a decent quality instrument that is ready for your child to play. You might even find a quality instrument that needs very little repair. You certainly don't want to buy an instrument that can't be repaired! Your child will be carrying the instrument to and from school, in and out of the case, back and forth across the rehearsal area, and likely up and down the marching field. A lot of things can go wrong when you are carrying around a delicate instrument.

Brass

**Do all of the slides operate smoothly?
Are the valves dragging, sticking, moving?**

**Do the water keys close tightly?
Does air flow freely through the horn?
Is the horn dirty inside, or outside?
Are there any holes in the brass?
Is the lacquer or plating worn?
Are there any loose braces?
Is there a mouthpiece?
Is the mouthpiece stuck?
Are there any parts missing?
Is a case included?
Does the case latch tightly?**



Woodwind

**Are there any parts missing?
Do all of the keys open/close correctly?
Are any of the keys sticking?
Are the pads in good condition?
Are there any cracks in the body?
Is there a mouthpiece?
Is there a neck (for saxes)?
Is a case included?
Does the case latch tightly?**

25 Happiness Tips

For many of us, the goal of life isn't ultimate wealth, a massive amount of stuff, or the perfect car. It's happiness, plain and simple. Some people may be created happier than others, with enjoyment of life programmed into their hardwiring. For others, getting to happiness isn't always that simple. You weren't programmed that way.

But like any programming, yours can be changed. Rewrite your life program to include as many of the following tips as appeal to you, and the ultimate goal of happiness can be yours. If you've already achieved complete happiness, well done!

1. Experiment to find out what makes you happy. Different things make different people happy. If you aren't sure what your hot spots are, experiment. Try different things out. Find out what you enjoy most. The answers just might surprise you. Try a few of the following for starters.
2. Surround yourself with others who are happy. If you are around angry, depressed or sad people, it will transfer to you. You can't help it. But if you're around people who are happy, that will also transfer to you. You'll also learn their habits, and learn to react the way they do when something bad happens. Slowly weed out the negative influences on your life and replace them with positive ones.
3. Count your blessings. When something bad happens to you, try not to focus on it. Instead, take a minute to count your blessings. Everyone has good things in their lives, whether it is health or loved ones or whatever.
4. Gratitude sessions. Along those lines, it is a good practice to have a daily gratitude session. Think about what you have to be thankful for, and silently thank those who have done something good for you in some way. If you have time, take the time to call them or email them to thank them.
5. Think solutions. Instead of thinking about problems, move to the next step: how to solve it. When someone says to me, "Oh, this is so hard," or "Oh, I can't seem to do this," or "Man, we don't have any more of that," I just ask them, "Well, what's the solution?" If you develop solution-oriented thinking, you'll be much happier.
6. Connect with others. As much as possible, spend time with those you love, and with others who you enjoy. It could be a simple phone call, or a short visit. Or take a day with the person or people you'd like to spend time with. Have a conversation, do things together, be intimate.
7. Accept things. We are often unaware of it, but we usually want things or people or ourselves to change. And that's a sure way to lead to unhappiness, because we cannot control the world. We have to accept things as they are, try to understand them, even love them. Including and most especially ourselves: accept who you are, allow yourself to be yourself, try to understand and love yourself. Then do the same with the others in your life.
8. Take time to savor life. Instead of rushing from one thing to another, resolve to have less to do each day, less appointments and fewer tasks. Then do each thing slowly, with mindfulness and ease, and try to be present in the moment. And truly enjoy whatever it is you do, from talking to eating to walking to just sitting.
9. Notice small things. Along the same lines, try to notice when you feel good, or you're not suffering, or you are tasting something really delicious, or you feel something cold or hot, anything. Noticing the little things will help keep you focused on the present.
10. Treat yourself. Take a few minutes each day to give yourself a little treat, whether that's something like chocolate or berries, or a bubble bath, or walking barefoot in the grass, or taking a nap. Whatever it is, treat yourself. You deserve it.

11. This shall pass. When bad things happen, and you're having trouble accepting it, think to yourself the same thing the ancients did: "This, too, shall pass." And it will. And you'll survive.
12. Volunteer. When you give to others, whether that's money or the stuff you no longer need or your time and love, you become happier. It's true. Take 5 minutes today to call a charity and volunteer to donate some time sometime this month. It will make a big difference in your life.
13. Follow your passions. If you do what you love to do, especially for a living, you will be extremely happy. This is one of the best things you can do. If it seems impossible, don't give up. Others have done it and you can too.
14. Look at your achievements. Instead of looking at what you haven't done, or what you've failed at, think about what you have done. Many times that's much more than we realize.
15. Laugh. Just the simple act of laughing can make you happier. Watch a funny movie, tell jokes, read a humorous book, go to humor sites on the Internet. And laugh your head off.
16. Realize that you deserve it. You deserve happiness. That simple statement is actually profound for many people, as they don't believe they really deserve to be happy. It's often unconscious. If you feel that within yourself, you need to first realize that you deserve happiness. Repeat it if necessary.
17. Have a goal. Too many goals will lead to ineffectiveness. Try to choose one goal and really focus on it. And work to accomplish it. Goals lead to happiness, if you make progress on them.
18. Celebrate. When you do something right, when you accomplish something, when you feel like it, reward yourself. Celebrate. Have fun, and pat yourself on the back.
19. Spend time doing something you love. Make room in your life by eliminating some of the commitments you don't really like doing, and replacing them with something you truly love.
20. Show little acts of kindness. Each day, try to be kind to others in little ways, opening doors, smiling, giving up your place in line.
21. Exercise. Just a short walk or run could lift your spirits and reduce stress. Nothing difficult. Just get outside and move.
22. Catch negative thoughts. Monitor your thoughts. When you catch negative ones, try to think of something good instead. Corny, but it helps.
23. Jealousy doesn't help. Many people obsess about others who are successful or happy. That gets you nowhere, fast. Instead, be happy for them. Then focus on yourself, and what you do right.
24. Check out nature. Go and watch a sunrise or sunset. Watch the water, whether that's a river or ocean or lake. Watch the stars, or the clouds. Watch animals. Watch people. Watch children. And be inspired by it all.
25. Laugh some more. When you are in the middle of a bad situation, look around you, realize the absurdity of the situation, and just laugh. In a year, no one will care. In two years, you'll be laughing at this anyway. So laugh now, and be happy now.

Norsemen Notes is published by the Valhalla Instrumental Music and Colorguard Parents booster club.
Submissions can be sent to R.B. Anthony (rbanthony@gmail.com)
Deadlines are the third Tuesday of every month.



The Many Benefits of Music Education

Traditionally, parents have been among the loudest in the chorus of voices supporting music education.

As a parent, you wield extraordinary influence over local principals, school boards, and other decision makers. By becoming involved in the advocacy process, you can make a significant difference in the quality of your child's music education program. A growing amount of statistical evidence supports the music education cause at all levels of education:

- Schools that have music programs have significantly higher graduation rates than those without music programs (90.2 percent compared to 72.9 percent).*
- On average, students in music performance scored 57 points higher on the verbal and 41 points higher on the math section of the SAT than did students with no music participation.*

In short, music education is an integral part of students' success. Fostering a strong music program in your child's school will help you achieve your goals as a leader in your community and as a parent.

Nurturing Music Education

Supporting your child's school music teachers can have powerful effects. School music programs have a profound impact on the academic development

of students. Here are some simple, time-effective ways to assist your child's school music educators:

Assess the Status Quo

- Study the ways that music education develops creativity, enhances cooperative learning, instills disciplined work habits, and statistically correlates with gains in standardized test scores.*
- Speak with your local school board about your desire to have a strong music education for your child.
- Find out if your school's music program passes muster with national Opportunity-to-Learn Standards—take the "rate your school program" quiz on SupportMusic.com.
- Find out if music classes in your schools are taught by teachers certified in the arts; see to it that arts specialists are required by policy.



Communicate Constructively

- Speak at meetings of your school board about the importance of supporting music education with funds for teacher training, equipment and supplies, and music-related activities.
- Be in touch with local music teachers on a regular basis. Offer to help out.
- Ask yourself why your children need high-quality music education. Be able to articulate the answers to teachers, administrators, and other parents.
- Take part in your school's music booster organization.
- Make certain that your local media give adequate coverage to the accomplishments of your school's music program.
- Call together individuals who support music education as a subset of your PTA, as an extension of your school booster program, or as a stand-alone group.
- Coordinate your local advocacy activities with the national scene; sign up on MusicFriends.org.

* See Parent Resources at www.menc.org/parentbrochure