

What a Weekend!!!!

I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved who made this a successful weekend in Allentown. First to Jeff and Sarah who did an outstanding job with this year's band. It's been amazing to watch the band's progress throughout the season. Although I couldn't see any of the show and could only hear very little of it from behind the castle wall last night, I could hear the applause and screams from the crowd during and following the performance. The show has certainly come a long way from the glimpse of it that we saw in August during Open House.

Thank you to the Pit and Prop crews for an outstanding job this season with special thanks to Eric Pehmoeller who coordinated the design and building of the props, the transportation of the props and instruments to the competition and getting the props on and off the field, and Phil Mazzotti, who coordinated the pit crew. I know they appreciated all of the volunteers who supported them and who were able to be there in Allentown. A special thanks goes out to Eric, Brian Baker, Kevin Crofton, Ed Otero and Mike Shurak who left for Allentown on Saturday to bring down all of the props, instruments and uniforms. This allowed us to get to the stadium early on Sunday to reserve a spot to setup for the tailgate party. I think we fed 250 people in about an hour. Speaking of the tailgate party, I would like to thank Chris Robarge and Karen Young who worked with Eric and Phil to plan the event and organize the food. Thanks to the Robarges and Gary Brayfield who arrived ahead of the buses and helped with setup and cooking. And thank you to all of the meal plan volunteers and others who came off the bus and immediately took up a spot to help feed the kids. Things went very smoothly.

A special thanks to Lisa Gentile who organized all of the uniforms to be brought down Saturday and coordinated handing them out after the tailgate party and gathering them up after the competition. I'm sure the kids appreciated not having to ride back and forth from Allentown in their uniforms. Thank you Lisa.

And thank you to everyone who came down to support the band. We sold over 100 tickets for show which is pretty remarkable considering the kids performed 3 1/2 hours from home at 8:02 on a Sunday night. It really was

great to hear how loud the cheers from the stands sounded on the field and I know that had a positive effect on the kids during their performance knowing you were all there to support them. A special thanks to Vicki Pehmoeller who spent the better part of the last two weeks selling tickets to both the New England States and Northern States Competitions. Due to her tenacity we sold all of the required tickets for New England States and all but a handful of tickets for Allentown.

And congratulations to our students who worked so hard these past 3 months and were rewarded last night with an outstanding score.

As you know it ended up being a very late night, or should I say a very late early morning. I know they guys on the trucks appreciated those Pit and Prop parents who took their cars to Allentown and came back to the school to help unload the trucks at 2:00am and stayed to move the instruments and props in once the busses arrived. I think we finished up around 3:15am. Thank you so much to everyone. The trucks still needed to be returned, but because there were enough parents to help move everything in it allowed Kevin, Brian and Eric to leave to return them without having to wait for everything to be done. As it was when I drove off around 3:35 they still had not gotten back.

And then there was the parents bus which broke down in PA. I haven't heard when they finally arrived but the ETA when I left the school was 4:30. As I left the band room there were students trying to get some sleep while waiting for Mom and/or Dad to get back to take them home, a very tired group of students as you might imagine. Right now many of them are getting ready for tonight's concert. I hope they don't fall asleep in their chairs.

Thanks again to everyone. I was a great weekend and the weather held!!! I hope you will all be there at the Aqua Turf for the band banquet on Monday November 14th to celebrate this great season. Remember, reservations are due tomorrow. I hope to see you there!!!

John Miller, President
Southington Band Backers