



Springs Valley Blackhawk Brigade

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Festival of marching bands shows strength and community between area marching bands

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FRENCH LICK, Ind. – In front of nearly 1,100 fans, area marching bands showed why southern Indiana has some of the best bands in the state at the first annual Springs Valley Festival of Marching Bands held Saturday evening at Springs Valley High School.

In attendance was the Northeast Dubois Jeeps, Pride of Paoli, Orleans Bulldog Regiment, and the host Springs Valley Blackhawk Brigade. The event was a community show and not geared towards judging or scores. “Luke (Aylsworth)...has come up with a good idea to get our students and fans together before everyone hits the “contest trail,” mentioned Director of Band at Paoli Bill Laughlin. “The entire purpose of the “Preview” is for the students from the respective schools to view each others' shows, to hang out together, to have pizza together, and, to celebrate being in band!”

The event was a huge success. The home stands along with the track area was filled with fans. “Our festival was a huge success,” said Luke Aylsworth, Director of Bands and event coordinator at Springs Valley. We had tons of people in attendance and it seemed everyone had a great time. That was the goal of the event. We wanted a festival to celebrate the local bands and their efforts that go into the marching band activity.”

The four bands performed standstill performances for the fans before performing their complete field show. Springs Valley graduates and Brigade alumni Larry (Director at NE Dubois) and Terry (Director at Orleans) Burton also brought their bands to the show. Larry is in his first season as director at Dubois while Terry is beginning his seventh year. “Having spent time at Valley, I know that this idea is long overdue,” said Larry. “It is a beautiful school with wonderful facilities that can easily provide an outstanding atmosphere for marching band”. All four bands also gather to form one ensemble to play a few warm-ups and perform the National Anthem.

Unlike many other marching band events, this event was one of encouragement and support of all four bands. School alliances were not visible as everyone supported all the students. Terry Burrton added, “The event was a true display of what marching band is all about. The love of music, the thrill of unity and the display of emotions.”

Laughlin alluded to a moment that happened at the 2007 ISSMA State Finals. When Paoli left the field, they stopped and clapped for Springs Valley and the Brigade returned the favor. “When we both went to the Regionals, and to the State Finals together - we would applaud and cheer each other.”

Events such as these cannot go on without the help of many people. The Springs Valley Band Boosters along with other parents and alumni aided in making this event a success. “I would like to personally thank, Mr. Pritchett, Mr. Boyd, Mr. Emmons and John Carnes for their help with planning for the festival. In addition, one of the best aspects of our band program was on proud display during the festival. That group is our

Blackhawk Brigade Band Boosters. These parents, volunteers, fans, and friends did a spectacular job helping to organize and staff the event. I was very impressed by their dedication and effort. It is easy to see why our band has been so successful in recent years. Our students have great, supportive parents cheering them on every step of the way. I congratulate their efforts and thank the community for a successful evening of music," added Aylsworth

All four bands will hit the road across Indiana for their second week of contest. Both Paoli and Orleans will head to Columbus North while Springs Valley will go to Warren Central in Indianapolis. Springs Valley will take the field at 6:26 pm.