

Marching ON



Name: Ryan Pegram
Age: 17
Instrument: Tenor Saxophone
Location: Colleyville, Texas
Accomplishments: Woodwind captain over 75 people. His school band, the L.D. Bell Blue Raider Band, won U.S. nationals in 2007, and took 2nd in 2006 and 2008. He plans to attend Southern Virginia University.
Favorite Scripture: D&C 122:7

After participating in one of the most winning high school marching bands in the nation, Ryan Pegram says winning isn't everything. Sharing the joy of the journey is what matters most.

How did you first get interested in marching band? I grew up with the L.D. Bell High School band when my sister entered the program. I remember going to one of her first competitions. I was blown away! I always admired watching her march with the other kids.

How popular is marching band in Texas? We're a school of about 1,800 kids, and more than 300 of those are in band. It's a huge deal here to be in the Bell band. We have the most medals out of any other band in the country since 2000, which is 23 medals. I was in the band for 10 of those.

How does living the gospel help you in life? When we do what we should, we're blessed. For example, I found out *not* going to early morning seminary was more of a burden than going. When I went, my attitude and overall performance during band and throughout my school day changed dramatically for the better.

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What lessons from band apply in your everyday living? Band taught me how to work hard for something. Enduring to the end will pay off. We're only on this earth once, so we might as well learn all we can and make the most of it. Some people are in band just for a shiny medal. But the medal doesn't matter in the long run. There are goals much more important than any activity you do in school, like living your life worthily.

I loved working to live up to the band's reputation. The same thing applies to being members of the Church. Those who follow the Church's teachings are known to give off a light that few people can describe. We must remember what we stand for, that people will look at us and want to have exactly what we have. It is a good thing, but a huge responsibility. I plan on living up to that name.

What advice do you have on listening to uplifting music? It's tough for teens to find enjoyable music that meets Church standards. But I feel empowered when I listen to good music. After feeling that, it's silly to want to listen to anything below Church standards. I sometimes watch a video of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and when I see them so absorbed in what they are singing, it's pretty hard to deny the power of the Holy Spirit and how our choice of music affects how we feel. **NE**

—As told to Jacob Fullmer