West Johnston Band Parents Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE –WEST JOHNSTON MARCHING BAND ENDS SEASON ON A HIGH NOTE– BENSON, N.C., November 16, 2006:

After two spectacular performances and another great marching season, West Johnston is one of the top 20 bands in the country, as they placed 17th in Grand Nationals competition in Indianapolis, Indiana.

On November 9th the West Johnston Marching Band stepped onto the Astroturf in the RCA Dome in Indianapolis, Indiana for their preliminary competition performance at the Bands on America Grand Nationals. This marching band competition included 92 bands from across the United States. Clayton High School and Croatan High School were the only other bands from NC to compete in the Grand Nationals.

Saturday, November 11th was a great day for West Johnston High School as over 10,000 people from all over the United States watched the marching band perform in semi-finals. The final scores placed the band 17th in the nation. "We are going to continue to strive to be the best we can be and maybe, one day, we will break into that elite top twelve bands for finals. We know though, that by continuing to work together and setting the bar high, it will happen for our band!" stated West's band director M. Lance Britt. "We are making magic happen for these kids. We are making an impact during the most important time in their young lives. The year is not over and we have only begun to see what these kids are truly capable of. Their potential is limitless."

The students at West would like to thank the marching band from Clayton for staying to cheer for them during their semi-final performance. "We all thought they had left and gone back to Clayton," said one of the students." We heard them cheering for us and that made me really proud of my sport. We cheered for every band we saw, giving each a standing ovation as they finished their performances. It felt good to have a band do the same for us, especially one from our same county!"

Mr. M. Lance Britt, Director of Bands at West Johnston commented, "Words cannot express how proud I am of our students especially when several of the country's leading band directors compliment them on their sportsmanship and their performances." David S. Duffy, West's assistant director said "Our students brought the foundation of our Country to life through their journey of learning and performing our field show. They captured the true spirit of our country and won the hearts of the spectators in Indy."

Once again, the band parents were on task as over 100 parents traveled to Indianapolis for the competition. "It takes an army to move a band," joked one of the band moms. The trip to Indianapolis would not have been possible without them. The band parents were responsible for chaperoning, feeding the masses, moving props, cleaning uniforms, hauling instruments and equipment, errand running, making sure the students called home, and of course cheering for their band. Mr. Britt describes their support as phenomenal! "These parents are amazing, they do whatever to take care of these kids, like finding an indoor practice facility in fifteen minutes when the weather turned rainy and cold and grilling chickens and cooking macaroni & cheese outside for 200."

Students returned to West after a great experience, not only in performance but also educationally by visiting the mall briefly, attending a leadership seminar and meeting band students from throughout the country.

What's next for the West Johnston Band?????

The band plans to march in four Christmas parades in the area before completely ending the marching season. Raleigh, Four Oaks, Clayton and Smithfield will have the teal and white uniformed band proudly marching through their streets in the next month.
Please support this great group of students, directors and parents by making a tax deductible Friends of the Band contribution.

Photos taken by Dave Morse

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