

Marching 100 starts preparing for the upcoming season

by Steven Spencer, Staff Writer
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ALTON - Alton High School's Marching 100 hit the field this week for band camp. For the next couple of weeks the band will prepare for the upcoming season to ensure a successful year.

Assistant Band Director Steve James said the band has been focusing on their field show and the musicians aren't letting the high temperatures put them down.

"We are learning our field show "Echoes off the River," James said. "The kids are in great spirits even though it's super hot. This is one of those years where you kind of feel it from the begging of our summer rehearsals that it's going to be a good year. Just by how much the kids are buying in to it. For what we've gotten done it's been super easy, the kids are great and we're all having fun."

Each day the musicians are putting in the time and effort required to make sure that they have a strong performance in all aspects of competition.

"Basically in the morning we're going over our basics which is marching technique," James said. "We'll do a stretch a dance block and work on our marching in time and our marching technique. Then we'll set our drill, which is our choreography, onto the field. Then we work on our music and at the end of the day we put the two together."

James said the attitudes that kids are bringing with them to camp is tremendous, and that makes the entire process of teaching much more effective.

"This is by far the easiest band camp I've had to teach," James said. "They listen. They buy into it. That's the biggest thing if you have a group of kids who just buy into what you're trying to do it makes teaching easy, it makes it fun. Hopefully it means good things."

With the positive attitudes and determination that the musicians are bringing to camp this year, it looks like it will be a good season for the band.

"Hopefully they have a successful season," James said. "That's our goal. Really what I want is improvement every single day and we see that already in band camp. If we can say our last show is the best we've preformed, that is a successful season. The rest will follow, the trophies and all the accolades."

The Marching 100 is also looking at the prospect of doing new shows this year. James said he is pushing to compete in Springfield in a show called "Valhalla."

"It's a competition that they've never done," James said. "But for us it's a bunch of bands that are like us. I'm excited about that. They get to see something they've never been a part of."

James said the band has been going through a bit a rebuilding process over the past year, but things are back to where they need to be in ord



er to make the Marching 100 a power house in the area.

"Last year we took a step to get the quality," James said. "I think this year is when we finally get to see the rebuilding and the quality. We are no longer rebuilding. We have established what the Marching 100 will be from here on out. That's what our goal is, to show that we are one of the premiere bands in the area."