

Andrew Gipson gives to community as band director, firefighter

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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Andrew Gipson epitomizes a man who enjoys serving his community, first as Liberty Middle School band director and now as a Glen Carbon volunteer firefighter.

Gipson was recently certified in Illinois as a firefighter after completing a year of fire training both in the classroom and hands on in the field.

He had to perform some different tasks to complete his tests, including several practical modules of firefighter training and working different scenarios. One such test was saving someone entrapped and rescuing them. On the final exam, those taking the test only have a moment's notice before they are tested and each time it is a different type of situation. In a recent fire call in Glen Carbon, Gipson and some other community firemen helped save a home that could have been destroyed. He said helping save a home or potentially saving a life are two factors that motivate him to want to serve Glen Carbon.

Gipson said he was proud to have completed the training, testing and also a 300-plus question test to become certified in the state.

"I can now report to a fire when tones drop to report a fire," he said. "It gives me a lot of pride to be able to help people and give back."

The band director takes that part of his life with as much seriousness and is known throughout the community for training talent to go to the high school level and beyond.

"Being band director is a wonderful job and music is a great way to facilitate education," he said. "There are so many different forms of intelligence that music encapsulates. I would hate to think of a world without music and the arts."

Liberty Principal Hillary Stanifer said Gipson is able to see the big picture and she is extremely proud of him for his firefighter work off hours.

"He is also an administrative intern," she said. "This state firefighter certification and his work at Liberty Middle both show he is really wanting to be involved in his community."