

Whippany Park HS band deserves recognition

I have been a band parent and on the pit crew for the Whippany Park High School Marching Band, the pride of Hanover Township, for eight years.

This program, led by band directors Carl Sabatino and Peter Scianio, is unique in the area and deserves recognition. It accepts all students interested, whether they can play an instrument or not, and provides music instruction and a sense of pride, accomplishment and discipline for 25 percent of the student body.

Sabatino and Scianio work tirelessly to provide the school, the community and 150 students with a resource of incalculable value. WPHS Marching Band competes admirably in band competitions against schools with three times the student body. How 50 freshmen, some with little or no musical background, can be integrated into a competitive unit of 150 is a modern-day marvel accomplished year after year at a weeklong band camp.

As a parent who travels with the band to football games, competitions and trips to Disney World, Cleveland and, this year, to Washington, D.C., I can say all trips have been conducted with discipline and the highest level of comportment. Sabatino and Scianio treat each student with respect and dignity and expect the best from them. Traveling with 150 teenagers could be a daunting

undertaking, but it all works smoothly thanks to the groundwork done by the directors.

Both of my sons were members while in high school and have developed lifelong friendships and a greater music appreciation from participation in the band. I still volunteer with the band because I firmly believe in

its value and feel the need to support the hard work that Sabatino and Scianio put into its success year after year.

So cheers to Sabatino and Scianio, and to the school administration for its support of an invaluable program.

Anthony R. Bentrovato
MORRIS PLAINS

What a strike of luck, relief at last, happy days might return. A massive building plan was designed and things started to go forward, new roads, parking facilities and buildings. People drove by and were in awe of such activity.

Here, in a town with attractive services, restaurants, stores, highway access, a railroad bordering on the property, adequate parking spaces, banks, barber shops — the whole deal — and the influx of additional employees sounded fantastic to the business community. Resident taxpayers rejoiced. Then, “poof” and it was all gone. Now we sit with a cement city, with the lights on but nobody home.

What happened, most of us don't know. But one thing is for certain: It seems we have another missed opportunity to pull ourselves out of the muck.

The recent announcement by Bayer — that they will relocate their organization to the Mount Olive area and wait for a building to be constructed — is truly upsetting, not to mention the additional 500 employees they plan to take on. Imagine how this would have helped our town. Why didn't our negotiators get on the bandwagon? Maybe they did, but it didn't get out to the people. I'm sure a deal could have been reached, they have happened before. What's the old saying? “A half a loaf is better than nothing.” This could have been beneficial to all: the town, Bayer and, most importantly, you and me. Seems someone missed the boat with this deal. With everything built and ready, Bayer could have put their sign on the lawn and gone to work shortly.

I guess “take two aspirin and call me in the morning” won't work in this case.

Cornelius Keating
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