

Homer-Center dropped some beats with their percussion ensemble, *Nuclear Percussion*. The percussion ensemble had its first competition on Saturday, March 17, 2012, at Huntingdon Area High School. Students in the group play snare drums, bass drums, cymbals, marimbas, xylophones, vibraphones, timpani, synthesizers, and various other auxiliary and battery percussion instruments. The group's show is theatrical with this year's theme being *perception*.

Ms. Wilson, the main director, has taken on the responsibilities of the group this year and is excited about it. She says, "When I started this year I had no idea what I was getting into." She explained that this is a large commitment for her to be a part of and that a lot of parts need to come together. "I have a new respect for a group which I didn't know much about," she said. She says that even though it takes lots of time and commitment, it is totally worthwhile. Ms. Wilson says that her best experience so far is jumping in the group when someone is absent and being able to play with the students. "It is a challenging, humbling experience that really gets me excited." An assistant director for the group is Mr. Jon Stolarz. He is a veteran to the group as he has directed in past years. He says that is it an excellent opportunity for students to enhance their musical skills while learning about discipline and responsibility.

Tory Dellafiora, who plays the marimba and is section leader for the front ensemble, says, "We left the school at 7 A.M. and arrived at Huntingdon around 9 A.M. We practiced as a group for about an hour, and then performed in their gym around 10:30 AM. There were five schools in our division, so we competed against four other schools." She says that her favorite part about percussion ensemble is making music with friends. "I would definitely recommend this to other people," she says. "The most rewarding part is coming off the floor knowing you did your best." Tory displays just one example of the continual excitement in the group.

The group's show is called *Perception*. So far three pieces have been performed: *Perception 1*, *Perception 2*, and *Perception 3 – False Images*. The main theme of the show is simple, that what you see and what you hear aren't always correct. The show plays on the theme that the human mind can play a trick on you. Not only does the group have to perform for an audience, members must also be put in front of a group of judges and compete against other schools in the area. Ms. Wilson explained that even the smallest parts are important to the judges.

Ms. Wilson says, "Performing in this group requires such a commitment and dedication that this gives students skills that you just don't get anywhere else." Mr. Stolarz explained, "It is great to see these students grow." He says that, "Competitions give the students a chance to show off some of the talent that Homer-Center has to offer."

By: Evan Bellas and Sarah Henry

Photo: Indoor percussion

