

Pride of Owasso expecting July 4 to be a blast

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Just as the Pride of Owasso marching band, was walking off the field at the 2010 Broken Arrow Invitational, it was announced: for the fourth time in 20 years, Owasso would be represented in the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, Calif.

New Year's Day 2011, members of the Pride of Owasso will march nearly six miles down Main Street for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. But in order to make that happen, it is going to take hours of hard work and fundraising.

A trip to southern California can cost each band member \$1,400 to 1,700.

So students, along with their parents and other band patrons, are rolling up their sleeves for one of their biggest fundraisers of the year—the fireworks stand.

For the past eight summers, the Pride of Owasso has endured the heat to sell fireworks to the community and raise funds for invitationals and events. But this year there is a big prize in mind.

"I really want to go to Pasadena," freshman Steven Wilbur said. "Yeah it's hot out here, but in the end, there's a great payoff."

As the July 4 weekend approaches, parents and patrons are backing the students to sell, stock, and clean the stand to see them

accomplish their goal.

"It was important to us to demonstrate that it is worthwhile to volunteer your time and effort to achieving something that is important to you," parent and band patron Nicole Miller said. "Being involved with the fireworks fundraiser with our son was a chance for us to combine our efforts with the other kids and parents toward this goal."

Julie Perlingiere does not have any children currently in the OHS band, yet remembering how her children felt marching in the Rose Parade in 2004, she knew she had to be involved again.

"It's an experience they will never forget, and for many this will be the first time to ever go to some of these states," she said. "The more money we raise, the less money the kids have to.

So even though my kids are not going, I know that I am helping someone's child."

Big expectations, plenty of helping hands and a fully-stocked fireworks stand, all that is left are the customers.

"Owasso is a great community, and as people come out, they show their support and let the kids know that they are important and that they matter," parent and band patron Dave Van Paepeghem said.

The band is geared up for the weekend rush, with Jan. 1, 2011 and the city of Owasso as their inspiration.

"We feel really fortunate," senior Michelle Jones said. "Not many schools have this opportunity. So we are ready to work hard and make it to Pasadena, so we can represent Owasso and make them proud."



DANIELLE PARKER/OWASSO REPORTER
Despite the nearly 100-degree temperatures, OHS band members sophomore Kaley Gartner, freshman Steven Wilbur and senior Michelle Jones stay busy keeping the fireworks stocked.



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