

# Pandemic performances

By: Sydney Burlage @burlage\_sydney

What would a pep rally or a halftime show be like without entertainment? The Poms team makes sure we never have to find an answer to that question. Not only is Poms a team that keeps the school spirit high here at Marion, but they are a super close knit family. "I am going to miss having fun with the team and always knowing that I have people to go to no matter what when I graduate," said Mikayla VanWey, a senior member of Poms.

Like many other sports, Poms has been affected in a big way by the pandemic. "We aren't able to do as many competitions and we have to stay six feet apart when we dance," said Keara McGuire, sophomore. Some of the poms competitions are even debating going virtual. The Poms team doesn't know exactly how they will handle it if one of the largest parts of their season goes online, but they plan to roll with the punches just like they have until now. "It has also been hard because I am on the volleyball team too so when part of the team had to quarantine, I was out of

Poms practice for a few weeks," said McGuire.

The state competition is also undergoing big changes due

to corona. "Normally we would all be scattered throughout a Friday evening, but now the competition will be a Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday competition," said VanWey.

All of the Marion groups including solos, color guard, and Poms will perform in a time slot on one day to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This is different from the past competitions, but if it results in there still being a state competition all the participants support it. The team's hope is that it will stay in person and not go virtual.

Even with the future of their season unknown, the girls on the Poms team are staying optimistic and doing their best to improve. "We are working hard so that even if we don't get the competitions like we want this

year we can come back even stronger and better next year," said McGuire. The Poms team will continue to practice three or four times a week to prepare for state. In the meantime they can still be found hyping up the crowd at our other home sporting events amid the COVID-19 season.



Penelope Conklin, freshman, and Keara McGuire, sophomore, dance at a football game to support Marion.

# Marching in masks

Marching through tough times.

By: Jenna Sackett @Jenna\_Sackett13

After these last few months of constant change, most people just want everything to be back to normal. They want the sports back on TV, to go to concerts, and to be around people again. However, we are still in a pandemic, but that doesn't mean some normalcy can't return. Marion was fortunate enough to get to use Linn-Mar's football field this season for a variety of things. Football, cheer, poms, and marching band are all a huge part of what made Friday night football games the way they were. Now our games may be at a different stadium, at 2:30 on a Saturday, but they've still got the same great players and performers. Most activities had to wear a mask while performing, but how does one play an instrument, besides percussion, with

their face covered? The Scarlet Spectrum Marching Band found a way to perform with a mask that still allowed them to play their instruments. "Pretty much there is a hole with a little flap and you insert your mouthpiece between the fabric," said Ella Fortmann, junior. Those that can also have a piece of fabric over the bell or end of their instrument. Fortmann has been in band since 5th grade, playing the clarinet. When the marching band season was more or less canceled, she was rightfully bummed out. "I was disappointed at first, but then I kind of understood why they canceled," said Fortmann. Another student who came to terms with the changed band season was Tanner Shindelar, senior. Shindelar has also been playing since 5th grade. Shindelar, like many, was just glad everyone was staying safe. His senior marching band season is not what

he was expecting, but he still gets to do what he loves, make music. "It's enjoyable getting to make music with other people," said Shindelar. During quarantine music classes were some of the biggest strugglers. You can't exactly have a Zoom meeting of roughly 60 people playing music and expect it to be at all together, not to mention some people had left their instruments here over spring break, thinking they'd be back for them in several days. It had been a while since the band had made music together.

Although Marion's band is not performing this year, some bands still are. Linn-Mar is one of them. Marion just decided canceling competitions would be the best plan for their band. When asked how he felt about the fact that Linn-Mar was still competing Shindelar said, "That's fine. I'm just glad that we got to perform our music. It's better than nothing."



Tanner Shindelar, senior, performs with the band during half time in his special mask.

Despite the weird way the band is working this year, Shindelar is right. It's better than nothing. We still get a little normalcy back. We still get to watch the poms girls dance, the cheerleaders cheer, and the football players play. We still get to support the band. We still get to get through this together, and it's definitely better than nothing.