

Carson's band finds *fun* in fundamentals

By Jessica Garcia

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Getting into the right rhythm is about more than the music, Carson High School's new Blue Thunder members told the Appeal. If you drill long enough, you can get a "killer tan line," some of band director Nicolas Jacques' students say.

Sophomore Alex Brady joined band as a fifth grader, gradually became more skilled in middle school and now enjoys the Blue Thunder, saying being part of a musical program has its perks. She plays the flute and the trumpet.

"I felt the band had a very welcoming presence," she said. "There's never a boring day."

Jacques said this season the band will participate in five competitions.



JESSICA GARCIA/NEVADA APPEAL

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The Carson High School Blue Thunder begins its 'Along Came a Spider' set for its parent preview Friday on the school's football field.

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"Last season, we were a first-place band in our division," he said. "We're looking to build off that success."

Jacques, constantly striving to challenge his students and improve his program, said he chose more difficult music with more difficult drill formations for this season. Band camp is an annual boot camp of rehearsals for the musicians to smooth out their fundamentals with their instruments and steps on their fields. They have to work out how to cooperate together quickly as a team before the intense fall regimen of football games, concerts and other performances.

It's meant to challenge students like senior Sam Amrhein, who plays the French horn.

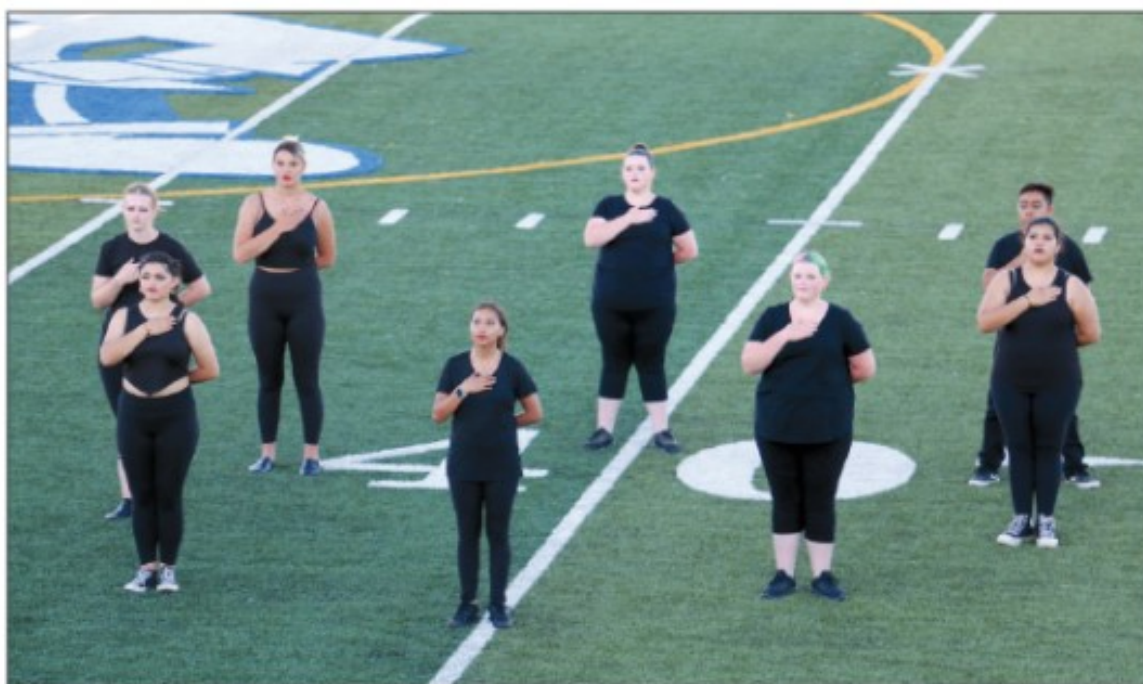
"My dad and brother were always practicing at home, so I said, 'I'll do that, too, I guess,'" she said. "The music (Jacques chose) is interesting. It's fun to play, it's definitely something I haven't heard before with other bands playing."

Jacques, introducing the parents Friday to what it takes to help students become "masters of musical multitasking" in approximately 56 hours of band camp training as they learn to handle their instruments, play music and march, said the season is only beginning.

"I think the drill is interesting because we have to do a lot of new things we didn't do last year," senior Aiden Blandford said.

Blandford, who once played the euphonium, now plays trumpet.

This year's show theme is



PHOTOS BY JESSICA GARCIA/NEVADA APPEAL

Carson High School's color guard team stands for the national anthem Friday as the Blue Thunder performs.



Members of the Carson High School Blue Thunder marching band perform a number from 'Along Came a Spider.'

"Along Came a Spider," which the band performed for the parents Friday. The preview has been shown to parents via Zoom in the past two years due to COVID-19, but last week's concert was live on Carson High's football stadium.

"The music's really cool and the kids are really into it," Jacques told the Appeal. "And we have a well-balanced group of very excited kids

and the hype is high."

The band also continues to raise funds for its efforts, bringing in \$610 in profit from a recent car wash, Jacques said. The funds cover the group's participation fees. Several students prepaid for car wash tickets, so some of the profit went back directly to them but it benefited the program as a whole, he said.

Overall, the Blue Thunder continues to grow. He makes

his annual visits to the middle schools in the spring for recruitment and to make his presence known amongst potential students. He also runs leadership auditions in early May to identify his upcoming talent in the fall.

"It's only building since we're getting out of the pandemic, and things are settling," he said.

For information, visit www.facebook.com/carsonbands.