

# Band brings spirit to field

BY JENNIFER MARKS

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As the Lincoln University marching band, known as the Marching Musical Storm, took the field at Stokes Stadium after the football game Saturday night, I knew this would be a show unlike any other.

The band from Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Mo. carried so much energy and passion along with their instruments, they soon worked their way into the hearts of those in the stands. A historically black land-grant public college, Lincoln University was founded by men of the 62nd and 65th United States Colored Infantry during 1866 for the education of African Americans, according to the Lincoln University website. With a starkly different heritage than Truman State's band, the Marching Musical Storm brought a vastly different marching band traditions more common to southern states like Florida and Mississippi, to our small Missouri town.

After arriving at the game late, I was forced to sit in the visitors section right next to their band. The Storm hadn't started yet, so I was caught completely off-guard when the band struck up an intense swinging beat and the cymbal players started thrusting and dancing to keep time. This was a whole different ball game, albeit an awesome one, than my classical violin training. After their first few songs, I could tell people on the Truman side wanted to clap or cheer, but were uncomfortable cheering for the other team's band. After all, Truman struggles enough with team spirit to be rooting for another team.

By the end of the second quarter, Truman students and alumni alike were clapping and cheering for the band, many pulling out their cell phones to record the dancing players. I still have no idea how those drummers could be such incredible percussionists and dance so vivaciously, even in the face of defeat. At one point during the game, the Lincoln team was down by 35 points. The band, however, looked as if their team was winning by 35 points. Members swayed and danced with the beat, giant smiles on their faces as they turned to dance with their neighbors — all while playing an instrument.

When Truman's marching band took the field for half-time, the distinct difference between the two bands was obvious. Truman's band was technically impeccable, always in tune and always precise with their notes. However, the Lincoln performance after the show was remarkable. The Marching Musical Storm



Jennifer Marks/Index

Above, the Lincoln University Marching Musical Storm takes the field after the football game last Saturday night to perform for the Stokes Stadium crowd. In addition to a marching band, the performing group included a color guard and a dance team. Below, the Marching Musical Storm drum major conducts and keeps the band together. Instead of typical conducting, the drum major keeps time with grandiose dancing and exaggerated marching with his baton.

brought so much energy to Stokes Stadium, the stands practically were vibrating with excitement. It's hard to dislike a band whose drum major proudly strutted across midfield and somersaulted, full fluffy hat and all, across the turf. If this much energy was brought to a strange field and a strange crowd, I can only imagine how electrifying home performances are in Jefferson City.

I don't think I've ever had so much fun at a football game during my life. Watching a large group of students who feel the music deeply and who enjoy playing with each other so much was truly amazing. I had a hard time focusing on the game, even with Truman's impressive lead, because the band's energy was so overwhelming. Lincoln's Marching Musical Storm put on a true performance and proved themselves a band who is able to outshine even the winning football team.



## Staff climber tackles ambition and chance



**Failed mountain climb teaches staffer lesson about life's ambitions**

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Staff Reporter

Hanging on a rope 800 feet up a 1,400-foot granite wall a few weeks ago, I found myself in an unexpected mood: bored and frustrated. August 18 was the last day of my three-month stay in Colorado and I was halfway up one of North America's most classic rock climbs — the Diamond Face of Longs Peak in Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado.

I stood on top of the mountain 10 times via various routes during the summer, but reaching the summit by scaling its daunting vertical and overhanging east face has been my biggest goal for years. I have a poster in my room as a constant reminder. Just being able to attempt the climb takes years of experience, which is why I originally planned to achieve that milestone during the summer of 2014. But after a summer of breakthrough successes, cowboyboying my way up rock obstacles that seemed impossible a century ago, and, with only a week left out west, I felt ready to jump into that poster Mario-styled.

I called my friend Bryan, with whom I had topped Longs Peak via the Notch Couloir route, a technically demanding snow-, ice- and

rock-mixed climb, during June. As crazy and psyched as I was, he was panting up the trail beside me at 2 a.m. the next Sunday to be my belay partner for the climb. Despite our efforts to beat other climbers to the base, we arrived at the North Chimney shortly after sunrise behind about eight other two- to three-person parties.

After half an hour of waiting, we started up the infamous chimney, dodging whizzing rocks dislodged by climbers above. With 100 feet of taut rope between us, connected to interval gear placements in the rock to protect against a potential fall, we moved together, reaching the Broadway Ledge at about 8 a.m.

At this point, the Casual Route begins, and its physical demand and ultra-specific route line make passing a near-impossible task. The route is even nicknamed the "Cattle Route," infamous for its relatively long "cattle" lines of climbers. I had enough time to watch climbers above fuss and curse at each other on rather exposed sections, eat breakfast, chat with other climbers and take a nap.

Another 90 minutes later, I was once again chalking my hands to lead the first pitch. I was surprised at my speed and efficiency when I caught up with the party ahead five minutes later. It didn't take long before I realized it was not my speed, but rather the slow-moving climbers about 100 feet ahead of me.

The next three hours consisted of stop-and-go misery, in which we gained a vertical distance of less than 300 feet. Instead of driving myself crazy like a New York City taxi driver on Times Square, I decided to wait for a while to create some space between our group and the next party. Finally, I was able to start again, pulling on a long-anticipated difficult finger crack at 13,500 feet above sea level, exploding with energy and

surprised confidence.

I made it a few moves up before Bryan hollered from down below that it was 2 p.m. Normally, that time would be late for being on the summit, considering the Rocky Mountains are prone to afternoon thunderstorms most summer days. However, storms were not a concern that day, as there was not a cloud in the sky — undoubtedly one reason for the number of surrounding high peak adventurers. We were afraid that even with a good pace, we would likely not reach the summit before 8 p.m., and would have to descend the mountain in a pitch-black rappel. We had to turn around.

As I carefully climbed down to the rappel station, I became angry. I thought I had to wait another year for my biggest life goal. I don't think I would have been as upset if my physical abilities had failed me, but the fact I had to give up my ambitions as a result of other people put me in a bad mood.

We zipped our way back down the rock, past Broadway down to a glacier at the bottom. During the six-mile hike back to the trailhead, I complained to Bryan about what we could have done and what should have happened. Bryan kept a positive attitude, but I wasn't having any of it.

That's when it hit me. I was spending a beautiful day in my favorite place on earth and whining about it. I had spent three months in a national park most people are lucky to visit for a week in their life, and was acting like a kid being told "no" to a must-have space ship toy from Toys-R-Us.

Life isn't so much about achieving ambitions as it is about having the opportunities to be ambitious. Christmas and birthdays come every year, and children have the patience to wait. I go to Colorado every summer and geology aside, Longs Peak isn't going anywhere. Until then, I have a poster to look at for the next 300 days.

## Awkward life has rewards



**Awkward phases could bring Truman State students together**

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Do you remember how awesome middle school was? How popular you were and how great your hair looked every day? How you never did anything embarrassing or stupid around the opposite sex? Me neither.

Let's face it: we've all had an awkward phase, some longer than others. Mine began sometime during sixth grade and probably is still happening. I had hair down to my butt, which I eventually cut off to my ears, wrongly assuming it would be less awkward. I also had glasses and a mouth full of braces, which I wore proudly as I practiced violin and took honors courses.

A gawky pubescent body wasn't all that encompassed my awkward phase. I had a deep, intense obsession with "Lord of the Rings." For Christmas one year, all I wanted was the extended edition of the DVD boxed set. There was a giant poster of Aragorn on my bedroom door, a replica of the necklace from the movie and I wrote "Mrs. Aragorn" on all of my notebooks in school. I was that kid.

The phenomenon of an awkward phase has the incredible ability to bring everyone together, especially here at Truman State, where we're arguably just a bunch of awkward college kids.

Today, I still can quote all the "Lord of the Rings" movies by heart

and the Aragorn poster is still firmly attached to my bedroom door: How- ever awful my awkward phase was, it taught me a lot about myself and about other people. During middle school, smart kids were often some of the weirdest. But when I tried to break my way into the "cool crowd" by shopping at Hollister and other brand-name stores, I was still an outsider, just a better-dressed outsider. Popular kid clothes still didn't make me one of them.

Working at the Joseph Baldwin Academy this summer opened my eyes to the impact the awkward phase has and the magic of Truman's campus for creating an environment impervious to oppression by the "cool kids". My non-awkward self spent six weeks of my summer with 400 kids whose ages ranged from 12 to 16 — prime awkward phase time. All of the kids were smart and equally insecure with themselves. We had fedora kids who wore their fedoras to the water park because they were devoted to the hat. We had the ERS kids who played cards from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., and we had an abundance of just plain old awkward. It was amazing to see how these kids came together in all their gawky pubescent glory and make friends, transcending "coolness" for the most part.

Here at Truman, we might be college kids, but we do exactly what the students at JBA do, except on a larger scale. Have you ever turned on "Harry Potter" or "Lord of the Rings" in a lounge in one of the dorms? If not, I'll just fill you in about exactly what happens.

First, you turn on the movie and within 30 seconds of the theme song, you'll get the first wave of kids peeking out of their rooms and racing down the hall. Within 15 minutes, the texts have gone out and the athletes start filing in. A little later the Greek-affiliated kids pile on to the couch. Throughout this process, you have the wanderers — kids who just wander in to the room and are hooked by the movie.

Only at Truman do athletes, nerds, Greeks and weird kids, like me, embrace the remnants of their awkward phases and come together as a community.