

# Unique drums bring special honor to band

By GRACE R. DOVE  
Post Staff

Lake-Lehman High school's marching garbage cans and brake drums brought home a sixth consecutive District II championship and a special trophy for the best percussion section in last month's Tournament of Bands.

Marching garbage cans? Brake drums? In a high school band?

These were included in a group of improvised instruments which band director Edward Richards designed as part of a novelty percussion selection for the competition.

"I wanted to create a large, novel percussion selection involving the entire band, while experimenting with different and unique musical sounds," Richards said.

"Many band members were skeptical at first," said percussion section leaders Johanna Miller and Jay McCarroll. "Some of them were upset that they had to play improvised percussion instruments instead of their regular brass or woodwinds."

Miller and McCarroll were rather concerned; as section leaders, it's their responsibility to see that each student knows his or her part perfectly for the performance. Many band members had never played percussion and had to start with the basics.

And in addition to the usual complement of assorted drums,

chimes and xylophones, band members had to learn to play jingle poles (an assortment of little bells attached to a long pole), garbage cans, tambourines and brake drums (two from a Volkswagen and two from a Volkswagen.)

"The hardest part was teaching the other students how to play these things. Once it came together, it was lots of fun," Miller said. "But we often wondered how we would ever do it."

Improvised instruments and drums aren't exactly new to the world of music; for example, steel drums made from 50-gallon drums are popular in the Caribbean.

Miller's and McCarroll's experience, dedication and sense of responsibility had prompted Richards to appoint them percussion section leaders for the 1992-93 school year.

Packing and moving percussion instruments can be challenging, since they range in size from the small triangles on up to the king-size bass drum and four tympani ("kettle drums"). And the garbage cans.

"There's lots of stress; it's a big responsibility," Miller said. "Because we're in charge of the section, it's our responsibility if the performance doesn't go right."

"But it's worth it. I've learned to work with others under pressure, to be patient. I've matured," McCarroll said.

Both Miller and McCarroll credited instrumental instructors Dave Gambel and Ed Telecky with helping to teach the students their parts and perform so well.

Johanna Miller plays bassoon and saxophone in addition to percussion, and is a manager of the brass choir. She has represented Lake-Lehman in district and regional bands and district orchestra and is on the girls' basketball team.

Jay McCarroll also manages the brass choir; he plays bass drum in the marching band and tympani in concert band and district band. He was a member of the Indoor Color Guard for three years and has helped to design costumes for the school play, color guard and Indoor Guard.

The award-winning novelty percussion selection was also featured at the colorful pre-game show at Lake-Lehman's homecoming game under the lights, where colorful silks and costumes complemented the music's "Arabian Nights" theme.

And how do brake drums and marching garbage cans sound?

Properly played, a garbage can sounds similar to a zippy, metallic version of a snare drum. And the brake drums, both Pontiac and Volkswagen, remind the listener of a blacksmith's hammer striking an anvil.



NOVELTY INSTRUMENTS - Lake-Lehman band members Johanna Miller and Jay McCarroll show off percussion instruments improvised from a garbage can and a brake drum, which were used in addition to the standard drums in a novelty selection at the Tournament of Bands competition. (Post Photo/Grace R. Dove)

## Lake-Lehman taxpayers oppose child care program

By GRACE R. DOVE  
Post Staff

The president of the Lake-Lehman Taxpayers' Association says he gave the school board a letter opposing the district's new before-and after-school day-care program after its regular meeting in November.

But neither school board president Liz Sichler nor superintendent Nancy Davis recall seeing it.

Taxpayers' Association president Alan Moss said that he gave the letter to Mrs. Sichler in person, as required by the Public School Code.

"I was not in the group of letter that Mr. Moss gave me. I opened all of the association's letters and read them at the board table that night," Mrs. Sichler said. "Possibly they thought that they put it with the others, or maybe it was lost."

Mrs. Davis said that the first she heard of the letter was when she was contacted by *The Post* for comments on it. She said that she located a copy which had been published by another local newspaper.

The letter criticizes the district's before-and after-school day care program now operating at the Lehman-Jackson and Lake-Noxen

elementary schools, where 17 and 15 students respectively attend the after-school session.

In the letter, the association asked the following questions:

- If the day-care program has been funded by a state grant, why is this money not considered an expense to the taxpayers?

Mrs. Davis replied that when she made her original statement that the day-care program would operate at no cost to the taxpayers, she meant that the program would not add any outlays to the district's budget.

"I thought that the taxpayers understood that. Of course the state grant that funds this program is taxpayers' money from Harrisburg," Mrs. Davis said.

"These funds, from the Department of Education and the Department of Public Welfare, are available to be used by all eligible taxpayers in the state. Lake-Lehman was one of 11 school districts eligible for the before-and after-school day-care program."

- Why were no bids publicly solicited for the day-care provider?

Mrs. Davis responded that the district has never had to solicit bids for special grants from the Department of Education.

Wee Care and Little People were the only two available day-care providers, according to a study of

experienced, certified day-care providers conducted by Community Services for Children for several area school districts. Mrs. Davis said.

Because Little People couldn't guarantee being ready to start when the school year began and Wee Care could, Wee Care was selected.

"If we hadn't used Wee Care, we would have missed obtaining the grant," she said.

- If a privately-owned business is operating on school property, are the taxpayers paying for utilities?

Since custodial personnel are always working in the buildings while the day-care program is operating, the lights and heat are always on anyway, Mrs. Davis said. Custodians have scheduled their work so that the day-care area is the last to be cleaned.

Even during vacations or when school isn't in session, the lights and heat are on while custodians doing maintenance or repair work in the buildings, she said.

- In case of accidents, could the district be held liable?

Mrs. Davis said that Wee Care has its own liability insurance.

District solicitor Peter Savage had told the taxpayers' association at the October 13 school board meeting that Lake-Lehman School District is fully covered by liability

insurance.

"We don't feel that the school district should be socializing the community. If a day care center wants to operate here, let them come to Lehman and find their own place to operate a business," Moss said. "The taxpayers should not have to become involved in the operation of a private business. We have enough problems."

"This letter is definitely an attack on the superintendent for her efforts to bring a needed service to the community," Mrs. Sichler said.

Mrs. Davis pointed out that Lehman-Jackson and Lake-Noxen schools have been open evenings and weekends for several years for the use of Brownie, Girl Scout and Cub Scout activities, without any question of liability insurance.

"I see this program as helping to provide a safe, secure place for children under 12 years of age to be after school," Mrs. Davis said. "It's not just a baby-sitting service. In addition to learning activities, the children also do their homework."

She added that parents must qualify for the service under state income guidelines and either be working or in job training programs during these hours.

### Lake Twp. taxes due December 15

Ruth Orloski, Lake Twp. Tax Collector, advises taxpayers that the last day to pay all 1992 Property and Per Capita taxes is December 15, 1992. After that date all property taxes will be returned to the Tax Claim Bureau, Luzerne County Court House, as delinquent. Additional costs will be added.

Unpaid Per Capita taxes will be turned over to Berkheimer Assoc. for collection with additional costs being added also.

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### Dallas school board elects officers

The Dallas school board announced the following officers at its reorganization meeting Monday, December 7:

- John Cleary, president.
  - Mrs. Ellen Nagy, vice-president.
  - John George, West Side Tech board.
- Committee chairpersons will be announced at a later date, according to superintendent Gerald Wycallis.

### Lake-Lehman school board reorganization

The Lake-Lehman school board elected the following officers at its reorganization meeting Tuesday, December 1:

- Dr. Martin McMahon, president.
  - Tom Williams, first vice-president.
  - Mrs. Sue Dobash, second vice-president.
  - Ken Williams, West Side Technical School board.
- Committee chairmen included Ed Kern, buildings and grounds; Jeff Katzen, transportation; Dr. John Presper, curriculum and instruction; Joseph "Red" Jones, athletics and activities; Sue Dobash and Liz Sichler, legislative representatives to the Pennsylvania School Boards Association.

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