

Annie Ahlstrom:

Following a family tradition, she held her section to a higher standard

By Bruce Smith
Matchup

It has been a long time since a member of the Ahlstrom family wasn't playing a big part of the Bingham Marching Band.

First it was Sam, then came Camille. This year was 17 year-old Annie's turn. Following in the footsteps of her older siblings, she led a group of almost 20 clarinet players as Bingham built more respect among its state competitors.

"That was the largest section of the band," said band leader Darin Graber. "Clarinets are a great voice. It was a young section and they had to work hard because the music challenged them, but the full section was there (at practices, rehearsals, etc...) most of the time. Part of that is leadership."

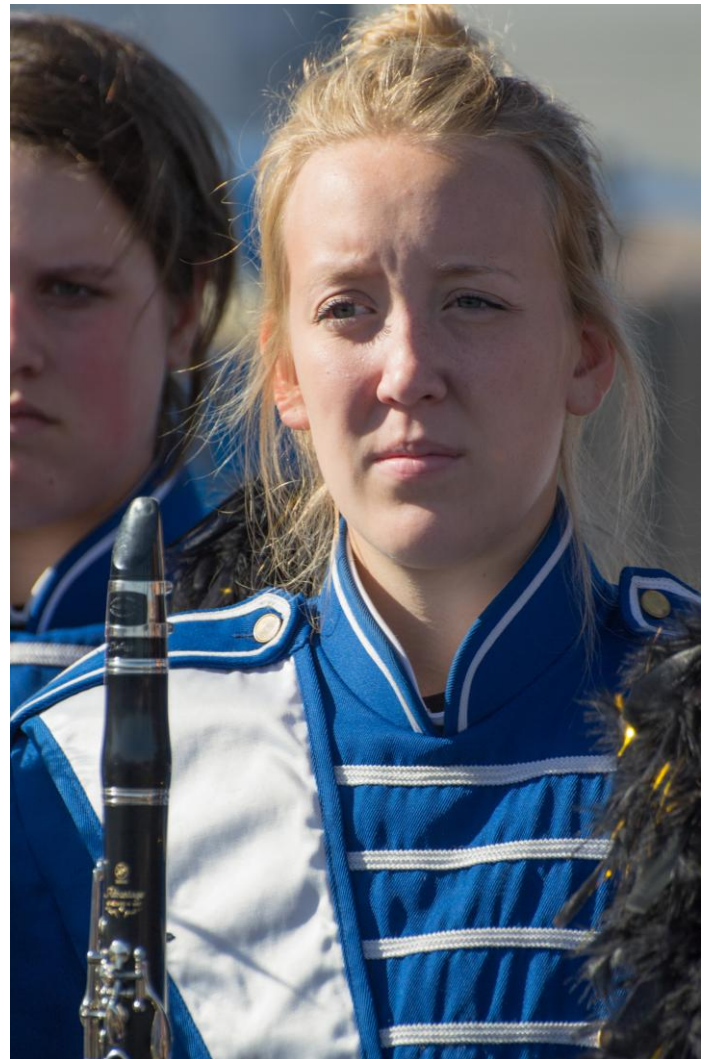
Annie always had high aspirations. She started playing the piano at age 7, and music always seemed to be playing somewhere in the house. But besides band, Annie also showed some athletic ability.

At one time, she hoped to also play basketball at Bingham. She said she had "a great four months" with the ninth-grade basketball team at Elk Ridge Middle School. However, there wasn't enough time in the day for both, and she eventually chose band. Besides being the clarinet section leader, she was also the band council's event chairman this year.

Her mother, Marta, was the booster club president. Her younger sister, Hannah, was also a clarinet player and will likely keep moving up the ranks.

"We've always been really involved," Annie said. "There always seems to be music playing at home, too."

Annie started playing the piano at age 7, and



Annie Ahlstrom continued a family tradition, taking on a big responsibility, heading the Bingham band's largest section.

learned the clarinet in junior high. She has been going to Bingham band concerts for as long as she could remember.

"Graber calls the clarinet, 'the violin of the band,'" she said. "It's always a major part."

The clarinet players are also among her closest friends. They sat together on the bus rides throughout Utah and on to Southern California. Part of Ahlstrom's role as section leader was to take roll and hand out the dot groups. The clarinet members were always well behaved.

"They were very smart ... very cerebral," said Graber.

Ahlstrom said her high-school highlight came at the Bands of America Competition in St. George.

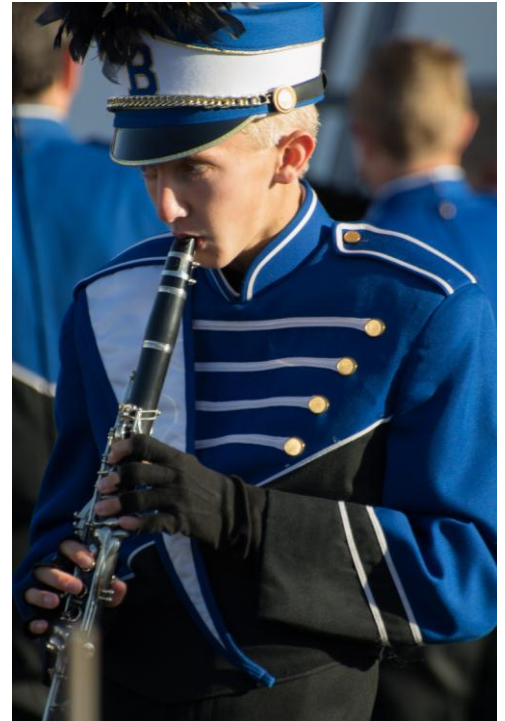
"We were sitting in the bleachers and we

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BINGHAM MARCHING BAND: Clarinets



BINGHAM 2012 CLARINET SECTION
TOP ROW: Ellie Kruckenberg, Bryan Poulson, Kyanne Hawkins, Dan Crockett, Joseph Hansen, Eric Roberts.
MIDDLE ROW: Riley Hunt, Annie Ahlstrom, Hannah Ahlstrom, Ryan Giles, Veronica Robinson, Lindsey Ames.
BOTTOM ROW: Emily Brookes, Brynn Shephard, Preston Childers, Joelle Crossley, Lani Gailey, Carlos Vinatea, Laura Johnson, Sarah Holbrook.



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didn't think we made the cut," she recalled. "They didn't call us until the last and then we were freaking out."

Other highlights were her clarinet solo at this year's Christmas concert. She also spent a lot of time with the Bingham Pep Band at basketball games.

"I like playing, 'Hey Baby' because everyone sings really loud," she said. "It's actually the trumpet players that are loudest, so I get to clap and sing."

Ahlstrom admitted that, while her musical interest may never wane, the long hours probably would. After graduation, she planned to attend Snow College and eventually earn a degree in elementary education.

"I've loved it through high school," she said. "I might play in a pep band in college. We'll see."

ABOVE: Eric Roberts
MIDDLE LEFT: Carlos Vinatea, Lindsey Ames, XXXXXXXXXXXXX
MIDDLE: Bryan Poulson
MIDDLE RIGHT: Riley Hunt, Ellie Kruckenberg, Hannah Ahlstrom.