



NORMAL MARCHING INVITATIONAL

MARCHING TOGETHER



MATEUSZ JANIK PHOTOS, THE PANTAGRAPH

Members of the El Paso-Gridley High School Marching Band perform Saturday during the 14th annual Normal Marching Invitational at Tucci Stadium at Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington.

Parents, volunteers keep Normal's band competition in step

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BLOOMINGTON — Before the first band stepped onto the field Saturday for the 14th annual Normal Marching Invitational at Illinois Wesleyan University, Normal Marching Band parents had already spent parts of two days preparing their off-campus home event.

Volunteers loaded equipment at Normal West High School on Friday. Setup at Tucci Stadium resumed around 9 a.m. Saturday, while a water crew filled coolers at Normal Community High School.

Because the combined Normal Community and Normal West program could not host the competition at either school, volunteers transported concessions, tents, senior banners, water, equipment and hospitality supplies to Illinois Wesleyan.

Normal was scheduled to perform in exhibition at 9:15 p.m. Parents expected packing to continue until about 11 p.m., followed by unloading at both schools Sunday.

"We have to bring everything here," said Sarah Piotrowski, one of the program's co-lead parents.

Moving Music

Central Illinois high school marching bands pour talent, dedication and energy into bringing spirit to football games. The Pantagraph takes a look at what it takes.



Each family connected with the roughly 140-member band is responsible for working at least one volunteer session, Piotrowski said. Grandparents, parents of former students, Illinois State University marching band members and other community volunteers also filled jobs throughout the day.

"I don't sign up for anything," Piotrowski said. "I'm just here all day."

Hosting the event also meant responding when plans did not work as expected.

The outdoor concession stand repeatedly tripped electrical breakers Saturday, threatening the griddle used to prepare grilled cheese sandwiches. Rather than waste the food already purchased, a parent drove across town to retrieve a Blackstone griddle.

Parents also were prepared to retrieve forgotten instruments,

supply missing uniform pieces and help visiting bands move equipment. This year's white pants, socks and shoes created additional cleaning and stain-removal work.

Christine Henneberg, a former Normal Community front ensemble member whose sons Evan and Logan now perform with Normal, said today's productions are more theatrical and time-intensive than those she experienced as a student.

Brett Henneberg compared the commitment to a "full-time sport."

Christine Henneberg said students may become frustrated by the workload, but competitions help them understand why they spent months developing the show.

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Members of Prairie Central High School's front ensemble perform Saturday during the 14th annual Normal Marching Invitational at Tucci Stadium at Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington.

US | DATA CENTERS

'Cautionary tale' plays out in DC suburbs

Virginia county's data center boom brings wealth; regrets follow

CHRISTOPHER CANN
USA Today

No place embraced the digital economy more than Loudoun County.

Long known as the wealthiest county in the United States, thanks to its proximity to Washington, D.C., and major government contractors, the county became a leader in the global data center boom. Companies flocked to the area for its extensive fiber network and fast-track approval process.

The region is home to more than 230 data center buildings, what the county describes as the largest concentration of computing hubs on the planet. The facilities consume enough electricity to power more than 2.2 million homes. Transmission lines tower over homes, and several hyperscale data centers are under construction.

"The growth there has been staggering," said Terry Clower, a professor of public policy at George Mason University.

Many residents are troubled by the construction rate and worry the county is too reliant on the money the industry brings in. Some also raise concerns about noise, pollution and their property values.

"Our residents have had enough," said Juli Briskman, a member of the county board of supervisors who called for a moratorium. "It's gone too far."

Data center capital

In the 1990s, America Online and UUNet, one of the world's largest internet providers, established their global headquarters in Loudoun, spurring a wave of development. Within

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MCLEAN CO. COURT

Heyworth man's estate sues Rivian

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NORMAL — The estate of Kevin W. Lancaster, a 61-year-old Heyworth man who died after being pinned by a semitrailer at a Rivian logistics center in Normal, has sued Rivian and other defendants, alleging they failed to protect workers near the loading dock.

Filed Sept. 17 in McLean County Circuit Court, the lawsuit names three Rivian entities, five G&D Integrated companies and Dustin L. Lewis. It seeks more than \$50,000 in wrongful-death and survival damages.

The complaint says Lancaster worked at the loading dock for a company not named in the suit. It alleges he was taking a break near an exit and loading-dock door on March 5 when a semitruck backed into the dock and pinned him. The complaint alleges the truck was operated by an employee of G&D Integrated Holdings or one of its subsidiaries.

The complaint describes the center as an inbound logistics and receiving hub and alleges more than 100 semitrailers move through the site each day. It says Rivian designated two outdoor break areas near the loading docks but failed to put adequate safety protections in place.

The alleged failures include not assigning a spotter, not establishing a clear-zone policy, not providing

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