

>>> In order to prepare for their upcoming tour, Katie Danner and Katherine James rehearse with the full ensemble. The Wind Symphony put on five concerts throughout the year.

> At the Coca-Cola Factory in Atlanta, Elizabeth Sterling, Justin Holden, and Jerome Golden show off their Wind Symphony shirts. The tour was made to a new location annually.



Photo courtesy of Justin Holden.



# times are changing

New director and new members energize Wind Symphony



> Ryan Cole and Mo Turner practice their percussion parts before the annual Spring Concert. Besides performing, the group had weekly dinners and formed an intramural sports team.

## officers

- Andy DeSoto | *President*
- Miriam Foltz | *Vice President*
- Megan Grady | *Secretary*
- Laura Grieneisen | *Treasurer*
- Will Taylor | *Publicity Chair*
- Rachel Jones | *Historian*
- Erica Wickman | *Tour Director*

With the addition of new Director of Bands Angela Holt and many changes in ensemble members, some could have considered the Wind Symphony to be rebuilding themselves. In reality, however, they flourished with a higher energy and closer camaraderie than ever before.

The group performed five concerts annually, including one for Homecoming where alumni, both recent and not, came back to perform with the group in the second half of the program. Another popular concert was the Pops Concert, where the group took a break from traditional band repertoire and played popular music from movies such as *Star Wars* and *Pirates of the Caribbean*.

Senior Andy DeSoto was highly involved with the Wind Symphony, serving as President most recently. "Wind Symphony is a student organization, a class, a music ensemble, a social experience, and it even fulfills a GER," DeSoto said. "What more could you ask for?" The varied aspects of the group were what drew many members to it in the first place. Getting credit for something one enjoyed doing with friends was a perk not many classes could boast.

The Wind Symphony hosted a number of activities in addition to their concerts. Every year the group went on tour to a different location to perform and sight-see. This year's destination was Atlanta, Georgia. The tour gave students the chance to perform for others and have fun at the same time. While in Atlanta, members saw the Atlanta Symphony, toured the Coca-Cola Factory, and went to a Medieval Times dinner-show among other activities. They also stayed with local families in homestays. Because

tours were costly, the ensemble needed to fundraise to mitigate individual members' tour costs. The most lucrative fundraiser was the annual Video Game Tournament in partnership with AMP Late-Night Events.

Even more impressive was the camaraderie of the group. "Members of the Wind Symphony continue to excel outside of Ewell," senior Laura Grieneisen said. "Under Angela Holt, our energetic new conductor, members have hosted a video game tournament, toured Atlanta to encourage high school students to continue in their musical scholarship, and led the Tchotchkes IM soccer team to its best season yet," Grieneisen said. While the nature of an ensemble is a place to come play music for a few hours each week, it evolved in the words of Vice President Miriam Foltz, into "an extended musical family." While some simply came for the music, others participated in the full range of activities the Wind Symphony offered; the level of involvement was entirely up to the individual member. "They are a great group of people who just happen to play instruments, and play them pretty well too," freshman John Hallenborg said. "The Wind Symphony kids like to do things together afterwards, and if you want to go, they are welcoming and always warm," Hallenborg said.

The Wind Symphony flourished under new direction because of the energy its members brought to the table. Whether preparing for a concert or having weekly dinners, their love for the ensemble and its members allowed them to succeed.

>Christina Bianchi