

IT'S



GOLDEN TRIANGLE MARCHING FESTIVAL

TIME!

**SEPTEMBER 27 • ALL DAY •
NEW HOPE HIGH SCHOOL**

Ryan Jobe has been to be enough band festivals to think “Why not at New Hope High School?”

On Saturday, Jobe’s dream will become a reality when the Golden Triangle Marching Festival kicks off at NHHS in what is believed to be the inaugural event of its kind at the school, and the first in recent memory in Lowndes County.

“I’m excited,” Jobe said. “I feel confident we will be prepared for the day in a way that it should go smoothly. That is a big thanks to our staff and the volunteers who will be there for the day.”

“The goal is for fun, community and that the band directors and band members get quality feedback for their future competitions.”

Hamilton, Okolona and J.Z. George will compete in Class 1A. Choctaw County, Nettleton, Shannon, Mooreville and Baldwyn will compete in Class 2A. Columbus and Lamar County (Ala.) will compete in Class 3A. West Point and Amory will compete in Class 5A. Kosciusko and Caledonia (5:30 p.m.) will compete in Class 6A. Each school will have 20 minutes to set up, to perform and to clear the field.

Admission for the Mississippi High School Activities Association-sanctioned event, which will kick off at 12:30 p.m., will be \$10 (cash only). Children 5 years of age and younger will be admitted free. State passes also will be accepted for free admission. Parking will be free.

As the host school, Jobe said New Hope, which will perform at 6:50 p.m., will be judged but its score won't be eligible for a trophy.

Jobe said New Hope has performed at marching band festivals in Corinth; Hoover, Alabama; Tupelo; Brandon; Gordo, Alabama; Booneville (Northeast Mississippi Community College), so he and New Hope band director Erica Shirley are familiar with what goes into putting one on, which is why he felt the space on the NHHS campus lent itself to bringing a festival to Columbus.

Shirley, who was a member of the New Hope band and went on to play in Mississippi State University's Famous Maroon Band, said she never thought the New Hope band would do something like this on such a large scale.

“To have 15 bands signed up to come to our festival in its inaugural year is insane, but I love it,” Shirley said. “I'm excited to show our Trojan Pride and what our school/band has to offer. Like Mr. Jobe said,

we want them to have a fun, educational experience, but most of all we want them to come back!”

Jobe started organizing the festival started near the end of the last marching band season. From there, he asked area band directors when they would like to have a competition and what kind of event they wanted.

“I like to plan and to coordinate,” Jobe said. “I told Erica, ‘I think we can do this’, so I looked at the schools within a two-hour radius and put out feelers. There are a lot of schools in that radius and the majority of them said they wanted a competition before the state marching band evaluation day (which will be Saturday, Oct. 11, in Grenada, Gulfport, Pearl, Philadelphia and Tupelo).

“They’re going to get judged how they will be judged in two weeks for their state evaluation. It is a great practice run for the band directors and for their kids.”

Six judges will evaluate the drum major, the color guard, dance lines and majorettes, percussion and the rest of the band. Jobe said that set-up is similar to the ones schools see at other competitions.

The East Mississippi C.C. Mighty Lion Band will wrap up the performances at 7:10 p.m. Trophies will be handed out following the EMCC band’s performance.

Caledonia band director Shelby Wilbanks said the timing and the proximity of the event made it easy for his squad to participate.

“We were happy to support a local event that would help our program and the New Hope program grow tremendously,” Wilbanks said. “The staff of the NHHS Band have worked extremely hard to put together a top-notch judging panel that will be beneficial to every band in

attendance. We look forward to marching on Trojan Field this weekend and adding this competition to our schedule in future years.”

Jobe said including the EMCC Mighty Lion Band, which is home to more than 10 former NHHS band members, was a great way to give all the performers a glimpse at what they can aspire to.

Big Daddy’s Snack Machine, Birria Bros, Downtown Nutrition, K&K’s Sweet Treats, Kona Ice, Somethin’ Sweet and Wayne’s Pest Control will operate food trucks in the parking lot adjacent to the NHHS football field. The area will be cordoned off to help keep pedestrians away from traffic.

Jobe said the event will have several “twists” in that there will be \$2 “Band-o-Grams” to individuals and their bands as their squad takes the field and there will be breaks between performances for music, dancing, eating and relaxation.

Jobe thanked New Hope Band sponsors Amro Music, BankFirst, Teas and Leaves of Columbus and Shep’s Cleaners for their support as well as the band’s booster club and parents and volunteers, including members of the NHHS Beta Club, assistant band director Clay Tyson, student teacher Xander Nowell and the NHHS administration for helping to make it happen.

“I think it is going to be awesome,” Jobe said. “I think with the crowd and the turnout we will be able to make some money for our program. I also think it elevates the expectation of the kids to know we are a ‘host’ school, so maybe it gives them an extra source of pride.

“The most important thing is that our guests feel like they are treated well and fairly, their kids get a chance to perform and they have a good time.”