

Benefit concert for Olympic drumline



Members of the Sardis Drumline rehearse at Sardis secondary last week. The band of 35 students is on its way to perform at the Olympics, but they still need to raise about \$10,000. The band is having a fundraising concert on Feb. 7 at 7 p.m. at the school. Tickets are \$10 each and people can call 604-858-9424 for more info.

JENNA HAUCK/ PROGRESS

By Katie Bartel - Chilliwack Progress

When the drumline said the Olympics were an opportunity of a lifetime, it wasn't kidding.

Sardis secondary's drumline just received confirmation last week that it will be performing outside GM Place before and after the quarter final and semi final hockey games on Feb. 24 and 26. And not only that, once the games start, they'll be granted access into GM Place to watch the games too.

A Canadian hockey lover's dream come true.

"These are the key kind of big games, they're the Olympics for us," said band teacher Bruno Gagnon.

"When I think about it, I get goosebumps ... just being in the downtown area during that time, I can't even imagine how exciting it's going to be. It's such an exciting opportunity for these kids."

But the band still needs financial help getting to the games.

The gig is expected to cost around \$25,000.

So far, they've raised approximately \$13,000.

VANOC has donated \$6,000, \$5,000 of which went towards Olympic-issued uniforms. Participating students (35 in total) have paid \$200 each to perform, totaling \$7,000. And the community has also stepped up with donations.

But the band still needs at least \$10,000 more.

They still need to purchase matching winter boots, gloves and toques, as well as meals, and transportation costs. They also need to pay for their "frugal" accommodations, which will be in the gymnasium at Howe Sound secondary school in Squamish, and is going to cost the group \$3,400 for seven nights.

The drumline is holding a fundraising concert on Feb. 7, the same day as the torch relay, to show the Chilliwack community what they're all about, and to hopefully open up more pocketbooks.

"These kids are going to be the ambassadors for Sardis, Chilliwack, B.C., and Canada; they're going to be performing for the world," said Gagnon.

"We really hope the community will meet us half way, because these kids are taking this very seriously, they're working very, very hard, and they're going to do us proud."

In addition to the hockey games, the drumline will also be performing at the Sliding Centre for four days during the luge and skeleton competitions, and at Whistler Olympic Park for three days for the ski jump and biathlon competitions.

The drumline concert is on Feb. 7 at 7 p.m. at Sardis secondary. Tickets are \$10 and are available at the school and London Drugs.

For more information, contact the school at 604-858-9424.

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