

## A Window into Newman's History



A 46 year old drum skin has a new home at Newman Catholic Middle and High School, bringing with it the memory of one of the school's proudest moments, a trip to the Olympics. In 1972 the marching band made the trip to take part in the Summer Olympic Games festivities in Munich. This piece of Newman history surfaced two years ago, during an Alumni tour, when the drum skin was discovered by members of the Class of '76. Paul Benning remembers "we poked our heads into a long closet and saw it shoved off to the side." Paul offered to craft a custom-made case as a permanent display. After much thought he decided the case would be round and have 5 beveled edges to mimic the 5 Olympic Rings. In May of this

year, his vision was fulfilled when the beautiful display was delivered, bringing back to life the story of a group of kids who worked hard, dreamed big and became champions!

The once-in-a-lifetime experience was only possible thanks to the leadership of a dynamic music teacher, Richard Schroeder. Mr. Schroeder found out that a marching band competition was scheduled to coincide with the Olympic festivities. At that time, the school didn't have a marching band so Mr. Schroeder encouraged his students to form one. The students would have to practice hard all summer to learn different routines and drills. Together they would need to raise \$52,000 to make the trip reality.

Alumna, Mary (Ebben) Slobodnik, shared that most of the kids had never been on an airplane, had never been far from their families, or traveled at all before this trip to Germany. Taking part in this once-in-a-lifetime experience became their dream. To earn money, Mary and some friends formed a small band and played polka music at venues throughout the summer.

Kay DeLonay, whose husband made the trip, recalls that her family took part in the "Bucks for the Band" fundraiser. One dollar donations were mailed to the First American National Bank and put into a trip fund. Kay's mother, Marion Boller, was secretary to the bank's president and recorded the many individual donations. It took a "Newman family" effort of supporters giving what they could to send the students on a great adventure.

While in Germany, the band marched in numerous parades, visited the Olympic grounds and enjoyed a few moments of simply being tourists. This group of students, who five months earlier were not even a marching band, competed in Weisbaden and won first place in their division! Upon returning to Wausau, the band received a police escort back to Newman where hundreds of people came out to welcome them home.

Displaying the drum skin offers current students a window to the past and a reminder of the importance of keeping history alive. T. O'Brien wrote, "And sometimes remembering will lead to a story...That's what stories are for. Stories are for joining the past to the future." Newman Catholic Schools is a family with many stories, and this one reminds us to dream big, work hard, and go on great adventures.