



Melanie Bugher, of West Windsor, getting ready for the Inaugural Parade.

A WW girl gets to march in the Inaugural Parade

By Kristine Snodgrass
Staff Writer

When a projected 1 million people descend on Washington for the inauguration of President-elect Barack Obama on Tuesday, a West Windsor native will be part of the historic event as she performs with the University of Delaware band in the Inaugural Parade.

Melanie Bugher, a freshman at the university and a 2008 graduate of West Windsor-Plainsboro High School South, will be marching down Pennsylvania Avenue with the 32-member color guard of the Fightin' Blue Hen Marching Band.

"I can't wait," she said. "It's going

to be a great experience."

The band was notified in early December that the Presidential Inaugural Committee had selected it from a record number of applicants.

Ms. Bugher found out by e-mail just before she left for winter break.

"There are eight marching band girls on our floor," she said. "When we got the e-mail, we were screaming and running down the hallway and jumping up and down."

Ms. Bugher and the rest of the University of Delaware band, which has about 350 members, will be heading down to the capital by bus Sunday to

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begin practice, she said.

The university was the focus of attention during the election thanks to its alumnus, Vice President-elect Joe Biden. He represented Delaware in the U.S. Senate for 30 years.

The future vice president, who played football for the university as a freshman, held a rally on campus shortly before Election Day.

As a student at High School South, Ms. Bugher participated in both Marching Band Color Guard and indoor winter guard,

and was assistant captain of the marching band color guard during her senior year.

The Pirate Marching Band won numerous awards and competitions while she was part of it, and performed at the New York Giants Stadium, the Baltimore Ravens Stadium and at the Naval Academy Stadium in Annapolis, Md.

Ms. Bugher said she "developed the love" for color guard while at High School South, and she credited the program with inspiring her to join the University of Delaware band.

With a cold snap on its way

and extended forecasts predicting frosty temperatures — and possibly snow — in the capital on Inauguration Day, she said the band will be bundling up to stay warm during the parade.

"We are doing our normal fall uniforms, with a couple things underneath to keep warm," she said.

Inaugural Day festivities begin at 10 a.m. on the west front of the U.S. Capitol, according to the Presidential Inaugural Committee Web site.

After President-elect Obama is sworn in and gives his Inaugural Address, he will escort out-

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going President George W. Bush to a departure ceremony before attending a luncheon in the Capitol's Stuary Hall.

The parade is set to begin at 2:30 p.m., and will then make its way down Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol to the White House. Stands for spectators are set up from 3rd to 17th streets.

The band will perform the songs "Stars and Stripes Forever" and "25 or 6 to 4" as they march, stopping once in front of a reviewing stand to perform, Ms. Bugher said.