



Hope and Joy Jones (12) cheer at the varsity girls basketball team's CIF playoff game prior to the team's victory. The girls said they dedicate themselves to school sports and organizations because all players deserve support.

Sisters dedicate money, time to encourage school spirit

Devon Bohart
STAFF WRITER

The stands of the gym strained beneath the weight of the hundreds of students, parents and other supporters. More than a dozen school dance teams had traveled to Westview to compete in the West Coast Elite competition hosted by the Westview Dance Team.

A mass of students clad in green camouflaged T-shirts promoting the Dance Troupe sat perched at the bottom of the stands, patiently waiting for the Westview dancers to take the floor.

As the announcer cued the upcoming dancers, all 10 matching students leapt to their feet applauding and rooting for the Westview representative, making sure that they cheered loud enough to be heard above the buzzing and murmuring of the crowd.

Among the screaming teenagers stood twin sisters, taller than the rest. They led the group in applause and their voices exceeded all of the others in the gym.

Hope and Joy Jones (12) are major supporters of Westview's many sports teams and extra-curricular programs and show their pride with each event they attend.

"I do my best to [support the school]," Hope said. "If there's a game, I'll go to the game. I try to fit it in before anything else. Some people go home and rest or sleep; I go out and support [my peers]."

While the girls are eager to cheer for any Westview student organization, the group that's closest to them is the Dance Troupe.

"The girls put effort into dancing; it's great seeing what they do and it's great seeing them come out and win [the West Coast competition]," Joy said.

When the dancers placed first and second overall with their solos, Hope and Joy were among the parents cheering for their daughters.

Though they were the same age as many of the dancers, the sisters couldn't be more proud of the girls' award-winning performances.

"It's cool to have that kind of support," dancer Jamie Sanders (10) said. "It helps me know I'm [there] to entertain and it makes it more enjoyable."

Hope and Joy have a strong bond with the dancers that has been formed through the shows that the Troupe puts on to showcase their talent in ways outside of competitions.

Hope and Joy worked backstage at the dancers' many performances throughout their junior and senior years and now know each dancer on a personal level.

"I love those girls," Hope said. "Over my four years, the

support for [the Dance Troupe] has gone down. I want them to know how much I support them and we love that team."

The twins said that the Troupe may receive thunderous applause at every pep rally, but there are few supporters for them outside of school events. Because of this, they feel it's their duty to encourage the dancers.

Hope and Joy revealed their support for the team by taking on the role of encouraging the dancers to the level that they deserve.

"Even though people think that they are amazing, they need to know that [we] really care about them," Joy said. "It just blows you away that they [do] it all by themselves."

Hope and Joy dedicate vast amounts of time and money to show their school pride and go to sporting events. They see it as one of their top priorities.

For the previous dance competition, Hope and Joy spent \$250 to make 10 camouflaged shirts printed with "The Dance Troupe eats Chuck Norris for breakfast" on the front to show their confidence in the Dance Troupe as well as the dedication that Hope and Joy have to the support them.

"I don't care what people think," Hope said. "I care for them. And I want them to know how much I support them."

Hope and Joy also do a lot to promote the theatre company, the choir program, band, orchestra and many other organizations.

They devote lunch periods to selling tickets for the theatre company's productions and work backstage at every choir and band concert.

"It's something really special because it's more than just supporting the Dance Troupe or the theatre company," said Madeline Des Jardins (12), who worked with Hope and Joy when she was the student director of Westview Theatre Company's production of *The Tempest*. "It's about supporting each other [as a whole]."

Altogether the girls have attended dozens of different sporting events and other performances over their past years at Westview, including basketball, field hockey, choir, and band.

Hope and Joy also hold near perfect attendance to each Friday night Westview football game. They gathered together large groups of friends and planted themselves in the dead center of the bleachers.

The twins shout for the football team, applaud the band, scream with the cheerleaders and lead their own cheers to pump up the team as well as its spectators. After all, they are part of Westview.

"Everyone needs support, no matter what," Joy said. "They need to know that they [are] good at what they're doing."

SNAPSHOT stories in 300 words or fewer

Playing in pit calls for preparation, quick thinking

Melissa Truong
STAFF WRITER

Inside the dark chamber, floor lights bathed the room in blue to keep the light from escaping to the theatre stage.

Violinist Priscilla Tang (10) glanced back and forth between her music, illuminated by a single light stand, and conductor Jeri Webb.

On opening night, under the Westview Theatre Co. stage, Tang slid her bow over her D string and began to play "Overture in B" with other members of the pit orchestra, keeping time with the performer onstage. She heard a loud thud as one of the performers leaped on the stage, causing the ceiling, which was held up by metal bars, to dip down a few inches.

Twisting her body, Tang managed to avoid hitting her bow against the metal bars that held up the ceiling.

Microphones were placed strategically around the outer sides of the room and Tang could not afford to make any sounds that could be heard by the audience.

She played at a comfortable tempo until, out of the corner of her eye, she saw Webb suddenly speed up.

"A lot of times during the show, the singer will randomly add something into the song, or change the tempo a bit," Tang said.

Caught unaware, Tang lost count of the beat. Remembering what Webb once told the orchestra during practice, she immediately stopped playing, knowing the piano had the melody and would cover up her mistake.

Nodding her head to the beat, she kept track of where the orchestra was, joining in at a rest.

As the song ended and the audience clapped for the singers, Tang gave a thumbs up to the rest of her section, silently congratulating them on a job well done.

She marked the place where she had made a mistake and prepared for the next song.

D'Angelo regains partial memory after TBI, amnesia

RECOVERY, from page 1

when they finally found a liver.

"God saved my life," Cecilia said. "I was pretty much a walking miracle. I would have been dead now if my liver wasn't here in California. A lot of things could have gone wrong, but they didn't. God kept me alive."

In the three weeks Cecilia was unconscious, Pamela stayed by her side, bathing her daughter while she herself often didn't shower.

"I didn't leave her side, as long as they let me be with her," Pamela said. "It's not in your hands, so worrying didn't help. I knew it was out of my control and she was in God's hands—and the doctors' of course, their miracle hands. Even the doctors and nurses called her a miracle."

Because of the overdose, Cecilia's brain had swelled for a period of time long enough to cause a TBI and empty mind. Though she didn't recognize the nurses or even her mother at first, Cecilia didn't forget who to call "mom."

"She was the one sitting there in front of me," Cecilia said.

Pamela said that though Cecilia's mind had reverted to that of a child, she didn't forget that it was a wonder her daughter was alive.

"Everything she did, if she squeezed a hand or blinked, was a miracle," Pamela said. "I was pretty weepy, but I didn't want to cry, to show her any weakness. Moms have to be strong."

However, the path to recovery proved to be the bigger trial for Cecilia as she struggled to remember how to walk, to talk, to write.

"I had to go through speech [and] physical therapy," Cecilia said. "I had to learn how to walk again. I didn't know how to do math, how to write. I had to do occupational therapy, like where you [practice] picking up little things. I couldn't walk from here to there. I'd fall down."

When the nurses first placed a piece of paper and pen in front of Cecilia, she didn't know what they were.

"They said, 'Look at this white sheet. You're going to write something on it,'" Cecilia said. "I didn't do anything for a long time. I just sat



Jessica Chang

Cecilia D'Angelo (11) reflects upon her overdose on acetaminophen and the subsequent liver transplant that followed. Now in recovery, D'Angelo said she wants to share her experience in order to help prevent other teens from painkiller abuse.

there. Finally, I made a letter or scribble. [But] I couldn't recognize my own handwriting."

For the next few months, Cecilia returned to physical therapy day after day. She never wanted to go, but she knew she had to.

"It was when I started having to do things that it got really frustrating, having to write the same thing over and over again, having to go every day, for the whole day," she said. "I knew that I did all this before. I thought, 'Oh, I'm just going to get better.' But I wasn't, so I had to do it."

During her stay in the hospital, Cecilia rarely was allowed to leave the vicinity for fear of taxing her low immune system. However, her mom and aunt often came to give her pedicures, and her brother Julian (12) had his birthday party at the hospital as well. Their Maltese poodle, Misty, proved to be the biggest help for Cecilia's emotional recovery.

"Cecilia loved it when Misty went to the hospital to visit her," Pamela said. "Misty helped heal Cecilia like a therapy dog."

Cecilia failed her second semester of sophomore year because she was in the hospital the majority of those months. But before class start-

ed in August, she still had to relearn 10 years worth of schooling.

"[Last] summer, I had second grade, third grade math books and I couldn't even do them," Cecilia said. "But [by the time] I went back to school, I was doing algebra again. So my brain's coming back. I'm remembering things again."

After her transplant and four liver biopsies, complications still remain. Every day at lunch last term, Cecilia visited the health office to pump medication through an IV that led directly to her heart. Additionally, because of Cecilia's TBI, she was placed in Individual Educational Plan (IEP) classes last term to receive more individual attention. This semester, Cecilia was bumped back to non-IEP classes. Although her memory is still a setback at times, Cecilia said she feels almost back to normal.

"I never wanted to go [to therapy], but now I can talk, I can write, I can do algebra, I can write essays," she said.

"[She's] had a couple of perfect tests," Pamela said.

Almost a year after her overdose and transplant, Cecilia still has to take 31 pills a day, half

in the morning, half at night. But she said she has gotten used to what her mom calls "a blessing and a curse."

"Half of the pills are for my body to not reject my liver," Cecilia said. "I take a pill called Prednisone and it has a lot of side effects. I get bloated. I feel sick a lot. If I walk too much, my toes, my fingers and my knees burn. But it's saving my life, so what can I do?"

Cecilia said she now realizes the importance of always talking to someone instead of attempting to take one's life.

"What I want to do is help teens be aware of what can happen," she said. "It happened to me. It's horrible. Don't reach into your medicine cabinet when you're depressed. Run. Talk to your best friend. Hug your dog."

Cecilia goes back for check-ups every other Wednesday, and so far, her liver and kidneys have shown improvement. But a little bit of doubt nevertheless remains.

"We're always worried that [the check-up] might not turn out well," Cecilia said. "But we're always praying that maybe the pills will go down and my body will heal."

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