

## Mt. Markham color guard squads compete

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By Eric Monnat

Mount Markham's Sport of Art Show, held Saturday at Mount Markham High School, drew color guards from across New York state. The district had four teams compete in the competition. Shown are the Mount Markham Ponies performing. The Ponies finished second in their division and the Mustangs placed first in their division.

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West Winfield -

For nine years, Mount Markham color guards have been dazzling audiences near and far, including on their home turf in West Winfield.

Mount Markham color guards didn't disappoint this weekend either at the ninth annual Sport of Art Show at Mount Markham High School, where all four teams from the school district competed against teams from around the state.

In all there were 20 different color guards from as far away as Orchard Park and Clifton Park.

The Ponies, made up of students in fifth through eighth grade, and Mustangs, made up of students in ninth through 12th grade, both competed, with the Ponies posting a second place score of 52.7 in their division and the Mustangs tallying a first place 68.8 in their division.

The two other teams, the Fillies and Colts, which are made up of students in pre-kindergarten through second grade and third and fourth grades, respectively, each completed an exhibition performance.

The Mount Markham teams have around 70 students involved.

Executive Director of Mount Markham color guards Carrie Abaté was pleased with the overall show and her teams.

"It was a very good turnout, I am proud of the parents at Mount Markham who came out in droves to help," said Abaté. "It went great."

Teams perform their routine on a 60 by 90 foot floor mat. Each team selects a song to perform to and can use props besides flags and rifles. Overall, each team performs for four to five minutes.

Assistant Director Laura Buchanan said teams are scored on general effort, movement, equipment, ensemble analysis and points can be taken off for timing penalties.

Equipment Technician Amy Devine said participants learn more than a dance routine.

"(Color guard) teaches life skills like competition," said Devine.

The teams have been practicing and competing since September. Abaté said the teams have this week off for Easter and then they come back to prepare for a show in Cicero. Up after that will be the state championships at the Rochester Institute of Technology on April 5.

Last year's home show was canceled due to inclement weather.

For more information, visit [www.mtmguard.org](http://www.mtmguard.org).

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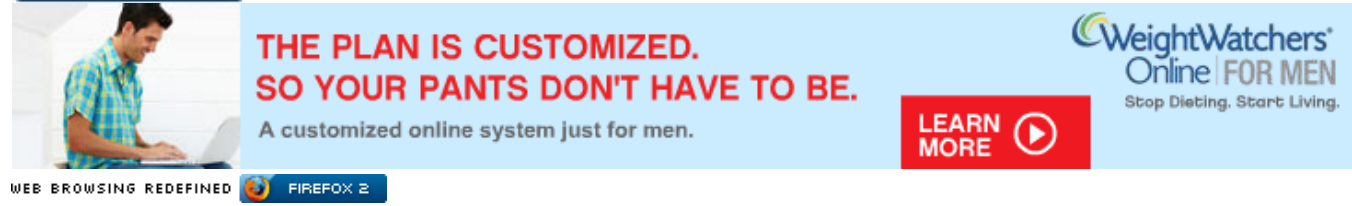
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