An Uncommon Fundraiser

Newark Middle School band and vocal musicians next week are hoping to raise at least $200 for the “Common Threads” nonprofit children’s clothing closet housed in the Woodlane Community Church at 5694 Woodlane.

How?
By obtaining sponsors that will give the NMS musicians 10 cents for every minute they practice their instruments or singing at home during the 7-day period of January 30th through February 5th.

The money will be used to purchase new kids socks and underwear for the Common Threads that also provides “quality gently-used” children’s clothing _ all at NO COST to those in the community that need it.

Rebekah Valerio, NMS band teacher, who likes to involve her 6-8th grade band students in a service project each year that draws on her “students’ musicality” came up with the idea of the “Practice-a-Thon” to raise money for a “noble outreach.”

She pitched the idea to her students who enthusiastically embraced the idea.

“They said ‘yeah, definitely.’ There was great consensus,” Valerio said.

NMS Vocal Music teacher Melissa Narusky, who also liked the idea, invited her 6-8th grade vocal music students to join in the fundraiser and they will be participating as well.

“My mission is to strengthen students’ practice skills and empower our youth to move outside of themselves and proactively help one other,” Valerio said.

The NMS musicians are being encouraged to practice every day not only to strengthen their skills but to support a very worthy cause.
They will also log their daily practice time that will be confirmed by an adult who will initial their logs. The logs will be shown to their sponsors.

Since she is not a Newark resident, Valerio, whose students have previously raised funds for the Newark Food Closet, asked Cindy Briggs, PreK-12 Music Department Leader who teaches instrumental music at Kelley School for suggestions of other local charitable outreaches that also could use some support.

Briggs suggested “Common Threads.”
Valerio and Narusky’s students are being encouraged to each obtain at least $2 in pledges from family members, friends or teachers. Students will personally collect the monies pledged from their sponsors after the week-long “Practice-a-Thon” is over.

Valerio said the student-driven fundraiser will not only help “kids move outside of themselves but make a difference in their community.”

Newark resident Sarah Humphrey, an elementary music teacher in Geneva who started “Common Threads” with Bethany Comella four years ago, is “incredibly thankful” the NMS students are raising money for the children’s clothing closet.

“We can ALWAYS use donations of new socks and underwear and the money the students raise will be put to good use,” she said, noting “Common Threads” is open the first and third Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. until noon.