

Lincoln-Way Marching Band Doesn't Let Rose Parade Performance Go Up In Smoke

Chicago (CBS) — Band members from a suburban high school marching band are expected to return home Wednesday after a trip to the Rose Parade in California had an unexpected twist.

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During the parade, a train-themed float caught fire, and thousands lining the route were stunned by the smoke.

But, the Lincoln-Way marching band, from suburban New Lenox, played through the float fiasco.

“I smelled the smoke and I was like, ‘oh, this caught on fire,’” Madisen Tomaszewski said. “I looked over to the side when we passed the float and I saw this hole in the side of it.”

Toluwa Balogun said the 281 students marching had plenty of practice.

“We’re a good band. We adapt to situations that are serious,” he said.

Months ago, CBS 2 got a glimpse of the hundreds of hours of preparation the band puts in. The cost to fly them out, ship gear and stay in California surpassed \$1 million. A portion was paid through fundraising.

Fortunately, no one was hurt by the fire.

“The rest of the parade went on without a hitch,” Tomaszewski said.

Band members call the march the most memorable they’ll take part in.

“It’s not the memory I expected,” Balogun said.

Tomaszewski said she doesn’t think the fire ruined the trip for her.

“I think it actually made it more memorable because I think later on me and my friends can laugh about the float that caught on fire and how we just kept on marching,” she said.

The students added they never felt in harm’s way. Hundred of volunteers and first responders acted quickly.