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EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

LOCAL STUDENT WITH "MARCHING PANTHERS"

CHARLESTON, IL-- Lori Birk, whose parents, Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Birk, live in Newton, is a proud member of Eastern Illinois University's Panther Marching Band. The freshman Music Education major plays the 1st Bass Drum in the band.

Over 130 Eastern students devote five hours a week to march rehearsal and two hours a week to music rehearsal to bring music and spirit to Eastern's football games, as well as other sporting events and campus activities. Band Director Bruce Moss said he is proud of their hard work to bring entertainment and excitement to Eastern.

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The band members also have to memorize their music, and the large majority of their music is arranged specifically for them. Al Horney, head of Eastern's Jazz Studies, arranges most of the music for the band's half-time presentations.

"By using arranged music, the band gets a more distinctive and authentic sound. This is more educational and entertaining, and is a real challenge for students to perform different music and drills each week," Moss said.

The band performed for the opening day game for the Chicago Bears at Chicago's Soldier Field on Sept. 9. This has become an annual event for the band.

"This is a challenge for us. It gets the year off to an exciting start," Moss said. Performing for 65,000 football fans, particularly Chicago Bears fans, is none other than thrilling for the Marching Band.

Eastern's Marching Band also hosts an annual high school band competition, this year held on Saturday, Oct. 6. All the members help with the competition which involves 29 area high school bands and give a performance at the end of the competition.

Eastern's band program gives students an opportunity to continue the music education they began in high school, in addition to providing a creative outlet for social, musical, and academic endeavors.