The music blasts from the figures on the damp field. The bright coloration makes the eyes of viewers shimmer. There is a slight whisper of people counting. About 15 or so girls swiftly dance in the grass, like dandelions blowing in the wind. Sweat drips down the faces of people who push all personal emotions or circumstances out of their minds to compete.

Walking into the orchestra room after school, you may spot a skinny girl with short, wispy chestnut hair whirling a flag or rifle. She will have dark hazel eyes and a gleaming smile, along with slightly tanned, luminescent skin with light freckled accents.

 Sixteen-year- old Emily Tennant has been a part of the South Pointe High School colorguard for three years, and performing on the field is something that she absolutely loves.

“I started colorguard when I was in seventh grade, but we only performed in parades,” Tennant said.

Tennant takes time to have fun while practicing with her friends. “Marching band is kinda my whole friend group,” she said.

Tennant has made a bunch of new friends since the start of her first marching band season. Recalling the most difficult part of band was a challenge for her.

Her parents are Tim and Mindy Tennant. Tim has a dark goatee and short, mahogany hair. He was diagnosed as a diabetic at the beginning of this year, and therefore has lost a good bit of weight due to diet changes.

Mindy is a plush woman with hair similar to a bob. Her hair is a coffee-brown color, and accentuates her penetrating olive and amber eyes. Being the youngest out of three sisters, Emily is now seen as the favorite.

“Since all my siblings are gone and I’m the only kid in the house, I feel that my parents want to do more things with me,” Emily said, a grin from ear-to- ear.

Tennant was open about her childhood, and discussed her positive and negative memories with her family members.

“Something that I feel bad about now is I remember hiding under mine and my sister’s bed. She came in and she was talking to her boyfriend at the time. I laid under my bed for at least an hour, I swear, and when she got down I grabbed her ankles and she freaked out,” she said.

“My family memories in general consist of my dad playing guitar and singing with his friends in bars and my mom running sound. One memory in particular was at a bar named ‘MissSipps’. I had gone there quite frequently with my parents and the owner thought I was an angel. My dad was getting me to sit in on drums and I ran off the stage. It was mid-song, because I messed up. I was in tears. I remember hiding in the bathroom because I appreciated the scenery

in the bar; the girls’ bathroom was a light pink color with small ivy strands. There was also a full wall of clean mirrors,” she recalled.

“While I was crying, my dad went in the bathroom and comforted me until I decided to go back up there. I was terrified. Although everyone knew what happened, they didn’t care. They just thought that I was an awesome kid for getting up there. I was 6 years old, drumming ‘Sweet Home Alabama’ with a bunch of my dad’s friends.”

Her hometown was in DuQuoin Illinois, with a population of about 6,500 people.

“There were only four stoplights, and they were all on the same road,” Tennant stated.

She said that her school life was very uneventful. She wasn’t in any sports besides colorguard, and it only lasted two months.

“I was bullied a bit, and I didn’t really accept myself fully until I moved here,” she confessed.

“I My family was all really close together, each at most two hours away. I had aunts, uncles, grandmas and grandpas that all lived super close to DuQuoin,” she vocalized.

“As for family life, both of my siblings lived with my parents. I shared a room with the middle sister, Lauren.”

She also had her fair share of difficulties. Her sisters, Lauren who is 23 and Katy who is 26, have all had their struggles.

When asked about events from her childhood, she spoke plainly and without hesitation.“For a family being borderline broke, I had a pretty good childhood. My earliest memory was walking to the park with my dad,” she muttered. She pondered over any other memories, shifting her eyes back and forth.

When she moved from Illinois to South Carolina, everything seemed to improve, but there was one issue in particular that stood out to her. The memory was ingrained into her brain like a brand. Everyone was yelling at each other, and Katy referenced the fact that Lauren moved out early and decided to live with her grandparents due to past conflicts.

“Emily is going to end up like Lauren if you all don’t stop!” Katy said.

“After watching the fights and things that have happened, I can now weigh the options of certain situations and focus on how to deal with them. After we moved, there was less fighting.

When I went to South Pointe, I had to choose what classes I was going to take. The first thing that I decided to do was colorguard since I was so familiar with it,” Tennant communicated. She does understand that she also has flaws outside of guard.

“I’m very opinionated. I feel that I should be open with my opinions with people. I could work on my confidence and assertiveness more, which is something that colorguard and ROTC helps with,” she said.

Her instructors only had good things to say about their performer. They can usually be seen either outside or in the orchestra room after school.

Paige Sudduth is the most experienced South Pointe colorguard instructor, and is an excellent role model to students. She stated, “Emily was once a sweet girl who seemed really shy and observant. She has become so outgoing. She is someone who any guard member could ask for help. She is also someone that the staff trusts.”, Paige said.

Jon’ Paul Montgomery, one of the newest colorguard instructors at South Pointe, can be easily spotted by his auricomous hair and his bold attitude. He is a concrete performer and terrific role model. When asked about Tennant, he said, “She’s realized her power as a leader even though she doesn’t have a leadership title. I can’t wait to see how talented she will be!”

Looking back, Tennant said, “My freshman year of guard, I was a mess. I cried nearly every practice when I was called out, and I would thank God when a practice went by that I wouldn’t be called out by any of the instructors or captains.”

She was somewhat afraid of her instructors and had difficulty feeling secure in her new environment. Now, she sees her instructors in a slightly different light.

“I don’t have many experiences with Jon’ Paul; however, my experiences with him have been funny and memorable. With Paige, I feel more pressure to be better. I put both of them on a pedestal as far as they go. I know they have more experience then I do, and I know that they areof a higher power so I respect them,” Tennant enunciated.

It was obvious that she wanted music to somehow be a part of her life in the future. As far as giving advice to people who may be interested in joining colorguard or

marching band here at SPHS, Tennant said, “Don’t do it if you aren’t willing to dedicate

everything to marching band.” Although guard is fun, a great deal of effort must be put into it to

be successful. “You will shed tears,” she warned.

After laughing at her own response, she said, “I’m not going to specify why. That all depends on the person. It depends on your attitude.”

How would she describe colorguard in one word? She paused, and said, “I want to say

‘crazy’, but I think ‘dedication’ is better.”