# Peak Performers in the ARTS

**Jacquese Steele**
Staff Writer

ANGELO MURRAY / KNIGHT LIFE

Senior Vanetta Jones has been a member of the LN Marching Band and the performing drumline for all four years at Norrix. Jones was first inspired to play the drums in 8th grade when she saw the movie "Drumline," and from that moment on she decided that drumming was what she wanted to do in high school.

"Drumming is something that calms me down and relaxes me," Jones said.

Jones also gives credit to former LN Band teacher Sue "Ms. J" Johnson for being her inspiration to keep pushing herself to become the drummer she is today.

"Ms. J worked us hard," said Jones. "She can be strict when it comes down to performing."

Jones added that Ms. J was otherwise a pretty cool laid back individual.

Jones plans to attend Central Michigan University this fall and aspires to be a part of their drumline and pep band. However, Jones admits that drumming will not pay her bills, so she is planning to make good money by studying to become a tax attorney.

"I can make more money being an attorney than drumming my whole life," said Jones.

Jones is currently using her drumming hands to write poetry and participate on the LN Forensics team. She plans on continuing to work hard and possibly becoming as great at poetry as she is at drumming.

Junior Courtney Dodge just started acting this year. Dodge first participated in the Loy Norrix Drama Department's production of "Greater Tuna" this past fall. She is a part of the Forensics team and has appeared in this year's musical production of "Little Shop of Horrors" as the savvy businesswoman Patricia Martin.

Dodge's first audition was for the Kalamazoo Civic's production of "High School Musical." She did not get into the show, but was very proud of the fact that she received a call back. This fueled her to keep on auditioning until she was cast in a show.

"I never found anything I was good at and really liked to do until now," said Dodge.

Dodge agrees that she has been, as they say in show business "bitten by the bug" and plans to attend more auditions, get into more shows, and even would like to aim for a role at the Kalamazoo Civic. Although Dodge is very ambitious about performing, she does not wish to pursue performing as a career.

Dodge won't let this difficulty stop her from enjoying the one thing in which she has found her "niche." Dodge adds that she picks up on things quickly and also that she gets a rush from the move of things in performing.

"I'm a fast paced kind of kid, that's why I like this stuff," said Dodge.

Dodge has recently auditioned and was cast in the Civic Youth Theater's production of "Holes" as Stanley Yelnats' mother.

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Sophomore Teeoncey Sanders has been singing since 7th grade. Sanders is no stranger to the spotlight. She was once a part of the children's choir at Maple Street Magnet School and has been singing with her choir at Richland Bible Church for the last couple of months.

Sanders has not been involved in singing and performing here at Loy Norrix, but has been thinking about joining the choir. The reason for Sanders not participating in the choir here at Loy Norrix can be attributed to her focus on taking required classes.

Sanders does not plan on taking singing to the next level or pursuing it as a career. Instead, Sanders wishes to become a writer. She enjoys writing short stories and one day hopes to publish a novel.

"I'm trying to get all of my core classes out of the way then maybe I can do more stuff next year," Sanders said. "It's something I do as more of a hobby."

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In addition to her love for singing, Sanders is also interested in the guitar and is eager to take lessons.

# *Kumo Hibachi and Sushi* Will Hook You

**Kristen Wehling**
Feature Editor

Sushi, it is not just raw fish rolled up into a tiny rice-filled roll. Kumo Hibachi and Sushi, located at 6396 S. Westnedge in Portage, offers a variety of Japanese cuisine including their popular hibachi and sushi.

The restaurant has a gorgeous set-up with several tables positioned on top of stairs for patrons to sit down and dine on cushions. Kumo Hibachi's dining room also consists of a small bar where the chefs prepare fresh sushi and sashimi for diners to walk up to and observe. The hibachi room, located in the back of the restaurant, seats several parties of up to eight. Chefs cook on the hibachi right in front of the customers, which makes for a fantastic show with flames flying high into the air as your food is prepared in front of your eyes.

Kumo Hibachi's menu consists of several varieties of Japanese cuisine. At my first glance of the menu, I had absolutely no idea what "maki," "tamaki," "sashimi," or "udon" meant until I asked for assistance from several waitresses and the manager (in case you didn't know, "maki" means a roll, "tamaki" means a hand roll, "sashimi" is cut raw fish, and "udon" are thick noodles). Kumo Hibachi offers sushi, sashimi, appetizers, entrees, hibachi, udon or soba (pan fried noodles), and varieties of teriyaki. Prices vary greatly, between $1.50 for the least expensive sushi and sashimi a la carte all the way up to $46.95 for an immense amount of expensive sushi in a sushi entrée.

**Sushi: Cold cooked rice dressed that is topped with raw or cooked fish, or formed into a roll with fish, egg, or vegetables and wrapped in seaweed.**

**Sashimi: A Japanese dish consisting of very thin bite-size slices of fresh raw fish, traditionally served with soy sauce and wasabi.**

**Hibachi: A small Japanese-style charcoal brazier covered with a grill, usually used for outdoor cooking (The grill Kumo Hibachi uses). It is also the North American term for Japanese teppanyaki cooking.**

One of the misconceptions about sushi is that it is all raw. It's not. Since I am still skeptical about trying raw tuna or salmon, I ordered the Spicy Tempura Maki ($6.95), a roll filled with deep fried tempura shrimp, avocado, cucumber, and tobiko (tiny caviar). My guest ordered the Philadelphia Roll ($6.95), another type of sushi without raw fish consisting of smoked salmon, avocado, cucumber, scallions, cream cheese, and tobiko. In addition, she ordered the miso soup ($1.95) as an appetizer which is a broth consisting of bean curd, seaweed, and scallion.

Upon waiting for our food, several servers offered us refills on our cups of green tea. Their visits were frequent which made for excellent service. I was offered a sample of their green tea ice cream after I asked the manager what it tasted like. The sample was split between my guest and myself, and dessert before dinner never tasted so excellent. I did not know what to expect at the first bite, but the mint green colored ice cream tasted delicious. It was a cross between a light drizzle of caramel and chocolate chips with a hint of tea. The dessert was not at all what I would have expected. I anticipated a strong tea-flavored heap of cream. This flavor was far from it.

Our food arrived in about ten or fifteen minutes, positioned on the plate in a very artistic set up. The Spicy Tempura Maki was spicy and delicious, cut in five pieces with a long shrimp tail adorning the ends of two slices of the maki. Picking the Spicy Tempura Maki up with chopsticks proved to be very difficult since the pieces were so large and stuffed. The Philadelphia Roll was a bit easier to pick up with chopsticks as they were cut into six smaller cylinders. This roll was good and tasty, especially with the cream cheese and dipped in Kumo Hibachi's homemade teriyaki sauce. The Philadelphia Roll was recommended by my guest for fans of smoked fish. It was not spicy like the tempura maki so it would be perfect for those who prefer mild foods.

I was curious as to what the desserts were like. The menu consisted of a dessert called Mochi ($3.95), which I had never heard of before. Kumo Hibachi's manager described it as a rice dough on the outside, enclosing an ice cream center. As a treat, a sample of the Mochi was brought out for my guest and I after our dinner. I don't think I have ever tried an ice cream dessert quite as unique or delicious before. The flavors of ice cream in the center vary depending on Kumo Hibachi's availability, but the rice dough covered a ball of tasty, pink, and fruity raspberry ice cream. The dough was the consistency of gum or a gummy worm and was surprisingly good, but had to be cut with a fork because of its gum-like make-up. The consistency of the dough and its light flavor made consuming the raspberry ice cream a magical adventure with all new texures and flavors.

Our grand total came to $18.93 with the two sushi plates and two green teas at $1.00 each. The average bill for two people will actually depend on personal preferences and how many dishes are ordered. I would estimate the average bill being between $15.00 and $35.00 for two diners.

Kumo Hibachi and Sushi had excellent service and a variety of sushi and Japanese food to select from. Sushi is a delicacy that must be tried at least one time in life, and Kumo Hibachi is an excellent place to partake in this adventure. For first time sushi consumers, it is typically recommended that you try the California Roll first, which is a standard sushi filled with imitation crabmeat, avocado, and cucumber. Since it is not real fish, this sushi is popular among those who have not yet tried sushi. Intermediate sushi diners can try the sushis with raw tuna, salmon, or eel. For some of the more experienced and daring sushi lovers out there, try sashimi since it is only raw fish with no rice or vegetables.

Prior to my visit to Kumo Hibachi, I have tried sushi only once and was satisfied with it, but Kumo Hibachi's sushi was even more delicious and has officially hooked me to this international treat.

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**Left: The Philadelphia Roll ($6.95) on a plate adorned with a small drop of wasabi and ginger. Right: The Spicy Tempura Maki ($6.95) served with a side of wasabi and ginger as well.**

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**The Hibachi Room at Kumo Hibachi and Sushi. Patrons seat themselves in parties of up to eight around the hibachi grill and watch as the cooks prepare their meals.**