

# ORCHESTRA NOTES

## MCKINNEY HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRA NEWSLETTER



### SPERRY PERFORMANCE HALL



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#### DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the first edition of (what will be) our monthly newsletter! I am looking forward to using this medium to feature all the awesome things going on in here in MHS Orchestra.

We have had a busy month in MHS Orchestra! In February, all students participated in a UIL Preview Concert here at MHS, and then celebrated all their hard work during our lock-in social. Later that month, all orchestras traveled to perform at UIL contest. Each orchestra beautifully played three pieces for judges, who provided valuable feedback and ratings. You can find links to their recordings later on in the newsletter if you'd like to hear their award-winning performances.

After UIL, a large number of orchestra students participated in our Spring Trip. We joined the MHS Theater and Choir programs in traveling to Orlando, Florida to visit Universal Studios and Walt Disney World. We had a blast and learned a lot – I hope you enjoy all the pictures on the upcoming pages!

Be sure to also find the list of upcoming events and ways to stay connected! Finally, thank you all for your support of the MHS Orchestra program!

*Jeff Harvick*

Head Orchestra Director



# PREVIEW CONCERT & LOCK-IN



## UIL PREVIEW CONCERT

On February 16th, the orchestras performed a preview of their UIL concerts in our own auditorium here at MHS. Because many of the actual UIL performances were during the school day, this was the best opportunity for many families to hear the performances that the students have been preparing. This concert was featured by Manestream News in their MHS1 segment. **Click the image above and go to 6:13 in the video to see the feature.**

## LOCK-IN SOCIAL

Immediately after the UIL Preview Concert, students changed out of their formal clothes and into PJ's for the annual UIL Lock-in social. Students enjoyed singing karaoke, playing video games, working together on puzzles, and playing board games until midnight. After the social, the students enjoyed a well-earned 4-day weekend.





# UIL CONCERT & SIGHT READING CONTEST

January and February are "contest season" for orchestra, and in Texas that contest is called UIL Concert & Sight Reading. Each orchestra prepares three works from a curated list of selections, and performs them for judges. They then also sight-read a brand new work for a different set judges. The UIL judges give each ensemble ratings and valuable feedback to help foster the musicians' continued growth.

Here at McKinney High School, our five orchestras combine together to form three performing groups at UIL Contest: Concert & Sinfonia combined, Camerata Orchestra, and Symphony Orchestra. All three orchestras gave beautiful performances of their concert literature, full of variety and nuance. The judges recognized their hard work with excellent and superior ratings, and importantly gave expert feedback and guidance to help the musicians, directors, and orchestra programs a whole continue along their journey in musical excellence. In the sight-reading evaluation, the orchestras showed excellent musical literacy, understanding, listening, watching, and note-reading skills. The directors are very proud of the hard work the orchestras demonstrated at UIL this year. **If you want to hear recordings of their award-winning performances, click or press the picture of the orchestra below.**



## CONCERT & SINFONIA ORCHESTRA

This orchestra is made up of all students from 2nd and 6th period orchestra. They performed on February 22nd at Lebanon Trail High School. They performed three works: *Rosamunde* by Schubert, *Lullaby to the Moon* by Balmages, and *Bravery & Grace* by George Sweet. They received Excellent and Superior Ratings on stage, and Excellent ratings in the sight-reading contest.

## CAMERATA ORCHESTRA

Camerata Orchestra is comprised of all students from 3rd period orchestra. They performed on February 23rd at Reedy High School. They performed three works at UIL Contest: *Luminosity* by Ramsey-White, *Lullaby* by Hofeldt, and the *Serenade* by Leyden. Camerata Orchestra received Excellent and Superior Ratings on stage, and Superior ratings in sight-reading.



## SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The McKinney High School Symphony Orchestra is a full orchestra comprised of varsity orchestra students from 4th period Philharmonic, 5th period Chamber, as well as about 30 students from the MHS Honors Band. They performed at UIL contest on February 24th at Reedy High school. They played Verdi's *Nabucco Overture*, Grieg's *Last Spring*, and the Finale from Dvorak's *9th Symphony, "New World."* They received straight Superior Ratings on stage and sight-reading!





# SPRING TRIP, DAY 1

## March 2nd – Walt Disney World Magic Kingdom!

For this year's spring trip, our first in four years, we traveled to Orlando, Florida to visit Walt Disney World and Universal Studios. We enjoyed joining the MHS choir and theatre programs on this journey, and we were honored to have MISD Director of Fine Arts, Dr. Jared Critchfield join us on the trip also. The first day had us all meeting at 4am at school to take buses to the airport, then flying to Tampa, and taking buses the rest of the way to Orlando. Finally, the students spent the afternoon and evening at Magic Kingdom at Disney World, capped off by their famous fireworks show!

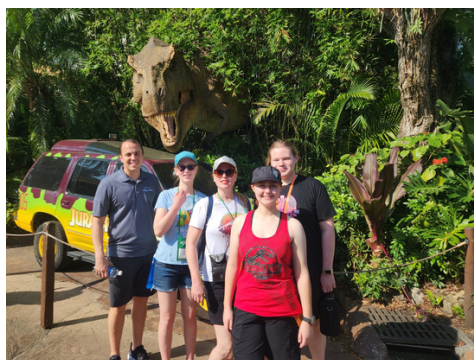




# SPRING TRIP, DAY 2

## March 3rd – Universal Studios Orlando!

For the second day of our trip, students spent the entire day at Universal Studios, home of The Wizarding World of Harry Potter, Islands of Adventure, Jurassic Park, Spider-Man, and many other famous attractions.





# SPRING TRIP, DAY 3

March 4th – Disney Imagination Campus & Hollywood Studios

On Saturday, we started the day by participating in a workshop on the Disney Imagination Campus at Epcot. We were led by our music industry pro and Disney artist, Rich. Even though the workshop started at 7am, the students sight-read very well. They recorded a track, and their performance was added to a clip from the film "Frozen." Students learned a great deal about the music industry from Rich. After their performance, we enjoyed spending the day at Disney's Hollywood Studios. At the end of the day, we took in the Fantasmic Light Show.





# SPRING TRIP, LAST DAY!

## March 5th – Return to Universal Studios Orlando

For the last day of the trip, we returned to Universal Studios to catch any other attractions we didn't get to see the first time! Our flight home was delayed, but we luckily knew in plenty of time so the students could spend an extra hour in the park. No one was sad about that! We went straight from the park to the airport, and we made it back to Love Field Airport by about 10pm. We had a great trip! All participants had an amazing experience, made new friends, and gained lifelong memories. The students acted with class at all times; the directors received many compliments on their conduct, professionalism, and positive attitudes. Also, thank you so much to our parent chaperones who made this trip possible!





# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: DYLAN BLOXHAM

Dylan is this year's MHS Orchestra President. She is a senior violinist in Philharmonic Orchestra, she loves orchestra and all the memories that came with it!

**Q: What do you love most about being in MHS Orchestra?**

A: I love the community that Orchestra creates and all the friends I've made because of this community. Without it I know that I wouldn't have as many amazing people in my life, and all the amazing experiences that came with it.

**Q: What advice do you have for first-year members of MHS Orchestra?**

A: Never ever give up! If I hadn't continued to work hard and practice violin, I never would've made it as far as I have in Orchestra.

**Q: What has been your favorite memory in orchestra?**

A: The Spring trip to Orlando, specifically Walt Disney World! I loved watching the firework show on the first night with all of my closest friends, it made me feel like a little kid again.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## **McKINNEY ISD SOLO & ENSEMBLE**

*SATURDAY, APRIL 1 | 8am-4pm | MHS*

Students will perform solos and/or with the ensembles they have prepared. They will receive feedback and a rating from a judge.

## **SPIRIT NIGHT AT BARRO'S PIZZA**

*THURSDAY, APRIL 6 | 2730 S CENTRAL EXPY*

MHS Orchestra Booster Club will receive a percentage of proceeds. Be sure to mention the orchestra!

## **SWEETS AND STRINGS RECITAL**

*TUESDAY, APRIL 11 | 6PM | MHS*

Students who receive Superior Exemplary Ratings at Solo & Ensemble will be invited to perform on this recital. Free & open to the public. Dessert reception afterward.

## **McKINNEY ISD HONORS RECITAL**

*TUESDAY, APRIL 25 | 6PM | MHS*

Three outstanding soloists from each high school (North, Boyd, and MHS) will be invited to perform in this recital. This is the culmination of the Solo & Ensemble season. Free & open to the public.

## **ORCHESTRA SPRING CONCERT**

*FRIDAY, MAY 12 | 7PM | MHS PAC*

All students will participate in our final performance of the year. Orchestras will perform themes from hit movie and TV shows. Free & open to the public.

## **ORCHESTRA BANQUET**

*SATURDAY, MAY 20 | 6PM | MISD CEC*

Catered dinner. We'll give awards, celebrate successes, and recognize our departing senior orchestra students. Event will conclude with a DJ and student dance. Tickets are free for current orchestra students, and around \$30 for guests.



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