

McNary's Celebration of Music lights up the Elsinore

Feel-Good STORY

Saluting the people that make us proud of our community

presented by



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McNary High School's performing arts groups staged its Celebration of Music at the historic Elsinore Theatre in Salem, on Tuesday, May 3, in what is hoped to be the first of a new annual tradition.

The Highlander Classics choir, the Chamber Orchestra, Wind Ensemble and Advanced Symphony Orchestra presented a two-hour performance, highlighting each of the groups.

After they were in their seats, Sean Williams, director of orchestras, welcomed the audience. He related that Elizabeth Herring, director of bands, was the driving force behind the evening—a welcome performance after COVID forced cancellations of concerts over recent years.

The evening began with five selections by the Highlander Classics, led by director Dr.

Jeffrey Larkin. The voices filled the theatre, followed by cheers and applause.

After a set change, the Chamber Orchestra took to the stage with five pieces. Hannah Eggert was the featured player on *Girl with the Flaxen Hair* (Claude Debussy). Benjamin Standley, on viola, and Tyshin Nguyen on cello, were the featured musicians on *October* (Eric Whitacre).

Nguyen, a senior, marveled at the grandeur of the Elsinore Theatre, saying its acoustics were better than at the Ken Collins Theatre at McNary, where the orchestra regularly performs.

The Wind Ensemble, under the direction of Elizabeth Herring, gave the audience three pieces that kept toes tapping.

Finishing out the show was the advanced symphony orchestra, led by Williams. They played three pieces, with alto saxophonist Sam

Banton the featured performer on *Mourning Song* (M.L. Daniels).

The final piece of the evening, *Let There Be Peace on Earth* (Miller & Jackson), saw the Highlander choir lining the aisles to accompany the orchestra.

Tyler Payne, a percussionist, was happy to celebrate his birthday on the Elsinore stage with his friends. He also plays the euphonium and has taken part in the popular Tuba Christmas held in each year at the Elsinore Theatre.

The best part of the evening for Hannah Kuper, clarinetist and concert mistress, was performing with friends. "Everyone is friends," she said.

Salem-Keizer is recognized state-wide as having robust and supported arts programs, especially in music. One hundred-fourteen students proved Tuesday at the Elsinore Theatre that the support was justified.



Trumpeters play during rehearsals for McNary's Celebration of Music at the Elsinore Theatre on Tuesday, May 3.

Photo by JOSHUA MANES of Keizertimes



Dougie Howard plays the violin during symphony rehearsals for McNary's Celebration of Music at the Elsinore Theatre on Tuesday, May 3.

Photo by JOSHUA MANES of Keizertimes



Victor Ceja warms up on the flute during wind ensemble rehearsals at the Elsinore Theatre for McNary's Celebration of Music on Tuesday, May 3.

Photo by JOSHUA MANES of Keizertimes



Carlos Sanchez plays the clarinet during wind ensemble rehearsals for McNary's Celebration of Music at the Elsinore Theatre on Tuesday, May 3.

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Sean Williams directs the McNary chamber orchestra during rehearsals for the Celebration of Music concert at the Elsinore Theatre on Tuesday, May 3.

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