

KEEPING THE FLAME ALIVE

The vocal department performs in the Walt Disney World Candlelight Concert

By Ben Seelig

OCTOBER

Among dozens of other high schools, Dreyfoos was in the running for Disney World's 65th annual Candlelight Processional. They were required to record "Silent Night" and "They Rejoice with Great Joy" along with another song of their choice. In October, they received confirmation they were going to be performing at the concert.

"We've had so much going on with Prism and our vocal concert coming up that we rehearse for the entire period, and for the last 20 minutes, we'll go over the music together with (music teacher) **Kent Taylor** (while we all) stand around the piano," vocal senior **London O'Brien** said. "We'd go over some tricky spots if we needed to, but for the most part, we were practicing the part on our own. When we did it in class, it was more to review and fix some of the flaws and vulnerabilities."

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The participants left during third period and arrived at Disney's Magic Kingdom that afternoon. They met with the other six schools that were participating and worked in a short practice with all the other schools. In addition, they had time to talk to the conductor and the story narrator, Neil Patrick Harris.

“When you're getting ready you are lined up by how tall you are, so I wasn't standing next to anyone from our school, but everyone was so nice," vocal senior **Madeleine Thron** said. “We were talking about Neil Patrick Harris, and how he didn't seem like a real person. It was really easy to talk to other schools, and a lot of people from other schools were wanting to talk to you. (It was) a very friendly atmosphere."

They performed the show, including eight songs with narration from Harris. There was also a special show from the Voices of Liberty. For the concert's namesake, all the singers dressed in orange flowy robes meant to emulate the look of a flame. Additionally, each student spent the remainder of the night in EPCOT following the performances.

“I clearly remember how hot it was, because we were all shoulder to shoulder, and the lights were pointing right at us,” vocal senior **Emily McLaughlin** said. “The candle was also shaking in my hand the whole time. (However,) it wasn't like we were going to Orlando for a competition, it was more just to sing. I like that so much more than feeling like I have to do my best. It was a different, less stressful kind of challenge.”

DEC. 9

The singers arrived at the Magic Kingdom park, and the process to get everyone in the park was relatively quick. Once the role call was taken, many singers flocked to the new rollercoaster, Tron Lightcycle Power Run. The seniors were free to roam the park on their own, eating and going on rides with their group before leaving at 5 p.m.

“We woke up at 7 a.m. to get tickets for Tron because you have to wait in a virtual queue,” Thron said. “Then we went on space mountain with Mr. Taylor, which was one of my favorite parts of the whole trip. The whole thing was incredible.”