

Guests tour amazing space in H-F's Performing Arts Center

BY MARILYN THOMAS
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Homewood-Flossmoor High School students gave guests a taste of the arts program on Wednesday, May 11, when District 233 hosted a Performing Arts Center open house.

Students and faculty gave tours through the space. Guests got time to hear the Bel Canto Choir sing Motown hits, the H-F Jazz Band perform high energy swing pieces, and the H-F Orchestra, under the direction of senior Kere Eno, perform a Michael Jackson suite.

Scenes from a New Faces production were acted in the Mall Auditorium and student guitarists jammed in the Guitar Room to vocals by Venus Jamison and Laila Green.

Dozens of art works lined the walls and student videos were shown in the new performing arts theater.

"As a teacher in this space, I can tell you these are some of the most amazing students," Jackie Wargo, fine arts department chairperson, told the guests on her tour.

More than 100 people took time to visit the Performing Arts Center and were very impressed – not just with the new spaces but the talent of H-F students. This was the first time guests got to visit the spaces. The \$16.3 million wing on the H-F South Building was completed in January 2021, but no students were on campus as the pandemic



Marilyn Thomas/H-F Chronicle

Members of the Bel Canto Choir performed for visitors at the Fine Arts Open House at Homewood-Flossmoor High School in May 11.

forced schools into remote learning. Students didn't use the space until this school year.

Andrea Lasticly of Flossmoor found her daughter's drawing, a pineapple in shades of purple, on display.

"I think it is exciting because it opens up a lot of opportunities for the children to bring their creativity, and the space for them to do so from the music to the dance to the theater and in so many capacities," Lasticly said. "So, I think it opens up a whole new world for them."

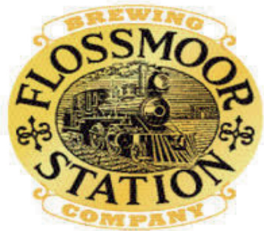
"It's a fantastic space. It's such a good feeling to actually see the kids work in the space, see where they're creating it, see where it's actually happening," said Aimee Matthys whose two children are involved in arts programs. "To see that for the first time, it's exciting. It's incredible. Super impressive. I'm so glad they're honoring them (students) in this way."

Bob Hindsley, who retired as the H-F band director in 1993, said he made a point of coming to see the space.

"I've driven around it many, many

times," he said. "It's big, big changes." Hindsley stood in what was the band room in his day, pointing out where his office had been and looking into a space that he remembers having risers so all the band members could perform. As part of the construction/remodeling project, Hindsley's old space was converted to a fine arts classroom.

"I salute the school board and the community for supporting this. I'm just overwhelmed by what I've seen," he said.



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