



Maria Carrillo High School

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To Whom It May Concern:

The MCHS Jazz Choir has traveled to Jeju, South Korea in 2008, 2010, and 2014. We were scheduled to travel again in 2018. In September, we made the decision to cancel the trip to South Korea because of the uncertainty of the safety due to the instability of North Korea's ruler. We changed our travel plans to go to The Apollo Theater in NYC. Shortly after this decision, we experienced the horrible fires where 4 of our 18 Jazz Choir students lost their homes. Our Fall Concerts were postponed until November 8 & 9. I was contacted by Peter Suk from the Santa Rosa/Jeju Sister City Committee on November 9. He insisted that the South Korean's felt that it was safe for us to travel and they really wanted us to come. They were worried about their Sister City and wanted to know that the people of Santa Rosa were OK. I mentioned at our concert on November 9 that the Jazz Choir was raising money for an upcoming trip and that we would be making the decision of going to NYC or Jeju. Diann Kitamura was at the concert and later sent me a note saying:

Hi Gail,

I wanted to share how much I enjoyed the concert last night. Listening to all those beautiful voices and instruments relieved so much stress I didn't realize I was carrying.

Thank you for all you do and congratulations on your award. It is much deserved.

Elizabeth will keep me posted on your New York or South Korea trip. Both sound fabulous but I, too, prefer Korea. For the past 10 years, I travel to Korea each year. Last year (because I became the Supt.) was the first year I didn't go. If you go, will you be going to Jeonju or Jeju?

Again, thank you for a wonderful treat last night.

Diann

On November 13, we had a meeting about both trips. All of the parents attended as well as Peter Suk and Don Taylor from the Sister City Committee. Peter and Don explained the trip and the cost. I talked about pros and cons of both the Jeju and NYC trips. Parents that had been on both trips in previous years also answered questions and gave their perspective. At the end of the night, we took a vote and the parents unanimously decided on the Jeju trip. Their main comment was "We can not live in fear - some of us have lost our homes and our children have lost so much already". I passed around a sheet of paper and found that all 18 students would be attending and 16 parents were also going to travel with the Sister City Committee to experience this amazing trip. There are only 3 students going that will not have a parent with them. Evelyn Anderson and I will serve as chaperones.

In past years, the trip has cost \$1500.00 for the entire trip. This includes air fare, lodging, food, museums, etc. Because we are traveling with so many people, the cost went up to \$1670.00 per

person. The Jazz Choir raised enough money to pay the \$1500.00 for each student. The parents donated the other \$170.00 for their child. If the family could not have made that donation, the money would come out of another choir club account and reimbursed later when the Jazz Choir raised the money. The Jazz Choir has raised \$27,000 over the last 2 years in preparation for this trip. This money was raised by performing throughout the community and from multiple donations.

The Jazz Choir will be performing for Jeju's Fire Festival. The fact that there is fire involved has been addressed by the families that lost their homes as well as one of our parents that is a Fire Captain in Santa Rosa. After seeing pictures and videos of this event, everyone feels that this will be an empowering event for the families that fled the Santa Rosa fires.

Our students will be performing at various other events including the Jeju Mayor's Dinner and various performances in Seoul, hosted by Seoul's District City Mayor. The students will experience Korean food, Emperor's Palaces, museums, cultural events, etc. The agenda is still be finalized.

We will take an Airport Express from MCHS to SFO at 8:00 PM on February 27. We will be traveling on Korean Air from SFO to Seoul/Inchon Airport and then taking a short flight from Gimpo Regional Airport to Jeju Island. We will be in Jeju until March 4. We will then fly back to Seoul where we will continue our amazing adventure until March 6 where we will fly from Seoul/Inchon to SFO at 8:05 PM. We will arrive at SFO at 1:30 PM and take an Airport Express bus back to MCHS.

I have the district Medical Authorization form filled out by each student/parent. This will be with me at all times. Because we have 16 parents attending, they will have their personal insurance information with them as well. One of our parents is also a doctor so she will be packing a Dr. bag in case anyone gets sick. Parents will be notified before assisting their child for health reasons. Students will not be allowed to swim.

I hope this answers all the questions that you have about this trip. Please let me know if you need more information.

Gail Bowers
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