

## CCYO Plays Disneyland

By Cameron Sun



Cameron Sun (center) searches for the right page

Photo by Sun Family

As a middle school student, I don't usually have many reasons to help me convince my parents to go to Disneyland with me. But that is exactly where I traveled with the Contra Costa Youth Orchestra (CCYO) to perform a suite of movie songs.

I play cello with CCYO, an orchestra consisting of about 30 middle school and high school age kids. Almost every year, we are offered a chance to perform for the Disneyland Magic Music Days program. In addition to Disneyland, CCYO has performed at places like Golden State Warriors games, the Blackhawk museum, Six Flags Marine World, and on a Royal Caribbean cruise.

I left for Disneyland with my family on the Friday before Presidents' Day. The 8-hour drive was probably the least enjoyable part of our trip, but it at

least heightened my anticipation. The next day, we left our hotel with all our possessions to go to another hotel, closer to the park. We took our things to the room, bought four bus tickets, and rode to Disney's California Adventure park.

California Adventure was one of my favorite parts of the trip, because it did something that all vacation spots should be able to do: it allowed me to escape. Each smaller section of the park had its own unique but pleasant atmosphere, making the park feel like multiple, smaller, more personal parks. It made me forget all about the stresses of school and whatnot.

My favorite moment of the trip took place the next day. At 8:30, I dressed in a suit and took my cello to meet the rest of the orchestra. Together, we walked through the service en-

trance at the back of Disneyland, past industrial-looking buildings, and through a gate which let us out right next to the Plaza Gardens stage.

At 10:30, we began playing. I've been in many concerts, but the one at Disneyland was almost magical. Just the feeling of being part of what makes Disneyland special was enough for me, but the fact that we drew a crowd of passers-by elated me.

But alas, after we had our fill of rides we left for our hotel and the next day, for home. But, even as we left Disneyland, I felt as if I was taking something back with me, as if some of the magic of the trip had stayed with me.

The Contra Costa Youth Orchestra is under the direction of Greg Mazmanian, who also teaches at Orinda Intermediate School. "CCYO performs at Disneyland every other year or so," Mazmanian says, "and the experience never gets old...in fact it's like visiting dear friends or relatives and entertaining them with the latest tunes you've learned!"

CCYO will play a benefit concert for "Comfort for Kids" at the Leshner Center on May 28th. CCYO is a full symphony youth orchestra. Membership is by audition and is open to students in grades 7-12. For more information, contact [info@ContraCostaYouthOrchestra.com](mailto:info@ContraCostaYouthOrchestra.com).