

Bach to Basic: The Story and Music of Johann Sebastian Bach.

AUHS District GATE Orchestra to perform spring concert

By Loreen Berlin

Typically, schools have a band or choir but an all-string orchestra is rare in public schools.

"Some of our children don't have much and they can't afford private lessons," Julie Metz, coordinator for the Anaheim Union High School District GATE Orchestra and instructor for the Music Masters String Program for the Savanna School District in Anaheim said. "It's wonderful for them to be a part of something larger than themselves."

The after-school program is made up of 4th through 12th graders from surrounding schools and is divided into three groups of beginners, intermediate, and advanced.

The group is having their Spring Concert Monday, May 6, at 7 p.m. in the Knott Avenue Christian Church, 315 S. Knott Ave., in Anaheim.

The theme for the concert is "Bach to Basic: The Story and Music of Johann Sebastian Bach."

Metz said that the Music Masters program is committed to music education for young people and that it is the only program of its kind in the Anaheim area.

Now in its 20th year, Music Masters gives instrumental instruction to grades 4 through 6 at four elementary schools in the Savanna School District and the Music Masters program employs one instructor and one assistant who conduct weekly 45 minute lessons from October through May. More than 200 aspiring instrumentalists are participating this year.



How the AUHSD GATE Orchestras came to be in 1991, was that Orangeview Junior High School music director, Ed Craig, began an instrumental string program at the school; two years later, Craig started the Anaheim Union High School District GATE Orchestra, which today remains a unique string orchestra where all gifted and talented children grades 4 through 12 residing in Anaheim and surrounding areas can participate in learning a string instrument.

Orangeview Junior High is still the only junior high school in Anaheim that provides instrumental string training in 7th and 8th grades, which graduates to Western High School in Anaheim where they can continue in a string program.

The GATE Orchestra, managed by Julie Metz, is held at Orangeview Junior High School in Anaheim, on Wednesdays, from 4 to 6 p.m.

Founded in 1898, the AUHSD has a student population of approximately 32,000 and is one of the largest school districts in the state, with an average daily-attendance of 31,000 students. In comparison, most school districts in California have an average daily-attendance rate of just 500 students.

The district covers 46 square miles and stretches across the cities of Anaheim, Buena Park, Cypress, La Palma and Stanton. The students, who speak 46 different languages in their homes, attend 20 campuses and come from five feeder elementary districts.