

Gospel

- Elizangela DeCarvalho

“When it comes to Gospel, it has to come with excellence and the performers have to work hard. We all have to come with the same focus of worshipping God, with excellence,” said Orlando Retana, a drummer, about the Marblehead METCO Gospel Concert. Every year, for many years, there has been a Marblehead METCO Gospel Concert, which was first organized by Ms. Elaine Munn, the former Marblehead METCO director. Now, current Berklee student Jermain Martin, 25, is the Gospel Concert Director. When asked what he wished to accomplish with the Concert, he responded, “My dream is to enrich the lives of young people, to realize that the best vehicle to success could very well be collaboration. Music is one of the greatest entities of life, and it plays a key role in education, and the development of a person.” When asked what he hopes will come out of the concert, Martin said, “Not only the town of Marblehead but other school districts and cities to be able to host and commemorate diversity through music and the performing arts.”

The money raised at this amazing three hour long concert will support scholarships to two seniors, one Marblehead resident and one METCO student, to help with their future academics. There were wonderful performances by Marblehead High School students, Joseph Stoddard & The Village Chorus, Kate Ferris & The Village Jazz Assemble, and The MHS Jazz Quintet. The jazz performances were amazing, with very talented musicians who allowed the listener to live the music and not just listen to it. Other performers were Bob Tirelli & the MVMS Select Chorus, LaQuandra Seymore, The Berklee College of Music Reverence Gospel Ensemble, and The Greater Bethlehem Temple MASS Choir. Saxophonist Clay Lyons, 24, said on his experience performing, “It was exhilarating and lots of fun, there were lots of passion, fire, emotion, the most important attributes of music. That is what inspires me to play with singers, what inspires me about singers, why I strive to play like a singer.”

The Gospel Concert, in fact, had good reviews from the audience. Janaya Randall, 17, and her partner Tyler Capasso, 18, said, “The concert was so good, the singers were so good and uplifting.” Capasso yelled with excitement, “I came not expecting much of the show because I came to a practice the day before, but after the first performance I was very impressed. The concert was very musical and joyful; I’m glad I came and I want more!”

During the concert the crowd was laughing, singing, and having a good time. The Gospel Concert was indeed very interesting, just like last year’s. The hosts were very funny and they kept the audience entertained and enthusiastic. When I interviewed host Tyler Merullo, 14, and asked how it feels to host, he responded, “I love it. I’ve been hosting the concert for three years and I’ve loved doing it since the first time. I would host the Gospel Choir for the rest of my life if I could.” That passion that people like Tyler exhibit towards music, gospel, empowerment, joy, and happiness is just amazing. Music is in fact life to some, and then it isn’t to others. Music is therapy to some, and then it isn’t to others. Music is in fact enlightenment to some, and then it isn’t to others. All people have their own meaning for music, their own meaning for anything at all.