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Southside Math Club spreads holiday cheer

From Southside High School

Members of the Southside High School Math Club shared some of their holiday cheer when they visited Ridgewood Nursing Home after school on Dec. 12. Members of the club brought more than 300 Christmas presents to be given to residents who have no family that visit them.

They also provided homemade Christmas cards to be opened during the Christmas season. Members sang Christmas carols led by Math Club president Sarah Petty and were accompanied on the guitar by Kylie Bowden (sophomore) and Southside alumni Madison Hudson and Caleb Petty. Residents joined in on the fun by singing with the club members. Advisors of the club are Tina Petty and Lisa Johnson.

Members of the Math Club are continuing to collect pop tabs from soda cans, soup cans, pet food, etc. to benefit the Ronald McDonald House of Greenville. All the schools on the south side of the river have joined forces to raise money for the families of sick children by serving as drop off locations for the pop tabs (Southside High School, Cho-



SOUTHSIDE HIGH SCHOOL

DOING GOOD: Members of the Southside High School Math Club who visited the nursing home were, front row, Shawn Gerard, Alexandra Clark, Miranda Carawan, Delta Cole, Dagoberto Garcia, Michelle Rocha, Mallory Nobles, Courtney Boyd, Kylie Bowden, Jayshawnna Johnson, Kaila Lietz and Katjia Riddick. Back row are Jaqwan Cobb, Dylan Wilkins, Mackenzie Jeter, Talia Askew, James Main, Campbell Barnes, Sarah Petty (president), Yasmin Woolard and Dedan Wilkins.

cowinity Middle School, Chocowinity Primary School, and Snowden School).

Math Club members will also support the Ronald McDonald House in the spring by participating in the

annual 'Sport a Shirt, Share a Night' fundraiser, collecting wish list items to donate and making door decorations. The club appreciates all those who support their efforts.

**ON COMMUNITY:** Exploring the power and strength of community to promote a better and enduring future

Blind, but now I see

"Look for the pigeon poop." I kidded through gritted teeth, stomach knotted, as we climbed the stairs to our seats high above the floor of the Verizon Center in Washington, DC — now called the Capitol One Center — and before the Verizon, maybe it was the Wells Fargo, or Fed Ex. It didn't really matter what it was called; it was still a hike.

I have acrophobia, or fear of heights, so any step past the first rung on a ladder makes me wonder if I can make the next step or get a nosebleed.

It seemed like the steps were getting steeper the more we climbed. Soon we would need to start rappelling. We finally reached our seats four rows from the ceiling. I gladly slid past folks sitting in the first two seats, grabbed the plastic molding of the armrests, and locked on for dear life as I pulled myself into the chair.

"I'm sorry, honey, I didn't realize we were up so high," said Allison, my wife. "Next time, I'll make sure and forget the cost," she added, sitting down and looking at my face that was now, I was sure, almost white. I think I reached up to see if my nose was bleeding.

Fat chance, I said to myself. Concerts like this come along not very often, and only once can we take out a second mortgage to attend.

"It is what it is," I said gamely. "Is my hair on top white? I thought I felt something splash up there. See any pigeons, swallows, anything like that around here?"

"Very funny," she replied. "Thanks so much for coming; you know how much this means to me."

I nodded a couple of times, looking down, wondering how flat I would look if I fell ... like a pancake.

I could have done without the journey up the Matterhorn.

But hey, now that we made it to the top — the view was spectacular.

Twenty minutes later, Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli, the reason we hiked heavenward, wearing socks but no shoes, was ushered on stage by his guide doubling as a conductor of the back-

ing orchestra. Bocelli is blind from a boyhood accident, so without shoes, he could feel the pulse of musical vibrations through the floor.

One hundred and five minutes later, the same guide escorted a beaming Bocelli around the stage as he soaked in the adulation of a sold-out crowd of people and pigeons. Alternating solo and performing with a mix of vocalists and two dancers, Bocelli made me forget the height and the nosebleeds. Moreover, he did it with all but 10 minutes of song and a couple of sentences in languages I could understand.

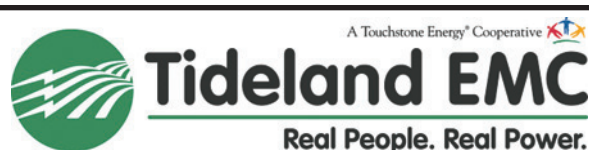
Bocelli does not sing; that is too mortal, too pedestrian of a description. His voice tran-

scends the senses. For 95 minutes, my brain could not translate the Italian, French and Portuguese lyrics. But the soft and gentle notes he greeted us with every number and his ending soaring vocal oratory took all 20,000 heart and souls on a journey, leaving us spent with sensory overload, but full, well feeling the meaning of that journey. Ironically, we were the ones being guided across his stage.

Allison had played Bocelli for a couple of days before the concert on this little speaker at home, but that was like hearing the primary colors, while Bocelli in person conjured up an ethereal color wheel in surround sound. Simply, if I were blind, his voice could make me see.

Now, with Bocelli on my phone, even on the highest volume with earbuds the

singing still sounds like it did before the concert. That's OK, because now I feel his music inside me. As it turned out, the journey, after all, made me "see."

**ROBERT GREENE SANDS**

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- 1) Install Load Management Switches! Please contact us at 252.972.9300 for more information.
- 2) Utilize storm windows and doors and keep them shut! This will help keep the heat in your home where it belongs....inside!
- 3) Keep your thermostat in check! The recommended winter setting is 68 degrees and each degree over that will increase your bill by about 5%.
- 4) Say NO to electric space heaters. They can be dangerous and they use a lot of electricity, adding over \$150 to your utility bill.
- 5) Avoid appliance use during peak demand hours! In the winter months, peak demand usually occurs between 7 am -10 am.
- 6) Turn off the lights! Before you leave a room, turn off the light!
- 7) Insulate, seal openings and use weatherstripping! Keep those cool drafts down to a minimum.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!



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