

Murphy Monitor

www.murphymonitor.com

© Copyright 2008 All rights reserved.

Volume 4: Issue 4 Murphy, Texas • Thursday, February 21, 2008 • C&S Media Publications 4 Sections, 22 pages 50 cents

PISD bond committee looks at Murphy high school

Proposal also includes middle, preschool in east Plano, elementary in Parker

By Jamie Engle
Staff Writer
jengle@murphymonitor.com

Construction of a high school in Murphy could be more than just a rumor if the proposed Plano ISD bond package is approved by the Plano ISD Board of Trustees, then by voters in May.

Details of a nearly half-million-dollar bond package recommenda-

tion were to be presented to the Plano ISD Board of Trustees at their work session Feb. 19. It includes \$62,244,725 for the new east-side high school. The presentation is a result of the work of the 2008 Facilities and Technology Task Force and of several public input sessions.

"The bond funds are weighted toward new construction on the east side of the district," said Richard

Matkin, associate superintendent for Plano ISD business services.

The bond proposal calls for an elementary school in Parker and a high school for grades nine and 10 in Murphy, on the PISD campus on Murphy Road. It also includes a new preschool and middle school in East Plano. New construction accounts for \$140,855,112 of the bond funds.

At \$490 million, it is the largest PISD bond package to date. Matkin

said the impact on tax rates is in line with the approximately \$400 million 2000 bond election. It is estimated the tax rate would go up about .10 per \$100 valuation, from .2484 to about .34 at the highest.

Plano currently has the lowest Metroplex-area debt rate. McKinney is highest at .50, followed by Allen at .4303.

Renovations recommended in the bond proposal total \$121,166,629,

spread among 10 campuses. Additions and modifications total \$62,182,369 and includes \$26,559,947 for science, kitchen and dining and administration offices for Plano East Senior High.

The 2008 Facilities and Technology Study Task Force was appointed last fall to study district needs, tour facilities and receive public input and then submit recommendations for the bond proposal.

The \$490,000,000 proposal will be on the May 10 bond election.

"It has been four years as promised since the school district has held a bond issue to address major facilities and technology needs," said Dr. Doug Otto, superintendent of schools. "The 2004 bond election handled several major projects, and now it is time to revisit our district's

See USING page 6A



Courtesy Photo

Founder and conductor Ron Planks (far left) and co-conductor Tajette Travenia (far right) lead the Strings of Color Orchestra. Musicians are (in alphabetical order) Ariel Bowman (violin, Murphy), Xavier Degrate (violin, Murphy), Bree'Anna Farlough (cello, Richardson), Andrew Hodge (cello, Murphy), Xavier Hubbard (violin, Richardson), Mickala Johnson-Gomez (cello, Carrollton), Stephanie Jones (cello, Carrollton), Daniel Lattimore (violin, Murphy), Kimberlee Manora (cello, Plano), Curlita Meshack (violin, Dallas), Quice Sanders (violin, Dallas), Jasmine Scott (violin, Plano), Eden Sirak (violin, Richardson), Alexis Smith (violin, Richardson), Alex Robinson (viola, Plano), Ramfis Swoopes (cello, Plano), Savannah Thigpen (cello, Plano) and Sedrick Wall (bass, Plano).

Strings of Color, sounds of black history

Hip-hop, R&B, pop music to fill Eisemann Center

By Jamie Engle
Staff Writer
jengle@murphymonitor.com

The works of Scott Joplin, Billie Holiday and Motown will be presented in "The Sounds of Black History," a concert by the Strings of Color Orchestra on Sunday, Feb. 24 at The Eisemann Center in Richardson. Four of the musicians are Murphy residents.

Ariel Bowman (violin), Xavier Degrate (violin), Andrew Hodge (cello) and Daniel Lattimore (violin) are members of the Strings of Color Orchestra. Sunday will be the inaugural performance of the orchestra, which was formed in 2007 by Ron Planks, director of

the award-winning Plano ISD Williams High School Orchestra and member of the North-Dallas-based Appassionato String Quartet.

Adding their music to the evening are guest vocalist Andrea Williams and flutist Donald Bohanon-Williams.

The show opens with the jazzy sounds of local band Mike Whitley Project.

Designed for up-and-coming young musicians, Strings of Color Orchestra members range from middle school to college-level experience, said SOC founder and conductor Ron Planks. Hopeful students from across North Texas auditioned for the orchestra last

summer; eighteen are in the orchestra. Tajette Travenia is associate conductor of Strings of Color and a member of the Appassionato String Quartet.

"We're really excited about our first concert," Planks said. "Strings of Color Orchestra – and 'The Sounds of Black History' performance – are the realization of a dream I've had for years. The musicians have worked day and night to perfect the music, but we've had a lot of fun too, because the music is familiar and lively. How can you not be upbeat when you're playing Scott Joplin or Motown? We've worked hard to make this a reality – it's still hard to believe it's really going to hap-

pen!" Planks said this orchestra has special meaning for him.

"Strings of Color was born out of a desire to provide young string players of all racial backgrounds a venue to showcase their talent, with our target audience being string players within the African-American community," Planks said. "I remember coming through my public school orchestra program and being one of maybe two African Americans in my string program. But times have changed, and you see so much diversity in all music classes, but especially the orchestra room."

See YOUNG page 6A



Courtesy Photo

Ron Planks is the founder and conductor of the Strings of Color Orchestra. He is also the director of the Williams High School Orchestra and a member of the Appassionato String Quartet.

Candidate filing continues

Daniel seeking re-election; Daugherty running for Place 3

From staff reports
news@murphymonitor.com

Mike Daniel has filed for re-election to the Place 5 Murphy City Council seat.

Daniel won the Place 5 seat in a special election last November. The seat became vacant when Murray Sanderford resigned to move to Houston.

Daniel is a software implementation project manager with UGS. He has lived in Murphy since 2003 and has served on the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Community Leadership Council. He is a member of the Murphy Chamber of Commerce and the Murphy Cemetery Association.

One of Daniel's opponents in the November election has again filed for a Council position but this time for the Place 3 seat.

John Daugherty has filed for the seat currently held by Dwayne Elledge.

Daugherty has lived in Murphy for about 18 months. He owns his own company, Pentex Advisory Services, LLC, and holds a bachelor of science in petroleum and gas engineering from Penn State University.

He is a Murphy Crime Watch block captain and a board member and program chair for the Richardson Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association.

The mayor's seat currently held by Bret Baldwin is also up for election. Baldwin, a private practice psychologist, is serving his first term as mayor.

The mayor and councilmen are elected for three-year terms, and there is no term limitation.

Candidate packets are available on the city's Web site, www.murphytx.org, and on compact disc in the city secretary's office at Murphy City Hall. Paper copies are available on request, Nemer said.

"Anyone wishing to apply for a place on the ballot should obtain a

See FILING page 8A

Inside

- Occasions 4A
- Op/Com 7A
- Sports 1B
- Real Estate 1C
- Classifieds 2C



VOTERS Area Primaries Guide '08

Section C inside this issue

Lake Lavon
Water Level
Normal 492 ft.

As of 02/18/08
489.82 ft.

Lake Jim Chapman
Normal 440 – Current 441.13

Source U.S. Army Corps of Engineers